



**British Foreign Policy: An Examination of the Relationship between
British Intelligence, Democratic Peace Theory, and International
Law through the Lens of Ethnic Stratification & Mass Atrocity in
Southeast Asia 1965-1990**

A humanities thesis submitted by

Joshua Karl Rieser BA (Hons). MRes.

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Department of Media Production
Faculty of Media and Communication
Bournemouth University

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Abstract

Democratic peace theory suggests that democratic states do not engage in covert action against one another.¹ Academic scholarship, however, indicates that democratic states will use covert action against an elected government if national security planners perceive there is democratic decay in its national trajectory. However, this does not account for why a state would contravene democratic norms *and* international law. Nor does it account for why a state would intervene against another democratic state leading to a more authoritarian leader being supported. Based upon a combination of archival research, including media files, historiography, and analysis of democratic peace theory, the thesis explains why, in the non-European Cold War setting, Britain engaged in covert action against democratically elected governments in Indonesia and Cambodia. Moreover, the thesis will contend with how Britain continued to interfere in the internal affairs of states despite participating in international law conferences designed to bolster international norms including that of non-interference.

The thesis proffers the hypothesis that perceptions of state trajectory and countering communism outweighed obligations to international law and democratic norms, such as democratic peace theory. The thesis will argue that between 1950 and 1965 Indonesia and Cambodia were emerging democracies and although they were not colonised by Britain, they were both considered Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AATs) which posed a threat to British interests. This threat was related to increased communist activity which national security planners perceived could destabilise former British colonies. Former colonies have tended to maintain close relations with the imperial power that colonised it. The retention of these relations was a policy objective for Britain. However, this does not account for how Britain shaped developments in states that it did not colonise. The research will argue that perceptions of security underpinned this decision-making process with AATs assuming temporary importance when there was a perception that communism had made advances. To counter these advances national security planners targeted AATs, which gained temporary importance whilst Britain engaged in covert action leading to examples of what this thesis terms zonal foreign policy. When the perceived threat subsided, Britain pivoted to soft power regardless of whether the state was more authoritarian. This enables the thesis to produce clear findings that demonstrate DPT does not hold as a rationale for British foreign policy in the context of Indonesia or Cambodia. Nor does the presumption that international

¹ Michael Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace," *International Studies Quarterly* Vo.59, No.4(December 2015). p.815

norms dictate foreign policy hold true. Rather a combination of threat perception, security concerns and a desire to protect its former colonies shaped British foreign policy and trumped obligations to international law and democratic norms.

Key Words: diplomatic history, intelligence, international relations, international law, democracy

Declaration

I declare that this thesis/project is all my own work and the sources of information and the material I have used (including the internet) have been fully identified and properly acknowledged.

Student signature – *Joshua Karl Rieser*

Acknowledgements

To be sat here writing an acknowledgement page on a doctoral thesis is a surreal moment. Upon reflection it is no small miracle to be doing so. If you had told me ten years ago, I would be in this position I would have laughed dismissively. The thesis, although disrupted by the Covid pandemic, has undoubtedly been my best experience to date. Along the way I have discovered a passion for education and research, and it has opened doors I would not have dreamt of as a child. As ever, no doctoral research is a solo endeavour. In fact, my entire academic career to date has been motivated and supported by Dr Scott Andrew Keefer. From our first lecture together in September 2015, to the masters and doctorate, his inspiration and passion for history has inspired me to pursue my passion for the subject. Without his support, I may not have been sat here writing this today and I will forever be indebted to him for his unwavering support. I look forward to working with Scott on future research projects and as a colleague at Bournemouth University.

I would also like to thank Professor Melanie Klinkner who has supported this thesis through her passion and expertise in international law and Cambodian affairs. Thank you for pushing me to always strengthen my arguments and highlighting my analysis. Working with Melanie on this project has been an enjoyable experience and I look forward to collaborating on future projects together. Thanks to Dr Rory Cormac and Dr Christopher Prior for their expertise and recommendations around intelligence gathering and British foreign policy. I would also like to thank the fantastic staff at the National Archives in Kew and the Churchill College at the University of Cambridge. To those family members who have supported me throughout, you know who you are, and I am forever indebted to you. Finally, I would like to thank the four horsemen Alfie, Ben, James, and Sam, who have kept me sane and laughing throughout this process - your friendship has been invaluable.

This research has been motivated by a desire to further our understanding of British foreign policy, its intelligence apparatus, and its relationship with international law. Foreign policy, diplomacy and intelligence have always intrigued my mind. The opportunity to work on a project involving all three subjects has been an eclectic experience and I look forward to publishing papers as a post-doctoral researcher. Alas, the “forever” student is no more!

Abbreviations

ASEAN – *Association of Southeast Asian Nations*

ANZUS – *Treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States*

Capitol – *Metonym for US Government*

CENTO – *Central Treaty Organisation of the Middle East*

DoD – *Department of Defence (US)*

ECtHR – *European Court of Human Rights*

Grey Zone – *Space between peace and war in which state and non-state actors compete.*

IAC – *International Armed Conflict*

I.C.B.M – *Intercontinental Ballistic Missile*

IHL – *International Humanitarian Law*

ILC – *International Law Commission*

NSC – *National Security Council*

MOD – *Ministry of Defence*

NATO – *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*

NIAC – *Non-International Armed Conflict*

NLMs – *National Liberation Movements*

PKI – *Partai Komunis Indonesia (Communist Party of Indonesia)*

POLAD – *Political Adviser*

SIS/MI6 – *Secret Intelligence Service (UK)*

SEATO – *South East Asia Treaty Organisation*

SEAMU - *South East Asia Monitoring Unit*

SHAPE – *Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe*

TAPOL – *Tahanan politik (Indonesian Political Prisoner)*

UNGA – *United Nations General Assembly*

UNSC – *United Nations Security Council*

UNTAC – *United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia*

UKMTAS – *United Kingdom Military Training Assistance Scheme*

Whitehall – *Metonym for the British Government and Civil Service*

ZOPFAN – *Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality*

Cambodian State Names

Khmer Empire – (802-1431)

Post Angkor Period – (1431-1863)

French Protectorate – (1863-1871)

French Indochina – (1871-1953)

Kingdom of Cambodia – (1953-1970)

Khmer Republic – (1970-1975)

Democratic Kampuchea – (1975-1979)

People's Republic of Kampuchea* – (1979-1989) **de facto*

Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea* – (1982-1992) **de jure*

State of Cambodia – (1989-1992)

UNTAC – (1992-1993)

Provisional Government of National Union and National Salvation of Cambodia* – (1994-1998) **not recognised internationally.*

Second Kingdom of Cambodia – (1993-Present)

Place Names

Ceylon – *Sri Lanka*

Batavia – *Jakarta*

Formosa – *Taiwan*

Malayan Federation – *Malaysia*

Burma – *Myanmar*

French Indochina – *Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos*

North Rhodesia – *Zambia*

South Rhodesia – *Zimbabwe*

Nyasaland – *Malawi*

Gold Coast – *Ghana*

Tanganyika & Zanzibar – *Tanzania*

Siam – *Thailand*

Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)

Sir Richard ‘Dick’ White – (1956-1968)

Sir John Rennie – (1968-1973)

Sir Maurice Oldfield – (1973-1978)

Sir Arthur ‘Dickie’ Franks – (1979-1982)

Sir Colin Figures – (1982-1989)

Straits Settlements & Crown Colonies of Southeast Asia (1826-1966)

Penang

Singapore

Malacca

Dinding

Crown Colony of Sarawak

Crown Colony of Labuan

Crown Colony of North Borneo

Christmas Island

Dramatis Personae

Andrew Gilchrist – Served as the fourth Ambassador to Indonesia from 1962-1966. Gilchrist served in the Special Operations Executive during the Second World War. Gilchrist was an influential figure in Britain's intelligence operations against Indonesia.

Norman Reddaway – Reddaway was a British diplomat who created the Information Research Department alongside Christopher Mayhew in 1948. Reddaway was influential in intelligence operations in Indonesia.

Ed Wynne – Wynne headed up the South East Asia Monitoring Unit (SEAMU) an offshoot of the Information Research Department.

Henry Hainworth – Served as the fifth Ambassador to Indonesia from 1968-1970. During this time, there was a substantial pivot away from covert action in Indonesia.

Edith Temple Roberts – Journalist who produced the BBC Tropical Talks radio show. Temple Roberts was supplied with IRD material and disseminated in her shows.

Professor Georges Perrin – Leading law academic who worked at the University of Lausanne. Perrin was approached by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to advise on the nature of the Helsinki Accords.

Captain Richard Noone – Former British Army officer and anthropologist, Noone travelled around Cambodian, Laotian and Thai hill tribes to assess their vulnerability to communism.

To Mum...

Introduction

a. Framing

The aim of this thesis is to critique democratic peace theory (DPT) through an exposition of archival material relating to British intelligence activities in Cold War Indonesia and Cambodia. The research proffers the hypothesis that perceptions of state security and countering communism outweighed obligations to international law and democratic norms, such as DPT. In this case, if state trajectory was perceived to be aligning with communism, democratic norms and international law did not form a barrier against the use of intelligence operations. As DPT does not provide a rationale for British intelligence activities, the thesis proposes a new hypothesis, zonal foreign policy, to explain the behaviour of national security planners. Zonal foreign policy applies to the continued conscious role colonial-era boundaries have played in the demarcation or delineation of European powers' post-colonial foreign policy. Moreover, it provides a rationale for how Britain shaped events in countries that it did not colonise, in this context, known as Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AATs).

This thesis engages with two case studies of British covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia, both emerging democracies in Cold War Southeast Asia. Advocates of DPT argue that democratic states are less likely to engage in covert action against one another.² Academic scholarship, however, suggests that democratic states will use covert action against an elected government if national security planners perceive there is democratic decay, signalled by a pivot toward authoritarianism, or there are concerns about its trajectory.³ This, however, does not account for why a state would contravene democratic norms *and* international law. Nor does it account for why a democratic state would support an authoritarian leader over a democratically elected one. Based upon a combination of archival research, historiography, and analysis of DPT, the thesis explains why, in the non-European Cold War setting, Britain engaged in covert action against emerging democracies and how it continued to interfere in the internal affairs of states despite championing its role

² Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace." p.815

³ Ibid. p.815

in international law conferences designed to bolster international norms including that of non-interference. Questions abound.

- Why did Britain support more authoritarian leaders over their democratically-elected counterparts?
- Did national security planners consider international law or democratic norms as a barrier to covert action and did the principle of non-intervention apply?
- What was the role of the Information Research Department in shaping developments in Indonesia and Cambodia?

These form the three main research questions posed by the thesis. This is an Anglo-centric thesis based around a diplomatic history of British foreign policy in its post-decolonised world. The research will examine Britain's relationship with Indonesia and Cambodia. Both states experienced regime change during the Cold War. Once regime change occurred, Indonesia and Cambodia were ruled by authoritarian leaders. Britain supported both because of their anti-communist policies. This is evidenced through a notable decrease in intelligence activity in both countries. If DPT provided a framework for British foreign policy, then national security planners would be less likely to engage in covert action against the democratically elected government rather than the authoritarian one.

This would suggest that security concerns around communist expansion outweighed democratic norms. As hypocrisy and legitimacy costs increased in Europe, zonal foreign policy became increasingly prevalent in decision-making processes. This is evident during the 1980s when Cambodia became a target for British covert action.⁴ According to Rory Cormac, it became increasingly difficult to operate in Europe as the Cold War progressed with covert action revolving around pinprick operations.⁵ Pinprick operations were small scale operations designed to undermine internal divisions.⁶ Higher hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe led national security planners to target other regions. Cormac stated that 'the approach went further in the Far East than it did behind the Iron Curtain.'⁷ The Final Act of the Helsinki Accords reinforced the notion that the risk of

⁴ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: The National Archives, 1988).

⁵ Rory Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*, 1 ed. (Great Britain: Clays Ltd, 2018). p.72 Risk of conventional escalation with the Soviet Union was pervasive fear of national security planners.

⁶ Ibid. p.59

⁷ Ibid. p.71

escalation and legitimacy costs were too high in Europe. This chapter will begin by outlining where the thesis contributes to our understanding of covert action before providing an overview of British covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia.

b. Rationale for Research

Britain's post-Brexit ambitions have been the centre of political debate in the United Kingdom.⁸ The Indo-Pacific region has been highlighted as a region where Britain should increase its diplomatic influence.⁹ This includes hard and soft power options. In July 2021, the Cabinet Office released the United Kingdom's Integrated Review.¹⁰ The review stated that Britain must 'adapt to major changes in the world around us [Britain], including the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific region.'¹¹ The so-called 'pivot' to the region is, in part, an effort to reign in China, the region's hegemon.

This has been typified by Britain's entry into the Trans-Pacific Partnership.¹² Moreover, it has been exhibited through Britain's increasing investment and defence commitments in Southeast Asia.¹³ For example, the Royal Navy has stationed two patrol boats in the region and sailed HMS *Queen Elizabeth* through disputed waters in the South China in 2021.¹⁴ However, it appears little is understood about Britain's prior intervention in the region. This manifests itself in a belief that a resumption of British intervention will be beneficial to the region. It is important for us to understand Britain's relationship with these states as Southeast Asia grows in strategic importance for London. For example, Indonesia is one of the fastest growing global economies.¹⁵ With a considerable population, as of 2024 standing around 280 million¹⁶, it also has a complicated relationship with Beijing. Most states in the region are finding themselves balancing their relationships between Washington and Beijing.

⁸ HM Government, "Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy," ed. Cabinet Office (London: Gov.UK, March 2021).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Dominic Webb, "The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)," ed. UK Parliament (London: House of Commons Library, 17 November 2023). Although Britain has entered the trade agreement, little is expected in the way of economic gain.

¹³ Royal Navy, "UK Military Complete First of Two Major Exercises in East Asia," Royal Navy Website.

¹⁴ Brad Lendon, "UK's HMS Queen Elizabeth Aircraft Carrier Pictured in South China Sea," CNN.

¹⁵ Alec Russell and Mercedes Ruehl, "Is Indonesia finally set to become an economic superpower?," *Financial Times* November 15 2023.

¹⁶ United Nations Population Division, "Population: Total|Data," World Bank Group.

And with Cambodia heavily dependent on Chinese trade and investment¹⁷ it is necessary for Britain to counter Beijing's influence throughout the region. British foreign policy is aligning itself, once again, with Washington in containing Chinese influence drawing similarities with the Cold War. This research is, therefore, in part a response to the Integrated Review in that it deals with the history of British intervention in the region. Moreover, the Integrated Review provides a timely opportunity to study the impact of British intervention on the region. This provides one of the main contributions to academic practice and our understanding of Britain's relationship with Southeast Asia and wider Indo-Pacific region. It is hoped this research may lay a foundation for further work in the field of British foreign policy and its relationship with Southeast Asia.

c. **Ethical Issues**

This section deals with the moral questions posed by the study of British intelligence operations, especially those of the IRD, in Indonesia and Cambodia. Although the causality may be opaque, as a researcher, it is important to reflect on the nature of the propaganda. Following British intelligence campaigns in both states, there were periods of social unrest resulting in crimes against humanity being committed by forces that were seemingly under British influence. The mass atrocities in question are the Mass Killings in Indonesia and the Cambodian Genocide. Although the thesis is not suggesting that Britain alone caused the mass atrocities in either state, nor to overplay its role, it was complicit in destabilising both states through concerted intelligence operations.¹⁸ Other factors shaped developments in Indonesia and Cambodia, such as other state intervention. This included the American bombing campaign in Cambodia which was as an extension of its war in Vietnam.¹⁹ Moreover, international and regional powers were involved in shaping developments in Indonesia.²⁰ This included former colonial powers, France, and the Netherlands and regional powers such as Thailand and Vietnam. Decolonisation and self-determination were also components in shaping regional geopolitics.

¹⁷ Khmer Times, "Cambodia-China Trade Continues to Grow Despite Global Demand Slowdown," *Khmer Times* January 12th 2024.

¹⁸ Aboeprijadi Santoso & Gerry van Klinken, "Genocide Finally Enters Public Discourse: The International People's Tribunal 1965," *Journal of Genocide Research* Volume 19(December 2017).

¹⁹ David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, Second Edition ed. (Chiang Mai, Thailand.: Silkworm Books, 1994). p.77 Kissinger's recent death may reignite debates around American intervention.

²⁰ This included, but not limited to, Thailand, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, the United States, and Vietnam.

Britain was complicit in destabilising Indonesia and Cambodia through its intelligence operations. This is supported by academics including John Roosa and Paul Lashmar.²¹ Britain must reconcile its role in the mass atrocities throughout Indonesia and Cambodia. This research has dealt with these issues, highlighting where Britain's intelligence operations were undermining state security connect. That IRD inspired operations undermined Indonesian and Cambodian sovereignty and led to instability. Understanding Britain's complicity in the mass atrocities in Indonesia and Cambodia presents challenges for the historian.

d. **Definitions**

This thesis operates within these working definitions. The theories of Zonal foreign policy and Anglophile Adjacent Territories are unique to this thesis.

- Zonal Foreign Policy – is a hypothesis proposed by this thesis which argues that when states were perceived to be pivoting towards communism Britain would use intelligence operations to protect its interests. This was at the expense of DPT and international law.
- Anglophile Adjacent Territories – AATs are states which border former British colonies.
- Democratic Peace Theory – democratic peace theory suggests that democratic states are less inclined to use intelligence operations against each other.
- Covert Action – covert action is defined as activities of a state that are designed to undermine another state in a plausibly deniable manner.

e. **Contribution**

This thesis will contribute to three areas of under-developed research, outlined thematically below. Research on covert action usually revolves around three broad types of operation²² - this research is no different. The analysis addresses several themes including propaganda, military training, and financial assistance with a focus on the Information Research Department (IRD), Counter-Subversion Committee (CSC), and Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), who played an active role in supporting British foreign policy. Covert action

²¹ See John Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: the September 30th Movement and Suharto's coup d'état in Indonesia* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006). And Paul Lashmar, Nicholas Gilby, and James Oliver, "Slaughter in Indonesia: Britain's secret propaganda war," *The Guardian* October 17th 2021.

²² Rory Cormac, Calder Walton, and Damien Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs " *Review of International Studies* (2021).

was used to supplement British foreign policy in Southeast Asia. It is not the purpose of the thesis to assess the ‘success’ of covert action, however. That said, regime change did occur in Indonesia and Cambodia resulting in the decline of communist influence. Once this influence had declined, Britain pivoted to soft power despite the autocratic nature of new the regimes thus diminishing the theory of DPT. The temporary importance granted to Indonesia and Cambodia is symptomatic of zonal foreign policy. This section begins with an outline of DPT and zonal foreign policy.

Democratic Peace Theory & Zonal Foreign Policy

The thesis is primarily concerned by democratic peace theorists who suggest that sociocultural norms reduce the likelihood of democratic states engaging in covert action. DPT is a key theory associated with international relations. According to certain academics, it provides a model for sustaining peace.²³ It is an important theory that has been the subject of scholarly attention. This is outlined fully in the literature review. However, it is apt to discuss its relationship with zonal foreign policy. Michael Poznansky outlined how democratic peace theorists suggest sociocultural norms such as *culture*, *perception* and *practices* have produced barriers to stop democracies engaging in covert action against one another.²⁴ Of particular importance is selectorate theory which posits that when two conditions are met, a democratic state is more likely to engage in covert action against another.²⁵ Britain’s interference in Indonesian and Cambodian internal affairs, however, suggests this theory lacks application to British foreign policy. Britain’s colonial endeavours provide a further layer of complexity as former colonies have tended to maintain close relations with the imperial power that colonised it. Although Indonesia and Cambodia were not colonised by Britain, they formed countries this thesis has termed AATs. These are states which border Anglophile states or former colonies. The retention of close relations with former colonies was a cornerstone of British foreign policy. Isolating Anglophile states from the threat of communism formed a key foreign policy objective. This thesis argues that zonal foreign policy was influenced by three considerations –

- **Hypocrisy costs** – national security planners will avoid hypocrisy costs so they can continue covert operations in a plausibly deniable manner.

²³ John Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," *International Security* vol.19, no.2(1994). p.87

²⁴ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace."

²⁵ *Ibid.* The two conditions are outlined in chapter 2.

- **Legitimacy costs** – these costs are associated with a state's ability to appear legitimate in international institutions.
- **Audience costs** – these costs are incurred on the domestic political front if a state backs down in a foreign policy crisis and are associated with DPT.

If national security planners perceived legitimacy and hypocrisy costs were too high, then covert action might be unwarranted. National security planners calculated these costs were higher in Europe. One of the key factors in this assessment was the risk of escalation. Given the importance of avoiding war on the continent, national security planners explored covert action in other regions. Maintenance of close relationships with Britain's former colonies were built around strong bi-lateral ties and threat perception. For example, communist advances in AATs were unacceptable to national security planners. The research, therefore, will argue that perceptions of security underpinned this decision-making process with AATs assuming temporary importance when there was a perception that communism had made advances in these territories. When the perceived threat subsided, Britain pivoted to soft power regardless of whether the state was more authoritarian. This phenomenon diminishes the role of DPT which is fully examined in the literature review.

Democratic peace theorists posit that democratically elected governments are unlikely to engage in warfare or threaten one another.²⁶ Cultural norms and perceptions are central to this viewpoint.²⁷ Democratic peace theorists argue that democratic states hold positive perceptions of other democratic states which establishes a mutual understanding between the two.²⁸ According to Christopher Layne DPT has two main schools of thought.²⁹ Firstly, democratic states are constrained by institutional barriers such as public opinion and domestic legal barriers.³⁰ Secondly, that democratic norms are a barrier to inter-state violence between democracies.³¹ However, in the case of British intervention in Indonesia and Cambodia, neither institutional barriers nor democratic norms inhibited covert action. International law, moreover, did not induce a pivot away from its use.

²⁶ Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of Democratic Peace," *International Security* Vol.19, No.2(Fall 1994). p.6

²⁷ *Ibid.* p.9

²⁸ *Ibid.* p.5

²⁹ *Ibid.* p.5

³⁰ *Ibid.* p.5

³¹ *Ibid.* p.6

The thesis will contribute to several areas of diplomatic history including our understanding of British foreign policy objectives in the non-European world and enhancing our understanding of intelligence gathering in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. The research will demonstrate that DPT is a flawed hypothesis by demonstrating Britain's support of authoritarian leaders over those who were democratically elected. In the case of Indonesia, for example, Suharto was more authoritarian than his predecessor.³² Likewise in Cambodia, regime change led to Lon Nol who displayed authoritarian traits. This would suggest that national security planners' perceptions of national security and communist threat outweighed democratic norms and international law. To avoid legitimization issues, national security planners sought to interfere in the internal affairs of other states in a plausibly deniable manner. This would suggest national security planners were concerned by perceptions of self-image and state credibility.

Zonal foreign policy is a new hypothesis. A legacy of colonialism, zonal foreign policy has not been applied to the study of covert action. The thesis argues that higher hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe influenced British decision-making processes. Zonal foreign policy concerns demarcation lines. Demarcations sometimes exist in the consciousness of national security planners. These are sometimes displayed in informal or formal dialogue with allies. Security underpinned this decision-making process. Democratic peace theorists do not account for perceptions of security or zonal foreign policy. This is where the thesis will contribute to our understanding of covert action and DPT. The thesis will also consider the mental geography of national security planners who sought to protect regional assets and former colonies. Britain's security obligations in Southeast Asia revolved around protecting its former colonies from communist subversion.³³ By incorporating zonal foreign policy into the research, it will augment our knowledge of British covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia. Further context to zonal foreign policy is provided in Chapter Three.

Security Perception, State Trajectory & Authoritarian Leaders

Democratic peace theorists posit that national security planners will engage in covert action if they perceive a state to be in democratic decay.³⁴ This is limited in application to British foreign policy, however. The thesis will argue that it was not the prospect of a state

³² Peter Dale Scott, "The United States and the Overthrow of Sukarno, 1965-1967," *Pacific Affairs* Vol.58, No.2(Summer 1985). p.240

³³ Counter Subversion Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.," ed. Foreign Office (London: The National Archives, 1964-1967).

³⁴ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace." p.815

becoming more authoritarian that induced covert action. Rather it was security and threat perception that underpinned decision-making. For example, in Indonesia, Britain supported Suharto despite him exhibiting authoritarian qualities. When members of Suharto's cabinet spoke in favour of communism, Britain responded with intelligence operations.³⁵ Britain's support of authoritarian leaders suggests that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy. If national security planners perceived a leader to be anti-communist, even if more autocratic than their predecessor, they would receive support. Once an anti-communist was in power there was a shift in British policy to soft power. Soft power included the use of the British Council, BBC, and aid. These were used to further British foreign policy objectives once the perceived threat of communism had dissipated.

The thesis will argue that when state trajectory was perceived to be aligning with communism, Britain engaged in covert action. Where Poznansky credits democratic backsliding in the process of policymakers to engage in covert action³⁶, the thesis will consider security perception as the primary consideration. According to the Carnegie Institute for International Peace there are three main causes of democratic backsliding, grievance fuelled illiberalism, opportunistic authoritarianism, and entrenched interest revanchism.³⁷ In the case of Indonesia and Cambodia, the research would suggest that both Suharto and Lon Nol were opportunistic. London's support of both leaders, despite their authoritarian nature, suggests DPT is limited in application to British foreign policy.

British Case Study

Although subject to extensive scholarship, previous research on covert action has focused primarily on American case studies. This thesis provides a nuanced approach by using British covert action as a case study. By the 1960s, Britain was in a different political, economic, and military position to America. Previous research on British intelligence activities conducted by Rory Cormac suggested London used covert action to mask its declining power.³⁸ Cormac's observations are correct. Where this thesis differs, however, is the exploration of covert action with zonal foreign policy and democratic norms. Declassification of Cold War documents provided the thesis with a novel set of resources allowing it to focus on British covert action. Britain provides a nuanced case study as it was

³⁵ Information Research Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673," ed. Foreign Office (London: The National Archives, 1965). Voice from the Well targeted Subandrio *vide* chapter four further information.

³⁶ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace." p.816

³⁷ Thomas Carothers, "Understanding and Responding to Global Democratic Backsliding."

³⁸ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.4 public knowledge of covert action was limited.

particularly susceptible to hypocrisy costs in the post-colonial setting which drove its foreign policy towards covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia. Striking a realist tone, the thesis will support the notion that the international system is in a constant state of conflict as neither democratic norms nor international law reduced levels of covert action. When policymakers perceived their national security was compromised by communism, it responded with covert action at the expense of democratic norms. Indonesia and Cambodia, therefore, provide a membrane through which we can discern British attitudes towards democratic norms and international law. The thesis, therefore, offers a new perspective of British covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia.

f. **Covert Action, Democratic Norms & International Law**

Sandwiched between the two case studies of British intelligence activities in Indonesia and Cambodia was the Helsinki Conference. Although designed to promote peace and security in Europe, the Accords codified international norms.³⁹ The European centric nature of the conference is linked with the concept of zonal foreign policy as the conference increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs increased. Advancements in the development of democratic norms and international law will be used discern whether Helsinki induced a pivot in British foreign policy. Covert action in emerging democracies suggests that DPT does not provide a model for Britain's Cold War foreign policy demonstrating that democratic norms and international law had a limited impact in shaping British foreign policy in the realms of covert action. This would suggest that security perceptions outweighed the norm of non-interference. Non-interference is at the core of the UN Charter Article 2 (4) which states -

all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations⁴⁰

Following an examination of intelligence papers, however, the materials do not consider international law, especially the principle of non-intervention as a consideration viz. covert

³⁹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1983).

⁴⁰ United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, "United Nations Charter - Article 2 (4)," ed. UN General Assembly (San Francisco, United States: United Nations, 1945).

action. International law does not appear, therefore, to be of hindrance to national security planners. Notable international conferences include the 1968 Tehran Conference and the Helsinki Conference which codified international law and human rights provisions. British objectives at Tehran is an undeveloped area of Cold War history which is addressed in Chapter Five. As newly independent states began to join the UN, they began to shape democratic norms and international law around anti-colonial policies. To fulfil its foreign policy aims and avoid charges of neo-colonialism, Britain engaged in covert action. Covert action revolved around the principle of plausible deniability enabling Britain to avoid hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. Covert action in emerging or Asian-style democracies demonstrates that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for Britain's Cold War foreign policy. The next two sections provide brief histories of Britain's intervention in Indonesia and Cambodia.

g. Indonesia

Indonesia provides the first case study. Research conducted on Indonesia will outline how Britain intervened in Indonesia's internal affairs through covert action undermining the principle of non-intervention and how zonal foreign policy provides a rationale for its policies. Under Sukarno Indonesia established itself as a fledgling democracy under the state's Guided Democracy initiative.⁴¹ By the 1960s national security planners began to perceive Indonesia as a threat to its former colonies. Communist expansion presented the greatest threat to British interests. One of London's objectives, therefore, was to encourage more vigorous action by anti-communist Indonesians against the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI). Following British intelligence operations and regime change London supported the more authoritarian Suharto despite clear evidence of democratic backsliding. The research suggests that Britain's support was due, in part, to Suharto's hostility towards communism. Suharto's suppression of communist forces in Indonesia reduced the threat towards Malaysia resulting in a reduction in British intelligence activities suggesting DPT does not provide a rationale for Britain's Cold War foreign policy.

The 1960s saw British influence decline throughout Southeast Asia. This decline was compounded by a series of defence papers stripping Britain of its permanent military

⁴¹ Justus M. van der Kroef, "'Guided Democracy' in Indonesia," *Far Eastern Service* Vol.26, No.8(August 1957).

presence in the region.⁴² British Chancellor, Denis Healey, described the 1966 Defence White Paper as an 'exercise in political and military realism.'⁴³ Healey's comments suggest that national security planners were aware of Britain's poor economic outlook. To maintain Britain's influence in Southeast Asia, London engaged in covert action to rebalance the geopolitical landscape. By the mid-1960s Sukarno dominated Indonesia's political, social, and economic landscape.⁴⁴ As Sukarno began to pivot towards socialism, communist factions throughout Indonesia began to capitalise on their newfound popularity. However, a common misconception that the PKI was dependent on Beijing was, according to Foreign Office (FO) files, false.⁴⁵ FO correspondence determined that the PKI was essentially a nationalist communist party.⁴⁶ This development still concerned policymakers in London who perceived the PKI as a threat to Malaysia. Indonesia gained temporary importance whilst national security planners dealt with the perceived threat. This included calling for the assassination of prominent Indonesian figures.⁴⁷

To tackle communist expansion Britain looked to the Indonesian Army (TNI) as a counter balance.⁴⁸ Policymakers believed the TNI were the only force capable of countering the surging popularity of the PKI.⁴⁹ This belief was shared across the Atlantic as Washington implemented a successful policy of 'train-the-trainer' for TNI forces.⁵⁰ By the 1960s, the TNI had become a major political force, amenable to Washington's influence. It had, moreover, demonstrated its ability to deny power to the communists.⁵¹ In response Sukarno established a 'fifth force' whereby he aimed to arm peasant revolutionaries who he believed would break the army's monopoly.⁵² TNI leadership, on their part, endeavoured to place strategic units under the command of the most loyal officers.⁵³ This would enable them to control low level communist infiltration. Following an anti-communist propaganda campaign

⁴² Records of the Ministry of Defence, "Defence White Paper 1966. DEFE 13/505," ed. Ministry of Defence (London: National Archives, 1965-1966).

⁴³ Denis Healy, "Defence Review," (London: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, 22 February 1966).

⁴⁴ Peter Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*, First Edition ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1971). p.

⁴⁵ Foreign Office, "Internal Political Situation: Attempted Coup Against Sukarno. FO 371/180313," ed. Foreign Office. Sub-series Within FO 371 - South East Asia (D): Indonesia (DH) (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁴⁸ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1642," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁴⁹ Richard Hutton, *Jakarta Knows Best: US Defence Policies and Security Cooperation in 1950s Indonesia*, First ed. (Kansas: US Army Command and General Staff College Press, 2019). p.29.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* p.27

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p.3.

⁵² Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.69

⁵³ *Ibid.* p.70

led by the IRD, the PKI party headquarters were partially destroyed by Muslim arsonists on October 9th, 1965.⁵⁴ Unofficial estimates, according to *The Times*, suggested *ca.* 1,500 suspected communists had been detained as anti-communist sentiment began to suffuse Indonesia.⁵⁵ Although it is not possible to assess the true impact of the intelligence campaign, it is evident national security planners were willing to engage in this form of propaganda.

Sukarno's pivot towards communism forms an important chapter in Anglo-Indonesian relations. To negate communist influence in Indonesia, British intelligence began a concerted campaign to discredit the PKI.⁵⁶ Following the 1965 British records predicted that future violence was likely to occur in Indonesia.⁵⁷ By February 1966, Sukarno had reorganised the Indonesian government by limiting the influence of the TNI, although they were not excluded from decision making.⁵⁸ Cabinet Office reports suggested that this move had strengthened Sukarno's position.⁵⁹ As Sukarno pivoted towards Beijing and Moscow, London engaged in a series of covert operations to manipulate public opinion back towards the West.⁶⁰ Disseminated propaganda highlighted Indonesia's precarious economic position and targeted superstitions.⁶¹ Sukarno was stripped of his presidency in March 1967.⁶² Once regime change occurred in Indonesia, the country experienced democratic decay under Suharto. Despite this, Britain supported the Suharto regime. Britain's support of the authoritarian demonstrates the limitations of DPT and offers a potential example of zonal foreign policy. Chapters Four and Five will outline these events in greater detail.

h. Cambodia

Research on Cambodia concentrates on two periods of regime change in the country. The first concerns British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia, an under-researched

⁵⁴ From Our Correspondent, "Mass Arrests in Jakarta Anti-Communist Drive," *The Times* October 11th 1965.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁵⁷ Cabinet Conclusions 1-16 (64) (Harold Wilson), "Conclusion Former Reference "Overseas Affairs - Indonesia" CAB 128/39/66," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 07 October 1965).

⁵⁸ Cabinet Office, "Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings. Indonesia. CAB 128/41/13," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 24th February 1966).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668."

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.69

area, the second during the Vietnamese occupation. The thesis aims to link British intelligence activities to zonal foreign policy. By the 1960s, Cambodia had undergone a democratic shift with the establishment of parliamentary elections and increased public participation in politics.⁶³ DPT would suggest that Britain would be less inclined to engage in covert action in Cambodia, however by the 1960s it had proliferated.⁶⁴ The research on Cambodia begins by examining intelligence gathering in pre-revolutionary Cambodia from 1962 when anthropologist, Dick Noone, visited Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand.⁶⁵ Noone's reports on Cambodian hill tribes was sent to the FO noting that the tribes were susceptible to communist influence and recommending a series of propaganda campaigns to counter communist subversion.⁶⁶ These developments concerned national security planners as communist advances in AATs were inimical to British interests.

Cambodia can be classed as an AAT due to its proximity to Malaysia and Singapore. In keeping with Indonesia, if it fell to communist forces, it would pose a threat to Britain's interests and security. Moreover, with a deteriorating situation in Vietnam, the risk of continental Southeast Asia being overrun by communist forces was a very real prospect for national security planners. By the mid-1960s, these concerns manifested themselves in the form of IRD country assessment briefs which were disseminated to diplomats.⁶⁷ Although Cambodia arguably posed fewer security risks to Britain's former colonies, the IRD explored ways to influence Cambodia's internal affairs.⁶⁸ IRD officers shared intelligence reports with Cambodian officials in Phnom Penh as Sihanouk became a liability to British national security planners.⁶⁹ By the late 1960s Sihanouk became a target of covert action.⁷⁰ IRD reports on Sihanouk focused on his temperament and Cambodian affairs.⁷¹ Following a bloodless coup in 1970, Lon Nol succeeded Sihanouk as prime minister. Lon Nol exhibited more authoritarian traits than his predecessor leading to democratic backsliding.⁷² Despite

⁶³ Roger M. Smith, "Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia," *Asian Survey*, University of California Press Vol.7, No.6(June 1967).

⁶⁴ Foreign Office, "Intelligence Gathering Visits Within Cambodia. FO 1119/1," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1968-1969).

⁶⁵ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Malaysia: National Archives, 1962).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ _____, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1969).

⁶⁸ _____, "Visits by Mr Ashworth, IRD Hong Kong, to Burma and Cambodia, 2-9 October 1968. FCO 95/447," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1968). IRD methods are explored further in Chapter 6.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Derek Wilson, "General Lon Nol asked to form new Government," *The Times* April 22nd 1971.

democratic decay, Britain supported Lon Nol demonstrated by a noticeable decrease in IRD output in Cambodia. This would suggest that Britain was more concerned by security risks than democratic norms or international law.

To support British foreign policy in the region, national security planners used soft power including the planned introduction of a BBC Khmer service.⁷³ Despite this, Lon Nol's government was toppled by the Khmer Rouge in 1975 leading to mass atrocities.⁷⁴ Khmer Rouge cadres ruled over Cambodia through a system of forced labour, the elimination of unwanted elements, summary justice and a disregard for Khmer traditions.⁷⁵ The resulting genocide has been the subject of extensive scholarship. Therefore, this thesis does not engage with the genocide, rather it focuses on events in 1980s Cambodia. By the 1980s, the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia provided an opportunity for Britain to counter communist expansion through the UKMTAS supporting the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy.⁷⁶ Once the Vietnamese-backed government had collapsed, Britain supported the UN transitional government. DPT would suggest that democratic and international norms would have inhibited Britain's response to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. However, there were fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Cambodia which provided an opportunity to target one of the Soviet Union's closest allies. Although the state of Cambodia underwent numerous name changes, including the Khmer Republic and Democratic Kampuchea, for clarity it will be referred to as '*Cambodia*' throughout the thesis unless directly quoted. Similarly, '*Southeast Asia*' will be used throughout the thesis when referring to the region, unless the original 'South East Asia' is used in the original documents. Moreover, all modern-day spellings of cities and countries will be used unless directly quoted. Chapters 6 and 7 examine British covert action in Cambodia further.

i. **A Note on Methodology**

The research seeks to augment our knowledge of British covert action and its relationship with democratic norms and international law. The task is a daunting one. For example, several methodological issues have arisen whilst researching British intelligence

⁷³ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office & BBC (London: National Archives, 1972). Plans were dropped by 1975 – this will be examined further in chapter 6.

⁷⁴ ———, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* *Vide* David Chandler for further reading on the Cambodian Genocide

⁷⁶ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

operations as sensitivity shrouds the activities of intelligence gathering and covert action. This is reflected in the accessibility of archival materials. Several Freedom of Information Act requests were submitted to the FO, National Archives and Cabinet Office. Overall, twenty FOI requests were submitted to these departments with limited success. One success, however, came in January 2022 when the FO approved files previously held under the Public Records Act. The thesis, therefore, had unprecedented access to *Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia* (FO 1101/4) which had not previously been viewed by researchers. This enabled the research to expose new material allowing it to contribute to the debate on British intelligence activities during the Cold War.

The thesis is a primary research project of a qualitative nature and will draw upon multi-archival research. Research has been conducted through the National Archives in London, the University of Cambridge, the Diplomatic Oral History Programme, various newspaper archives and the personal archival material of politicians and diplomats. A further resource, provided by the FCDO, is the UK Treaties Online platform. This combination of archival material will allow the historian to assess Britain's intelligence activities and discern that DPT does not provide an explanation for its interventionist policies. This will aid our understanding of the relationship between covert action, democratic norms, and international law. Indeed, covert action is an under-theorised subject.⁷⁷ According to recent research on the success of covert action, however, there is a growing body of literature dedicated to researching the relationship between covert action and democratic norms.⁷⁸ A further methodological issue concerns the as the full narrative of their activities is still widely unknown. According to Paul Lashmar, Hanslope Park, the FO site near Milton Keynes, holds 2.9 million files pertaining to the IRD.⁷⁹ The implications of this are vast and limits the scope of the research.

j. **Conclusion**

Despite recent contributions from intelligence scholars, there is a lacuna in our understanding of British covert action and its relationship with DPT. The aim of the research is to demonstrate that DPT does not provide a framework for British foreign policy in its post-decolonised world. The thesis explores how perceptions of state trajectory and security

⁷⁷ Cormac, Walton, and Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs ". p.111

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.113

⁷⁹ Paul Lashmar, *Spies, Spin and the Fourth Estate: British Intelligence and the Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020). pp.118-119

concerns around communist activity outweighed obligations to international law and democratic norms assessing whether zonal foreign policy may provide a rationale for its actions in Indonesia and Cambodia. A further facet of the research is the inclusion of international law. For example, covert action in Cambodia occurred either side of the Helsinki Accords suggesting that the European centric nature of the conference reinforced the perception that legitimacy and hypocrisy costs were too high in Europe. Despite signing the accords, Britain still engaged in covert action and interfered in the internal affairs of Cambodia. One of the main contributions of the research, therefore, is to increase our understanding of British attitudes towards international law at key conferences including the 1975 Helsinki Accords.

As hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe increased due to democratic norms and international law treaties, zonal foreign policy became an increasingly important consideration. Asian-style and emerging democracies were targeted by Britain due to perceived security threats relating to communist expansion. This suggests that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy. Furthermore, the research will develop our understanding of the IRD and its role in Indonesia and pre-revolutionary Cambodia. This will contribute to the wider knowledge of Cold War history. Although human rights abuses occurred in both states following regime change the thesis does not engage in them as this is a British case study. It is worth noting, however, that the International People's Tribunal found British intelligence activities in Indonesia contributed to the mass killings and unlawful detention of suspected communists.⁸⁰

Through a diplomatic history, the thesis will demonstrate that outside of Europe, Britain contravened international law and democratic norms when it perceived its security was threatened by communism or perceived the state trajectory to be pivoting towards communism. The thesis is composed of thematic chapters with the following chapter providing a review of the key literature. The third chapter will explore the role of zonal foreign policy in British foreign policy and outline how international law conferences shifted Britain's approach to diplomacy. The following chapters will introduce research on Britain's covert activities in Indonesia and Cambodia demonstrating that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for Britain's Cold War foreign policy. The final research chapter will provide an assessment of Britain's covert operations in 1980s Cambodia.

⁸⁰ Klinken, "Genocide Finally Enters Public Discourse: The International People's Tribunal 1965."

II

Literature Review**a. Framing**

The aim of this chapter is to outline scholarly debate on several core themes including, British foreign policy, democratic peace theory (DPT), Asian-Style democracy, democratic norms, and international law. As outlined in the introduction the thesis will critique DPT through an exposition of archival material. A systematic review of secondary material will highlight where the thesis sits within the historiography of covert action and DPT. Although the research privileges Indonesia and Cambodia as case studies, Britain remains the central actor. The chapter does not consult broad histories of either country, therefore. The thesis will argue that when Britain perceived its security was threatened by communist activity in Southeast Asia, it used covert action to fulfil its foreign policy objectives despite its obligations to democratic norms and international law. The principle of non-intervention underpinned post-war international law. Readings on international law, therefore, will focus on this principle. Further scholarship centres around democracy in Asia.⁸¹ The thesis argues that universal democratic principles exist and that both Indonesia and Cambodia moved towards democratisation by the 1950s.

Zonal foreign policy is an under theorised concept which has not been the subject of scholarly debate. This does not preclude it from the literature review, however. The subject will be incorporated into readings on British foreign policy. This will be tied in with the East of Suez section which contends with British foreign policy in Southeast Asia during the Cold War. This line of enquiry raises questions about how London pursued its foreign policy objectives outside of its former colonies, known in this context as Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AATs). State trajectory is a key indicator in the rationale of national security planners. The thesis will argue that when national security planners perceived Indonesia and Cambodia to pose a security risk, they used covert action to fulfil policy objectives despite democratisation. Several case studies concerning American covert action and its relationship with democratic norms have been published.⁸² To date there has been scant

⁸¹ Clark D. Neher, "Asian Style Democracy," *Asian Survey* Vol.34, No.11(November 1994). Scholarship on Asian-style democracies is contentious.

⁸² Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace."

research conducted by diplomatic historians on British intelligence and its relationship with international law and democratic norms.

A further area where the thesis contributes to our understanding of covert action concerns British intelligence activities in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. To date, the subject has received limited academic attention. Britain's operations in Indonesia and Cambodia raise questions as to their compatibility with legal norms and possible obligations espoused at those very conferences. Through a diplomatic history of British foreign policy, the research will demonstrate that when Britain perceived its security was threatened by communism it engaged in intelligence activities. Although the scope of the research incorporates aspects of decolonisation, it is not the purpose of the thesis to engage in decolonisation debates. To do so would distract from the overarching aim of the thesis. It is worth noting the impact of decolonisation on the post-colonial world, however. Indeed, how intelligence and decolonisation interacted in the Cold War is a potential further area of research. What follows is a detailed exposition of secondary materials. The review begins with literature pertaining to British foreign policy and diplomatic histories before outlining debates on democratic norms and Asian-style democracies. The review will conclude with readings on the principle of non-intervention.

b. East of Suez

Britain's military withdrawal from the Far East has been the subject of scholarly debate. Although it is not the purpose of the thesis to ascertain whether there was a correlation between the withdrawal and a proliferation of covert action, it is worth noting the impact of the withdrawal on British foreign policy. One of the findings of the research suggests that national security planners attempted to maintain a global posture into the 1970s⁸³ countering the orthodox narrative. The orthodox narrative around British foreign policy frames the era as one of decline and managing expectations. Saki Dockrill, for example, published a paper on British foreign policy in the Far East in 2002.⁸⁴ Where other historians privileged the November 1967 devaluation of the pound as the trigger for the withdrawal, Dockrill suggested that political necessity also played a role.⁸⁵ According to review by Kevin Ruane,

⁸³ Information Research Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.," ed. Foreign Office (London: The National Archives, 1970).

⁸⁴ Kevin Ruane, "Reviewed Work(s): Britain's Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice between Europe and the World? by Saki Dockrill," *Journal of Cold War Studies* Vol.6, No.4(2004).

⁸⁵ Michael. F Hopkins, "Reviewed Work(s): Britain's Retreat from East of Suez by Saki Dockrill," *International Affairs 1944-* Vol. 79, No.1(January 2003).

Saki suggested that Britain replaced its military commitments east of Suez with diplomacy and military assistance schemes.⁸⁶ Britain, moreover, would not maintain its defence posture in the Far East on borrowed Allied or American finance.⁸⁷ There is, however, no suggestion that intelligence played a role in supplementing British foreign policy. Failing to acknowledge the role of intelligence in sustaining British foreign policy, fails to acknowledge an aspect of Britain's Cold War arsenal.

Jeffrey Pickering suggested that the withdrawal of Britain's mission East of Suez was not the result of a gradual policy shift, rather an abrupt change bought about by the Sterling Crisis and a change of personality inside the cabinet, notably Roy Jenkins.⁸⁸ Jenkins, a Europhile, was instrumental in the decision-making process behind Britain's withdrawal from the region. Pickering also suggested that the Labour government under Clement Atlee and Ernest Bevin supported the continuation of the British empire.⁸⁹ However, this viewpoint is not shared amongst other academics. Matthew Jones, for example, suggested that Britain's support of Malaysia, combined with its desire to maintain its 'special relationship' with Washington, shaped its foreign policy East of Suez.⁹⁰ Jones suggested that maintaining these relationships was more influential than the misplaced imperial sentiment of national security planners.⁹¹ This is supported by John Dumbrell, who researched Anglo-American relations during the 1960s. Dumbrell explored the supposed existence of deals struck between London and Washington to maintain Britain's military commitments east of Suez.⁹² According to the article, Washington would support the British economy if it continued to assist America's war effort in Vietnam and maintain its military commitments in the region.⁹³ On balance, it is likely that British foreign policy was shaped by combination of these factors. Research on British foreign policy, however, has been limited by the focus on Anglo-American relations and the personalities of the Labour government. What is missing from the historiography is a detailed discussion concerning security perception, intelligence, and the role of norms.

⁸⁶ Ruane, "Reviewed Work(s): Britain's Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice between Europe and the World? by Saki Dockrill."

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ David Childs, "Reviewed Work(s): Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez: The Politics of Retrenchment by Jeffrey Pickering," *A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* Vol.31. No.3(Autumn 1999).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Matthew Jones, "A Decision Delayed: Britain's Withdrawal from South East Asia Reconsidered, 1961-1968," *The English Historical Review* Vol.117, No.472(June 2000). p.571.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² John Dumbrell, "The Johnson Administration and the British Labour Government: Vietnam, the Pound and East of Suez," *Journal of American Studies*, no. Vol (August 1996).

⁹³ Ibid.

November 2004 saw Ross Christie's exposition of British foreign policy in the extra-European world from 1959-1968.⁹⁴ Christie sought to outline how Britain's withdrawal from the extra-European world was a cross-departmental process.⁹⁵ This was a departure from the previous held assumption that national security planners were guided by an outdated imperial sentiment drawing parallels with readings on East of Suez.⁹⁶ Chapter Five, dedicated to British foreign policy in the Far East, was of interest. Christie's focus on economic policies, however, made no room for discussion concerning intelligence activities in the region. A further contribution to the East of Suez debate was provided by Helen Parr in 2006. Parr argued that as Britain retreated from East of Suez, London's priorities gravitated towards Europe.⁹⁷ Parr's central argument revolved around the notion that Britain had 'lost an empire and not yet found a role.'⁹⁸ David Sanders, however, suggested that British foreign policy was of sound judgement based around a proactive defence posture.⁹⁹ IRD documents, moreover, suggest that Parr's argument does not account for intelligence operations. For example, the IRD, despite successive policy reviews, maintained its presence in every region.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, up until the 1970s, it undertook a systematic approach to projecting British influence throughout the world.¹⁰¹

Donald Weatherbee and Milton Osbourne provide expertise on the wider Southeast Asian region.¹⁰² Although Weatherbee does not attempt to bring anything new to the debate viz. theoretical insight, he managed to provide an insightful read into the inner workings of Southeast Asia.¹⁰³ For example, according to Mark Beeson at the School of Political Science and International Studies in Queensland Australia, there is a distinct absence of any 'substantive discussion of the region's underlying economic structures.'¹⁰⁴ Therefore, if the

⁹⁴ Ross Christie, "'Britain's Crisis of Confidence': How Whitehall Planned Britain's Retreat from the extra-European world, 1959-1968 (PhD)," *British Library Ethos* University of Stirling(November 2004).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Helen Parr, "Britain, America, East of Suez and the EEC: Finding a Role in British Foreign Policy, 1964-67," *Contemporary British History* Vol.20, No.3(2006).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Russell Bryant, "Review Work(s): Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: An Introduction to British Foreign Policy since 1945 by David Sanders," *North American Conference on British Studies* Vo.23, No.3(Winter 1991).

¹⁰⁰ Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.."

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Donald Weatherbee, *International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy*, First Edition ed. (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005). The publication does not privilege Britain's relationship with Southeast Asia either.

¹⁰³ Clark D. Neher, "Review: International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy by Donald E. Weatherbee," *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 65 No.2(May 2006). p.457 Weatherbee does not state he is writing an economic history.

¹⁰⁴ Beeson Mark, "Review: International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* Vol.27 No.3(December 2005).

reader is searching for new theories or paradigms in the context of Southeast Asian geopolitics, they may be best suited to searching alternative avenues. Of particular importance were the chapters dedicated to the study of international relations in Southeast Asia coupled with the region's human rights record and Cold War topics. This provided the thesis with a firm understating of the region's complex relationship with the Cold War and decolonisation.

2009 saw David McCourt contribute to the debate by arguing that Britain's role East of Suez was a rhetorical construction and had not been challenged by historians.¹⁰⁵ The publication sought to challenge the predominant theories of Britain's withdrawal from East of Suez. McCourt, whilst acknowledging the significance of economic and political factors, suggested that Britain's "role" has never been fully outlined.¹⁰⁶ By focusing on roles in international affairs, McCourt argued, the publication offered a more complete account of Britain's withdrawal from East of Suez. McCourt argued that Britain was dependent on its continued ability to define its own role and other important states to "cast" Britain into it.¹⁰⁷ McCourt suggested that once the Confrontation with Indonesia had ended, the argument for committing forces in the Far East lost much of its force.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, McCourt's analysis of British foreign policy pivots away from the traditional explanations of economic or political factors alone.¹⁰⁹ McCourt concluded that the importance of the term "role" was so strong that historians never questioned the actual definition. Saki Dockrill, who was noted by McCourt, as one notable exception to the trend.¹¹⁰ As the thesis will demonstrate, intelligence has often been overlooked in the study of British foreign policy. The thesis will shift away from the phenomenon of strategic overstretch towards an intelligence-based analysis of British foreign policy in Southeast Asia privileging security perceptions. The next section outlines scholarship on diplomatic histories.

c. Helsinki and Pivot to Europe

Diplomatic histories have been the subject of extensive debate as seen with debates on the Helsinki Accords. In 2014 Yoshitaka Okamoto explored Britain's relationship with

¹⁰⁵ David M. McCourt, "What was Britain's "East of Suez Role"? Reassessing the Withdrawal, 1964-1968," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* Vol. 20, No.3(2009). p.454

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p.457

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p.455

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p.455

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p.455

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p.458

European security under the Callaghan government. Okamoto's research covered a transitional period in British foreign policy following the promises of the Helsinki Accords and détente. Okamoto's clearly defined timeframe (1976-1979) spanned the Belgrade conference in 1977. Okamoto argued that throughout this timeframe, London prioritised its relationship with Washington and increased its contribution to NATO.¹¹¹ Within this framework Britain exploited inconsistencies in Jimmy Carter's foreign policy.¹¹² This would suggest that by the 1970s, Britain was pivoting towards Europe and North America. This is supported by IRD documents which discuss how North America and Western Europe had become increasingly important for British security.¹¹³ However, as IRD documents discuss, this did not come at the detriment of other regions including Southeast Asia.¹¹⁴

In 2013 Ki-Joon Hong set out to examine the unintended consequences of the Final Act.¹¹⁵ More specifically, Hong examined the role of 'path emergence', which he argued presented a 'conceptual apparatus to explain the emergent properties exhibited with a complex adaptive system.'¹¹⁶ This theory highlights four explanatory methods which serve as conceptual lynchpins for the case analysis of the CSCE. These methods provide a tool to analyse the unintended consequences of the Helsinki Accords, which Hong argued, contributed to the end of the Cold War. Hong suggested that the Accords had far reaching consequences despite initial doubt that the conference would reinforce the *status quo* in Europe.¹¹⁷ Concluding his article, Hong discussed the development of path emergence theories and how they can be used in future studies. Hong's observations are correct. The increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe combined with cultural norms established at Helsinki may have bought about the end of the Cold War. In the context of zonal foreign policy, these increased costs shaped British foreign policy as it sought to combat communist advances outside of Europe. Coupled with Okamoto's work, the publications strengthened our understanding of British foreign policy in the Cold War. Neither, however, addressed the role of the intelligence services in supporting national security planners. This is a gap the thesis will exploit.

¹¹¹ Yoshitaka Okamoto, "Britain, European Security and the Cold War 1976-9 (PhD)," *British Library Ethos* Queen Mary University, University of London(2014).

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.."

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ki-Joon Hong, "The Unintended Consequences of the Helsinki Final Act: A Path Emergence Theory Perspective," *International Political Science Review* Vol. 34, No.3(June 2013).

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Catherine Cosman's *Helsinki Review* outlined the provisions of the Accords and discussed the implications of human rights clauses. Although the human rights elements provided a blueprint for the future, Cosman claimed that the content of the Final Act would take years to implement.¹¹⁸ The Final Act, Cosman argued, promoted a general European political consciousness with the aim of the conference to undermine ideological and political blocs that had formed in the post-war era.¹¹⁹ In the context of international relations, therefore, this would suggest the extra-European world were not afforded the same rights. One of the overarching aims of the thesis is to provide a through exposition of diplomatic papers relating to the conference to ascertain British views on the matter.

Further research on Helsinki and wider CSCE was provided by Angela Romano in 2009. Romano traced the relationship between the Soviet Union and America in the build-up to the CSCE. More specifically, Romano examined how American foreign policy began to realign to mirror western European attitudes towards regional security.¹²⁰ This included the acknowledgment of the Soviet Union's role as a pillar of the international community.¹²¹ This provided Washington with extra flexibility to cope with the challenges of Vietnam and spiralling military expenditure. Nixon and Kissinger, moreover, accepted the CSCE to appease their more favourable European allies.¹²² According to Romano, Basket III on human rights issues became an instrument the West used to punish Soviet aggression. This extended to the non-European world.¹²³ This would suggest that although the conference was designed to maintain peace and security in Europe, there were concerns that Soviet activities outside of Europe could destabilise the international order.

Dominic McGoldrick's 1990 *Human Rights Development in the Helsinki Process* explored the impact of the Accords on human rights.¹²⁴ According to McGoldrick, Britain, along with other states, was instrumental in drafting the human rights elements of the Helsinki Accords.¹²⁵ Britain, moreover, was central to the human rights debate amongst CSCE members throughout the 1980s culminating in the 1990 Conference in the Human

¹¹⁸ Catherine Cosman, "The Helsinki Process," *Harvard International Review* Vol.8, No.2(December 1985).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Angela Romano, "Detente, Entente, or Linkage? The Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in U.S. Relations with the Soviet Union," *Diplomatic History* Vol.33, No.4(September 2009).

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Dominic McGoldrick, "Human Rights Developments in the Helsinki Process," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* Vol. 39, No.4(October 1990).

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Dimension of the CSCE held in Copenhagen.¹²⁶ McGoldrick's research would suggest that Britain was central to human rights pledges espoused by the CSCE. However, this does not account for its intelligence activities which arguably undermined human rights in Indonesia and Cambodia. Nor does it address the anti-pluralist nature of the CSCE, which as the research will demonstrate, did not extend to non-European states.¹²⁷

1982 saw the publication of *The Concept of Human Rights in International Law* by Anthony D'Amato. D'Amato's research suggested that many human rights laws have adopted customary international law status.¹²⁸ If true, then Britain would be obligated by customary international law to act in lawful manner towards all states regardless of geographic location. As previously stated, however, Britain did not extend certain provisions of the Helsinki Accords to non-European states. Intelligence activities, therefore, contravened customary international law whilst allowing Britain to maintain plausible deniability. According to D'Amato, law 'has an internal dynamism that promotes, if not requires, equality, its prescriptions, in nearly every legal system including the international, apply to all its addresses equally.'¹²⁹ Moreover, D'Amato argued that many human rights laws have become part of customary international law.¹³⁰ Although the Helsinki Accords were designed to bring peace and security to Europe, the conventions had a larger impact on international law.¹³¹ This would suggest Britain was bound by the Accords, meaning the interference in Cambodia's internal affairs was in violation of the conference. Examining secondary materials relating to Helsinki exposes a tendency for historians to focus on American attitudes towards the Accords and wider détente. Various other publications, moreover, focus specifically on Soviet perceptions.¹³² This leaves a lacuna in the narrative of British foreign policy and attitudes towards extra-European international law.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Letters from the Public. FCO 28/5979," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1983).

¹²⁸ Anthony D'Amato, "The Concept of Human Rights in International Law," *Columbia Law Review* Vol.82, No.6(October 1982).

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Sarah B Snyder, "'Jerry, Don't Go': Domestic Opposition to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act," *Journal of American Studies* Volume 44. No. 1(February 2010).

d. Democratic Norms

There has been a spate of recent academic works aimed at understanding the relationship between covert action and democratic norms. According to Michael Poznansky, DPT has been the subject of sustained scholarship for the past twenty years.¹³³ Democratic peace theorists posit that democratic states are less likely to engage in covert action against one another due to cultural norms.¹³⁴ The thesis posits that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy and its use of covert action in the mid to latter stages of the Cold War. The thesis will specifically critique selectorate theory. According to Poznansky, selectorate theory suggests that a democratic state would use covert action against another for two reasons. Firstly, if state A is substantially stronger than state B or secondly, if the chance of success is particularly high.¹³⁵ In Indonesia and Cambodia, the chance of success was not particularly high as both states were sensitive to foreign intervention, especially at the hands of a former colonial power. If Britain was caught interfering in the domestic affairs of either state, there was a high chance of escalation. Moreover, as this thesis will suggest, there are further reasons why a democratic state would use covert action against another revolving around perceptions of security and communist threats. Democratic peace theorists suggest that norms and shared values should reduce democratic countries propensity to engage in covert action.¹³⁶ Indeed, Bruce Russett lauded the role of institutional barriers and cultural norms to international stability.¹³⁷ This may be true, especially in the realm of European relations, but it does not engage with the use of intelligence apparatus to shape foreign policy developments. Moreover, Russett's work, published in 1993, was not privy to archival materials. Indeed, historians only became aware of the IRD's existence in the mid-1990s.¹³⁸ It is possible, therefore, that newer archival materials will allow the historian to critique DPT.

A 2021 study by Michael Poznansky explored why, in some circumstances, national security planners opt for overt action rather than covert.¹³⁹ Poznansky proposes that this

¹³³ Michael Poznansky and Matt.K Scroggs, "Ballots and Blackmail: Coercive Diplomacy and the Democratic Peace," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol.60(2016). p.739

¹³⁴ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace."

¹³⁵ Ibid. p.817

¹³⁶ Poznansky and Scroggs, "Ballots and Blackmail: Coercive Diplomacy and the Democratic Peace."

¹³⁷ Miroslav Nincic, "Reviewed Work: *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War* by Bruce M. Russett," *The American Political Science Review* Vol.88 No.4(December 1994).

¹³⁸ Christopher Andrew, "Intelligence and International Relations in the Early Cold War," *Cambridge University Press. Review of International Studies*. Vol.24, No. 3(July 1998).

¹³⁹ Michael Poznansky, "The Psychology of Overt and Covert Intervention," *Security Studies* Vol.30, No.3(July 2021). Poznansky uses two cases of American intervention in the Middle East and Latin America

decision will be affected by whether a state is attempting to overthrow a regime or prop one up.¹⁴⁰ Poznansky linked this to international relations theory of loss aversion. Poznansky posits that a state is more likely to use overt action to support a regime and covert action when deposing one.¹⁴¹ The thesis will support this assessment and Britain used covert action against Suharto and Sihanouk with both leaders being facing regime change. According to Cormac, Calder, and van PuyVelde, there has been extensive scholarship devoted to the relationship between covert action and democratic norms.¹⁴² A recent publication by Michael Poznansky titled *In the Shadow of International Law* and a previous title, *Feigning Compliance: Covert Action and International Law*, provided an American-centric focus on the relationship between covert action and international law.¹⁴³ This is an area where the thesis will differ from Poznansky's research through a British case study. As discussed by Poznansky, overt regime change has a higher degree of success.¹⁴⁴ Legitimising overt methods through international law, however, cannot always be achieved. According to Poznansky, this is when a state will engage in covert action.¹⁴⁵ A further area of contribution concerns right-leaning governments. Research by Poznansky suggested that research had not been conducted on covert action targeting right leaning governments.¹⁴⁶ In this case Sihanouk's Sangkum party, although socialist in name, it contained elements of conservatism and right-wing thinking. Research on British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia will aid our understanding of this phenomenon.

Research concerning DPT posits that democratic states will not engage in covert action against one another.¹⁴⁷ Poznansky's *Stasis or Decay*, however, suggested that if a state perceives another is in democratic decay, it will act against it to instigate regime change.¹⁴⁸ A state perceived to be in democratic stasis is usually perceived as stable, however, this does not always guarantee non-interference.¹⁴⁹ Poznansky's publication established that democratic states will use covert action against another based upon its perception of its trajectory but not why a state would derogate from its international law obligations as well. Britain was concerned by democratic decay in the sense that it could lead to communist

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Cormac, Walton, and Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs ". p.

¹⁴³ Michael Poznansky, "Feigning Compliance: Covert Action and International Law," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol.63, No.1(2019).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace." p.815

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

penetration in Indonesia and Cambodia. This would suggest that policymakers were predominantly concerned by states perceived to be pivoting towards communism. The theory posits that a democratic state may use covert action against another when two circumstances are met. Firstly, when the target is weaker than the challenger and secondly the ability to maintain plausible deniability high.¹⁵⁰ Although Indonesia and Cambodia were weaker democracies, supporting selectorate theory, there was not a high chance of success in either. Moreover, the more daring covert operations were at risk of being exposed. Britain was wary of audience and hypocrisy costs.

Poznansky outlined how a state will assess another state's trajectory to discern whether there is an indication of democratic decay.¹⁵¹ This suggests that a democratic state will use covert action against another democratic state if it perceives there is democratic decay.¹⁵² There is also an argument that a state would resort to using covert action to avoid audience costs.¹⁵³ In the case of Indonesia and Cambodia, however, there was no significant sign that either were in a state of democratic decay. Democratic decay, moreover, was not the sole reason for Britain engaging in covert action against either state. Perceptions of security was a factor in national security planning. A further critique of DPT was provided by Sebastian Rosato in 2003. Rosato claimed that DPT is based around imperial peace and restricted to the Americas and Europe.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, democracies are capable of quick military mobilisations.¹⁵⁵ This, according to Rosato, suggests that democracies are willing to bypass democratic norms when needed.¹⁵⁶ Rosato concluded that democracies can undertake decisive military action. In 1994, Christopher Layne published an article on the competing international relations theories of DPT and realism.¹⁵⁷ Layne suggested DPT is not a theory, rather it is a hypothesis that does not stand up to scrutiny.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, he suggested that some democratic peace theorists claim that if the critical mass of states are democratic, then the risk of conflict reduces.¹⁵⁹ In the context of this debate, the thesis will support the realist position as Britain engaged in covert activities against Indonesia and Cambodia despite their status as Asian-style democracies.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ ———, "Feigning Compliance: Covert Action and International Law."

¹⁵⁴ Sebastian Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory," *American Political Science Association* Vol.97, No.4(November 2003). p.599

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of Democratic Peace." p.5

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. p.5

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. p.6

Poznansky and Scroggs published an article in 2016 concerning coercive democracy and democratic peace.¹⁶⁰ *Ballots and Blackmail* argued that academics still know comparatively little about how democracies might coerce or use force against one another.¹⁶¹ Poznansky cited the Fashoda Crisis as an example of where DPT does not provide a framework for how states interact.¹⁶² According to their research, datasets studying militarised coercive threats, suggest that blackmail and coercion are less likely to occur between two democracies. However, this does not account for perceptions of security. This thesis suggests that threat perception outweighs democratic norms. *Feigning Compliance*, outlined why, in some circumstances, leaders use covert action to instigate regime change. Non-intervention, according to Poznansky, sits at an intersection of a formal agreement and a moral principle.¹⁶³ He identified the principle of non-intervention as the 'main determinant' of covert action regime change.¹⁶⁴ Poznansky is correct in claiming that there are credibility and hypocrisy costs associated with acting outside of legal exemptions.¹⁶⁵ In the case of Europe, these costs were considerably higher, especially with the codification of non-intervention in the Helsinki Accords.¹⁶⁶ Outside of Europe, these costs were less acute. This thesis will demonstrate that covert action was a more plausible method in these regions and suggest that zonal foreign policy played a role in national security planning.

Poznansky stated that American politicians publicly stated their opposition to communism.¹⁶⁷ Similarly, politicians in Britain publicly denounced the spread of communism.¹⁶⁸ Meanwhile, overt methods became politically risky. Poznansky's publication was tested against two case studies of American backed regime change during the Cold War.¹⁶⁹ In the case of Britain, it is not evident from archival files that Britain sought regime change in Cambodia. Its actions, however, did contribute to political instability. Poznansky argued that decision makers turned to covert action when there was a lack a legal exemption to the non-intervention principle.¹⁷⁰ Gaining authorisation from an internationally recognised body is important when preparing to intervene. Seeking legal exemptions,

¹⁶⁰ Poznansky and Scroggs, "Ballots and Blackmail: Coercive Diplomacy and the Democratic Peace."

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Poznansky, "Feigning Compliance: Covert Action and International Law." p.74

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. p.72

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. p.72

¹⁶⁶ Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act," OSCE.

¹⁶⁷ Poznansky, "Feigning Compliance: Covert Action and International Law." p.70

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p.70

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. p.72

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. p.72

however, is time consuming and can open a state up to unnecessary criticism. If international recognition is not granted, then a state can find itself in a predicament drawing comparisons with the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003.¹⁷¹ This poses the question of whether international law posed a barrier to covert action at all. In the case of Indonesia and Cambodia, Britain engaged in covert action despite democratic norms and international law. Poznansky's work is an American-centric study. Britain, therefore, provides a nuanced case study as Britain's military was not as capable as its American counterparts. Moreover, Britain was also in relative decline compared to America especially in economic terms.

Drawing comparisons with covert action, most scholarly attention granted to democratic norms is American centric. For example, David Forsythe's publication on covert action and democratic norms focused on American case studies.¹⁷² Britain provides a certain nuance to the research as a former colonial power with declining international power. British foreign policy in the mid to latter stages of the Cold War focused on maintaining close economic and diplomatic ties with its former colonies. Maintaining these ties had implications for Britain's security perceptions. There has been a lack of research into British covert action and its relationship with international law and democratic norms. Where America had greater geopolitical movement, Britain became increasingly reliant on covert action to achieve its foreign policy goals. A study of British covert action and its relationship with international law is where the thesis will contribute to our understanding of covert action. As this thesis demonstrates, DPT does not provide an adequate model for British foreign policy or covert action during the mid to latter stages of the Cold War.

e. **Asian-Style Democracy**

Alongside debates on democratic norms, contentious debates surround perceptions of Asian-style democracies. The thesis will argue that Indonesia and Cambodia both developed democratic institutions and benefitted from universal principles of democracy. Although some academics suggest that cultural differences preclude Asian-style democracies from being classed as true democracies, this thesis will argue that cultural differences do not inhibit a state's ability to democratise. This viewpoint is shared by numerous academics who have critiqued Asian-style democracies suggesting that they are far removed from western

¹⁷¹ Peter Kimm, "Continued Scrutiny of the Justification for Invading Iraq," *The Times* October 7th 2004.

¹⁷² David P. Forsythe, "Democracy, War, and Covert Action," *Journal of Peace Research* Vol.29, No.4(November 1992).

liberal democracies.¹⁷³ The central argument revolves around the claim that 'Asia is a different place from the West and therefore must construct political regimes that suit the unique conditions of its cultures.'¹⁷⁴ Another school of thought promoted the idea that Asian-style democracies were just as democratic as their western counterparts but styled in a different manner. This was, in part, due to their cultural and economic structures.¹⁷⁵ That the economic performance of Asian democracies became the focal point of the debate is interesting. Advocates of Asian-style democracies, such as Clark Neher, argue that the high-growth rates experienced in Asia were due to their style of democracy.¹⁷⁶

Outlining what defines a democratic state is a difficult task.¹⁷⁷ Democracy is often viewed through the lens of western liberal democracy, one which held communism at bay. As suggested by Anders Uhlin, however, there are basic democratic values of a universal nature.¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, recent academia has suggested that Indonesia was governed by a democratically elected government.¹⁷⁹ Asian-style democracy differs from its western counterpart in that it is traditionally based around respect for hierarchy and authority.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, it was commonplace for Southeast Asian democracies to be ruled by large personalities like Sukarno, Suharto, and Sihanouk.¹⁸¹ The personalist nature of Asian-style democracy is also a key distinction between the two systems.¹⁸² One of the main arguments concerning Asian-style democracies revolves around culture. According to the former Singaporean prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, Asian societies are unable to fully embrace democracy because of its family centred nature. However, Kim Dae Jung argued that Cultural norms do not determine a society's fate.¹⁸³ Moreover, according to the article, Asia has long heritage of democratic traditions. From the mid-1950s, attempts at democratisation had occurred in Indonesia and Cambodia.¹⁸⁴ Jung argued that Asian states have a greater capacity to engage in democratic practices than their western counterparts.¹⁸⁵ Culture was

¹⁷³ Kim Dae Jung, "Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia's Anti-Democratic Values," *Foreign Affairs* Vol.73, No.6(December 1994).

¹⁷⁴ Stephen J. Hood, "The Myth of Asian-Style Democracy," *Asian Survey* Vol.38, No.9(September 1998).

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Neher, "Asian Style Democracy." p.953

¹⁷⁷ Anders Uhlin, "Transnational Democratic Diffusion and Indonesian Democrat Discourses," *Third World Quarterly* Vol.14, No.3(1993). p.518

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. p.518

¹⁷⁹ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace."

¹⁸⁰ Neher, "Asian Style Democracy." p.953

¹⁸¹ Ibid. p.953

¹⁸² Ibid. p.954

¹⁸³ Jung, "Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia's Anti-Democratic Values."

¹⁸⁴ T.J.S George, "Democracy, South-East Asian Style," *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol.7 No.31-33(August 1972).

¹⁸⁵ Jung, "Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia's Anti-Democratic Values."

not a barrier to democratisation, rather it was the grip of authoritarian leaders which inhibited its progress.¹⁸⁶

Yusufu Turaki argued that democracy has assumed acceptance across all cultures and is a self-generating political norm.¹⁸⁷ The publication also asserted that democracy is an evolving political norm.¹⁸⁸ According to Turaki all human cultures aspire to democratise.¹⁸⁹ In the post-colonial setting, Indonesia, and Cambodia both developed democratic institutions and increased public participation in government affairs.¹⁹⁰ This would suggest that Britain would be less likely to engage in covert action against them. Democratic processes in Indonesia have been the subject of scholarly attention.¹⁹¹ For example, Amitav Acharya's 1997 publication outlined how Southeast Asian states transitioned towards democracy.¹⁹² A sign of democratisation in Southeast Asia, for example, concerns the smooth leadership transitions which occurred throughout Southeast Asia in the 1990s.¹⁹³

A facet of Asian-style democracies is high economic growth.¹⁹⁴ This has led to debates around Asian-style democracies focusing on economics over the rights of the individual. For example, Yung-Myung Kim explored the relationship between economic development and regime type in 1997.¹⁹⁵ Moreover, Kim studied how Confucian teachings underpin Asian-style democracies. Leaders of Asian-style democracies have critiqued western-style democracies. For example, one critique concerns moral decay. Moral decay occurs in western democracies when too much emphasis is placed on the role of the individual over the community.¹⁹⁶ Neher suggested that Asian-style democracies are built around a patron-client communitarianism relationship which stresses the value of the individual as a part of a group rather than the individual alone.¹⁹⁷ These relationships, he argued, form the foundations of Asian-style democracies.¹⁹⁸

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Yusufu Turaki, "Is Democracy the Ideal Universal Political System?," *Philosophia Reformata* Vol.66, No.1(2001).

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ From Our Correspondent, "Cambodia Elections in September," *The Times* March 16th 1955.

¹⁹¹ Amitav Acharya, "Southeast Asia's Democratic Moment," *Asian Survey* Vo.39, No.3(May-June 1999).

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Yung-Myung Kim, "'Asian-Style Democracy': A Critique from East Asia," *Asian Survey* Vol.37 No.12(December 1997).

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. p.1122

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Neher, "Asian Style Democracy."

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

The suggestion that part-authoritarian, part-democratic systems were superior to their western counterparts was analysed by Steven Hood in 1998.¹⁹⁹ According to Hood, some academics term Asian-style democracy as 'soft authoritarianism', throughout the 1990s.²⁰⁰ Hood suggested that advocates of Asian-style democracy focus too heavily on Confucianism, which is at its very core anti-democratic.²⁰¹ This then, does not account for the different democratic styles between the two regions. Hood suggested that Asian democracies followed a similar path to democratisation as their western counterparts with the caveat that there were unique Asian characteristics to the process.²⁰² Ultimately, Hood argued, there is only one true model of democracy, liberal democracy.²⁰³ All other models and variants are not full democracies. However, Hood does not account for universal principles of democracy, nor does he address the parliamentary elections and attempts to democratise Indonesia and Cambodia in the 1950s and 1960s. There was a belief amongst some Southeast Asian leaders that democratisation would inhibit economic growth.²⁰⁴ Indeed, advocates of Asian-style democracies suggest that the state prioritises the group over the individual.²⁰⁵ This, they argued, facilitated economic growth in East Asia.²⁰⁶ This standpoint suggests that Asian-style democracies are inherently different to their western counterparts.²⁰⁷ This thesis will argue that universal principles of democracy still underpinned Asian-style democracy, however. Western states' perceptions of democracy in Asia are, therefore, viewed through a lens of western-style democracy.

The thesis will argue that both Indonesia and Cambodia were emerging democracies. For example, by the mid-1950s Cambodia possessed a national assembly and held elections.²⁰⁸ Moreover, there are universal principles of democracy that underpin Asian-style democracies. Indeed, according to Roger Smith, Cambodia underwent a political revolution in the 1950s which aimed at establishing the country as an equal amongst nations.²⁰⁹ This involved elections and the direct involvement of Cambodian citizens in political life.²¹⁰ Britain's intervention in the internal affairs of both countries, therefore, demonstrates the limitations of DPT. Asian democracies, moreover, critiqued the nature of western liberal

¹⁹⁹ Hood, "The Myth of Asian-Style Democracy." p.853

²⁰⁰ Ibid. p.854

²⁰¹ Ibid. p.854

²⁰² Ibid. p.

²⁰³ Ibid. p.

²⁰⁴ Acharya, "Southeast Asia's Democratic Moment."

²⁰⁵ Kim, ""Asian-Style Democracy": A Critique from East Asia."

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Smith, "Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia."

²⁰⁹ Ibid. P.362

²¹⁰ Ibid.

democracy.²¹¹ For example, some academics suggested the high growth rates witnessed in Asia were achieved through their system of democracy.²¹² Moreover, the monolithic nature of some Asian political parties such as the *Partai Nasional Indonesia* and *Golkar* distorts western perceptions of democracy. Dominant political parties are commonplace in Southeast Asia. They often are factionalised, and individuals compete for power within the party.²¹³ The research suggests that both Indonesia and Cambodia began to democratise in the post-war era. Universal principles of democracy underpinned this momentum towards democratisation. The thesis will argue that Asian-style democracies were democratic in nature and that DPT does not provide a framework for British foreign policy in Indonesia and Cambodia during the Cold War. The next section outlines debates on covert action.

f. Covert Action in Southeast Asia

Covert action has been the subject of excellent scholarship which is outlined in the literature review. One of the main contributions to our understanding of covert action and democratic norms in the British-centric nature of the research. British intelligence operations during the Cold War have received less attention than its American counterparts. Therefore, a case study of British covert action and its relationship with democratic norms is novel. Often British intelligence activities have been viewed through a wider NATO or Anglo-American lens. The term 'covert action', for example, is synonymous with American intelligence activities during the Cold War.²¹⁴ Building on the work of Rory Cormac, Richard Aldrich, Dan Lomas, and other intelligence historians the thesis seeks to remedy this neglect. The thesis will specifically examine British covert action in Southeast Asia and its relationship with international law obligations between 1960 and 1990.

The thesis will contribute to our understanding of British covert action and its relationship with DPT. Previous research on intelligence has often been presented in a linear fashion by providing broad histories of an institution or event. For example, Rory Cormac published *Disrupt and Deny* in 2018. Cormac outlined British covert action from the end of the Second World War to the Arab Spring in 2011. Broader histories of covert action, provided by Cormac have been followed by research on the relationship between covert action and the Royal Family. It is important, however, to narrow the scope of the research to Indonesia and

²¹¹ Neher, "Asian Style Democracy." p.955

²¹² Ibid. p.955

²¹³ Ibid. p.956

²¹⁴ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.4.

Cambodia. An area, to date, which has received limited attention. For example, Cormac did not covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. Covert action in 1980s Cambodia, moreover, was confined to a few pages. Cormac outlined how Britain used the audible channels of diplomacy and trade deals to pursue its foreign policy, but also utilised quieter, covert methods.²¹⁵ Covert action revolved around plausible deniability.²¹⁶ Cormac, moreover, addressed British covert action in Southeast Asia, specifically in Indonesia, Malaya, and Cambodia. He outlined the unattributable propaganda disseminated in Indonesia and military training provided to pro-Sihanoukist factions in Cambodia.²¹⁷ Likewise, covert action in Indonesia has received less academic attention than

Covert action, according to Cormac, was inherently controversial, much mythologised and a magnet for conspiracy theories.²¹⁸ For London, however, it became an increasingly potent tool throughout the Cold War. Cormac utilised a mixture of archival materials from the National Archives, the Eisenhower Archives and Churchill College, Cambridge. Similarly, this thesis has just a range of material from archives across Britain. Cormac concluded his publication by attempting to distil British covert action. Cormac viewed British covert action as a defensive mechanism in an increasingly volatile world.²¹⁹ This is an accurate assessment. Where the thesis differs from Cormac is that the research studies the relationship between covert action and Britain's obligations to international law and democratic norms. Moreover, the research will outline covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia and add weight to research on covert action in 1980s Cambodia. Recent historiography on covert action has attempted to define success. Defining success is an unenviable task. For example, under-theorisation of covert action, according to Cormac, poses a 'significant intellectual and policy problem.'²²⁰

Further research on British intelligence was compiled by former investigative journalist, Paul Lashmar, who published *Spies, Spin, and the Fourth Estate* in 2020. Lashmar sought to examine the relationship between the media and intelligence identifying a political contract that exists between the public and the intelligence services.²²¹ In return for a security, the

²¹⁵ Ibid. p.1

²¹⁶ Ibid. p.5

²¹⁷ Ibid. p.136

²¹⁸ Ibid. p.2

²¹⁹ Ibid. p. Britain has long enjoyed a loud voice on the international stage as a colonial and post-colonial power.

²²⁰ Cormac, Walton, and Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs ". p.112

²²¹ Lashmar, *Spies, Spin and the Fourth Estate: British Intelligence and the Media*. p.2

public surrender certain rights.²²² According to Lashmar, although the relationship has been long-standing, there had not been a systematic analysis. The first two chapters outlined the world of British intelligence and its origins. Lashmar set out to explore the personal relationships between journalists and intelligence officers and how journalists have kept the intelligence community honest. Lashmar deduced that the relationship between the media and intelligence had always been intertwined, sometimes in an intimate but often confrontational manner.²²³ In 2008 Christopher Moran published *Never to be Disclosed: Government Secrecy in Britain 1945-1975*. The publication argued that British censorship of government material was often defensible and legitimate in the context of national security.²²⁴ Moran discussed the roles of investigative journalists in exposing security matters which became increasingly acute during the 1960s and 1970s.²²⁵ The research, therefore, overlaps with Lashmar. Moran's research, moreover, shares a similar temporal scope to the thesis. Lashmar's and Moran's research provided the thesis with an example of how intelligence history can be multifaceted, reaffirming the validity of this research.

Lashmar has also written extensively on covert action in Indonesia having recorded an interview with Norman Reddaway in 1998.²²⁶ Having published two articles in 2021 on British covert action in Indonesia, he adds considerable weight to the study of intelligence history and investigative journalism. Lashmar's publication suggested that the IRD was responsible for crushing the *Konfrontasi* within six months and with limited financial strain.²²⁷ Where this thesis differs is in its ability to gauge the success of an intelligence operation. Although Lashmar revealed that Ed Wynne and Norman Reddaway claimed their operation was successful²²⁸, it does not account for other factors. This poses several challenges as historians find it harder to discern direct causality between an intelligence operation and the outcome for myriad reasons.

In line with Lashmar's research, the thesis consulted John Roosa's *Pretext for Mass Murder and Buried Histories: the anti-communist massacres of 1965-1966 in Indonesia*. The

²²² Ibid. p.2

²²³ Ibid. p.7

²²⁴ Christopher Moran, "Never To Be Disclosed: Government Secrecy in Britain 1945-1975 (PhD)," *British Library Ethos* University of Warwick(2008).

²²⁵ Ibid. p.7

²²⁶ Paul Lashmar and James Oliver, "How we destroyed Sukarno," *Independent* December 1st 1998.

²²⁷ Paul Lashmar, Nicholas Gilby, and James Oliver, "Revealed: how UK spies incited mass murder of Indonesia's communists," *The Guardian* 17th October 2021. Also see Lashmar and Oliver, "How we destroyed Sukarno."

²²⁸ Lashmar, Gilby, and Oliver, "Slaughter in Indonesia: Britain's secret propaganda war."

works provide new historiography of the Mass Killings in Indonesia.²²⁹ *Pretext for Mass Murder* begins by characterising the historiography of the Mass Killings as one of complexity.²³⁰ Central to the work is Roosa's new eye witness testimonies from those present at the Mass Killings.²³¹ 'Roosa's construction of his evidence is convincing' adding 'new complexity to the historiography of the New Order.'²³² Roosa described how the Mass Killings had been repackaged by Suharto as a national myth to place him as a national hero. Roosa dismantles this narrative through his eye-witness testimonies.

Although Britain and foreign intervention is not central to the narrative of the work there is some evidence provided to suggest there was intervention. Britain is only mentioned ten times throughout the work and is mainly consigned to Roosa's sixth chapter on the Indonesian Army in the context of the *Konfrontasi* and a cursory mention of colonial activity in Southeast Asia in the introduction.²³³ This work, therefore, does not add anything new to British intelligence activities in Indonesia. However, it does reshape our understanding of Suharto and the Mass Killings in Indonesia.

In 1997, Philip Davies published an extensive history of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) titled *Organisational Development of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service 1909-1979*.²³⁴ Davies argued SIS was built around 'pull architecture' where their activities were determined by the consumer.²³⁵ Of relevance was chapter seven (1956-1979) titled, *Reform, Redesign and Retrenchment*, which outlined a turbulent period for SIS as the organisation adjusted to a changing world.²³⁶ Following the independence of Singapore, for example, the Far East Controller was relieved of his command.²³⁷ Davies' research contributed to our understanding of the composition of SIS and activities in Southeast Asia. 2016 saw a further contribution to intelligence history by Nikita Shah. Shah's work titled '*Secret Towns*'

²²⁹ Trevor Preston, "Reviewed Work(s): Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30th Movement and Suharto's Coup d'Etat in Indonesia by John Roosa," *Center for Southeast Asian Studies* Vol.19, No.2(2008). Vide Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: the September 30th Movement and Suharto's coup d'état in Indonesia*.

²³⁰ Preston, "Reviewed Work(s): Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30th Movement and Suharto's Coup d'Etat in Indonesia by John Roosa."

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Gerry van Klinken, "Reviewed Work: Pretext for Mass Murder; The September 30th Movement and Suharto's coup d'état in Indonesia by John Rossa," *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land en Volkenkunde* Vol.163. No.1(2007). P.184

²³³ Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: the September 30th Movement and Suharto's coup d'état in Indonesia*. See also Roland Challis, *Shadow of a Revolution* (2001).

²³⁴ Philip Davies, "Organisational Development of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service 1909-1979. (PhD)," *British Library Ethos* University of Reading(1997).

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

challenged the conventional understanding of British intelligence operations in Asia during the Cold War.²³⁸ A section of Shah's research is dedicated to individual case studies of British intelligence activities in Asia highlighting the relatively unknown history of SIS.²³⁹ This observation overlaps with Cormac. Shah's focus on Anglo-American relations in intelligence sharing in Indonesia is where the research diverges, however. As such, Shah's bibliography features myriad files from American archives.²⁴⁰ This thesis, however, provides an Anglo-centric examination of covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia.

A further contribution came from Christopher Andrew in 1998 with research pertaining to intelligence and international relations in the early Cold War.²⁴¹ Although published in 1998, Andrew observed that intelligence history was underdeveloped.²⁴² He claimed, therefore, his work would change our understanding of the early Cold War positing that intelligence was the missing dimension of diplomatic history.²⁴³ Furthermore, there had been a failure to understand Signals Intelligence and an over reliance on Human Intelligence in the early Cold War era.²⁴⁴ With the release of the VENONA files in 1995, Andrew suggested that a renewed effort to understand Cold War intelligence was necessary.²⁴⁵ As the thesis attempts to provide a diplomatic history of Britain's Cold War activities in relation to international law, this is an area where the research will contribute to our understanding of the era. With the release of new archival material from the mid and late Cold War, moreover, the thesis will provide a further contribution to diplomatic history.

Michael Hopkins' *Continuing Debate and New Approaches in Cold War History* had three aims.²⁴⁶ Firstly, to locate the main historiographical debates in the Cold War. Secondly, to analyse the growing body of literature. Finally, to look beyond geographical issues to explore various aspects of espionage and intelligence.²⁴⁷ Hopkins, although noting the growing literature on intelligence, argued that research on the Soviet Union and China was thin.²⁴⁸

²³⁸ Nikita Shah, "'Secret Towns': British Intelligence in Asia during the Cold War (PhD)," *British Library Ethos* University of Warwick(2016).

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Andrew, "Intelligence and International Relations in the Early Cold War."

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid. VENONA was a counter intelligence programme run by the US Army Signal Intelligence Service to decrypt Soviet communications.

²⁴⁶ Micheal Hopkins, "Continuing Debate and New Approaches in Cold War History," *The Historical Journal*, Cambridge University Press Vol. 50 No. 4(December 2007).

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

Similarly, Britain had received less academic attention.²⁴⁹ Through a diplomatic history of Britain's Cold War intelligence activities, the thesis aims to remedy this neglect.

Anglo-American cooperation in intelligence operations against Indonesia in the 1960s has been the subject of historical attention. Richard Aldrich shed light on Anglo-American intelligence cooperation between 1941 and 1963.²⁵⁰ According to a review by Jerome Elie, Aldrich sought to outline elements of conflict between the two allies rather than portray an illusory compatible image.²⁵¹ Aldrich stressed that intelligence practices were driven by inter-departmental competition rather than being controlled by diplomatic services.²⁵² Aldrich's research overlaps with the contribution of Thomas Maguire who explored British and American intelligence and propaganda in early Cold War Southeast Asia.²⁵³ Maguire argued that cooperation in intelligence and propaganda operations was uncharted.²⁵⁴ 1998 saw a further publication by Aldrich on Anglo-American intelligence cooperation during the Cold War. Aldrich suggested the idea of a 'western intelligence community' was flawed as countries sought to protect any advantages.²⁵⁵ This led to the establishment of parallel organisations and increased cooperation. Although Britain maintained links with its American counterparts, there are examples of national security planners acting unilaterally.

In 2014, Christopher Murphy and Daniel Lomas assessed the viability of using Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to further our understanding of British intelligence.²⁵⁶ The pair outlined how the security services are not bound by the same laws as other government departments.²⁵⁷ By filing FOI requests, the publication argued, it would allow intelligence historians to move beyond the material released by the security services.²⁵⁸ Concluding their research, Murphy and Lomas stated that FOI requests can be beneficial to furthering our understanding of British intelligence.²⁵⁹ A further contribution to intelligence history was

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Jerome Elie, "Intelligence and the Cold War. (Review of *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and the Cold War Secret Intelligence* by Richard Aldrich)," *The SAIS Review of International Affairs* Vol.24 No.1(Winter-Spring 2004).

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Joseph Thomas Maguire, "Britain and American Intelligence and Anti-Communist Propaganda in Early Cold War Southeast Asia (PhD)," *British Library Ethos. University of Cambridge* PhD.395530(2016).

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Richard J. Aldrich, "British Intelligence and the Anglo-American 'Special Relationship' during the Cold War," *Review of International Studies* Vol.24, No.3(July 1998).

²⁵⁶ Christopher Murphy and Daniel Lomas, "Return to Neverland? Freedom of Information and the History of British intelligence," *The Historical Journal* Vol. 57, No.1(March 2014).

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

provided by Lomas in 2021 with a study on the relationship between the Labour Party and intelligence (1979-1994). Lomas set out to explain how Labour pushed for reform and accountability of British intelligence.²⁶⁰ During Labour's near twenty years in opposition, it broke the long-held bipartisan consensus that debates concerning intelligence were dangerous.

In response to growing concerns about the behaviour of security services, Labour performed a *volte-face* with the party pledging to establish a new Security Act.²⁶¹ According to Lomas, the Act would define the powers and remit of the security services whilst introducing parliamentary accountability.²⁶² Lomas' research transcended British covert operations in Cambodia in the 1980s. Similar concerns over covert action did not materialise under Thatcher. According to Cormac, Thatcher was an advocate of covert action.²⁶³ Although the readings have provided the thesis with a foundation, the thesis required a narrower vision. That vision explores the relationship between democratic norms and covert action in Southeast Asia. The next section outlines debates on the principle of non-intervention.

g. Principle of Non-Intervention

Although there has been research on the effectiveness of the CSCE, little attention has been paid to British aims throughout the conference. This is where the thesis contributes to our understanding of British foreign policy and its relationship with international law. The research will examine archival material to draw inferences about Britain's obligations to international law through preparatory committee (PrepCom) material. Although previous research has addressed British foreign policy during the Cold War and there is a growing weight of intelligence literature, there has been no study of its relationship with international law or how Britain perceived its obligations to international law and pluralism.

It is worth noting that although the thesis incorporates aspects of international law, the research does not provide an analysis of the legal implications of international law. Moreover, although the state is not a unitary actor when engaged in international law conferences, it acts as one. To maintain a narrow scope, the thesis is principally concerned with the principle of non-intervention. The principle of non-intervention was a pillar of post-

²⁶⁰ Daniel Lomas, "Party Politics and Intelligence: the Labour Party, British Intelligence and Oversight, 1979-1994," *Intelligence and National Security* Vol.36, No.3(2021).

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.237.

war international law. Debates on the principle have intensified in recent years.²⁶⁴ This has mainly derived from debates around the 'traditional' Westphalian notion of state sovereignty which has been challenged in recent years.²⁶⁵ Contingent sovereignty, for example, asserts that states can intervene militarily on humanitarian grounds critiquing the traditional viewpoint. Stuart Elden recognised the profound effect contingent sovereignty had on the territorial integrity of states.²⁶⁶ In terms of this research, contingent sovereignty might explain why Vietnam violated Cambodian sovereignty in 1978, which ended the genocide. Neither traditional nor contingent explanations of state sovereignty account for why Britain interfered in the internal affairs of Indonesia or Cambodia, however. For example, Britain pivoted to soft power in Indonesia despite human rights violations. Similarly, Britain contravened the principle of non-intervention in Cambodia following the Vietnamese invasion on security grounds.

A further facet of non-intervention concerns how it is framed. In 2013 Christian Reus-Smit published an article titled *The Concept of Intervention*.²⁶⁷ Research into non-intervention was predominantly viewed through a 'sovereignty frame'.²⁶⁸ Reus-Smit claimed that the sovereignty frame has been defined by the state centric nature of intervention.²⁶⁹ In this instance, the thesis will be using a sovereignty frame as all parties involved were sovereign states. Included amongst the ten declarations on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States were 'sovereign equality' and 'non-intervention in the internal affairs of another state'.²⁷⁰ Due to the European centric nature of the Accords, it reaffirmed the higher legitimacy and hypocrisy costs associated with covert action. This links with discussions around zonal foreign policy which is outlined in Chapter Three. Britain long championed itself as a pioneer and enforcer of international law.²⁷¹ Covert action, however, is viewed as subversive, underhand and contravenes the principle of non-intervention. This created credibility costs on national security planners who strove to maintain the perception that Britain was upholding democratic norms and international law. The thesis will argue that international law conferences had no profound effect on covert action.

²⁶⁴ Christian Reus-Smit, "The Concept of Intervention," *Special Issue: Intervention and the Ordering of the Modern World*. Cambridge University Press Vol.39, No.5(December 2013).

²⁶⁵ Luke Glanville, "The Myth of "Traditional" Sovereignty," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol.57, No.1(March 2013).

²⁶⁶ Stuart Elden, "Contingent Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and the Sanctity of Borders," *The SAIS Review of International Affairs* Vol.26, No.1(Winter-Spring 2006).

²⁶⁷ Reus-Smit, "The Concept of Intervention."

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ (OSCE), "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act."

²⁷¹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "The International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 22 April - 13 May 1968. Research and Analysis. FCO 160/311/7," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1992). Britain's aims and proposals at Tehran are outlined in Chapter 5.

h. Pluralism

International relations (IR) theories have played a role in the development of the thesis, in particular themes of anti-pluralism and neorealism. The rise of nationalism in the twentieth century led certain states to re-evaluate the pluralist nature of the international system in favour of a non-pluralist movement based around the *civilised* European states.²⁷² Liberal pluralist movements in international law operated in stark contrast to anti-pluralist movements. The liberal pluralist movement promoted the practice of an inclusive international system whereas the anti-pluralist scholars believed that the international community should be built up of states with ideological similarities.²⁷³ Anti-pluralist movements promote the idea the international system is anarchic, defined by states competing against one another. When conventional options began to become politically or financially unviable, Britain engaged in covert action to achieve its foreign policy goals.

Increased scholarship on the relationship between international politics and international law occurred in the early 2000s.²⁷⁴ In 2004 Gerry Simpson published *Great Powers and Outlaw States*. Simpson made an important contribution to our understanding of the international order since 1815 by outlining the competing systems of sovereign equality/legalised hegemony and anti-pluralism.²⁷⁵ Simpson's discussions are directly attributable to the research. For example, Helsinki was designed to promote peace and security in Europe and was the culmination of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). However, the European-centric conference did not promote peace and security in other regions. This would suggest that states outside of Europe were not afforded sovereign equality or the same rights as their European counterparts. Anti-pluralist movement would suggest that those outside of the Accords were not granted the same treatment as those who were party to the declaration. Through an exposition of archival materials, it is possible to discern that Britain pursued an anti-pluralist international system as its intelligence activities contravened international law. Moreover, it did not invite

²⁷² Stephen Allen, *International Law*, Fourth ed. (Harlow: Pearson, 2019). p.6

²⁷³ Gerry Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order*, First Edition ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). p.257

²⁷⁴ Alex. J Bellamy, "International Law and Organisation. Book Review: *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order* by Gerry Simpson," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* Vo.80, No.5(2004).

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

countries from outside of Europe to the conference²⁷⁶ highlighting the European-centric nature of the conference.

In chapter nine, Simpson noted a pivot towards anti-pluralism and outlined two emerging regimes, the *criminal law regime*, and the *democratic governance regime*. Both regimes undermined the system of equal sovereigns.²⁷⁷ Simpson also discussed the notion of state 'crime'. The traditional view of international law was that inter-state relations were regulated by private law. Therefore, the idea of a state 'crime' is anomalous as there was no judicial body to adjudicate and no enforcement body capable of upholding penal sanctions.²⁷⁸ Simpson's observations are correct. As this thesis will demonstrate, when Britain perceived its national security was at risk, it prescribed to an anti-pluralist international system. This is epitomised by London's attitudes towards international law and use of covert action against democratically elected states. Although espousing the virtues of political pluralism, it did not consult non-European States.²⁷⁹ This links directly with the notion of zonal foreign policy and demarcation lines in the consciousness of national security planners. Moreover, national security planners were concerned that a non-European presence at the Accords would prove inimical to British foreign policy.²⁸⁰ For example, the research would suggest that covert action is akin to neo-realism and that international law shares similarities with neoliberalism. Academics who champion neoliberalism posit that cooperation between states through international systems is possible as every state benefits.²⁸¹ International systems such as the UN are examples of such organisations. In the context of covert action, however, certain states are not afforded the same rights as others. This requires further attention and is worthy of further research.

The IR theories of realism and liberalism are contrasted in their approaches to the international order. Kenneth Waltz provided an outline for neorealism critiquing classical realism citing that it lacked structure. Classical realism, therefore, was considered

²⁷⁶ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Letters from the Public. FCO 28/5979."

²⁷⁷ Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order*. p.254

²⁷⁸ Geoffrey Robertson, *Crimes Against Humanity*, Third Edition ed. (England: Clays Ltd, 2006). p.94

²⁷⁹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Proposals regarding the rule of law. FCO 28/10225," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1990).

²⁸⁰ ———, "National Laws and International Obligations of Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) Countries. FCO 28/8790," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1988).

²⁸¹ Riley Quinn, *An Analysis of Kenneth Waltz's Theory of International Relations*, First Edition ed. (London: Macat International Ltd, 2017).

reductionist. To atone for this, Waltz proposed a structural theory, neo-realism.²⁸² Waltz posited that leaders are not the central actors in the international system. Moreover, Waltz critiqued the IR theory of classical realism, suggesting that it was too simplistic, otherwise known as reductionism. Neorealism suggests that states are the central actors in the international system and seek power to ensure self-preservation.²⁸³ Waltz suggested that nation states are the same in their approach to securing themselves against external threat. However, some states have larger, better equipped armies, which can project influence and defend against hostile events. Waltz proposed that the international system is built on anarchy because states are unequal in size and natural resources.²⁸⁴ States, therefore, will compete for these resources with those not providing sufficient resources failing.²⁸⁵ In terms of covert action, the interference in the internal affairs of another state would suggest that neorealism was a feature of British Cold War strategy. A positivist approach to IR involves a nature-led theoretical model that scholars use to interpret real world events. Waltz, for example, attempted to derive laws of international politics. Meanwhile, he argued that concepts such as anarchy are observable.²⁸⁶ As the Cold War concluded, it became apparent that neo-realism was an outdated IR model. As the century turned, however, it was re-established as a potent force.²⁸⁷

Building on the work of Walt and Waltz, Mearsheimer published *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.²⁸⁸ Mearsheimer proposed the theory of 'offensive realism' which pertains to a state's offensive capability.²⁸⁹ According to Mearsheimer, states will maximise their power relative to its competitor rather than simply obtain enough power to maintain preponderance. Defensive realism, a structural theory proposed by Waltz, would suggest that the international system is based around states pursuing moderate policies to ensure national security.²⁹⁰ Similarly, the thesis will explore notions of realism. A further IR theory, hegemonic stability theory, first proposed by Robert Keohane, was based on neoliberalism but limited to economic modelling.²⁹¹ It is not, therefore, fit for purpose for the thesis. Robert Kohane published *After Hegemony* in 1984. Alongside realism and liberalism, the thesis will consider the pluralist and anti-pluralist movements of the twentieth century. The international

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Robert Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol.32, No.4(December 1988).

pluralist movement espoused the virtues of inclusivity in the international system whereas anti-pluralism is selective. In the context of the 1975 Helsinki Conference, Britain continued to interfere in the internal affairs of other states. This suggests that countries outside of Europe were not afforded the same rights as other states. Anti-pluralist values, therefore, were a facet of British foreign policy. The chapter has outlined how international law, covert action, and IR theories interrelate.

i. Conclusion

The chapter has outlined contemporary debates on DPT, Asian-style democracy, non-intervention, and covert action. A thorough exposition of secondary material reveals a lacuna in our knowledge of British foreign policy and covert action. The American-centric nature of previous research has also left a gap in our understanding of how a declining power may use covert action to fulfil its foreign policy objectives. Moreover, this links with the concept of zonal foreign policy. This thesis will demonstrate that security concerns surrounding a state's trajectory outweighed Britain's obligations to international law and democratic norms. Competing theories on how the international system operates formed the foundations of the research. This includes DPT and pluralist and anti-pluralist movements.

Previous academic attention has been directed toward broad histories of covert action. This has left the historiography bereft of valuable insight into regional complexities. For instance, covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia has not been examined. Moreover, no attempt has been made to study the relationship between intelligence and international law. This is an area where diplomatic historians can contribute to intelligence history. A diplomatic inquiry of Britain's relationship with international law, therefore, is necessary. This will be achieved through an analysis of archival material to assess Britain's obligations to and contraventions of international law through two case studies of mass atrocities in Southeast Asia. Over the next chapters, the thesis will outline Britain's international law obligations and covert activities in Southeast Asia. Previous research on the CSCE and Helsinki Accords has been dominated by Soviet-American relations, often overlooking British attitudes towards the conference. By researching the relationship between international law and intelligence, the thesis contributes to our understanding of British foreign policy in the Cold War. Moreover, none of the readings address how Britain shaped developments in states which threatened its former colonies.

The aim of the thesis is to critique DPT through a case study of British foreign policy. The thesis is principally concerned by selectorate theory and will argue that Indonesia and Cambodia were democratising. This suggests that democratic states did engage in covert action against other elected governments. Moreover, the research will demonstrate that security perception outweighed obligations to international law and democratic norms. This is where the thesis contributes to the wider historiography of intelligence history and international law. The next chapter will address this by introducing the concept of zonal foreign policy and outlining covert action in Southeast Asia.

Chapter III

Zonal Foreign Policy

British Covert Action in Southeast Asia

a. Framing

So far, the thesis has addressed how national security planner's perceptions of state trajectory, specifically towards communism, emboldened Britain to engage in covert action against emerging democracies. Where the thesis diverges from previous scholarship on democratic peace theory (DPT), is the inclusion of international law and democratic norms. It was inevitable London found the post-war period one of acute strain. Undeterred, national security planners embarked on a policy of providing an alternative to the superpower rivalry acting as a 'third force' built around the Commonwealth.²⁹² It was clear by the 1950s, however, that British power was in decline. Coupled with new international norms, such as the principle of non-intervention, it left London with little room for geopolitical manoeuvring. To mask the decline and to maintain its disproportionate power, London engaged in covert action to achieve its foreign policy goals in emerging and Asian-style democracies. Here, the thesis will introduce the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy and its relationship with covert action. Zonal foreign policy concerns demarcation lines and provides an explanation for why Britain engaged in covert action in countries it did not colonise. Demarcations exist in the consciousness of national security planners and are displayed in informal or formal dialogue with allies.

In the Cold War context, zonal foreign policy manifests itself as a repercussion of decolonisation. Former colonies have tended to maintain close relations with the imperial power that colonised it. The retention of these relations was a policy objective for Britain. However, this does not account for how Britain shaped developments in states that it did not colonise. This chapter is principally concerned by the distinctions the London government made between Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AATs) and former colonies. As a former British colony, Malaysia is central to the narrative of Chapter 3. The research will argue that perceptions of security underpinned this decision-making process with AATs assuming temporary importance. When the perceived threat subsided, Britain pivoted to soft power

²⁹² John Darwin, "Britain and Decolonisation," (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988). pp.127-128

regardless of whether the state was more authoritarian diminishing the role of DPT. The chapter will include a discussion concerning Britain's 'behaviour' viz. democratic norms. This includes the predispositions of national security planners. Barbara Farnham argued that democratic norms affect the predispositions of national security planners.²⁹³ The threat perception of national security planners revolved around the notion that communist advances were inimical to British interests. A pivot towards communism would, therefore, trigger a response through covert action.

This chapter has two aims. Firstly, the chapter will add further weight to research scrutinising DPT through a British case study. Britain's non-compliance with democratic norms was signified by its intervention in the internal affairs of Indonesia and Cambodia. One of the components of Britain's intervention was propaganda.²⁹⁴ The chapter will provide an overview of the Information Research Department's (IRD) composition and activities in Southeast Asia. Secondly, to demonstrate that international law conferences such as the 1975 Helsinki Accords reinforced the perception that covert action in Europe was an unviable option due to increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. National security planners tasked with suppressing communist advances in Europe were limited in scope. Likewise, engaging in intelligence operations in a former colony would also carry higher legitimacy costs and was prohibited by the Foreign Office (FO).²⁹⁵ Southeast Asia, however, was a region which carried fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs with covert action providing a viable option to stymie communist advances. Indeed, there was a proliferation of intelligence activities when British interests were at risk. This would suggest that democratic norms and international law shaped British objectives in Europe but less so in Asia. Moreover, this demonstrates that the high credibility costs associated with covert action in Europe were not as acute in Asia. This is where the concept of zonal foreign policy is most apparent. Even though Indonesia and Cambodia were emerging democracies, Britain engaged in covert action against them. State trajectory and security concerns outweighed Britain's obligations to international law and democratic norms. This suggests that neither international law nor democratic norms inhibited British foreign policy as it continued to engage in covert action in Cambodia into the 1980s. As noted, there has been scant research on the relationship between DPT and covert action in the British context. The chapter will begin by outlining the limitations of DPT before exploring the proliferation of covert action.

²⁹³ Barbara Farnham, "The Theory of Democratic Peace and Threat Perception," *International Studies Quarterly* Vol.47, No.3(September 2003).

²⁹⁴ Information Research Department, "Indonesia. IRD. FCO 168/1143," (Singapore. S.E.A.D: National Archives, 1964). Alongside the IRD, special forces were used in Indonesia. *Vide* Cormac's *Disrupt and Deny* for further context.

²⁹⁵ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

b. Evidence of Democratic Peace Theory Limitations

This section will critically outline the limitations of DPT in the context of Britain's Cold War foreign policy. DPT suggests that democratic states will not engage in covert action against one another.²⁹⁶ The thesis is principally concerned by those who advocate selectorate theory. Selectorate theorists suggest that when two conditions are met, a democratic state may be emboldened to engage in covert action against another.²⁹⁷ Despite becoming increasingly democratised, Britain perceived communist activity in Indonesia and Cambodia as a threat to its former colonies leading to a proliferation of covert action. By 1970 both states had undergone regime change. Under Suharto Indonesia experienced democratic backsliding and was arguably a weaker democracy than it was under Sukarno. Similarly, under Lon Nol, Cambodia experienced democratic backsliding. If DPT provided a framework for British foreign policy, then Britain would be emboldened to engage in covert action. However, under Suharto and Lon Nol, national security planners perceived the risk of communist expansion to be reduced and pivoted to soft power.

Although Britain was not the colonial power in Indonesia or Cambodia, it was a major regional power. Both Indonesia and Cambodia were AATs which posed security risks to Britain's former colonies. A theory proposed by Daniel Thomas suggests that states will agree to be bound by international law to legitimise themselves without substantial compliance.²⁹⁸ This chapter supports Daniel Thomas' notion that 'a state's formal acceptance of international human rights norms does not necessarily guarantee significant changes in its behaviour, much less its identity and interests.'²⁹⁹ This is demonstrated by Britain's behaviour in Indonesia and Cambodia. According to Mike Bowker, Western European security was based around containment of Soviet influence.³⁰⁰ Both countries provided an opportunity to stymie communist advances in Southeast Asia, and in the case of the Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, deal a blow to one of the Soviet Union's closest allies.

By the early 1960s, communist advances in Indonesia concerned national security planners. According to an IRD report, the only barrier to a communist take-over in Indonesia

²⁹⁶ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace." p.815

²⁹⁷ Ibid. Firstly, if state A is substantially stronger than state B or secondly, if the chance of success is particularly high. *Vide Stasis or Decay* for further context on selectorate theory.

²⁹⁸ C. Daniel Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism*, First Edition ed. (Woodstock, Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 2001). p.3

²⁹⁹ Ibid. p.287

³⁰⁰ Mike Bowker and Phil Williams, "Helsinki and West European Security," *International Affairs* Vol.61, No.4(Autumn 1985).

was the army, the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI). The report stated that communist factions had not penetrated the upper echelons of the TNI due to the actions of senior military officers.³⁰¹ By 1965 Indonesia was ruled through a combination of religious, political, and communist forces. However, the report stated that in practice communist elements had taken precedence.³⁰² Sukarno's actions led the IRD to believe Indonesia would become a communist state within two years.³⁰³ National security planners' perception of Indonesia's state trajectory a series of intelligence operations in an emerging democracy. As Chapter 5 will demonstrate, once this threat was perceived to be neutralised, Britain supported the more authoritarian Suharto. This suggests that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy and supports the notion that countries perceived to be susceptible to communism assumed temporary importance.

In the realm of international norms, non-interference was a key component of the post-war world.³⁰⁴ Pursuant with the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords, Britain curtailed its intelligence operations in Europe as hypocrisy and legitimacy costs increased. Instead, it engaged in covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia.³⁰⁵ Although the thesis classifies Cambodia as an emerging democracy in the 1960s, by the 1980s, Cambodia was under Vietnamese occupation. Cambodia was still a target for covert action, however. This suggests that Britain, despite espousing political pluralism, did not support a pluralist system outside of Europe when it perceived its interests were threatened by communism. Moreover, this allowed Britain to avoid heightened hypocrisy and legitimacy costs supporting the notion of zonal foreign policy. Finally, it would suggest the Helsinki Accords had little effect on Britain's ability to pursue intelligence operations. In fact, FO legal advisers discerned that the Accords were not legally binding.³⁰⁶ As the chapter will demonstrate, legal advisers suggested the language and nature of the Helsinki Final Act did not create international legal obligations.

By the 1960s, the use of conventional force became an increasingly unviable option for national security planners. Intelligence operations provided an alternative method to pursue Britain's foreign policy. To add a further layer of complexity, national security planners had to

³⁰¹ IRD, "Information Research Department: Indonesia FCO 168/1589," ed. Foreign Office (London: The National Archives, January 1st 1965 to December 31st 1956). Some junior officers in the TNI were communist sympathisers.

³⁰² Ibid. Indonesia was ruled through a policy of Nasakonisasi.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of Democratic Peace." p.11

³⁰⁵ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

³⁰⁶ _____, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

account for how an intervention would be perceived by the international community. Self-perception, therefore, was a consideration for policymakers who strove to maintain Britain's image as a democratic state which abided by democratic norms. By engaging in covert action against Asian-style democracies, however, Britain violated democratic norms and international law. DPT, therefore, does not provide an adequate explanation for Britain's Cold War foreign policy. This will be demonstrated throughout the following sections as the chapter outlines the expansion of covert action into Southeast Asia where legitimacy and hypocrisy costs were perceived to be lower.

c. Context to Intelligence Activities

The aim of this section is to outline why Britain expanded the geographic scope of covert action and link it with zonal foreign policy. Indeed, Ernest Bevin warned against operations behind the Iron Curtain.³⁰⁷ Bevin's hesitancy suggests that cold warriors, prominent politicians during the Cold War, were aware of the risks associated with operating in Europe. Following setbacks to their intelligence operations in 1950s Europe, national security planners scaled up their efforts to combat communism in the Global South.³⁰⁸ To protect its former colonies and check communist gains, Britain engaged in intelligence operations in Indonesia and Cambodia. Not only does this link with zonal foreign policy it also highlights Britain's continued post-war global ambitions. This is reflected in IRD material which claimed the IRD would continue to meet its objectives despite a drawdown in conventional forces into the 1970s.³⁰⁹ The pivot towards the Global South was not only the repercussion of failed intelligence operations. Advancements in international law and democratic norms also led national security planners to explore covert operations outside of Europe where they perceived hypocrisy and legitimacy costs were lower. This is supported by Rory Cormac who suggested that once national security planners recognised the high-risk nature of covert action in Europe, they switched their attention to other regions.³¹⁰

Disputes between the FO and intelligence community were common as Hawkish military chiefs and SIS officers were balanced out by more cautious FO diplomats. On several occasions, the FO's cautious approach won out. Riskier options, therefore, narrowed

³⁰⁷ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.141.

³⁰⁸ Ibid. p.70 Following the ill-fated Operation Valuable, launched by SIS to train and infiltrate Albanian dissidents, Britain began to explore covert action in other regions.

³⁰⁹ Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.." Further context is provided later in the thesis

³¹⁰ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.137

significantly as Whitehall wished to avoid a potential horizontal escalation and reduce hypocrisy and legitimacy costs.³¹¹ This trend was bucked by some overzealous diplomats, however. For example, Britain's ambassador to Indonesia, Andrew Gilchrist, often drew criticism from IRD officers for his 'over imaginative' plans.³¹² Gilchrist's machinations are outlined fully in following chapter. By the 1960s, covert action provided Britain with an instrument to maintain its global obligations and be viewed as an advocate of non-intervention and democratic norms.

As the Cold War drew on, national security planners adopted a cautious approach to covert action compared to their American counterparts.³¹³ Pre-empting American hegemony, Stalin attempted to bolster the communist parties of France and Italy; Britain played its role in countering the Soviet threat propaganda.³¹⁴ Propaganda was disseminated in Eastern Europe by the IRD to provide a foundation to exploit rifts behind the Iron Curtain. In the concluding chapter of *Disrupt and Deny*, Cormac addressed the efficacy of covert action and concluded that due to myriad factors, it is difficult to assess any direct consequence of the policy and important not to overplay the role of covert action over local factors.³¹⁵ Throughout 1957, the development of Anglo-American intelligence sharing began to coalesce under the Information Policy Working Group, including joint planning policies.³¹⁶ Meanwhile, intelligence agencies improved their cooperation. As with covert action, London and Washington strove to maintain secrecy.³¹⁷ Maintaining secrecy, however, was problematic. It was suggested, therefore, that the Working Groups expand their operations to include officials believed to contribute to the groups.³¹⁸ To negate a potential diplomatic row allied capitals were kept informed of Anglo-American cooperation.³¹⁹ This would avoid allies from perceiving that Britain and America had established an 'exclusive' directorate.³²⁰

It was not just Europe where Britain and America sought to cooperate. Indonesia became a target of intelligence operations during the 1960s. Anglo-American cooperation in

³¹¹ Ibid. p.77.

³¹² Department, "Indonesia. IRD. FCO 168/1143."

³¹³ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.78.

³¹⁴ Ibid. p.73

³¹⁵ Ibid. p.279

³¹⁶ Records of Cabinet Committees, "Prime Minister's Visit to Washington and Ottawa. CAB 130/147. Papers 1-27," ed. Cabinet Office (The National Archives. London.: Cabinet:Miscellaneous Committees. Minutes and Papers., June 1958).

³¹⁷ ———, "Prime Minister's Commonwealth Tour: Papers 1-65. CAB 130/138," ed. Cabinet Office (London. The National Archives.: Cabinet: Miscellaneous Committees: Minutes and Papers, 1957-1958). Some commonwealth countries were updated on the Working Groups.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid.

Indonesia was facilitated, in part, through the 'Indonesia Working Group' based in Washington.³²¹ British policymakers used the Working Group to influence American policy towards Indonesia. However, key decisions on policy were made through higher diplomatic channels.³²² Britain nurtured its relationship with America throughout the Cold War.³²³ Following Harold Macmillan's trip to Washington in October 1957, eight 'working groups' were established facilitating closer Anglo-American cooperation.³²⁴ Notably, Indonesia was highlighted as a country of concern.³²⁵ Alongside their British and American counterparts, Australian national security planners were involved in the work from the outset.³²⁶ By the 1960s, following the disappointment of failed operations, the era of working groups ended.³²⁷ Meanwhile, national security planners were busy supporting pro-British leaders in newly independent states.³²⁸ As the Cold War rumbled on Britain faced a series of threats to key strategic locations in Southeast Asia. Whitehall pursued a policy of covert action to shore up its position in the region.³²⁹ It is possible to liken covert action to informal empire which established spheres of influence without the financial implications of administering the territory. This link is a further line of inquiry for future research projects.

This section provided context to why Britain expanded its intelligence footprint in Southeast Asia during the 1960s. Failed intelligence operations and higher hypocrisy costs in Europe led national security planners to explore intelligence operations in the Global South. The section also highlighted how London and Washington cooperated on intelligence operations against Indonesia and to a lesser extent, Cambodia. One of the core components of Britain's intelligence apparatus was propaganda. The next section of the chapter, therefore, outlines the organisation of the IRD, the propaganda arm of the Foreign Office. This will enable the chapter to demonstrate how zonal foreign policy manifested itself in Indonesia and Cambodia.

³²¹ Committees, "Prime Minister's Visit to Washington and Ottawa. CAB 130/147. Papers 1-27."

³²² Ibid.

³²³ ———, "Prime Minister's Commonwealth Tour: Papers 1-65. CAB 130/138."

³²⁴ ———, "Prime Minister's Visit to Washington and Ottawa. CAB 130/147. Papers 1-27."

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.141.

³²⁸ Ibid. p.140

³²⁹ Ibid. p.141

d. Organisation of IRD

The aim of this section is to outline the organisation and *modus operandi* of the IRD. Labour politician, Christopher Mayhew, linked the creation of the IRD to an anti-communist policy, vital for London to project itself as a 'third force' in geopolitics.³³⁰ The IRD was established under the Labour Party's *Future Foreign Publicity* policy.³³¹ Throughout the late 1940s, the IRD paved the way for propaganda to be utilised to further British interests and increase its cooperation with Washington on key issues, usually facilitated through the British Embassy.³³² At the height of its operations throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the department employed 300 staff.³³³ According to Hugh Wilford the original mission of the IRD was to not only disseminate anti-communist propaganda but to 'publicise a positive set of social democratic political ideals, such as social justice and the planned economy.'³³⁴ The IRD's *modus operandi* was established early on in its inception.³³⁵ Material for anti-communist dissemination was collected from a variety of sources with the raw data channelled through to the relevant geographic locations from a central system of research staff at the Foreign Office.³³⁶ By the 1950s, the IRD had a considerable network of permanent channels to disseminate propaganda.³³⁷

To facilitate its operations, the IRD established regional headquarters, known as RIOs, where permanent lines of communication would facilitate the dissemination of intelligence. Southeast Asia was supported through a RIO in Singapore, the South East Asian Monitoring Unit (SEAMU) and the political adviser's office (POLAD).³³⁸ According to FO files, research collated by the IRD was not 'pure' as its objective was to provide counter-propaganda material.³³⁹ The task of providing comprehensive material for IRD publications was onerous. For example, voluminous files were stored from anti-communist material to foreign delegations visiting China.³⁴⁰ IRD routine work consisted of providing two types of reports. 'Category A', which comprised of intelligence analysis distributed amongst cabinet ministers

³³⁰ Hugh Wilford, "The Information Research Department: Britain's Secret Cold War Weapon Revealed," *Review of International Studies*. Cambridge University Press. Vol. 24, No. 3(1998). p.353

³³¹ Ibid. p.353

³³² Ibid. p.366

³³³ Ibid. p.353

³³⁴ Ibid. p.369

³³⁵ Ibid. p.358

³³⁶ Ibid. p.358

³³⁷ Ibid. p.359

³³⁸ Ibid. p.359

³³⁹ Foreign Office, "Meetings with BBC: Notes on Scope of IRD Research. FO 1110/873," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1956).

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

and high-ranking civil servants and 'Category B' which had intelligence references redacted and disseminated amongst journalists and academics.³⁴¹ The research collected by the IRD fell into four categories.³⁴²

- a. Monitoring reports
- b. Newspapers and periodicals from around the world
- c. Published works, including official documents and statistics
- d. Reports from diplomatic missions

As the US began to take up the Soviet challenge it became publicly acknowledged by Washington that psychological warfare and propaganda were being used to combat the Soviet threat.³⁴³ London, in contrast, did not acknowledge any operations publicly. To achieve this, the IRD increasingly turned to 'black propaganda' to fulfil its policy goals.³⁴⁴ According to Cormac, most of the unattributable propaganda was 'grey' material. Dissemination of 'black' material was viewed as far more 'devious and dangerous.'³⁴⁵ Documents, however, show that London was actively disseminating black propaganda throughout Indonesia by the early 1960s.³⁴⁶ To do so, the IRD kept files on key personalities throughout Southeast Asia.³⁴⁷ The files indicated any links to extreme nationalism, including communist sympathies.³⁴⁸ This would allow the IRD to monitor key players and movements throughout the Global South. Although it is not possible to assess any IRD successes, the dissemination of black propaganda against AATs does demonstrate Britain's complicity in intervening in the internal affairs of other states. The IRD was drawn down throughout the 1970s, with its eventual closure in 1977 under the James Callaghan's Labour government.³⁴⁹ The next section outlines these developments and its links with zonal foreign policy.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.19.

³⁴⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

³⁴⁵ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.6.

³⁴⁶ IRD, "Information Research Department: Indonesia FCO 168/1589."

³⁴⁷ Office, "Meetings with BBC: Notes on Scope of IRD Research. FO 1110/873."

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Wilford, "The Information Research Department: Britain's Secret Cold War Weapon Revealed." p.353.

e. IRD and the Proliferation of Covert Action

Following limited success in Eastern Europe, the remit of the IRD expanded to include, amongst other regions, Southeast Asia.³⁵⁰ As the process of decolonisation began to gather pace, covert action was used to deter Indonesian aggression and prevent Cambodia from pivoting to communism making the case for zonal foreign policy.³⁵¹ Zonal foreign policy is linked to demarcation lines in national security planners' rationale. For example, military planners used a three-tier system to assess the importance of overseas territories.³⁵² Category I were countries deemed vital to British policymaking. Category II were countries where a loss of rights and/or facilities would endanger Britain's ability to meet one or more of its commitments. Category III countries were important but if a loss of facilities occurred, it would not significantly weaken London's ability to uphold its commitments.³⁵³ The categorisation of Britain's overseas commitments is evidence of zonal foreign policy.

Included in the list of Category I countries was Malaysia.³⁵⁴ The defence of Malaysia, an Anglophile state, was vital. Acknowledging British military limitations, Counter-Subversion Committee (CSC) documents revealed a reliance on local goodwill was key.³⁵⁵ By maintaining friendly relations with local governments, it allowed London to retain its overseas bases which were vital to protecting British interests. The CSC was not an executive body, rather it acted as a stimulator and co-ordinator. Any operation undertaken, therefore, remained the responsibility of the Overseas Department.³⁵⁶ The committee, however, was elevated to Cabinet Committee status in 1964 and would be furnished with two permanent staff members.³⁵⁷ By the mid-1960s, CSC operations played an important role in supplementing British foreign policy.³⁵⁸ A CSC document stated that the

³⁵⁰ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.70.

³⁵¹ Information Research Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148," ed. Records of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Predecessors (The National Archives, 1964).

³⁵² Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

ultimate cure for an insurrection is the removal of the causes of unrest and dissatisfaction on which it is based; therefore, the defeat of an insurgency movement is fundamentally a political problem.³⁵⁹

According to Cormac, propaganda was often used to provide a foundation for future intelligence operations.³⁶⁰ In the months preceding the establishment of Malaysia, the CSC aided the co-ordination of 'open and unattributable' propaganda in Indonesia.³⁶¹ Alongside the CSC, the IRD were active in Indonesia and Cambodia. According to an IRD report, the Diplomatic Wireless Service (DWS) was approached by IRD officials concerning the type of transmitter thought best to disseminate propaganda in Indonesia.³⁶² Harold Robin of the DWS informed the IRD that a medium wave transmitter to cover the entirety of Indonesia would have to be around 100 kilowatts. A short-wave transmitter would need to be around four to five kilowatts.³⁶³ Issues, however, arose over the practicalities and location of disseminating the propaganda. Malaysian officials informed the DWS that they planned to reacquire the site in Singapore in a few years making it a priority for the DWS to maintain good relations with the Malaysians.³⁶⁴ DWS activities in the Global South provides an area of potential study.

Throughout the 1960s London adopted strategies to isolate insurgencies in Malaysia.³⁶⁵ This, according to FO papers, led to a reduction in propaganda and intelligence sharing between the insurgencies.³⁶⁶ A report on deception campaigns run in Malaysia suggested the IRD was disseminating black propaganda throughout the region.³⁶⁷ FO files reveal that London viewed its defence commitments to Malaysia as akin to the defence commitments of America to South Vietnam.³⁶⁸ In 1964 Britain's Foreign Secretary, Rab Butler, claimed that London was as committed to Malaysia as it was to Berlin.³⁶⁹ Differences, however, arose over the type of defence commitments Britain and America became embroiled in throughout Southeast Asia. For Britain, the confrontation with Indonesia was a low-intensity conflict centring around the jungles of Sarawak and Borneo. Consequently, British forces were only

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.279.

³⁶¹ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

³⁶² Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Foreign Office, "Political Relations: Cambodian Declaration of Neutrality and Request to Convene a Conference. FO 371/175442," ed. FO (London1964).

³⁶⁹ Ibid. Rab Butler's comments came as he held meetings with his Western European counterparts.

permitted to repulse and deter any attempted infringement by the Indonesians.³⁷⁰ To undermine Indonesia's broader war efforts Britain used covert action.

Moreover, London sought to assist Malaysia and Cambodia in counterinsurgency propaganda.³⁷¹ Policymakers in London identified four vital areas where foreign military assistance groups could assist both countries.³⁷² Firstly, Britain developed a persuasive anti-communist campaign to deter citizens from attempting to join a communist party and demonstrate that communism was not the answer to their economic, social, or political problems. Secondly, friendly foreign assistance groups were to develop a sense of national pride, especially important in the nascent Malaysia, and loyalty towards the host government. A unified Malaysia, with strong institutions would act as a bulwark against communist influence and support British foreign policy. This would assist pro-British officials. Moreover, it was important for Britain to reach marginalised societies especially refugees who may not have been assimilated. Thirdly, London increased the presence and reputation of the government's village, district and national police and military forces.³⁷³ Lastly, London sought to increase the potency of Malaysia intelligence to disseminate propaganda through its press, radio, and posters.³⁷⁴ If Malaysia had strong intelligence services it would reduce the burden on Britain and provide national security planners with platform to disseminate propaganda.

Meanwhile, the RIO in Singapore acted as a springboard into the region.³⁷⁵ According to Alexander Shaw, the RIO's remit included generating intelligence to guide propaganda and, moreover, the analysis of enemy propaganda.³⁷⁶ Through the RIO, the IRD disseminated propaganda targeting Indonesia and Cambodia when they posed a threat to Anglophile territories. Elsewhere in the region, escalating violence in Vietnam threatened Britain's security interests. Concurrent communist activity in Indonesia exacerbated the issue further. Accordingly, London began to engage in intelligence operations in Vietnam reaffirming its commitment to American foreign policy.³⁷⁷ These operations revolved around BBC and IRD

³⁷⁰ _____, "Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation: HMG Policy. FO 371/181503," ed. Foreign Office Files (London: The National Archives, 1965).

³⁷¹ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

³⁷⁶ Alexander Nicholas Shaw, "Propaganda Intelligence and Covert Action: the Regional Information Office and British Intelligence in South-East Asia, 1949-1961," *Journal of Intelligence History* Volume 19, Number 1(2020).

³⁷⁷ Office, "Political Relations: Cambodian Declaration of Neutrality and Request to Convene a Conference. FO 371/175442."

radio programmes and publications.³⁷⁸ British intelligence operations in Vietnam provide further opportunities to explore covert action in Southeast Asia and discern whether zonal foreign policy provides a rationale for its actions.

It is worth noting at this point that IRD operations in Indonesia and Cambodia differed in intensity. In keeping with zonal foreign policy, national security planner's threat perception was key to policymaking. For example, the intensity of IRD operations in Cambodia did not match those in Indonesia. Although a neutral, western-leaning Cambodia was strategically important, its population size and geographic proximity to Malaysia meant it did not pose a greater risk than Indonesia.³⁷⁹ Moreover, as a former French colony, national security planners may have been wary of infringing on a key ally's interests. This was not the case in Indonesia, where the Dutch has less influence. If Cambodia were to fall to communist forces at the same time as Indonesia, however, Malaysia would be surrounded by communist states. Such an eventuality would be disastrous for Britain.

To support British interests in the region in January 1965 two Deception Committees were established.³⁸⁰ Due to the sensitive nature of the committees, the groups were provided cover names, the Forward Plans Committee (FPC) (Far East) and the Forward Plans Working Group (Far East). The composition of FPC (FE), the senior body, included the Chief of Staff Far East Command and the Chief of SIS, Dick White. Committee meetings were held once a month unless operational necessities required otherwise.³⁸¹ On January 29th, 1965, a report titled the *Intensification of War of Nerves* against Indonesia was published by the CSC.³⁸² The report suggested potential areas where Britain could strengthen its intelligence operations against Jakarta. The establishment and complexion of the Deception Committees demonstrates Britain's commitment to protecting its interests in the region. This section outlined the organisation of the IRD linked its activities with zonal foreign policy. What follows are examples of how zonal foreign policy manifested itself in Indonesia and Cambodia.

³⁷⁸ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Broadcasting: BBC Far Eastern Service; Exchange of Information with IRD. FCO 95/1796," ed. BBC & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1975).

³⁷⁹ Office, "Political Relations: Cambodian Declaration of Neutrality and Request to Convene a Conference. FO 371/175442." Britain had provided the Chairman to the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina

³⁸⁰ Committees, "Prime Minister's Commonwealth Tour: Papers 1-65. CAB 130/138."

³⁸¹ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

³⁸² Ibid.

f. Zonal Foreign Policy in Southeast Asia

This aim of this section is to outline specific examples of zonal foreign policy and examine how Britain pursued its foreign policy objectives in AATs through covert action. The research suggests that AATs gained temporary importance to national security planners when they perceived the AAT was pivoting towards communism. This is demonstrated through the proliferation of covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia. As covert action in Europe returned diminished gains, Britain turned its attention to its colonies. The Colonial Office, however, were not supportive of the plans and balked at the thought of using subversive actions against British colonies.³⁸³ According to a Cabinet Office paper, the collection of covert intelligence within British colonies was prohibited during the 1960s.³⁸⁴ This adds a further layer of complexity to British foreign policy. With hypocrisy and legitimacy costs perceived to be too high in Europe, it left national security planners with limited options. Targeting emerging and Asian-style democracies became an increasingly viable option. Moreover, the section will demonstrate non-compliance with democratic norms through the intervention in the internal affairs of Asian-style democracies. DPT would suggest that Britain would not engage in covert action against democratically- elected governments because of international and cultural norms.

IRD officers such as Hans Welser, Norman Reddaway, Leslie Sheridan, were instrumental in shaping Britain's Cold War foreign policy. Welser, for example, ran the 'special operations' desk at the IRD, which, according to Lashmar, provided a space for the organisations to liaise.³⁸⁵ The South and South East Asia Section of the IRD covered seventeen countries between Pakistan and Indonesia.³⁸⁶ In 1965 a Joint Research Department was formed in the region.³⁸⁷ By 1970 the complement of the department comprised of four full-time researchers made up of two A.R.O.s supplemented by one grade nine and grade ten researchers. The section was bolstered by two part-time academics.³⁸⁸ One A.R.O was responsible for Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. The other A.R.O covered the

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Cabinet Office, "Counter Subversion Committee: Meetings 1-7, Papers 1-27. CAB 134/2543," ed. Counter-Subversion Committee (London: The National Archives, Jan-Nov 1964). Covert action in Northern Ireland was also controversial as the British state would be using subversive techniques on its own citizens.

³⁸⁵ Lashmar, *Spies, Spin and the Fourth Estate: British Intelligence and the Media*. p.94 Welser received an OBE for his efforts with the IRD in 1960

³⁸⁶ Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.."

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

rest of Southeast Asia.³⁸⁹ One of the main threats to Malaysian unification was Indonesian intransigence.³⁹⁰ British forces were involved in counter-insurgency operations against Indonesian forces who attempted to infiltrate areas of Sabah and Sarawak.³⁹¹ The nature of this intervention was conventional. As Britain began to target communist subversion in Indonesia it used covert action. Exploiting local superstitions in Indonesia, especially in Java was one policy the IRD pursued.³⁹² Targeting emerging democracies carried fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs than their western counterparts.

Andrew Shonfield suggested that Western European and North American states had created a 'security community'.³⁹³ Zonal foreign policy would suggest that engaging in covert action against this community would demonstrate non-compliance with democratic norms. A crude interpretation of the Duncan Report, a report on Britain's post-decolonisation policy, would suggest that the IRD should pivot away from Southeast Asia.³⁹⁴ Indeed, there was a renewed focus on an 'Area of Concentration' which consisted of Western Europe and North America. Southeast Asia was in the 'Outer Area'.³⁹⁵ This demarcation in national security planner's consciousness is symptomatic of zonal foreign policy. Moreover, Britain's intervention in Indonesia and Cambodia, both emerging democracies, would suggest Southeast Asia remained an integral region. Following an 'Inspection of the IRD' in 1967, there was a suggestion the IRD and Research Department amalgamate into a 'Centralised Overseas Research Department'.³⁹⁶ What the FO report indicates is that throughout the 1960s, the British attempted to engage in a world-wide anti-communist campaign.³⁹⁷ By the early 1970s, it was suggested the IRD and Research Department may shift focus to countries of importance in the 'Outer Area'.³⁹⁸ This supports the notion of zonal foreign policy which argues that countries gained temporary importance. Moreover, it suggests that national security planners intended to continue shaping world events following decolonisation in Asia and Africa. Events in Cambodia throughout the 1980s supports the

³⁸⁹ Ibid. A report on the composition of the IRD suggested that Afghanistan be incorporated into the Section.

³⁹⁰ Foreign Office, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1963).

³⁹¹ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

³⁹² Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

³⁹³ Andrew Shonfield, "The Duncan Report and its Critics," *Royal Institute for International Affairs* Vol 46, No.2(April 1970). p.248

³⁹⁴ Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.." The IRD received a special section in the Duncan Report. The report was intended to highlight areas where the government could cut costs. Sir John 'Val' Duncan headed the report.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Ibid. The archival material does not suggest the amalgamation occurred.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

notion that Britain still shaped events in Southeast Asia beyond the end of decolonisation. Furthermore, this counters the narrative that Britain retreated from its international obligations in the post-war world and is a potential area of further research.

Indeed, changes were afoot in Southeast Asia. It was thought as America 'disentangled' itself from its commitments in Vietnam, one of the IRD's part-time academics could be relieved of their duties.³⁹⁹ Although London did not commit combat forces to Vietnam, covert action did extend to supporting the American war effort. According to FO files, in early 1966, the IRD were tasked with disseminating material highlighting Viet Cong 'atrocities' whilst contrasting positive American actions.⁴⁰⁰ Supporting American foreign policy was key for Britain's strategic interests. Moreover, a communist victory in Vietnam would have security implications for Britain's interests. This suggests that Britain was guided by perceptions of security and protecting its former colonies from communist threats. A potential overspill of violence had the potential to destabilise the region further. This may have led national security planners to the assumption that covert action provided the best means to protect British interests, even at the expense of democratic norms. Moreover, the IRD wanted to project a better image of Nguyễn Cao Kỳ, the South Vietnamese premier, who had been described as a pistol-packing Hitler worshipper.⁴⁰¹ Furthermore, the IRD reported in 1975, following the visit of Nguyễn Duc Quy, a Vietnamese national and former programme assistant for the BBC, that BBC news bulletins were listened to widely in Vietnam following the unification.⁴⁰² The BBC's perceived impartiality allowed national security planners to disseminate propaganda through official channels without the legitimacy costs.

Events in Vietnam also contributed to the destabilisation of Cambodia in the 1960s and 1970s. This had implications for British security. Covert action in Cambodia followed a familiar pattern of anti-communist propaganda which was disseminated in a methodical way to avoid "abstract and random actions".⁴⁰³ Interestingly, it appears to be a common trait of government files and parliamentary debates to view Cambodia through a Thai or Vietnamese lens. Cambodia, moreover, is often discussed in terms of British policy towards Vietnam or Thailand. It is evident that a direct policy towards Cambodia was often lacking. Similarly, when discussing Cambodian anti-Vietnamese resistance movements in the 1980s, many government files address it through their Vietnam or Thailand policies. Moreover,

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Office, "Meetings with BBC: Notes on Scope of IRD Research. FO 1110/873."

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² _____, "Broadcasting: BBC Far Eastern Service; Exchange of Information with IRD. FCO 95/1796."

⁴⁰³ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

numerous documents pertaining to Cambodia in the 1960s are contained within SEATO and Burmese files. Alongside propaganda, the IRD produced lists of international communist front organisations⁴⁰⁴ demonstrating British concern of communist activity in AATs supporting the concept of zonal foreign policy as Cambodia gained temporary importance when it was perceived it was susceptible to communism.

On May 29th, 1964, SEATO published a report on psychological warfare.⁴⁰⁵ The report stated that political propaganda programs could not be underestimated.⁴⁰⁶ Developing states, moreover, required technical assistance in developing their apparatus. Known as psychological warfare or psyops, London disseminated propaganda in a variety of forms, to reinforce positive opinions of Britain and the West.⁴⁰⁷ Psyops usually target groups or individuals with a specific message and is sometimes used to pursue political objectives.⁴⁰⁸ Psychological operations at “hut level” were crucial to London’s foreign policy.⁴⁰⁹ An indigenous military had the potential to provide London with the ability to reach rural and insecure areas through psychological operations.⁴¹⁰ Indigenous personnel, therefore, were trained in psychological operations techniques. The training extended to include the writing of radio scripts, the use of face-to-face persuasion and graphic presentations.⁴¹¹ Psywar objectives included ensuring the loyalty of the armed forces and maintaining the internal security of the state. Secondly, London sought to convince remote populations that the policies of the host government were aligned with their own as national security planners wished to deter villagers from turning to communism, foster national cohesion and discourage neutralism.⁴¹² Psychological operations, therefore, were used throughout Sarawak and Sabah.⁴¹³ The utilisation of indigenous military units allowed London to maintain plausible deniability. Despite this, Indonesian officials reported that intelligence service had caught two British “spies”.⁴¹⁴ Psychological warfare, therefore, was a further

⁴⁰⁴ Information Research Department, "International Communist Front Organisations. FO 1110/2163," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, January-May 1965).

⁴⁰⁵ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ H. D. Lasswell, "Chapter 12 Psychological Operations - A Force Multiplier," *Air University Press* (June 2019).

⁴⁰⁹ Office, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

⁴¹⁰ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Office, "Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation: HMG Policy. FO 371/181503."

⁴¹⁴ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

facet of covert action and acted as a force multiplier especially when combatting insurgencies.

Propaganda operations, when circumstances permitted, were split into three phases.⁴¹⁵ It was essential that all psychological operations work within the prescribed limits of policy. The first phase of a psychological operation was labelled 'planning and training'. The second phase of psychological operations involved a test of the pilot program.⁴¹⁶ A rehearsal of the propaganda program, designed for typical villages with diverse ethnicities, was tested and evaluated in the process. If the test evaluation was successful, the psychological operation entered the final stage. Step three, therefore, involved the operational phase of the propaganda campaign.⁴¹⁷ According to the CSC report, its material was not based on coercive appeals as 'propaganda is successful if it reflects the hopes and aspirations of the people.'⁴¹⁸ Moreover, the CSC report stated that 'propaganda and foreign policy are interrelated.'⁴¹⁹ This demonstrates that propaganda was a key component of British foreign policy designed to interfere in emerging and Asian-style democracies.

In the short-term London sought to end the *Konfrontasi* and force Jakarta to recognise Malaysia as a state.⁴²⁰ A regional system was thought best by the CSC. The committee explored every political avenue to demonstrate to Indonesians that the policy of 'confrontation' was detrimental, and Jakarta should abandon, or at least, modify the policy.⁴²¹ FO files reveal that London pursued covert operations to sway public opinion. Covert operations included a plan to convince Indonesians that the 'confrontation' could not succeed and was responsible for the deteriorating economic situation in the country.⁴²² The operations would avoid attacking Sukarno directly and concentrate on the potential Chinese threat to Indonesia. Chinese regional infiltration into Indonesia was a concern for national security planners.⁴²³ Communist advances from China could impact Malaysian stability. Moreover, there was concern amongst officials in London that residual British property and citizens may become targets of retaliation if Sukarno suspected British involvement in

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ Office, "Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation: HMG Policy. FO 371/181503."

⁴²¹ Ibid. For further information on the *Konfrontasi* see Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: the September 30th Movement and Suharto's coup d'état in Indonesia*.

⁴²² Office, "Malaysia-Indonesia Confrontation: HMG Policy. FO 371/181503."

⁴²³ Ibid.

subversion. According to FO correspondence, the plans enunciated in the document pertaining to covert action should be modified in that eventuality.⁴²⁴

Further intelligence operations in Indonesia centred around undermining the Indonesian's resolve to attack Malaysian targets across the border. This would be achieved by presenting their real enemy as the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI).⁴²⁵ Alongside propaganda, the British state tried to discredit any potential successor who had displayed communist sympathies. It was thought, however, that any attempt to promote an anti-communist successor would be counterproductive.⁴²⁶ An effort was made to encourage dissident movements inside Indonesia with a short-term goal of undermining Indonesia's military campaign.⁴²⁷ Manila was also encouraged to increase its propaganda and counter-subversion campaigns against Indonesia.⁴²⁸ Alongside covert action, London used its military to deter Indonesia and deprive Jakarta of new supplies of armaments and aircraft. Britain, moreover, was keen for Manila to be at the forefront of peace negotiations. This would suggest that London did not want to be viewed as a *tertius gaudens* but as a facilitator of peace.⁴²⁹ All British commercial and diplomatic channels were kept open to demonstrate London's resolve to finding a peaceful settlement.⁴³⁰ This would suggest perception was at the heart of British policymaking.

By the 1960s Indonesia became an ideological battleground. An IRD report claimed that Sukarno was 'constantly striving to maintain a fanatically anti-imperialist atmosphere in Djakarta.'⁴³¹ Furthermore, the report outlined how Sukarno had been flirting with the PKI which, by 1965, boasted three million members.⁴³² As early as June 1957 Britain met with representatives from the Anglosphere to establish a platform to share intelligence in Southeast Asia.⁴³³ According to the IRD, the PKI was influenced heavily by Beijing. As the PKI increased its influence throughout Indonesia, Sukarno pondered a policy of arming volunteers against the wishes of Dipa Aidit, the PKI General Secretary.⁴³⁴ Chinese policymakers suggested the volunteers could form the nucleus of the Indonesian Armed

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ IRD, "Information Research Department: Indonesia FCO 168/1589."

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Committees, "Prime Minister's Visit to Washington and Ottawa. CAB 130/147. Papers 1-27."

⁴³⁴ IRD, "Information Research Department: Indonesia FCO 168/1589."

Forces.⁴³⁵ The volunteers, moreover, would be able to resist any attempt to crush the *Konfrontasi* and PKI. The IRD suggested that Aidit believed the policy was inflammatory.

To exacerbate British concerns, Indonesia had accumulated significant debt to the Soviet Union, which in 1964, amounted to over \$100,000,000.⁴³⁶ Indonesian debt was accrued as the state struggled to pay off the loans for armaments.⁴³⁷ This concerned Whitehall as national security planners believed it might entrap Jakarta.⁴³⁸ Furthermore, Sukarno announced in June 1965 that Indonesia was seeking to establish diplomatic relations with Albania.⁴³⁹ Many political circles in London viewed the move as a pivot towards communism.⁴⁴⁰ A further IRD report following the move predicted that unless Sukarno died or an anti-communist coup was launched, Indonesia would become a communist state within a year to eighteen months.⁴⁴¹ Sukarno stated that there was an imperialist plot to assassinate him.⁴⁴² The IRD believed the claim was fabricated. A source from the Indonesian Interior Ministry claimed that if the assassination attempt failed, Sukarno predicted that a foreign smear campaign against himself, Subandrio, and General Jani would follow.⁴⁴³

To counter Indonesia's pivot towards communism, the IRD published articles in foreign press outlets denouncing Sukarno.⁴⁴⁴ In early June 1965, for example, IRD officers floated an article in an Austrian newspaper discussing the communist threat in Indonesia.⁴⁴⁵ The article resurfaced in the *Basler Nachrichten*, a Swiss newspaper, by the end of the month. IRD material sought to highlight Indonesia's vulnerability to communism and Sukarno's flirtation with 'Red China'.⁴⁴⁶ McCann, *au courant* with Southeast Asian affairs, was instrumental in decision making. Alongside IRD operations, JAC officials had drawn up further plans against Sukarno in Indonesia. However, the risk of exposure was too great leading to the plans being shelved. This supports the research of Cormac who suggested that London wished to keep maximum distance between policy and output.⁴⁴⁷ Deception plans, therefore, were always held in a fine balance.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁴⁴⁵ IRD, "Information Research Department: Indonesia FCO 168/1589."

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. pp.6-7.

The section demonstrated how Britain shaped developments in AATs to protect its former colonies. Events in Indonesia and Cambodia alarmed national security planners in London who perceived the communist threat to endanger their former colonies. British intelligence engaged in covert action against two emerging democracies at the expense of democratic norms. British actions undermined democratic norms including the rule of law and the representation of people in civic participation. Moreover, no one individual or institution should have disproportionate amount of power in a democracy. Britain's support of authoritarian figures in Indonesia and Cambodia directly undermined this democratic norm. The expansion of covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia was signified by increased levels of propaganda and military training schemes. Covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia carried fewer legitimacy and hypocrisy costs. Meanwhile, British delegates attended international conferences designed to outline state behaviour. The next section outlines how the European-centric Helsinki Preparatory Committee reinforced non-compliance with democratic norms.

g. The Helsinki Accords and the Reinforcement of Zonal Foreign Policy

This section will demonstrate that the European-centric nature of the Helsinki Final Act reinforced perceptions of zonal foreign policy in London. To understand Britain's perceptions of democratic norms and international law, the research examined PrepCom material from the Helsinki Conference. There is a consensus amongst historians that most international law is soft law.⁴⁴⁸ The Final Act of the Helsinki Conference is no different. Britain sought to balance its obligations under international law against its national interests at Helsinki.⁴⁴⁹ When it perceived its security was threatened, it used covert action to achieve its foreign policy objectives against Asian-style democracies. Hard law, Kenneth Abbott argued, restricts a state's behaviour and sovereignty.⁴⁵⁰ Although London was initially hesitant towards the Helsinki Conference, Britain contributed to the realm of human rights.⁴⁵¹ This is where Britain sought to influence proceedings. This section studies the correspondence of Foreign Office (FO) legal advisers in relation to the Final Act and international law. For

⁴⁴⁸ W. Kenneth Abbott, "Hard and Soft Law in International Governance," *International Organisation* Vol.54, No.3(Summer 2000). Soft law acts as more of a guideline rather than obtaining legally binding status. p.422

⁴⁴⁹ Palliser Michael, "British Foreign Policy," *Royal Institute for International Relations* Vo.31 (No.2)(1978). p.

⁴⁵⁰ Abbott, "Hard and Soft Law in International Governance." p.422

⁴⁵¹ Bowker and Williams, "Helsinki and West European Security."

example, Henry Darwin, the Deputy Legal Adviser for the FO was instrumental in shaping Britain's foreign policy approach to the Helsinki Accords and CSCE.

According to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, following the Cuban Missile Crisis, Warsaw Pact countries sought a thawing of relations with NATO member states.⁴⁵² This was exemplified in a 1966 joint declaration in Bucharest where Eastern European States proposed a pan-European conference.⁴⁵³ Between 1966 and 1979 the CSCE convened to further the prospect of peace in Europe. Helsinki provided delegations with an opportunity to secure peace in Europe and reduce tensions between the two blocs.⁴⁵⁴ Although the Accords were primarily associated with European peace and security, an argument can be made that the convention set a precedent for inter-state relations. British delegates sought to exclude non-aligned states from influencing the conference as it believed the countries would pursue policies that would run counter to British interests.

Although Britain did not consider the Final Act as a binding treaty, it did codify the behaviour of states.⁴⁵⁵ This, in turn, made it harder for national security planners to operate in Europe. One of the key concepts of the conference was the promotion of Confidence Building Measures (CBM).⁴⁵⁶ Basket One contained ten declarations guiding the moral-political dimension of the CSCE.⁴⁵⁷ For example, Article VI of the Basket One stipulated that a State should not interfere in the internal affairs of another state. Although the Final Act was not legally binding, it was deemed politically binding by national security planners in London.⁴⁵⁸ For example, Henry Darwin suggested the phrase 'politically binding' in the context of the Helsinki Conference indicated that the commitment to the measures would have the same degree of political force as other commitments resulting from the Helsinki process.⁴⁵⁹ British intelligence organs were also involved in international law conferences. For example, the IRD were involved with the CSCE.⁴⁶⁰ IRD officers were responsible for

⁴⁵² (OSCE), "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act."

⁴⁵³ Bowker and Williams, "Helsinki and West European Security."

⁴⁵⁴ (OSCE), "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act." The Final Act resulted in three dimensions known as "Baskets".

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Survey of CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Issues," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁴⁵⁹ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

⁴⁶⁰ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Information Research Department: Special Brief: 'CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation] Reaches Critical Point'. FCO 168/7157," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1974).

disseminating pro-British material in North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) magazines and countering Soviet propaganda.⁴⁶¹

Britain's delegation to NATO (UKDEL NATO) corresponded with the FO and IRD representatives over the implications of the Final Act.⁴⁶² Although the IRD ceased operations in 1977, the department took an active role in shaping public opinion throughout the early CSCE process.⁴⁶³ IRD policy planners, moreover, produced a background paper entitled "Proposals for a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe".⁴⁶⁴ IRD material was used to supplement British policy briefs. For example, prior to the multilateral preparatory talks (MPTs) on Mutual and Balance Force Reduction, IRD guidance was sought on how to brief journalists.⁴⁶⁵ Furthermore, the IRD followed the Soviet proposal, under Andrei Gromyko's initiative, concerning the use of direct broadcasting satellites. According to T Barker, the IRD circulated unattributable material to suitable recipients outlining the implications of Gromyko's policy.⁴⁶⁶ PrepCom material reveal Britain's aims of the Accords:

- Concrete results on concrete issues of East-West relations in the political, economic and security fields
- CSCE should not serve to perpetuate the post-war division of Europe but rather contribute to reconciliation and co-operation, by initiating a process of reducing still existing barriers
- No substitute for a peace deal⁴⁶⁷

Reducing political and cultural barriers between East and West increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs of covert action. According to Daniel Thomas, Western European states perceived the CSCE as a tool to overcome division on the continent and were less willing to

⁴⁶¹ ———, "Information Research Department: NATO and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). FCO 168/7994," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁴⁶² Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

⁴⁶³ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1972).

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ ———, "Information Research Department: NATO and the Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). FCO 168 7994," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁴⁶⁶ Office, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

antagonise the Soviets.⁴⁶⁸ The British Helsinki Review Group, according to Thomas, was composed of leading private citizens and diplomatic experts.⁴⁶⁹ Western European states generally placed more emphasis on the CSCE than their American counterparts.⁴⁷⁰ Negotiations between the delegations would not be divided between the two defence alliances.⁴⁷¹ Neutral and non-aligned countries in Europe would also be included in the negotiations.⁴⁷² Meanwhile, British documents highlighted several caveats of the Accords. It was believed that the Accords would not lead to improved European security.⁴⁷³ This was due to what the IRD's Eastern European and Soviet Department termed the 'totally uncompromising stance' of the Eastern bloc.⁴⁷⁴ This would suggest that targeting communist advances in other regions would allow Britain to pursue its foreign policy objectives without the higher hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. This relates directly to Indonesia and Cambodia where Britain used covert action to stymie communist advances.

Prior to the CSCE, IRD representatives from the Eastern European and Soviet Department held meetings with their French counterparts.⁴⁷⁵ Preparatory work began following the Davignon Report.⁴⁷⁶ Diplomats in Paris feared the Final Act would turn into a US-Soviet dominated publication which would isolate Europe.⁴⁷⁷ French fears were justified as archival material revealed Washington and Moscow wished to avoid any agitation caused by the CSCE which could hamper bi-lateral relations.⁴⁷⁸ For European capitals, however, the conference provided a real chance for change. Britain was keen to admit non-European states to the conference.⁴⁷⁹ This would suggest an imbalance in the approach of Western European nations towards the Final Act. Perceptions of European security reinforced the concept of zonal foreign policy and non-compliance of democratic norms.

⁴⁶⁸ Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism*. p.144

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid. p.142

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid. p.143

⁴⁷¹ Office, "Information Research Department: NATO and the Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). FCO 168 7994."

⁴⁷² _____, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid. The Davignon Report was published in 1970 - it outlined future foreign policy of the EEC.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ _____, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Letters from the Public. FCO 28/5979."

An August 1975 FO report titled 'The CSCE Summit: Finland's Place in the Sun' outlined Britain's position heading into the conference.⁴⁸⁰ British delegates, according to the report, would not accept a pan-European security system or coordination with the Brezhnev Doctrine.⁴⁸¹ David Hildyard, the Permanent UK Representative to the Office of the UN, suggested that London had been modest in its achievements at the CSCE.⁴⁸² British delegates had, however, been instrumental in the later stages of the conference, contributing in every sector.⁴⁸³ Hildyard suggested that Britain had played a "major" role in drafting the Final Act proper. For example, the delegation was tough on Basket I Principles, but contributed with "helpful" compromises.⁴⁸⁴ Britain, moreover, took a leading role in implementing the CBMs. Basket III was where British delegates contributed the most.⁴⁸⁵ The report stated that London proposed a package deal to breakthrough an impasse.⁴⁸⁶ Meanwhile, British delegates exploited time-pressured Russian delegates into compromising on a series of polices.⁴⁸⁷ This had a significant impact on proceedings at the conference.

h. The use of Media at the CSCE

This section will demonstrate Britain's ability to influence European states through media campaigns to maintain the perception that London's behaviour was pursuant with its international law obligations. Britain, however, still engaged in covert action in the Global South. On cultural and human relations, London was keen to formulate a policy that was open but explicit enough to allow national security planners to avoid scrutiny from Eastern European delegations.⁴⁸⁸ To avoid confrontation at the MPTs, the UKDEL NATO proposed that only one commission should convene.⁴⁸⁹ Moscow, they believed, would object to two commissions.⁴⁹⁰ To further cultural links, the British delegation proposed a joint east-west magazine. The British proposal did not conjure much support from Washington or Ottawa. Moreover, under the freedom of information agenda, the magazine drew criticism from

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid. 'Finland's Place in the Sun' is amongst files in FCO 28/5979

⁴⁸¹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Diplomatic Despatches, 1975. (Described at item level). FCO 160/174," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1975).

⁴⁸² Ibid.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ Michael, "British Foreign Policy." p.151

⁴⁸⁶ Office, "Diplomatic Despatches, 1975. (Described at item level). FCO 160/174."

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ _____, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

Moscow.⁴⁹¹ It was thought, however, that if the Russian delegation scuppered the magazine, the West would score a propaganda victory.⁴⁹² In coordination with the Guidance and Information Policy Department, IRD discussed the proposal. It was thought the magazine would take time to prepare and print and would, moreover, require treasury approval. This, correspondence between IRD staff discussed, would be difficult to achieve.⁴⁹³ Mr King suggested the magazine be titled *East-West Review* and be published either monthly or bi-monthly.⁴⁹⁴ Editorship would be organised under three people, one from NATO, one from a Warsaw Pact State and one neutral.⁴⁹⁵

Foreign affairs provided the area in which the West could exploit the joint magazine as it was thought the Soviets purposefully neglected the issue.⁴⁹⁶ Moscow, the paper argued, would be concerned about its image.⁴⁹⁷ Alongside the magazine, the Italians also suggested an internationally linked TV discussion programme.⁴⁹⁸ Britain had several reservations concerning the proposal, including the right to retaining cultural autonomy.⁴⁹⁹ Meanwhile, Edward Heath held bilateral talk with Giulio Andreotti over freer movement of people. The two leaders discussed bilateral cooperation on the issue. There was little appetite in Rome for the British for the proposal, however.⁵⁰⁰ Eastern European countries, moreover, viewed the policy as an attempt to interfere in their internal affairs.⁵⁰¹ The Guidance and Information Policy Department believed a proposed television link up on foreign affairs between East and West lacked practicality.⁵⁰² Eurovision and InterVision, the report argued, were already fulfilling the criteria. Moreover, the Soviets were likely to reject any such proposal and the propaganda value would not be great.⁵⁰³ The pivot towards the freer movement of people increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs.

NATO provided a further platform for member states to express their opinions and policies at the CSCE. For example, a PrepCom sat in September 1972 to discuss cultural relations. All NATO members except Portugal and Turkey bought cultural experts to the committee. Invitations extended to Greece and Spain caused concern amongst other

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² Ibid.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

delegations, who believed their track records on human rights should exclude them from participating in the prep committee.⁵⁰⁴ Concerned by potential communist subversion, NATO sought cohesion amongst its ranks. Turkish delegates were particularly concerned about subversion and warned they could not risk "ideological penetration" from the Soviet Union.⁵⁰⁵ According to Layne, cultural norms are intrinsically linked with democratic norms.⁵⁰⁶ As cultural norms extended between member states of the CSCE, it heightened hypocrisy and legitimacy costs of covert action in Europe.

According to a FO report, the press in Britain and western Europe were largely on the 'right lines.'⁵⁰⁷ The report outlined how the West was in a strong propaganda position and sought practical results from the Accords. To cement their position, the BBC and other 'serious' newspapers would be admitted to the MPTs.⁵⁰⁸ Coverages of the MPTs would be aired on the BBC's "Tonight" programme and a FO spokesperson would be interviewed.⁵⁰⁹ Alongside the media coverage, British journalists were offered a 'teach-in' session which would provide them with the necessary details. Journalists were also provided unattributable briefs by government officials. For example, Edward Peck, a member of the FO Western Organisation Department, met with Roger Berthoud of *The Times*. The meeting took place in August 1972 to discuss how NATO was unified in relation to the CSCE. Berthoud informed Peck that his articles would emphasise the unit of the alliance.⁵¹⁰ Peck believed Berthoud was a reliable journalist and would produce a positive article. Meanwhile, selected academics were briefed on the government's policies so that they could participate constructively in television and radio programmes.⁵¹¹ The use of the BBC and journalists to portray Britain as liberal democracy which adhered to the principle of non-intervention. This highlights how self-perception was a concern for national security planners.

The FO's Western Organisation Department (WOD) pondered how national security planners could outline British policies at the CSCE.⁵¹² Policymakers were concerned that non-aligned countries would begin lobbying London to safeguard their interests and demand

⁵⁰⁴ _____, "Information Research Department: NATO and the Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). FCO 168 7994."

⁵⁰⁵ _____, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

⁵⁰⁶ Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of Democratic Peace."

⁵⁰⁷ Office, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Ibid.

full knowledge of Britain's policies.⁵¹³ It was of importance, therefore, that London trickled information to non-aligned states. This was highlighted during a Political Committee meeting in late 1972. Meanwhile, according to a further FO report, non-aligned countries were concerned that their Eastern Bloc allies were not informed of CSCE developments.⁵¹⁴ However, the report added, non-aligned countries were almost exclusively receiving their information from the Soviet Union.⁵¹⁵ A fine balancing act, therefore, was sought. Although Cambodia was devoid of diplomatic relations with the west, it did have representation with several Warsaw Pact countries. This would suggest that British concerns rested with non-aligned activity in the global south.

Journalists were invited to a briefing to clear up potential misconceptions of British foreign policy before the PrepCom meetings in late 1972. According to a report by the WOD, the journalists would be provided a full statement of London's full aims at the CSCE.⁵¹⁶ Meanwhile, the report argued, the journalists should be taken into the department's confidence.⁵¹⁷ This would entail going beyond the general brief and into specifics. This approach would provide London with favourable publicity as delegates arrived for the PrepCom. Moreover, the plan would negate any negative publicity from the conference. National security planners were concerned that a perceived lack of NATO unity would provide the papers with ammunition. Meanwhile, NATO delegations discussed a common publicity line to avoid scrutiny. As the CSCE was not a "sexy" topic, the WOD worried journalists would sensationalise such stories with talk of "shocks" and "rows".⁵¹⁸ Prior to the CSCE PrepCom, Britain adopted a cautious attitude to avoid appearing defensive in the face of Soviet vagueness. London's courtship of journalists and the wider media highlights how national security planners wished to be perceived.

Meanwhile, according to correspondence between Brinson and Gadon, Norman Reddaway published a steering brief in preparation for the CSCE in mid-1972.⁵¹⁹ Reddaway met with the PUS in late July to brief him on IRD activities. Alongside the FO News Department, it was thought the IRD would deal with publicity in Britain and in some cases, abroad.⁵²⁰ Gaydon informed Brinson that the BBC External Service had been fully briefed on

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid.

⁵²⁰ Ibid.

British policies in preparation for the conference.⁵²¹ This would enable the BBC to counteract Russian propaganda effectively. Reddaway held meetings with BBC representatives to outline the government's viewpoint. In July 1972, national security planners in the FO prepared a draft declaration of principles for the CSCE. The draft included outcomes that were acceptable to the British delegation.⁵²² It was thought the draft would provide steady publicity throughout the conference.

A further IRD publication titled 'CSCE Reaches Critical Point' was circulated to support British policy at the conference.⁵²³ Despatched in July 1974, the paper was received in destinations throughout Europe and the Middle East. The publication was critical of Warsaw Pact governments citing their initial enthusiasm compared to their reluctance to compromise.⁵²⁴ According to the publication, Soviet states entered the CSCE with the belief that they could exploit the West.⁵²⁵ Soviet States, moreover, insisted that the conference conclude at an earlier date to pressure western delegations into compromising.⁵²⁶ Unsurprisingly, the IRD stressed the rigidity in the Soviet approach to the CSC compared to the good-natured approach of the West. NATO cohesion, therefore, was fundamental. As such, any divergencies in approach to the CSCE amongst member States would be addressed through the Information Committee.

There was a collective effort to prepare for the CSCE including the IRD, BBC and NATO.⁵²⁷ Norman Reddaway, for example, published an IRD steering brief for the CSCE. Britain had a significant impact on proceedings at the Helsinki Accords. British delegates, according to FO correspondence, played a key role in formulating Basket III where a deadlock was broken through ingenuity.⁵²⁸ Meanwhile, London challenged aspects of Basket I whilst providing constructive alternatives.⁵²⁹ IRD officers met with members of the UKDEL NATO in preparation for the CSCE.⁵³⁰ According to correspondence between Wilberforce, a defence attaché and Whitney, an IRD officer, discussed publishing an article in the NATO

⁵²¹ Ibid.

⁵²² _____, "Survey of CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Issues."

⁵²³ _____, "Information Research Department: Special Brief: 'CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation] Reaches Critical Point'. FCO 168/7157."

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

⁵²⁸ Basket III was aimed at easing social tensions such as marriage and travel.

⁵²⁹ Office, "Information Research Department: Special Brief: 'CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation] Reaches Critical Point'. FCO 168/7157." Basket I was named the "Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States" which codified how states should interact.

⁵³⁰ _____, "Information Research Department: NATO and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). FCO 168/7994."

review. The pair approached David Abshire. Abshire, founder of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, was believed to be a good fit for the role. Moreover, he served as Chairman of the Board for International Broadcasting, who were responsible for Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.⁵³¹ IRD officers liaised with Washington over the publication which was designed to espouse NATO's contribution to Basket III provisions. The publication of the article was eventually blocked by the Information Office citing potential "political consequences".⁵³² Instead the article appeared in *The Times*. Whitney bemoaned the decision stating that the publication was not a heavy-handed diatribe against the Soviets.⁵³³ The article, in Whitney's view, should have been published, therefore.⁵³⁴

British delegates approached the CSCE PrepCom with caution with London priming the press to negate any negative press in the build-up. In 1977, the CSCE established a "Follow-Up" committee to be held in Belgrade.⁵³⁵ According to a FO report, the committee convened to implement the Final Act of the conference and to facilitate the détente.⁵³⁶ According to a report on the CSCE, British delegates attended plenary sessions and five subsidiary meeting groups in preparation for the conference.⁵³⁷ David Owen stated that the Accords were designed to bring about peaceful change and to minimise the risk of miscalculation.⁵³⁸ This highlights the cost of risk of escalation in Europe.

Throughout 1977, Britain held preparatory meetings with 'friendly democracies' to attain common policy goals.⁵³⁹ British delegates at Belgrade were prepared to discuss any criticisms levelled against their record.⁵⁴⁰ Fresh proposals were also considered. In September 1977, Owen bemoaned the "narrow sightedness" of some national security planners arguing that Britain still had interests in the Far East.⁵⁴¹ September 1977 saw Owen address a FO seminar on human rights.⁵⁴² When discussing human rights, Owen suggested the most effective policy of the government when pursuing human rights violations was to

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Unattributable Printed Briefs B Series June 1977 - December 1977. Described at Item Level. FCO 95/2131," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁵³⁶ Office, "Survey of CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Issues."

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

⁵³⁹ _____, "Unattributable Printed Briefs B Series June 1977 - December 1977. Described at Item Level. FCO 95/2131."

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

⁵⁴² _____, "Survey of CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Issues."

lean on private organisations and confidential contacts.⁵⁴³ In the case of Cambodia, Britain pursued a policy of covert action to achieve its foreign policy goals. Moreover, in Indonesia, human rights were a continuing issue with political prisoners being detained illegally.⁵⁴⁴ FO files reveal that several human rights advocacy groups operated inside Eastern Europe auditing the progress of the Accords.⁵⁴⁵

An article titled 'Views of Détente' outlined British attitudes towards the Accords.⁵⁴⁶ According to the article, concerns emerged amongst national security planners over possible "seeds of confrontation" within the Final Act.⁵⁴⁷ Writing in 1978, Michael Palliser, the head of the Britain's diplomatic service, wrote of the need of western delegations to maintain a consistent moral balance between safeguarding international law and their national interests.⁵⁴⁸ This encapsulates the perception that communist states posed a threat to British security and suggests that national interests and security concerns outweighed Britain's obligations under international law. PrepCom material provides the historian with an understanding of British policy goals at Helsinki. Moreover, the Final Act increased the perception that hypocrisy and legitimacy costs were higher in Europe. To influence events and deliver a blow to Soviet ambitions, Britain used covert action in the global south, including Cambodia and Indonesia. The Final Act clearly articulated measures designed to influence how states should interact with one another. To discern whether the Final Act influenced Britain's ability to engage in intelligence operations, however, the thesis examined law office papers to gauge the Final Act's status in international law.

i. Helsinki's Effect on Britain's Intelligence Activities in the Global South

This section will explore the status of the Final Act in international law and its relationship with zonal foreign policy. Although legal advisers did not perceive the Final Act as a binding international treaty, it increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe. To demonstrate this, the thesis consulted archival material pertaining to the FO's legal advisers. Legal

⁵⁴³ ———, "Unattributable Printed Briefs B Series June 1977 - December 1977. Described at Item Level. FCO 95/2131."

⁵⁴⁴ Ministry for Overseas Development and Overseas Development Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/213," ed. Ministry for Overseas Development (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁵⁴⁵ Office, "Unattributable Printed Briefs B Series June 1977 - December 1977. Described at Item Level. FCO 95/2131."

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁸ Michael, "British Foreign Policy." p.150

advisers provided support to the FO throughout the Helsinki Accords and CSCE follow up meetings. Thus, their records are useful for assessing the status of the Helsinki Final Act in international law. Although it is now considered the Accords were not legally binding, there was significant ambiguity surrounding its nature in the early 1980s. For example, in 1983, FO correspondence reveal that legal advisers believed the Helsinki Accords were not legally binding.⁵⁴⁹ An official from the Soviet department stated that ‘there is no mention in any of the files that I have looked through, which date back to 1975, that any part of the Final Act was made legally binding by the UK.’⁵⁵⁰ Writing in 1985, Mike Bowker suggested the Final Act was a ‘hybrid document’ which sought to promote European security.⁵⁵¹ This fits in within the wider historiography of the conference. In the days following the Helsinki Accords, Soviet leaders waxed lyrical about the success of the CSCE.⁵⁵² Gustav Husak, the Czechoslovak premier, lauded the CSCE as the foundations of a new international system where different social systems could coexist peacefully.⁵⁵³ This would suggest that the Final Act reinforced the perception of high legitimacy and hypocrisy costs as violations of this new coexistence in Europe would endanger the détente and regional peace. To tackle communism in Europe, therefore, national security planners targeted communist expansion in AATs.

Following a request by UKDEL NATO to understand the term “politically binding” legal advisers at the FO began to consider the implications of the Helsinki Accords. For example, the FO Deputy Legal Adviser, Henry Darwin, suggested that the term “politically binding” did not constitute a legally binding obligation to international law.⁵⁵⁴ According to policy papers, ‘the Helsinki Final Act sets a standard of conduct.’⁵⁵⁵ Moreover, the ‘measures will be carried forward on the political rather than the legal basis which has been characteristic of other documents emerging from the Helsinki negotiations.’⁵⁵⁶ This would suggest that Britain sought a non-binding agreement along political lines.

⁵⁴⁹ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁵¹ Bowker and Williams, "Helsinki and West European Security."

⁵⁵² Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism*. p.94

⁵⁵³ Ibid. p.95

⁵⁵⁴ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

⁵⁵⁵ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Parliamentary Questions. FCO 28/5974," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1983).

⁵⁵⁶ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

The British embassy in Berne suggested that the Ambassador ascertain the true nature of the Final Act on international law. Legal advisers suggested an FO contact, Professor Georges Perrin at the University of Lausanne, to assess the status of the Final Act in international law.⁵⁵⁷ Perrin suggested that the terminology in the Final Act meant that the Accords were non-legally binding.⁵⁵⁸ Moreover, Perrin suggested that the terminology of 'participating states' rather than 'high contracting parties' meant that nature of the Final Act depended on the 'wishes or intentions' of the states which took part in the conference, rather than legally binding.⁵⁵⁹ This would suggest that the non-binding nature of the Accords meant Britain was under no obligation to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of another state. This was particularly true in the case of the global south.

FO adviser, Mr Blaker, suggested that the Final Act committed Britain to a 'framework' outlining the conduct of international relations and acted as a stimulus to creating intergovernmental cooperation.⁵⁶⁰ Blaker was quick to state that the wording of the Final Act was not in accordance with Article 102 of the UN Charter which meant it lacked a legal obligation.⁵⁶¹ Correspondence stated that the Final Act was 'clearly not international agreement since its closing paragraphs include wording which makes clear that it is not registrable under Article 102 of the UN Charter.'⁵⁶² Other legal advisers argued, however, that the status of the Final Act would hold binding status within international law by claiming the very nature of the Final Act created legal obligations to international law.⁵⁶³ Note the emphasis on 'international' and not 'European'. This would suggest the public-facing portion of British foreign policy promoted itself as a champion of political pluralism. The timing of the correspondence is telling as Britain was about to engage in intelligence operations in Cambodia. This supports the concept of zonal foreign policy demonstrating how Britain engaged with countries that it did not colonise.

Despite the non-binding nature of the Final Act, Britain would routinely intervene in political and human rights abuses by the Soviet Union. For example, Anatoly Shcharansky, a human rights activist, and political prisoner was detained unlawfully by the Soviet Union for nine years after he tried to leave the country for Israel.⁵⁶⁴ British delegates preparing for the

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁴ _____, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Letters from the Public. FCO 28/5979."

Madrid Conference sought to bring focus to his plight citing Moscow's 'default' on the Final Act.⁵⁶⁵ Correspondence reveal that diplomats believed Britain should intervene in his case. Despite the Final Act not being legally binding and Britain interfering in the internal affairs of Cambodia, it was ready to highlight Soviet breaches of the Accords. As ever, self-perception was crucial to London. In parliamentary questions pertaining to a CSCE conference in Madrid, 1983, diplomats posited that 'to abandon the CSCE process would be to forego the opportunity to draw attention to Soviet and East European failure to fulfil their commitments undertaken at Helsinki.'⁵⁶⁶

Throughout the 1980s a series of follow-up conferences were held by the CSCE. FO legal advisers concluded that the Final Act was not legally binding.⁵⁶⁷ These were designed to assess the progress of the Helsinki Accords and CSCE. The CSCE as a pan-European movement and non-binding to international law. CSCE follow up meetings did not induce a pivot in British foreign policy in the 1980s, however. CSCE follow-up meetings reinforced the perception that hypocrisy and legitimacy costs were too high in Europe. This led to an expansion in covert action into Asian-style democracies. This section has demonstrated that although national security planners did not perceive the Final Act as legally binding, it increased legitimacy and hypocrisy costs in Europe leading to covert action in Cambodia to discredit the Soviet Union. This section has demonstrated that Britain sought the advice of academics and legal professionals over the status of the Final Act in international law. Despite the non-binding nature of the Accords, it still increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs on intelligence operations on the continent.

j. **Conclusion**

This chapter had two intended aims. Firstly, to demonstrate that international law conferences such as the 1975 Helsinki Accords reinforced the notion that Europe was too hazardous to operate within. To counter communist advances national security planners targeted AATs, which gained temporary importance whilst Britain engaged in covert action leading to examples of zonal foreign policy. The chapter outlined how the IRD responded to the Duncan Report. Although national security planners were prepared to focus their attention on Western Europe and North America, they still planned to shape events in the

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁶ _____, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Parliamentary Questions. FCO 28/5974."

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

global south suggesting Britain sought a world role following decolonisation. This is demonstrated by its actions in Cambodia during the 1980s.

Secondly, the chapter argued that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for Britain's Cold War foreign policy. This was achieved through an exposition of archival material pertaining to intelligence operations. Indonesia and Cambodia gained temporary importance as they struggled to contain communism. Zonal foreign policy provides an explanation as to why Britain shaped events in countries it did not colonise. This chapter has demonstrated that international law reinforced the perception that Europe was too hazardous for covert action. By the 1960s acting unilaterally became an unviable option for Britain. This led to an expansion of covert action and for Britain to engage in covert action in Asian-style democracies. A combination of globalisation, democratic norms and international law made it increasingly difficult for national security planners to advocate covert action in Europe as zonal foreign policy became a pillar of Britain's Cold War policy.

Despite actively participating in conferences, Britain continued to engage in covert action in emerging democracies. DPT, therefore, does not provide an adequate explanation for British covert action in Southeast Asia in the mid to latter stages of the Cold War. British covert action was utilised throughout Southeast Asia in the wake of failed operations in Eastern Europe despite both Indonesia and Cambodia being ruled by democratic governments. London sought to increase its influence where conventional force would lead to an escalation or international pressure would oppose such action. According to Cormac, it is hard to truly assess the effectiveness of covert action for myriad reasons, including local factors and other forces.⁵⁶⁸ Due to the secretive nature of British covert action and its need for flexibility, there was a striking lack of regulation and structure.⁵⁶⁹ IRD files pertaining to covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia reveal the machinations of the intelligence services. Military training, a further facet of covert action, was used by the British in Cambodia during the Vietnamese occupation. British foreign policy towards Cambodia blocked humanitarian progress and prolonged a sanguinary civil war. Cambodia almost feels overlooked as British foreign policy towards Cambodia was usually viewed as a subsidiary of wider regional, Vietnamese, or Thai policy. Covert action by the IRD had dried up over the course of the late 1960s in Cambodia.

⁵⁶⁸ Cormac, Walton, and Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs ". *Vide Disrupt and Deny* for further information.

⁵⁶⁹ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.5.

Covert action was utilised by the CSC to counter communist threats. This included intelligence sharing, propaganda, and the BBC.⁵⁷⁰ For example, Edith Temple Roberts, the Tropical Talks writer for the BBC's Far Eastern Service, was provided intelligence for her shows.⁵⁷¹ By the mid-1980s, the Tropical Talks show comprised of four permanent members of staff.⁵⁷² CSC policymakers believed propaganda and foreign policy were interrelated.⁵⁷³

The chapter also demonstrated that Britain pursued a strategically selective international system outside of Europe despite espousing the values of political pluralism inside the CSCE. This supports the theory of zonal foreign policy. International law norms prior to the Helsinki Conference were premised on the principle of non-intervention.⁵⁷⁴ The Final Act codified the international law axiom of non-interference in Europe reinforcing the perception of high hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. Archival material revealed that Britain viewed the Helsinki Accords and CSCE as non-binding and essentially a pan-European conference.⁵⁷⁵ This is demonstrated through correspondence to members of the public.⁵⁷⁶ This highlights the role of increased legitimacy costs in shaping British foreign policy. Follow-up CSCE meetings reinforced the perception that Europe was too hazardous to operate within. This came at a time when Britain was stymying communist influence following the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. Intelligence operations in Cambodia, therefore, were part of a wider attempt to curtail Soviet advances in Southeast Asia. Follow up CSCE meetings throughout the 1980s provide the historian with archival material relating to FO legal advisers.

The status of international law within the Helsinki Accords was studied by legal advisers and academics. Archival materials reveal that FO legal advisers believed the Final Act did not create obligations to international law.⁵⁷⁷ European capitals were concerned by the prospect of the CSCE becoming dominated by the Americans and Soviets.⁵⁷⁸ This would suggest that political pluralism was preserved for members of the conference. During CSCE

⁵⁷⁰ Office, "Counter Subversion Committee: Meetings 1-7, Papers 1-27. CAB 134/2543."

⁵⁷¹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "UK: Recipients of IRD Material;BBC. FCO 95/1270," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1971).

⁵⁷² _____, "BBC External Services: Review of Far Eastern Service. FCO 21/2961," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office & BBC (London: National Archives, 1985).

⁵⁷³ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁵⁷⁴ Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism*. p.27

⁵⁷⁵ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

⁵⁷⁶ _____, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Letters from the Public. FCO 28/5979."

⁵⁷⁷ _____, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): status in international law of the Helsinki Final Act. FCO 28/5971."

⁵⁷⁸ _____, "Diplomatic Despatches, 1975. (Described at item level). FCO 160/174."

PrepCom meetings, national security planners discussed the implications of non-aligned countries participating in the conference. FO officials were concerned the non-aligned states would lobby Britain to safeguard their interests.⁵⁷⁹ It was thought non-aligned countries would lobby Britain to ensure the norms established at Helsinki were universal. This would suggest that London pursued an anti-pluralist international system. This suggests that zonal foreign policy was a consideration for national security planners.

PrepCom meetings, moreover, were held between NATO members. The meetings transcended freedom of movement, cultural links, and potential publications heightening hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe. Alongside the CSCE, the IRD kept abreast of developments. Meanwhile, officers kept a close watch on developments and spread unattributable material against Soviet proposals.⁵⁸⁰ For example, IRD proposed a Penguin Special dedicated to the CSCE to counter increasing Soviet military strength. Moreover, a proposed East-West magazine would exploit Soviet shortfalls in foreign affairs. It was thought the Soviets did not inform their populations of events outside the union, or at the very least a spin was put on them. The thesis will now analyse Britain's non-compliance with democratic norms through two case studies of covert action. The next chapter will outline Britain's non-compliance with democratic norms in Indonesia, an emerging democracy.

⁵⁷⁹ _____, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.

Chapter IV

Propaganda & Confrontation

Covert Action in Indonesia

a. Framing

Democratic peace theorists would argue that Britain would not have engaged in covert action in Indonesia as it was an emerging Asian-style democracy. As this chapter will demonstrate, however, Britain interfered in the internal affairs of Indonesia through covert action despite international norms, such as democratic peace theory (DPT), demonstrating that the international law principle of non-interference did not induce a pivot away from the use of covert action. A thorough exposition of archival materials will enable the thesis to determine British intelligence operations and explore their relationship with international law. This will be achieved through an exposition of Information Research Department (IRD) archival material. This chapter will also account for strategic diplomacy. Strategic diplomacy is, according to Jochen Prantl, 'the process by which state and non-state actors socially construct and frame their view of the world; set their agendas, and communicate, contest and negotiate diverging core interests and goals.'⁵⁸¹ In the case of zonal foreign policy, the global south had fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs than Europe. Demonstrating a central theme in British covert operations, Indonesia became a hotbed of deception, subversion, and propaganda. Despite not being the colonial power in Indonesia, Britain shaped developments in the country throughout the 1960s. London used covert action, *inter alia*, to suppress communist forces in Indonesia when it perceived its security was at risk. When Britain perceived Sukarno to be susceptible to communist factions it widened its approach. This included attempts to discredit the government and capitalise on national disasters. This sets the thesis up to examine British covert action and its relationship with democratic peace theory.

The chapter contains research obtained under the Freedom of Information requests. *Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia*, for example, contained transcripts of British

⁵⁸¹ Jochen Prantl, "Reuniting Strategy and Diplomacy for 21st Century Statecraft," *Contemporary Politics* Vo.28, No.1(2022).

propaganda disseminated in Indonesian press outlets.⁵⁸² The documents will introduce several uncovered IRD operations, including Operation Scrabble and an IRD inspired publication titled *Kenjataan*. This newly released material enabled the research to expose new links between covert action and DPT. This chapter will provide new insights into the role of the IRD, South East Asian Monitoring Unit (SEAMU) and BBC in the interference in Indonesia's internal affairs. The following chapter will demonstrate that under the more authoritarian Suharto, Britain pivoted to soft power enabling the thesis to undermine DPT further.

b. Democratic Pace Theory

The aim of this section is to demonstrate that DPT does not stand up to scrutiny when researching Britain's Cold War foreign policy. 1960s Indonesia witnessed the proliferation of British intelligence activities with covert action centring around the containment of communism and ending Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia.⁵⁸³ Although it is difficult for the historian to discern the success of covert action, there was regime change in Indonesia in 1967.⁵⁸⁴ According to Paul Lashmar, Norman Reddaway led the propaganda campaign against Sukarno in 1965 and possessed a £100,000 budget.⁵⁸⁵ Reddaway claimed in a 1998 interview with Lashmar and James Oliver, that the British campaign in Indonesia was one of the most successful plans in countering communism launched by the Foreign Office (FO).⁵⁸⁶ Throughout the 1960s, national security planners prepared detailed assessments on the internal situation in Indonesia. This allowed London to monitor communist factions in Indonesia and the activities of influential politicians. Amongst the reports were transcripts of speeches and events.⁵⁸⁷ For example, in April 1965, British correspondence revealed that diplomats suspected civil war would occur in Indonesia within the next two years as the political situation was likely to deteriorate.⁵⁸⁸ By Spring 1965, FO reports concluded that only Sukarno's early death would provide the catalyst for the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI) to reverse Indonesia's pivot towards neo-communism.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸² Foreign Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.," ed. Foreign Office (London: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, 1965).

⁵⁸³ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁵⁸⁴ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*.

⁵⁸⁵ Lashmar, *Spies, Spin and the Fourth Estate: British Intelligence and the Media*. p.107 see also Lashmar and Oliver, "How we destroyed Sukarno."

⁵⁸⁶ Lashmar, *Spies, Spin and the Fourth Estate: British Intelligence and the Media*. p.108 It is always difficult to assess the true impact of covert action.

⁵⁸⁷ Office, "Internal Political Situation: Attempted Coup Against Sukarno. FO 371/180313."

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

Although this chapter predominantly focuses on propaganda it does not neglect other facets of covert action including special forces operations, such as Operation Claret. Following the Radfan Campaign in 1964, the MOD published a series of reports on lessons learnt from military operations.⁵⁹⁰ Covert action, in the form of special forces operations, were part of the British military's strategy in Aden. Copies of the report were sent to diplomats inside the FO. Alongside the report, a separate briefing paper on the Indonesian Confrontation was present. This paper discussed the use of raiding parties, special forces operations and subversive techniques to alter the outcome in the Confrontation.⁵⁹¹ Another facet of covert action included police training. For example, Malaysian police benefited from a British Police Training Programme to bolster the government's apparatus in combating subversion.⁵⁹² Alongside the IRD, SEAMU operated within Indonesia. The unit, organised by Ed Wynne, was an offshoot of the IRD and was established in January 1965.⁵⁹³ Andrew Gilchrist wrote in October 1965 that any activities SEAMU embarked on would not be easy to plan nor decisive in their results, however.⁵⁹⁴

The dissemination of mendacious propaganda in Indonesia, for example, faced several hurdles from geographic barriers to the composition and content. Covert action was used to supplement political and military commitments in Indonesia and establish Malaysia as an independent state.⁵⁹⁵ Throughout the *Konfrontasi*, the intelligence services and IRD developed close connections with Malaysian intelligence. This allowed Britain to disseminate propaganda through their Malaysian counterparts. The efficacy of covert action, however, has been questioned by academics.⁵⁹⁶

Plausible deniability was key to London's intelligence operations. For example, Patrick Dean denied any British involvement in covert action to the UN.⁵⁹⁷ Back in London, policymakers formulated plans to spread Western ideas through unofficial channels to non-

⁵⁹⁰ Ministry of Defence: Chiefs of Staff Committee, "Chiefs of Staff Committee: Minutes of Meetings Now 69-72 (Described at Item Level) DEFE 4/177," ed. Ministry of Defence (London: National Archives, November 24th - December 8th 1964).

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Counter Subversion Fund: Malaysia; Police Training Programme. FCO 95/465," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1968-1969).

⁵⁹³ Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.." see also Lashmar, Gilby, and Oliver, "Slaughter in Indonesia: Britain's secret propaganda war." for further information on SEAMU.

⁵⁹⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668."

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁶ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.170.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid. p.171

aligned countries such as Indonesia specifically designed to target those who were sympathetic to British foreign policy.⁵⁹⁸ Moreover, documents disclosed plans proposed by British diplomats and IRD officers to exploit the political division in the months following the coup. IRD officers operated throughout Southeast Asia, often providing reports on how best to pursue British foreign policy in Indonesia.⁵⁹⁹ In the months preceding the coup numerous plans devised by Gilchrist were rejected by the IRD for their callousness.⁶⁰⁰ The research suggests that in some cases the intelligence operations of the department contrasted in approach to Gilchrist.⁶⁰¹ Gilchrist's background in intelligence highlights its incestuous relationship with diplomacy.

As far back as 1948 national security planners were concerned by communist propaganda being disseminated throughout Indonesia.⁶⁰² An IRD report titled 'Republican Hogwash' outlined the growing volumes of Russian literature in Indonesian libraries.⁶⁰³ The report outlined how in the wake of the unsuccessful Renville Agreement there was a significant 'swing' away from western liberal ideology in Indonesia.⁶⁰⁴ Russia, the report added, had taken advantage of the political landscape and assumed the role of Indonesia's guarantor.⁶⁰⁵ According to a further FO report, Russian literature began to fill libraries and bookshops throughout Indonesia during the 1950s. Examples of the literature included *Life in Russia Today* and the *Life of Lenin*.⁶⁰⁶ A prominent Indonesian businessman and publisher, Bassa, reported that *ca.* seventy per cent of his sales were Soviet.⁶⁰⁷ Furthermore, Russian film and revolutionary styled posters were seen throughout the archipelago.⁶⁰⁸ Increases in Soviet propaganda concerned London who feared Jakarta was pivoting towards Moscow. This perception led to an increase in intelligence operations. National security planner's perceptions of communist advances were well founded. For example, following Indonesian independence, PKI membership outstripped any other

⁵⁹⁸ Foreign Office, "North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO): Committee on Information and Cultural Relations, Means of Reaching Target Audiences in Non-Aligned Countries, Countering Efforts of Fronts to Obtain Consultative Status with UNESCO and Counter Propaganda in Indonesia. FO 1110/1990.," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁵⁹⁹ Office, "Internal Political Situation: Attempted Coup Against Sukarno. FO 371/180313."

⁶⁰⁰ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁶⁰¹ IRD, "Information Research Department: Indonesia FCO 168/1589."

⁶⁰² Foreign Office, "Communist Propaganda in Indonesia. Code 962 PFE 1208. FO 953/335," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1948).

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.* The Renville Agreement was an attempt to broker a cease fire between Indonesia and the Netherlands

⁶⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

political party.⁶⁰⁹ Meanwhile, tension mounted in Malaya as British, Malayan and Commonwealth forces battled an Indonesian insurgency.⁶¹⁰ Jakarta perceived Malaysia as a threat to Indonesian security. London, however, perceived Indonesia as a threat to Malaysia and regional security. Securing Malaysia from communism, therefore, was of paramount importance. London, after all, had considerable import markets in Malaysia. This would suggest that security considerations outweighed international norms undermining DPT.

National security planners faced similar communist threats in Burma. In response, the IRD disseminated small pamphlets printed in the vernacular decrying the virtues of communism.⁶¹¹ IRD official R.A. Vining pondered whether British propaganda could be disseminated throughout Indonesia. Distribution in Indonesia, Vining argued, would be easier than in Burma.⁶¹² The central theme of the pamphlets would be to espouse the virtues of British socialism and its achievements compared to Marxist-Leninist communism.⁶¹³ Mr Clibborn, another IRD officer, pondered whether it was necessary for the pamphlets to discuss the 'evils that beset any country which gives itself up to the Communist doctrine.'⁶¹⁴ Dissemination of such pamphlets would be either targeted towards the Dutch or pro-western Indonesians.⁶¹⁵ This is an example of Britain engaging in covert action against an Asian-style democracy.

Meanwhile, propaganda campaigns against Indonesia became more acute. According to a report in *The Times*, Sukarno refused to recognise the nascent Malaysia and threatened to withdraw from the UN inflaming tensions with London.⁶¹⁶ Sukarno responded by establishing the Conference of the New Emerging Forces (CONEFO).⁶¹⁷ Members of CONEFO were predominantly communist and posed a risk to Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AAT). Sukarno wished to house CONEFO conferences in a new-build construction project in Jakarta. Sukarno had undertaken a series of vanity projects funded through loans amounting to billions of dollars. Sukarno hoped the projects would provide a base of unity for nationalism and economic success. On July 21st, 1965, Sukarno held meetings with the Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia, Yao Chung-Ming, as he attempted to build bi-lateral

⁶⁰⁹ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.158

⁶¹⁰ Office, "Communist Propaganda in Indonesia. Code 962 PFE 1208. FO 953/335."

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ Ibid.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

⁶¹⁶ Reuter, "Jakarta Mob Attacks British Embassy," *The Times* September 17th 1953.

⁶¹⁷ Foreign Office, "Press Censorship and Propaganda 'South East Asia'. FO 371/180369," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

relations. FO officials believed Sukarno did not have the resources to complete the project, however.⁶¹⁸ In 1965, the *Indonesian Herald* published an article alluding to the benefits of CONEFO stating that it provided the only system to replace the UN and stop Indonesia from gravitating towards Beijing.⁶¹⁹ This had security risks for Britain. SEAMU exploited the saga in their November 1965 issue of *Kenjataan*. *Kenjataan*, which roughly translates as 'reality' in English, was a propaganda magazine created by Ed Wynne and his associates. The publication adopted an anti-government stance. For instance, an article titled *While Rome Burns* discussed the implications of the coup and CONEFO.⁶²⁰ *While Rome Burns*, attacked the *Indonesian Herald's* article supporting Sukarno's policy and denouncement of neo-colonialism. The article stated that

there is a new world outside the twisted ideas of hatred which Peking has fostered in its support for CONEFO, and all the other myriad slogans invented to deflect the people from their real problems.⁶²¹

According to the same FO report, Indonesians possessed little knowledge of Britain and did not exhibit any lingering colonial resentment like the Dutch.⁶²² In the context of zonal foreign policy this reduced hypocrisy and legitimacy costs for national security planners. This perception emboldened national security planners to engage in covert action in Indonesia.

c. British Intelligence Operations

On July 21st, 1965, Ibrahim Mohammad, chief representative of the Malayan National Liberation Front in Indonesia, spoke at the seventeenth anniversary of the Malayan Emergency.⁶²³ During his speech Mohammad claimed that the peoples of Indonesia, Singapore and Malaya were fighting colonialism as 'comrades-in-arms.'⁶²⁴ IRD officers were particularly interested in the Indonesian officials who attended the meeting including the Minister of Justice, Astrawinata, State Minister, Oei Tjoe Tat and Air Marshal Suryadharma. The report suggested all three of the high-ranking individuals were communist

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ Ibid.

⁶²² Cultural Relations Department, "Indonesia: British Council Operations. FCO 13/98," ed. Foreign Office: Cultural Relations (1968).

⁶²³ Office, "Press Censorship and Propaganda 'South East Asia'. FO 371/180369."

⁶²⁴ Ibid.

sympathisers.⁶²⁵ The conception of a unified Malaysia had been explored for many years as early as May 1961.⁶²⁶ Countering Indonesian subversion in Malaysia was key for British intelligence. According to Jakarta, a unified Malaysia would threaten its security.⁶²⁷

According to a FO report, the IRD took a 'very active' role in 'feeding' material to Malaysian contacts, who in turn, disseminated the material over the radio.⁶²⁸ A report titled 'Indonesian Disturbances – Unattributable Propaganda Exploitation' was drafted in early October 1965.⁶²⁹ According to the report, non-imperialist countries provided a good platform for the propaganda to originate from.⁶³⁰ Alongside the BBC, Voice of America (VOA) was also utilised for propaganda. Radio Australia, moreover, was fed similar information as it had a wide following in Indonesia. Chosen IRD 'contacts' were encouraged to disseminate as much of the material as safely possible.⁶³¹ IRD plans to disseminate a British news sheet would 'supply accurate information accurate to effective opinion all over the country and help to spread dissension and uncertainty among the ruling classes.'⁶³² John Drinkall was involved in the organisation of the IRD inspired 'black propaganda' publication.⁶³³ According to Drinkall, the nascent publication would need time to earn the trust of the Indonesian population. Ed Wynne also suggested that it was essential the IRD publication had established itself as a reliable and informative publication.⁶³⁴ Drinkall suggested, therefore, that Malaysian "black radio" stations would be a better fit.⁶³⁵

The report stated that there were three main issues with publishing a British newspaper in Indonesia. Firstly, complications arose over the composition of the paper, specifically around issue of language. McCann suggested the use of 'fractured' English or Dutch in the publication instead of the local Bahasa dialect.⁶³⁶ Dutch would be received by a wider audience outside of Jakarta and the publication's English provenance would be harder to detect.⁶³⁷ Using Dutch, moreover, would avoid the necessity for using local vernaculars. Secondly, the logistics and composition of the proposed paper concerned McCann, who

⁶²⁵ Ibid.

⁶²⁶ Colonial Office, "Report of the Commission of Enquiry, North Borneo and Sarawak 1962. Cmnd 1794.," ed. Command Papers (Hansards Parliamentary Papers: Hansards, August 1962).

⁶²⁷ Ibid.

⁶²⁸ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ Ibid.

⁶³¹ Ibid.

⁶³² Ibid.

⁶³³ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁶³⁴ Ibid.

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

believed a daily or weekly publication would be dependent on a far larger team than was available. McCann suggested a monthly periodical, which would give the illusion of an up-to-date publication.⁶³⁸ The report stated that the newspaper should have a green header replete with white writing as the colours are synonymous with Islam and, therefore, anti-communism.⁶³⁹ Moreover, to avoid suspicion McCann suggested the paper should be of poor quality in context and print.⁶⁴⁰

Although publicly British politicians advocated a peaceful settlement to the confrontation, the IRD undermined Jakarta with propaganda. For example, P.R. Oliver, wrote to British diplomat John Nicholls informing him of a paper prepared by Max McCann, regarding the 'publication of an ostensibly Indonesian news sheet, to be circulated in Indonesia as a vehicle to introduce to the educated reader a viewpoint calculated to further our own policies.'⁶⁴¹ The correspondence stated that the Indonesian government exercised tight control of public opinion and that the British embassy was assessing ways of putting across views more acceptable to British policy. The report stated that in 1964 no significant authorised source of information existed for the Indonesian press. This phenomenon resulted in an over reliance on *Antara* news agency, disseminated in Bahasa and English.⁶⁴² Other Indonesian newspapers, who often lacked finances, repeated *Antara's* line. According to the report, most newspapers followed the government line in daily articles.⁶⁴³ There was only one exception to the rule, the paper of the PKI, the *Harian Rakyat*.

Use of Media

According to McCann, one of the defects of Sukarno's government concerned corruption amongst senior politicians and officials.⁶⁴⁴ Corruption often filtered down into the lower ranks of the army. The report stated that the IRD would feed material of such nature into its publication even if the news was fabricated.⁶⁴⁵ McCann claimed that 'examples of this [corruption] could be readily invented if genuine subjects of reporting were difficult to unearth.'⁶⁴⁶ The IRD noted that Malaysian intelligence services frequently used Indonesian corruption in their clandestine broadcasts and that the British version should consult the

⁶³⁸ Ibid.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ Ibid.

⁶⁴² Ibid.

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ Office, "Press Censorship and Propaganda 'South East Asia'. FO 371/180369."

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

material to avoid inconsistencies.⁶⁴⁷ However, in later correspondence it was agreed that the operation should remain a solely British endeavour but those concerned should be physically close to the Malaysians.⁶⁴⁸ Neil Pritchard of the CRO would only inform Ghazali of British plans.⁶⁴⁹ Under the proposals, local gossip and information would be utilised by the IRD to maintain the appearance of Indonesian origin.⁶⁵⁰ McCann visited Singapore's R.I.O in August 1964 in a consultation role for the IRD.⁶⁵¹

In a letter dated November 5th, 1964, McCann informed his contacts at the FO that the MOD were interested in the proposal and that the Chief of the Defence Staff had personally endorsed the operation.⁶⁵² The political administrator (POLAD) and defence staff were copied in on the developments and asked if they would assist the project including accommodation and office space.⁶⁵³ A discussion was held concerning the possibility of using office space at RAF Changi in Singapore, which would provide ample security.⁶⁵⁴ However, it was later decided that the air base did not have sufficient room to offer the unit accommodation or office space. This would suggest that the operation was significant in size. Following extensive deliberation, Singapore was chosen as the destination to launch the operation as it was felt 'operators will not get the feel of the situation they are supposed to exploit unless they are physically situated in an area where the said situation is.'⁶⁵⁵ The publications, moreover, would be sent from different locations and in different style envelopes as to confuse any Indonesian censorship.⁶⁵⁶ As with many intelligence operations it is difficult to assess whether the McCann newspaper was effective but does demonstrate the nature of the propaganda.

Away from the IRD newspaper, countering propaganda encompassed other NATO members.⁶⁵⁷ In 1965, for example, NATO convened an Information Committee dedicated to intelligence acquisition and promoting Western ideas. Discussions were held viz.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁷ Office, "North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO): Committee on Information and Cultural Relations, Means of Reaching Target Audiences in Non-Aligned Countries, Countering Efforts of Fronts to Obtain Consultative Status with UNESCO and Counter Propaganda in Indonesia. FO 1110/1990.."

disseminating favourable propaganda to Western ideas in non-aligned countries.⁶⁵⁸ In February 1965, the British delegation to NATO proposed that experts in public relations and propaganda were present at further meetings.⁶⁵⁹ In response, the American delegation announced that Vincent Joyce, an expert in propaganda, would speak at the next meeting.⁶⁶⁰ According to David Goodchild, a British diplomat, the Dutch, Portuguese, and Italian delegations were unable to send experts but were keen to hear the British plans.⁶⁶¹ FO correspondence reveal that London's top priority was to target people of influence including leaders of opinion and those in a position to disseminate ideological material. Journalists, teachers, and senior officials were all targeted by London as well as unofficial entities such as youth organisations, political bodies, and religious sites.⁶⁶²

According to Goodchild, those who were in opposition to Western ideology were not treated as primary targets but could still be considered secondary targets.⁶⁶³ Material disseminated under the programme would have official origins - but the true sources would be entirely concealed. If the target audience were aware of the source, they were advised not to reveal the source.⁶⁶⁴ Moreover, the report noted that British media, specifically the *Guardian* and *Observer*, were influential in non-aligned countries.⁶⁶⁵ Articles selected for dissemination inside non-aligned countries would purport to be from international figures and easily adaptable to be indigenously produced.

The IRD aimed to spread alarm in Indonesia following the coup. Gilchrist for example sought to aggravate and prolong the crisis to delay the re-emergence of the Sukarno government.⁶⁶⁶ FO officials believed this could be achieved through a two-pronged approach. Firstly, overt radio broadcasting programs from the BBC and Radio Australia would provide up to date broadcasts. Indonesian radio stations were not fully operational and the local population, it was thought, would turn to reliable news outlets for information on the coup. It was important, however, that broadcasts from "non-imperialist" states should be broadcast too.⁶⁶⁷ Secondly, black propaganda would be disseminated through the IRD's

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶⁶² Ibid.

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁶ _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668."

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.

regular newsletter. According to the report, the IRD were in control of the broadcasts.⁶⁶⁸ This formed part of the IRD's propaganda campaign against Sukarno.

By 1965, however, tension arose between the IRD and diplomats over inaction in Indonesia. In correspondence with POLAD, Gilchrist lamented that London had not exploited the Indonesian Naval Mutiny.⁶⁶⁹ Gilchrist pondered whether Britain could potentially divert Indonesian oil tankers and 'generally cause confusion.'⁶⁷⁰ This, he argued, would mount pressure on Jakarta. Moreover, he asked if the Indonesian Air Force were to rebel, what actions could the IRD, and military, take to exploit the situation. Gilchrist's correspondence revealed that in the week following the coup British diplomats were exploring the possibility of disseminating black propaganda in Indonesia.⁶⁷¹ Preparing an effective launch pad for covert action was prioritised by Gilchrist. The launchpad included installing a series of transmitters throughout the region. The transmitters would be able to disseminate pre-recorded messages.⁶⁷² Gilchrist, moreover, proposed a seaborne transmitter system too. According to the correspondence, propaganda would be operated intensively against chosen targets. London, however, did not possess the equipment to carry out the operations.⁶⁷³

In early October 1965, an IRD radio broadcast titled "Radio 30 September" was due to air for the first time.⁶⁷⁴ According to a FO report, the aim of the broadcast was to incite supporters of the PKI to assassinate TNI officers and religious leaders.⁶⁷⁵ Broadcasts, around ten minutes in length, were to be transmitted three times a day throughout Java.⁶⁷⁶ Meanwhile, discussions were held between Gilchrist and the Chiefs of Staff over the safety of the generals.⁶⁷⁷ Correspondence between the MOD and FO reveal that London reassured the generals who were targeted in the coup that they need not look over their shoulders at western activity whilst they were 'bashing the PKI'.⁶⁷⁸ Safeguarding the generals whilst they dealt with the PKI, therefore, was a priority for the IRD. However, the destruction of the PKI was of greater importance -

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁷¹ Ibid.

⁶⁷² Ibid.

⁶⁷³ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.

Note of course that nothing in the above is intended to stand in the way of such unattributable measures as we can in fact take now, not so much in favour of the generals as against the PKI⁶⁷⁹

Meanwhile, London corresponded with Washington and Canberra over the fate of the generals with the American Ambassador suggesting Britain suspend all its provocative naval patrols in the region to allow the generals space to counter the PKI.⁶⁸⁰ Moreover, Washington proposed that London cease all cross-border military activity.⁶⁸¹ Gilchrist stated that without internal change psywar operations would be limited in its effectiveness to bring about political strife.⁶⁸² Targeting the PKI, therefore, was necessary to fulfil Britain's foreign policy objectives. The correspondence raised several key questions. Who would be protected? And how long would the protection last? This operation demonstrates Britain's complicity in inciting violence against the TNI whilst actively reassuring their safety. According to Gilchrist, the most effective way of deciding who required protection was to approach Suharto and Abdul Haris Nasution directly.⁶⁸³ IRD involvement in the radio publication was extensive. Ed Wynne informed John Drinkall that 'PG' was an expert in radio scripts and would bring his talents to the Radio 30 September program.⁶⁸⁴ Moreover, Norman Reddaway was sought by Gilchrist to assist in the development of the publication.⁶⁸⁵ According to the report, the main obstacle facing the broadcast were technical issues leading to one of the more elaborate British plans of using Royal Navy submarines.

d. Use of Submarines

A further report issued on October 25th, 1965, suggested Royal Navy submarines operating in the vicinity south of Java would be able to fit the broadcasting equipment into their radio rooms.⁶⁸⁶ Accommodating a small team comprising of a linguist, engineer and case officer would be easily achieved. Maintaining plausible deniability was, as ever, an essential component of the plan. Therefore, all correspondence to the team embarked on the submarine would be sent from Singapore in cypher form to avoid creating a 'attributable

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁸¹ Ibid.

⁶⁸² Ibid.

⁶⁸³ Ibid. Interestingly, Gilchrist noted on October 7th that Suharto had not displayed any political qualities or inclinations.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.

pattern on the air.⁶⁸⁷ There were, however, implications of using submarines. For example, the slow speed of submarines would leave the vessel vulnerable to direction finding tactics.⁶⁸⁸ The submarine would not be able to travel long distances between broadcasts making it easier for the Indonesians to track its location. A submerged submarine, however, would be harder to track but would have to operate within thirty miles of the coastline to transmit a coherent broadcast. According to the report, the duration of deployment would be limited to three weeks to allow transit time from Singapore.⁶⁸⁹ An IRD document stated that the issue of tracking would be offset if two submarines were used, however, due to a lack of equipment and programming teams, it was not viewed as a viable option.⁶⁹⁰ Distressingly, there are no further documents held at the National Archives pertaining to the proposed submarine operation. It is not possible to ascertain whether submarines were ever used, therefore.

Alongside Sukarno and Subandrio, Nasution was targeted by the IRD.⁶⁹¹ Nasution served as the former head of the TNI and was a former member of the disbanded Generation of 1945 group. According to a FO report, the 1945 Group served as an embarrassment to Sukarno.⁶⁹² Nasution, who survived the kidnap attempt in 1965, began espousing the benefits of pivoting towards the west, predominantly through financial and diplomatic links, whilst still promoting the old Indonesian policy of 'confrontation'.⁶⁹³ Reddaway suggested that British officials should pursue a policy whereby the press released, through informal channels, highlighted the incompatibility of mixing the two policies.⁶⁹⁴ By December 1965, London was offering material produced in Singapore to Malaysian black radio stations.⁶⁹⁵ Throughout the 1960s, Nasution would become the target of IRD propaganda in the form of radio broadcasts and a fortnightly newsletter.⁶⁹⁶ A policy document titled 'Getting at Nasution' was written by Reddaway on Christmas Eve, 1965.⁶⁹⁷ Alongside radio broadcasts IRD officers used Indonesian newspapers such as *Antara* to

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁹¹ ———, "Internal Political Situation: Attempted Coup Against Sukarno. FO 371/180313."

⁶⁹² Ibid.

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁴ Foreign Office, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid; ———, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. F1101/8.," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁶⁹⁷ Office, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

gain insights into Indonesian domestic affairs.⁶⁹⁸ *Antara* would also become a tool of the IRD in the late 1960s to counter Chinese subversion in Indonesia.⁶⁹⁹

Nasution claimed that London and Washington were encircling Indonesia using Commonwealth forces to fulfil the policy.⁷⁰⁰ Nasution was alluding to the string of British and American military bases situated on the islands of Diego Garcia and Maldives. Indonesian officials believed the islands were being militarised by the west to entrap Indonesia.⁷⁰¹ Nasution, moreover, charged London of stationing long range bombers in Darwin, Northern Australia.⁷⁰² Nasution's anxiety was not ill-judged as British intelligence began to target him and military advisers had previously discussed the use of long-range radio transmitters, stationed in Darwin, to broadcast propaganda into Indonesia.⁷⁰³ To prevent the supposed encirclement, Nasution pursued a continuation of the confrontation policy with Malaysia.⁷⁰⁴ According to Reddaway's report, it was commonplace for publicists to approach embassies and official missions for guidance on which topics to promote. Informal meetings, therefore, were held by embassy staff and publicists.⁷⁰⁵ Reddaway stated in his correspondence that what the publicists in London reported would generally find its way into Indonesia.⁷⁰⁶

By late 1965, political and economic instability in Indonesia led Nasution to approach western governments for aid. Reddaway reported that Indonesia's dalliance with communism had ended but some politicians wished to retain the policy of confrontation.⁷⁰⁷ Reddaway suggested that during bilateral talks, British diplomats should highlight the incompatibility of pursuing both paths. As the PKI were dismantled by the new military government, diplomats in London were hopeful that the confrontation was over.⁷⁰⁸ Whilst the Indonesian embassies in Paris and Canberra were approached for financial aid, reports of French and Australian aircraft being targeted were circulating in the press.⁷⁰⁹ IRD officers welcomed the news reports. The reports, they argued, could do no harm, and fortify the

⁶⁹⁸ _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁶⁹⁹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Indonesia: Consideration of Level of IRD Work Required and Visit by Miss Gibson, IRD London. FCO 95/147," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1967-1968).

⁷⁰⁰ Office, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

⁷⁰¹ Ibid.

⁷⁰² Ibid.

⁷⁰³ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

⁷⁰⁴ Office, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

inclination of Jakarta to abandon the old policy of confrontation.⁷¹⁰ The reports would also harm Indonesia's prestige. IRD officers felt that the diplomatic staff may have held contrary views but if the facts suited the IRD, then the secretive meetings would continue. Discreet briefings, moreover, had benefitted the IRD and had led to the right sort of publicity.⁷¹¹

IRD officers believed Nasution would become more favourable to the west when Washington cut its aid budget to Jakarta.⁷¹² In a written statement to the Armed Forces Bulletin, Nasution called upon Indonesia and other 'like-minded' countries to unite against colonialism and neo-colonialism.⁷¹³ Nasution, moreover, publicly celebrated Singapore's withdrawal from Malaysia. Nasution expressed his wishes for other parts of Malaysia to follow suit and stated that Singapore's withdrawal signalled the end of colonialism and neo-colonialism in Africa and Asia.⁷¹⁴ Meanwhile, Nasution accused London and Washington of supplying arms to rebel factions in the 1958 Indonesian Rebellion.⁷¹⁵ Further agitation with Indonesia occurred when a Qantas flight, bound for London, made a scheduled stopover in Singapore.⁷¹⁶ According to reports from the flight crew, the aircraft came under fire from Indonesian positions around the border areas with Malaysia. British diplomats were quick to approach the Indonesian authorities in protest at their actions.⁷¹⁷ An internal memorandum suggested that Reddaway held a meeting with Partono, an Indonesian pilot and the Minister for Air Communications, over the incident. Partono informed Reddaway that he would speak with Suharto over the incident. Although the incident provided the IRD with a further opportunity to embarrass Jakarta, on this occasion, British authorities planned to keep the incident from the newspapers to avoid an escalation.⁷¹⁸

Following the coup, London positioned itself as the guardian of the TNI Generals who were targeted in the coup whilst disseminating propaganda calling for their murder.⁷¹⁹ Propaganda formed one pillar of covert action in Indonesia during Sukarno's rule. There were, however, various other methods employed by London such as counter subversion operations. Counter-subversion in Suharto's Indonesia formed a core component of British intervention in Indonesian internal affairs and highlights how national security planners

⁷¹⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹¹ Ibid.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Ibid.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

⁷¹⁹ _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668."

responded to perceived threats of communism. These threats outweighed obligations to international norms, such as the principle of non-intervention.

e. British Propaganda & SEAMU

The aim of this section is to outline the role of SEAMU in Indonesia. According to Paul Lashmar, SEAMU was the brainchild of Andrew Gilchrist.⁷²⁰ Moreover, in a 2021 *Guardian* report, Lashmar described how the 'blandly named' unit was at the centre of ending the Confrontation.⁷²¹ Britain readily used propaganda to exploit a series of national emergencies and shortcomings in Indonesia. The aim of such propaganda was to weaken Sukarno and communism. According to IRD files, it was thought that reaching a political settlement with Jakarta was unlikely.⁷²² British national security planners, moreover, were concerned about Indonesia's perceived pivot towards communism. Accordingly, London disseminated 'black propaganda' throughout Indonesia.⁷²³ By 1969, the IRD had amassed ca. 7,000 contacts in Southeast Asia.⁷²⁴ Alongside the IRD, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) were involved in disseminating propaganda inside Indonesia. IRD officers believed the greatest threat to the federalisation of Malaysia was Indonesian subversion.⁷²⁵ In late May 1963, L.C. Glass, an IRD officer, proposed a series of measures to aid the establishment of Malaysia and counter Indonesian subversion.⁷²⁶ Glass identified that the BBC had no permanent correspondent in Malaysia and did not have the funds to employ one.⁷²⁷ It would, according to the report, cost around £2,500 to keep a reporter in Malaysia over a three-month period.⁷²⁸ The cost would include the reporter's keep and daily circuits to London. In a CSC meeting, Glass proposed that the funds be deducted from a counter subversion fund which consisted of funds from the FO, Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO), and the Colonial Office (CO) with the FO donating £1,500 and the two other departments £500

⁷²⁰ Lashmar, Gilby, and Oliver, "Slaughter in Indonesia: Britain's secret propaganda war."

⁷²¹ Ibid.

⁷²² Office, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

⁷²³ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

⁷²⁴ ———, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.." Contacts included personalities and organisations.

⁷²⁵ Foreign Office, "Broadcasting: IRD Paper on Hostile Broadcasts, Paper on BBC Broadcasts and Services and Questionnaire on Communist Bloc Radio Propaganda. FO 1110/1723," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1963).

⁷²⁶ Office, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

⁷²⁷ ———, "Broadcasting: IRD Paper on Hostile Broadcasts, Paper on BBC Broadcasts and Services and Questionnaire on Communist Bloc Radio Propaganda. FO 1110/1723."

⁷²⁸ Ibid.

respectively.⁷²⁹ Once the proposal was made to the BBC, Glass intended to tell them “to get on with it”.⁷³⁰ Back in Jakarta, Gilchrist, in correspondence with his Whitehall contacts, stated that the BBC enjoyed a “very valuable” reputation in Indonesia.⁷³¹ However, as noted by Gilchrist, using the BBC in shaping certain events and campaigns would not be acceptable.⁷³² This would suggest that London had parameters around using the BBC. Correspondence pertaining to the BBC was also circulated around ‘representatives of the Security Services.’⁷³³

To support BBC operations, a series of relay stations were proposed throughout the 1960s. For example, in 1964, the CRO proposed the establishment of a BBC relay station in Sarawak.⁷³⁴ London and Kuala Lumpur would keep the BBC license confidential.⁷³⁵ This would support the wider policy of establishing a global network of BBC Relay Stations.⁷³⁶ A further Relay Station was proposed in the Maldives to boost the signals to Southeast Asia and the Far East.⁷³⁷ By 1971, the BBC established the English language programme, ‘English by Radio’, to Indonesia.⁷³⁸ Popularity grew quickly, and listeners began to request transcripts of the recordings. Meanwhile, the IAD (Information A Department) explored plans to expand its printing services.⁷³⁹ According to an IAD report, the target was 10,000 copies.⁷⁴⁰ Education provided soft power opportunities in Indonesia. By the early 1970s, the BBC still enjoyed a reputation for independence and impartiality throughout Indonesia. Correspondence between the FO and the BBC Far Eastern Service reveal that the service had a research file dedicated to Suharto.⁷⁴¹ Moreover, material provided by the Far Eastern Service on the results on Indonesia’s election were published widely throughout the archipelago and was frequently quoted by Indonesian newspapers.⁷⁴² It was suggested that high-profile publications such as *Kompas*, *Sinar Harapan*, and the national news agency,

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ Ibid.

⁷³¹ ———, “Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication ‘The Problem of Malaysia’. FO 1110/1693.”

⁷³² Ibid.

⁷³³ Ibid.

⁷³⁴ Dominions Office, “Proposed BBC Relay Station at Sarawak,” ed. Dominions Office & BBC (London: National Archives, 1963-1964).

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

⁷³⁶ Ibid.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, “BBC Overseas Service to Indonesia. FCO 26/630,” ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office & BBC (London: National Archives, 1971).

⁷³⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

Antara, all used BBC material.⁷⁴³ In July 1971, BBC material was used forty times throughout Jakarta's newspapers.⁷⁴⁴ Copies of BBC material used in the Indonesian press were passed back to the IRD in London for examination.⁷⁴⁵ The BBC directly employed Indonesians residing in London, on a three-year contract, to read transcripts for the Indonesian Service.⁷⁴⁶ Any Indonesian wishing to serve with the BBC again would have to spend one year in Indonesia to avoid becoming too stiff and sharpen their accent.⁷⁴⁷ Meanwhile, Indonesian nationals served with the VOA. Indonesians, contracted by the VOA, enjoyed a larger salary than their counterparts in London, however.⁷⁴⁸

POLAD, located at Phoenix Park in Singapore, received regular updates on IRD operations in Indonesia.⁷⁴⁹ BBC broadcasts provided the IRD with cover to feed material into Indonesia. Perceived impartiality from the government provided the intelligence community with plausible deniability. Maintaining the BBC's reputation for impartiality was key. In July 1971, the BBC reported a false news story pertaining the death sentence of ten generals who were implicated with 1965 Abortive Coup.⁷⁵⁰ FO representatives approached the BBC to correct the misleading article.⁷⁵¹ The BBC provided the IRD with a vessel to disseminate propaganda throughout Indonesia. As in Cambodia and Vietnam, the BBC enjoyed an enviable reputation. Using BBC broadcasts, therefore, could be described as a 'trojan horse'.

Counter-subversion operations were key to supplementing British foreign policy in the region. To counter Malaysian nationalism Jakarta published a document titled "*The Problem of Malaysia*" in 1963.⁷⁵² The document was akin to a White Paper in Britain. By late 1963, IRD were preparing responses to the paper along with plans to counter these Indonesian efforts. According to FO files, countering Indonesian psyops in Malaysia was of paramount importance to the stability of the region.⁷⁵³ Once Malayo-Indonesian relations were normalised, London focused on countering Sukarno and the PKI. To facilitate this, Andrew

⁷⁴³ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid. Those contracted could extend for a further two-years but would not be able to renew following that period.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² Office, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

⁷⁵³ Ibid. This again supports the notion of zonal foreign policy.

Gilchrist proposed a series of unattributable publications, written in English, for “open-minded intellectuals”.⁷⁵⁴ Gilchrist hoped the publication would highlight the deleterious effect of the “*Konfrontasi*” on Indonesia’s prestige abroad and political and economic development at home.⁷⁵⁵ Gilchrist recommended the publications be posted at intervals to allow time for new, “effective”, material, and new propaganda themes to trickle out of Jakarta. Publications would also benefit from unpredictable dissemination dates to avoid censorship.⁷⁵⁶ Unattributable publications would be directed away from the island of Java as it was deemed the population were unable to be influenced. Material for the publication, moreover, would be collected in the Philippines to avoid suspicion.⁷⁵⁷ The inclusion of the Philippines demonstrates the far-reaching nature of the operation.

FO files discussed the implications of ‘*The Problem of Malaysia*’. London perceived the publication as inimical to British foreign policy interests.⁷⁵⁸ “*The Problem of Malaysia*” was published by the organ of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the *Indonesian Herald*. A copy of the publication is held amongst IRD documents at the National Archives.⁷⁵⁹ The rhetorical propaganda is ca. fifty pages long. The publication branded the federalisation of Malaysia, a ‘cunning and evil scheme’ concocted by London.⁷⁶⁰ Moreover, the paper argued, London’s true intentions throughout Southeast Asia were masked by a supposedly generous decolonisation programme.⁷⁶¹ Jakarta placed the blame for the confrontation squarely at Malaysia’s door. The publication branded Tengku Abdul Rahman’s behaviour as provocative, as Kuala Lumpur descended into a shameless conspiracy with London.⁷⁶² Moreover, the notion of creating a federalised Malaysia was a ploy by London to exert its will on the people of Sarawak, Brunei, and Sabah.⁷⁶³ The “*Problem of Malaysia*” stated that British plans in Malaysia was an example of ‘sugar-coated’ neo-colonialism.⁷⁶⁴ Gilchrist stated that the publication was a natural asset in the Indonesia campaign.⁷⁶⁵

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid. for further context on the *Konfrontasi* see John Roosa, *Buried Histories: The Anti-Communist Massacres of 1965-1966 in Indonesia* (Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin University Press, 2020).

⁷⁵⁶ Office, “Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication ‘The Problem of Malaysia’. FO 1110/1693.”

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.

⁷⁶² Ibid.

⁷⁶³ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid.

Moreover, he proposed three ways to counter the narrative of the publication:

- a. Publication of a British White Paper
- b. Publication of something of equal status to the Indonesian pamphlet giving the British case
- c. The issue to foreign governments of official commentary

Gilchrist believed that 'Option B' would not be practical, as a non-attributable IRD publication would not serve the purpose.⁷⁶⁶ Likewise, 'Option A' would not be practical as it would require permission and prior assessment from London. 'Option C', therefore, was the preferred route for Gilchrist.⁷⁶⁷ On this occasion, Gilchrist resorted to diplomacy rather than covert action.

Meanwhile, Stanley Budd invited Anthony Bottrall, an IRD officer, to Kuala Lumpur in 1963 to attend a seminar run by Malaysian academic Mohammed Sopiee.⁷⁶⁸ Sopiee ran a seminar on the threat of psychological warfare emanating from Indonesia. Bottrall was provided details of the seminar and asked to prepare materials Sopiee could use against the PKI.⁷⁶⁹ In correspondence with John Drinkall, Bottrall suggested that any direct attack on Sukarno was considered counterproductive.⁷⁷⁰ Although the TNI were not an attractive alternative to the PKI, it provided the IRD with a platform to leverage British influence and exploit anti-communist sentiments. It was important, moreover, to remove the Indonesian preoccupation with Malaysia. Therefore, according to Drinkall, the IRD must 'attempt to break the "monolithic" front in which the army and PKI are united in opposing Malaysia.'⁷⁷¹ Drinkall believed that exploiting the distrust between the TNI and PKI was crucial. Explicit exposés, claiming the PKI were the main beneficiaries of the confrontation, were key.⁷⁷² Other groups in Indonesia who opposed communist ideology, including religious and former members of the banned Masyumi, were to be 'stimulated' by IRD material.⁷⁷³

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ Ibid. The Islamic Masyumi Party had been banned by Sukarno following the PRRI Rebellion in 1960

Radio broadcasts, ideally from outside of Indonesia, was thought to provide the greatest chance of success.⁷⁷⁴ Printed material, purportedly from inside Indonesia, would also be pivotal.⁷⁷⁵ The material would promote the idea that the "confrontation" was in the communists' interests, not in the national. Meanwhile, Soviee was to be provided IRD material. He had his own translating unit, replete with Indonesian nationals, who were given free rein over the way they presented the material.⁷⁷⁶ Bottrall believed that having two Indonesian translators would provide the material with authenticity. FO files outlined the policy Bottrall pursued in Indonesia. According to Bottrall, the 1948 Czechoslovak coup and National Front tactics had garnered attention throughout Indonesia. Although there was no direct comparison between Czechoslovak leader, Edvard Beneš, and Sukarno, the IRD sought to highlight parallels between them.⁷⁷⁷ The material highlighted how the potent nationalism espoused by the PKI was not in the national interest. Moreover, Beijing's influence over Jakarta and the PKI was highlighted by IRD material. Jakarta, for example, had supported Beijing at Afro-Asian meetings. China had also provided financial support for GANEFO.

More broadly, Chinese subversion in Southeast Asia was a concern for British policymakers.⁷⁷⁸ For example, in early 1966, IRD officers met to discuss British propaganda aimed at North Vietnam and China.⁷⁷⁹ A document discussing the IRD meeting reveals the lengths London was prepared to go to in the fight against Chinese subversion. According to J. Nicholls, in 1965, the IRD information effort against communism was most acute in Vietnam.⁷⁸⁰ Propaganda output in Vietnam had region wide consequences for Indonesia and Cambodia. The efforts were in keeping with propaganda campaigns in Indonesia which sought to highlight the deleterious effect of Chinese communism on the archipelago.⁷⁸¹ A further section of the document outlined the agreed subjects and themes for exploitation the IRD proposed. The material would suggest that Beijing was willing to fight to the last Vietnamese and offered little practical support to the communists. Beijing, moreover, did not want a reasonable solution to the conflict.⁷⁸² Bottrall also suggested publishing material on the communist manipulation of information and propaganda. Anti-Chinese sentiment was prevalent throughout the Indonesian population, which the IRD sought to exploit. IRD

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁸ _____, "Meetings with BBC: Notes on Scope of IRD Research. FO 1110/873."

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁸¹ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁷⁸² Office, "Meetings with BBC: Notes on Scope of IRD Research. FO 1110/873."

material sought to expose the contrasting lifestyles of those who lived in the “free-world” and those who lived under communist rule. The objective was to lead some minds to believe there was a similar contrast between Indonesia and Malaysia.⁷⁸³ Following his ‘evacuation’ from Indonesia, Bottrall was sent to Singapore to join the R.I.O alongside Douglas Rivett-Carnac.⁷⁸⁴

In September 1963, MOD officials questioned whether there were enough resources in Malaysia to counter Indonesian subversion.⁷⁸⁵ Following a meeting, the CSC recommended that the machinery in Malaysia was not adequate and required additional funding to cope with subversion.⁷⁸⁶ It was thought an immediate subvention of £50,000 would suffice.⁷⁸⁷ Furthermore, it was deemed necessary for enhanced cooperation between the Forward Planning Staff and the Malaysian Federal Government.⁷⁸⁸ The Chiefs of Staff were involved in counter subversion operations in Indonesia. According to a FO brief, military commanders in London had approved a paper on meeting the threats to the Borneo territories.⁷⁸⁹ The Royal Air Force had drawn up contingency plans for the air defence of Malaysia. It would be politically impossible for London to extend the conflict itself, however. It was thought the confrontation in Sarawak and Sabah would likely continue. Interestingly, the report stated that without Central Intelligence Agency backing, any covert action undertaken by London would be ineffective.⁷⁹⁰ Washington’s policy towards Jakarta in 1963, however, did not include covert action. FO files stated that due to previous failures, Washington was reluctant to pursue this policy.⁷⁹¹ This demonstrates that credibility costs implicated American foreign policy. Britain, however, still engaged in covert action against an Asian-style democracy.

According to defence papers, to maintain pressure on Jakarta, intelligence operations by British forces in the jungles of Borneo, would continue at an increased pace.⁷⁹² The Joint Intelligence Committee were heavily involved in operational planning in Indonesia.

⁷⁸³ ———, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁸ 'Minutes from CSC Meeting – September 1963'

⁷⁸⁹ Office, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² Ibid.

According to minutes from a CSC meeting, Kuala Lumpur had experience in handling psychological operations.⁷⁹³ This experience was built around countering the communist insurgency during the Malayan Crisis. The onus, therefore, was placed on the Federal Government to absorb Indonesian subversion. London, however, had to be careful not to appear as if it were still controlling the Borneo territories. Numerous IRD officers, including Drinkall, Rivett-Carnac and Major General Bishop were all in attendance at the CSC meeting.⁷⁹⁴ Interestingly, documents pertaining to the Manila Accords and UN Resolutions on Malayan-Indonesian relations are also kept amongst its files.⁷⁹⁵ The Manila Accords were a trilateral agreement between Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines over the status of North Borneo and Sarawak. Although Britain was not involved in the Accords, the retention of files suggests national security planners were concerned by disputes over a former colonies' territory.

One of London's main objectives in Indonesia following the coup was to encourage more vigorous action by anti-communist Indonesians against the PKI.⁷⁹⁶ This would be achieved through a concerted propaganda campaign. Dissemination of black propaganda throughout Indonesia was well documented.⁷⁹⁷ Norman Reddaway stated in December 1965 that 'we are now offering material produced in Singapore to our friends in Malaysia'.⁷⁹⁸ Ed Wynne was designated head of the Regional Information Office (RIO) and left for Singapore in November 1964.⁷⁹⁹ Channelling propaganda through unofficial channels became a priority for the IRD. One scheme, for example, involved the exploitation of a food shortage.⁸⁰⁰ When the opportunity arose, the IRD would exploit Jakarta's poor response to myriad events including natural disasters and economic decline. For example, the IRD targeted a rice shortage in Indonesia.⁸⁰¹ According to Suwidjana, rice is the most important staple in Indonesia, accounting for sixty per cent of an average Indonesian's food intake.⁸⁰² Throughout the period 1959-1968, Indonesian rice production faced three major restrictions. Firstly, there was a low and declining consumption per capita due to poor harvests. Secondly, there were major fluctuations in prices and lastly, foreign competition was

⁷⁹³ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid. A breakdown of the chain of command in Malaysia is provided in the appendix. [Appendix 4]

⁷⁹⁶ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668."

⁷⁹⁷ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid. for further information on Norman Reddaway *vide* Lashmar and Oliver, "How we destroyed Sukarno."

⁷⁹⁹ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁰¹ Ibid.

⁸⁰² Njoman Suwidjana, "Indonesia's Rice Policy: Development, Patterns, Accomplishment and Problems," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1981).

increasing.⁸⁰³ The IRD was approached by Gilchrist with a proposal to exploit the situation, thus the aim of the propaganda was to destabilise the Sukarno government.⁸⁰⁴ For IRD officers, it provided an opportunity to disseminate unattributable propaganda. For example, in early 1964 a discussion was held between officials of the IRD viz. black propaganda and the Indonesian 'rice shortage'.⁸⁰⁵ Meanwhile, Gilchrist suggested sharing intelligence with the Malaysians to exploit the situation. Gilchrist and the RIO pursued an action plan throughout early 1964 to cajole the Malaysians to into spreading propaganda.⁸⁰⁶ Gilchrist, moreover, suggested the Malaysians exploit Sukarno's appeals to the UN for assistance.⁸⁰⁷

Gilchrist attached great importance to the rice shortage plan. In correspondence with the IRD he stated that 'so much of the story is not, of course, based on facts. We must not, however, do this sort of thing too often'.⁸⁰⁸ Gilchrist's statement highlights the nature of his own personal perceptions of propaganda and the links between diplomacy and intelligence. Moreover, the documents suggest Gilchrist was prepared to use black propaganda to fulfil policy goals in Indonesia, however, this was not representative of wider departmental policy. For example, Hans Welser made amendments to Gilchrist's proposals.⁸⁰⁹ Welser suggested that propaganda should be channelled through British newspapers as Washington would view Malaysian attempts to destabilise Indonesia negatively.⁸¹⁰ Drinkall suggested that the operation was well thought out and planned but wondered whether the operation would attract much publicity outside of Indonesia.⁸¹¹ Furthermore, two IRD officers, along with Pilcher, and Cable, discussed curtailing Gilchrist's plans citing the ambassador's more 'over imaginative proposals' as damaging.⁸¹² In this case, the IRD did not inform the ambassador of their motivations and discreetly altered the proposals.⁸¹³ According to Max McCann, Indonesian newspapers were rather fond of using tailpieces on the back pages of their newspapers.⁸¹⁴ This was highlighted as an area where the IRD publications could exploit this penchant with a 'small box story'.⁸¹⁵ A small box story would provide adequate room for propaganda without garnering too much attention from the Indonesian intelligence services.

⁸⁰³ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁴ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁶ _____, "Indonesia. IRD. FCO 168/1143."

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁸¹⁰ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁸¹¹ _____, "Indonesia. IRD. FCO 168/1143."

⁸¹² Ibid.

⁸¹³ Ibid.

⁸¹⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁸¹⁵ Ibid.

Careful exploitation of Indonesia's rice shortage provided London with an opportunity to capitalise on Jakarta's derisory response. Sukarno used the Bahasa term, *Berdikari*, which translates as 'self-reliance', as the centre piece of guided democracy.⁸¹⁶ IRD correspondence in 1965 revealed that Jakarta had been forced to resume rice imports from other Southeast Asian states.⁸¹⁷ One consignment, for example, had been imported from Thailand into the capital of West Sumatra, Padang. Plans for Indonesian self-sufficiency had failed.⁸¹⁸ A visit of an Indonesian official to Bangkok was to be used by the IRD as evidence of Indonesian incompetence.⁸¹⁹ Although IRD officials did not go to the full extent of Gilchrist's proposals, the department continued to disseminate black propaganda throughout Indonesia.⁸²⁰ Further opportunity for exploitation arose when Nasution, the Indonesian Defence Minister, refused to accept a new posting as Famine Relief Administrator. Sukarno believed Nasution was best placed to combat the growing famine in the country. An official IRD report on Indonesia, however, predicted a showdown between the PKI and the TNI and stated that Nasution did not want to abandon his post as Defence Minister at such a critical juncture.⁸²¹

The exploitation of Indonesia's rice shortage fell within Britain's strategic framework. This provided national security planners with leverage over Sukarno who wished to maintain the illusion that his government could sustain rice levels. National security planners, moreover, sought to curtail communist influence by directly attacking Jakarta's response to national emergencies. For example, in February 1963, the Balinese volcano, Gunung Agung, erupted causing widespread destruction and fatalities.⁸²² In a continuation of strategic diplomacy, the IRD exploited the natural disaster to tarnish the reputation of Sukarno's administration.⁸²³ By February 1964, ca. 200,000 Indonesians were still displaced and receiving vital supplies through the World Food Programme.⁸²⁴ The eruption had exacerbated food shortages plaguing the country. In February 1964, UNICEF donated 600,000 pounds of skimmed milk powder to Indonesia in response to the widespread famine.⁸²⁵ A press statement released by UNICEF was a *cause celebre* in the Indonesian press. Indonesian reports suggested that

⁸¹⁶ ———, "Internal Political Situation: Attempted Coup Against Sukarno. FO 371/180313."

⁸¹⁷ ———, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.

⁸¹⁹ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁸²⁰ Office, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

⁸²¹ Department, "Indonesia. IRD. FCO 168/1143."

⁸²² Office, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

⁸²³ Foreign Office, "Propaganda War Against UNICEF. FO 371/175311," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1964).

⁸²⁴ Ibid.

⁸²⁵ 'From Djakarta to Foreign Office' Ibid.

UNICEF were deliberately attempting to undermine the Indonesian government.⁸²⁶

According to a FO report, central Java was the worst affected area. The Director-General of Radio Indonesia informed British diplomats in Indonesia that there was a suspected 1.4 million Indonesians in central Java suffering from starvation.⁸²⁷

Hurustiati Subandrio, the Foreign Relations Minister to the Ministry of Health, caused further agitation with the UN in 1964.⁸²⁸ Hurustiati Subandrio verbally attacked UNICEF's efforts to provide aid to Indonesia and had made derogatory comments towards Brian Jones, the South Asia Regional Director for UNICEF.⁸²⁹ Jones was a British citizen, and it was suspected the comments were made in support of wider anti-British sentiment in Indonesia.⁸³⁰ Jefferey Petersen, a diplomat serving in the British Embassy in Jakarta, wrote to London explaining that Subandrio's comments were an example of her 'impulsive temper and pathological hatred of anything British.'⁸³¹ FO correspondence reported that Subandrio's comments were likely to lead to a further deterioration in Indonesian-UN relations.⁸³² Gilchrist, aware of the tensions, suggested on February 7th, that London should exploit the 'gaffe'.⁸³³

Further IRD propaganda efforts in Indonesia included an attempt to exploit a national scandal. In February 1965, it was reported that an Indonesian machine operator had stolen a vast quantity of bank notes set for circulation.⁸³⁴ Officials feared that the duplicated notes would enter circulation if the official notes were released. Consequently, officials in Jakarta decided to delay the release of twenty-five thousand Rupiah notes.⁸³⁵ Gilchrist, in response, proposed exploiting the situation to the IRD. He proposed that a propaganda publication would state that the stolen notes had already been distributed amongst various businessmen and the remnants were being stored in Surabaya and Medan.⁸³⁶ This was pure fabrication. According to Gilchrist, the story would serve as an embarrassment for the Indonesian government suggesting Jakarta could not provide adequate security for state money.⁸³⁷ Further plans by IRD officers discussed the possibility of exploiting Indonesian

⁸²⁶ Ibid.

⁸²⁷ Ibid.

⁸²⁸ Ibid.

⁸²⁹ Ibid.

⁸³⁰ Ibid.

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² Ibid.

⁸³³ Ibid.

⁸³⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁸³⁵ Ibid.

⁸³⁶ Ibid.

⁸³⁷ Ibid.

superstitions. For example, the propaganda would suggest that subversive organisations were behind the disappearance of the bank notes.⁸³⁸ A further report indicated the owner of a stand in the People's Entertainment Park in Surabaya, Tjong K.J, had been arrested for assisting in the circulation of counterfeit dollar bills.⁸³⁹ According to the FO report, the Indonesian National Police had already captured the ringleader of the operation.⁸⁴⁰ London attempted to deceive the Indonesian intelligence service, *Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara* (BAKIN), by leaving coded messages in Malaysian radio broadcasts. According to the documents, numbers read out during the message would be coded but easy to decipher. BAKIN operatives, therefore, would be able to break the code.⁸⁴¹ This amounted to attempts by the IRD to deliberately mis-lead BAKIN⁸⁴² demonstrating further attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of an Asian-style democracy.

Meanwhile, British, and Malaysian officials attempted to discourage Indonesians from engaging in cross border military activity. To combat the Indonesian policy of 'confrontation' in early January 1965 a further IRD plan was developed. Indonesian prisoners of war being held in Malaysia were to be 'strongly encouraged' to record a statement denouncing Jakarta.⁸⁴³ Prisoners were to read out a pre-arranged statement which would be broadcast through the radio station 'Suara Malaysia'. Soldier's confessions would end with the following statement, "so, you see, I am rather disillusioned about all this talk of 'Crush Malaysia' and so-called 'confrontation'".⁸⁴⁴ According to Max McCann, the plan was to induce Indonesians into listening to Suara Malaysia. Correspondence dated June 1965 stated that efforts such as this were fruitful. Attacks on Sukarno, however, were counterproductive.⁸⁴⁵ By 1965, Indonesian soldiers based along the Malaysian frontier in Eastern were beginning to listen to Suara Malaysia. It was hoped the broadcasts would diminish the soldiers' morale.⁸⁴⁶ IRD officers believed all radio stations inside Malaysia should have a similar slant to their reports and bulletins.⁸⁴⁷ IRD planning was a continuation of British foreign policy in Indonesia whereby the intelligence services tried to stymie communist advances. The message of the propaganda sat within the framework of previous

⁸³⁸ Ibid.

⁸³⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁴¹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1644," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

⁸⁴² Ibid.

⁸⁴³ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1642."

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

propaganda operations. British intervention in an Asian-style democracy suggests that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British Cold War foreign policy.

f. *Kenjataan*

In February 2022, the FO released a file called *Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia* following an FOI request. The contents of the document revealed correspondence between IRD officers about several SEAMU publications. SEAMU, was responsible for propaganda output in Indonesia. Norman Reddaway oversaw IRD operations in Indonesia from Singapore as the 'Coordinator of Political Warfare'.⁸⁴⁸ In correspondence between Edmonds and Reddaway at the end of 1965, Wynne was asked to clarify the unit's output and contribution to Britain's campaign against Sukarno. Edmonds, underwhelmed by the initial response, suggested that Hans Welser and Peter Hewitt prepare a briefing paper under the title "SEAMU - The First Twelve Months and Prospects of the Future".⁸⁴⁹ In response to the request, Wynne confirmed that SEAMU would use an anti-neo-colonialist book by President Nkrumah of Ghana to counter Indonesian subversion.⁸⁵⁰

Alongside Nkrumah's literature, SEAMU published anti-government articles in *Kenjataan* throughout 1965. To gauge the Indonesian's perspective of the coup, the IRD relied on several local translators.⁸⁵¹ The editorial blamed the Chinese Communist Party for the coup claiming that 'the hand of the Chinese Communists in the affair is now quite clear'.⁸⁵² *Kenjataan* was designed to appear slightly untidy creating the impression that amateur journalists were the editors.⁸⁵³ The publication would express the views of Indonesian emigres. FO papers reveal how the IRD collated and disseminated their publications throughout Indonesia. According to Wynne, copies of *Kenyataan* were sent to eleven posting points, thought to be SIS stations, throughout the world.⁸⁵⁴ This would allow the ten-page publication to maintain the appearance that the contents were the views of Indonesian emigres. For example, the publication enclosed copies of articles entitled "a correspondent from India".⁸⁵⁵ Around 1,400 addresses received copies of the publication.⁸⁵⁶ To complete

⁸⁴⁸ ———, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid.

⁸⁵² Ibid.

⁸⁵³ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid.

their task, the IRD produced ca. 1,500 words per day. The files suggest that *Kenjataan* contained one or two “journalistic gimmicks”.⁸⁵⁷ For example, the publication introduced readers to “Pak Pandir” (Uncle Pandir) who would comment on Indonesian affairs in a melancholiac manner. Alongside Pak Pandir, the publication featured two “students” named Mat and Dibjo. According to Welser, their inclusion would keep the readers entertained.⁸⁵⁸ The last copy of *Kenjataan* was published in August 1966.⁸⁵⁹ To maintain authenticity, Wynne employed a local translator to check the consistency of the language. According to the document, the translator would read most Indonesian newspapers and listen to *Antara* broadcasts.⁸⁶⁰ Max McCann commented that Gilchrist thought the publication of *Kenjataan* was magnificent.⁸⁶¹ *Kenjataan* highlights a shift in policy as national security planners adjusted their calculations to appeal to the widest audience possible.

Edmonds, however, was less enthusiastic about Wynne’s publications. For example, in October 1965 he claimed that *Kenjataan* was outdated and the attacks on Sukarno, too direct.⁸⁶² Given the publication made no mention of the coup, Edmonds pondered why the issue had gone to press. Although a heavily redacted document, the files reveal that IRD officers did not receive specific guidance from London over the content of their publications.⁸⁶³ Ed Wynne confirmed in correspondence with Reddaway that by November 1st, 1965, SEAMU had disseminated ca. 89,250,000 words of anti-confrontation, anti-red China, and anti-regime propaganda into Indonesia.⁸⁶⁴ On October 20th, however, correspondence between Edmonds and Reddaway reveal that they believed the journalistic gimmicks, in particular the Mat-Dibjo dialogue, to be counter-productive.⁸⁶⁵ Gilchrist commented that articles were hard-hitting and effective. Gilchrist had full knowledge of the publication and supplied intelligence material.⁸⁶⁶ According to Wynne, ‘we attacked David Cheng on the personal request of Sir Andrew Gilchrist, who says he is a “baddie”’.⁸⁶⁷ This highlights the links between covert action and diplomacy.

Sukarno was aware of the anti-government publications. According to government documents, the IRD linked Sukarno with communism by claiming he was a victim of Chinese

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid.

⁸⁶² Ibid.

⁸⁶³ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid. This number was calculated by multiplying the words by editions and copies.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

flattery. Sukarno's poor health, moreover, meant he pursued "insane policies".⁸⁶⁸ Beijing, it was argued, preyed on the poor health of Sukarno. According to Wynne, moreover, the Indonesian Public Prosecutor was aware of the IRD publication *Sedar*. Although not aware of its origins, he recognised the propaganda elements running through it and linked it to NECOLIM. The prosecutor demanded that all recipients hand their publications to the state. Moreover, he instructed *Antara* to run radio adverts calling for vigilance against subversive propaganda.⁸⁶⁹ Alongside *Kenjataan*, SEAMU disseminated propaganda into Indonesian media. The publication of *Kenjataan* fitted in with wider attempts to destabilise Sukarno and strategic diplomacy. Moreover, Gilchrist was briefed on the publication and believed it to be a well thought out plan. Meanwhile, SEAMU planned a separate operation to disseminate propaganda inside Indonesia.

g. Operation Scrabble

Operation Scrabble was a SEAMU plan to insert propaganda into the *Perwarta-Surabaia*.⁸⁷⁰ Scrabble highlighted the trauma facing Indonesian soldiers fighting against British and Malaysian forces in British Sabah.⁸⁷¹ Transcripts included several themes, including discrediting the confrontation. Transcripts included casualty lists and information on the anguish of mothers searching for news on their sons. The transcripts attempted to dissuade soldiers from fighting and highlight the deleterious effect the Confrontation was inflicting on Indonesia and their families. An extract from the newspaper revealed how two men, who preyed on the loneliness and poverty of the servicemen, were jailed.⁸⁷² According to the transcript, three women had been forced into prostitution to feed and clothe their families.⁸⁷³ Inevitably, the inclusion of this story would cause TNI servicemen to fear for their families, distracting them from the *Konfrontasi*. Although the archival trail dries up on Operation Scrabble, the implications of the propaganda are clear; when Britain perceived its security was compromised by perceived communist activity, it engaged in covert action against Asian-style democracies.

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid.

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ Ibid.

h. “The Voice from the Well (*Suara Lobang Buaja*)”

Indonesia became a further testing ground for the IRD in the months following the coup. This is epitomised by the curious case of Subandrio, the Indonesian foreign minister, who became the target of a propaganda campaign. On November 8th, 1965, Gilchrist proposed an IRD propaganda operation targeting Sukarno, Subandrio and communism.⁸⁷⁴ Gilchrist suggested a series of leaflets be disseminated inside Indonesia titled ‘*the voice from the well*’.⁸⁷⁵ Newly released IRD files contain a transcript of “from the well”. According to previous reports, Subandrio had been courting favour with the communist party.⁸⁷⁶ Subandrio, moreover, was viewed by many inside Indonesia as a China sympathiser and favoured increased trade favourable rates for Chinese merchants.⁸⁷⁷ The IRD planned to label “Subandrio, the Greatest Mis-leader of the Revolution” and highlight his communist sympathies Indonesians.⁸⁷⁸ Targeting Subandrio formed part of a wider propaganda campaign to blacken the reputation of the PKI and communism in the aftermath of the coup. Appealing for Indonesian unity in the face of external threats, especially from those posed by China, was also a priority for British intelligence.⁸⁷⁹ Richard Allen held a meeting with Subandrio in the weeks leading up to the coup⁸⁸⁰ as the IRD tapped into public anger towards him. Reports from *The Times* suggest that an effigy of hanged Subandrio was paraded through Jakarta in March 1966.⁸⁸¹

In keeping with previous propaganda, the IRD sought to exploit Indonesian superstitions. Reddaway, for example, was an advocate of exploiting the superstitions of the Javanese.⁸⁸² Transcripts reveal how the IRD highlighted Subandrio’s role in the coup. The language employed in the text was highly provocative and is addressed to Subandrio from the victims of the coup.⁸⁸³ According to IRD documents, the transcript would fade in with the phrase “the voice from the well”; the voice would be sepulchral and begin in a weak, moaning manner,

⁸⁷⁴ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁶ Office, "Internal Political Situation: Attempted Coup Against Sukarno. FO 371/180313."

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁸ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁰ Office, "Press Censorship and Propaganda 'South East Asia'. FO 371/180369."

⁸⁸¹ From Our Special Correspondent, "Students in Jakarta Hang Subandrio Effigy," *The Times* March 3rd 1966.

⁸⁸² Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

⁸⁸³ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

gradually growing in strength.⁸⁸⁴ Subandrio's name would be mentioned as the transcript read 'the voices you tried to smother in the well, the voices of us the dead. Those voices will always ring in your ears, calling you traitor and murderer'.⁸⁸⁵ Moreover, the recording would claim Subandrio would be unable to silence the voices from the well.⁸⁸⁶ Taped recordings of deranged laughter purporting to be Sukarno would accompany the recordings.⁸⁸⁷ The IRD file contained a copy of the Indonesian translation for authenticity, in keeping with previous IRD propaganda. According to the same document, there was concern that the translations may not sound authentic.⁸⁸⁸ Europe, for instance, was an area where the IRD could count on 'high class traitors and emigres' for competent translations, Indonesia was not.⁸⁸⁹ The letter claimed that the IRD relied on a 'tame' Indonesian translator.⁸⁹⁰ Moreover, the translations were not idiomatic.

By November 11th, it was thought leaflets would be a more suitable medium in the short term as a drafting a leaflet was time consuming.⁸⁹¹ IRD officers believed the leaflets may lose authenticity if published from outside Indonesia. Gilchrist, however, stated that the planned broadcast was a better idea than the leaflets.⁸⁹² Two days later, Gilchrist proposed that the propaganda broadcast use a real voice.⁸⁹³ The broadcast would be incorporated at the tag end of the Indonesian programme and broadcast in the Jakarta area. IRD officers believed the plan to broadcast would prove effective.⁸⁹⁴ The finalised broadcast was titled '*the voice from the well*'. According to the report, "*from beyond the well*" suggests that the voice comes from beyond the grave.⁸⁹⁵

Confusion over the translations arose as the project began to coalesce, however. Correspondence highlighted the idiosyncrasies of translating. For example, the literal translations for the word 'to be cut up' translates as "*diptong*" in Bahasa. This term was used in the original transcript. However, according to a local interpreter, the term would not be used by Indonesians who would instead use "*desembelih*", which translates into English as "hacked up".⁸⁹⁶ To add to the confusion another translator stated that "*diptong*" was correct

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁹¹ Ibid.

⁸⁹² Ibid.

⁸⁹³ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

and that “desembelih” would only be used in the context of throat cutting.⁸⁹⁷ IRD officers utilised a further translator who was a professor of Malay Languages.⁸⁹⁸ Policymakers in the IRD strove to obtain the correct vernacular to showcase the greatest degree of competency and increase the likelihood of success.⁸⁹⁹ In the context of ‘*from the well*’ there were concerns that spirits would not be able to communicate in writing and would lose authenticity. A broadcast using a native Indonesian speaker, therefore, was viewed as a more viable option.⁹⁰⁰ Edmonds was also keen to avoid the impression that there was a concerted NEKOLIM inspired campaign against Indonesia.⁹⁰¹

By November 15th, 1965, the IRD had finalised the text for the leaflet. Gilchrist discussed plans for the originators to purport to be “the exiled sons of Allah”.⁹⁰² One such extract read “when Allah brings my broken body together, Subandrio, he will break yours in the pit of hell”.⁹⁰³ Concerns mounted amongst IRD officers over the use of the term ‘Allah’ as devote Muslims would view the term ‘sons of Allah’ as blasphemous.⁹⁰⁴ Moreover, serious implications would arise if the readers thought the author was speaking on behalf of Allah.⁹⁰⁵ Whilst it is not possible to determine the outcome of the concerns, the draft copies contained references to Allah. To add to the effect of the broadcasts, leaflets disseminated by the IRD would contain pictures of the dead generals who fell victim to the attempted coup.⁹⁰⁶ Once finalised, dissemination of the leaflets became a priority. Gilchrist pursued the plan with vigour by suggesting an Indonesian citizen travel to Bangkok with dozens of tapes addressed to the *Antara News Agency* and the editor of the *Duta Masyarakat*. A bribe of US dollars would be issued to the carriers and newspapers.⁹⁰⁷ By December 10th, 1965, Reddaway confirmed in his correspondence with Edmonds that the tapes had been offered to Malaysian black radio stations. According to Reddaway, the Malaysians were “happy” with the output.⁹⁰⁸ The text of the final translation was similar to Gilchrist’s original phrasing and two days later ten tapes left Jakarta.⁹⁰⁹ Reddaway, whilst stationed in Phoenix Park, Singapore, wrote to John Edmonds at the FO on November 17th, 1965, claiming that

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁰¹ Ibid.

⁹⁰² Ibid.

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁵ ‘Edmonds to Reddaway’. Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Gilchrist's idea was "first class".⁹¹⁰ Edmonds, moreover, proposed that a newsletter or leaflet from Indonesia, addressed to fellow Muslims or exiled Indonesians, be disseminated throughout the archipelago.⁹¹¹ On November 20th, Reddaway informed Edmonds that Gilchrist had disseminated copies of '*The Voice*' to his contacts inside Jakarta.⁹¹² Reddaway believed the tapes would become an excellent regular feature. Moreover, according to Reddaway, the publication 'hammered the right people, who in my view merit the hardest hammering that can be administered.'⁹¹³ In late 1965, Edmonds suggested a separate plan involving a leaflet purporting to be of Indonesian origin. The leaflet, addressed primarily to Indonesian exiles and the Muslim diaspora, would stir Indonesian nationalism against the Chinese and inform citizens of the battle against the PKI.⁹¹⁴

Further propaganda in Indonesia would exploit the mental and physical health of Sukarno.⁹¹⁵ According to correspondence between Gilchrist and Reddaway, there was an increasing tendency amongst Indonesian intellectual circles to believe Sukarno's health was declining and his behaviour increasingly erratic and dictatorial. Furthermore, the drugs prescribed to Sukarno by Chinese doctors were exacerbating his declining mental health.⁹¹⁶ This links with the wider theme of countering Chinese subversion in Indonesia and formed an increasingly important pillar of covert action.⁹¹⁷ Edmonds, however, believed that targeting Sukarno's deteriorating mental health was not 'black' activity.⁹¹⁸ Moreover, it was noted on November 11th, 1965 that attacking Sukarno's mental health may have been premature.⁹¹⁹ Correspondence between Reddaway and Edmonds discussed Sukarno's mental health and possible IRD output,

If and when the time is ripe for an attack of this kind, it seems to us the best method might be for us to place a story in the foreign press, which could subsequently be requoted at your discretion⁹²⁰

⁹¹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹¹ Ibid.

⁹¹² Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

⁹¹³ Ibid.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid.

⁹¹⁵ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

⁹¹⁶ Ibid.

⁹¹⁷ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁹¹⁸ 'Edmonds to Reddaway'. Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

⁹¹⁹ Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

⁹²⁰ Ibid.

As discussed by Cormac, it is difficult to draw inferences on the effectiveness of the propaganda.⁹²¹ However, it does highlight the nature of covert action in Indonesia and disregard towards international law. Subandrio was sentenced to death by a military tribunal in October 1966.⁹²² On September 29th, 1967, coup plotters were shot dead by firing squad in Bandung, with one notable exception, Subandrio.⁹²³ British diplomats, on behalf of the royal family, suggested that the sentence be reduced to imprisonment. According to a report in *The Times*, Subandrio had served as Indonesia's first ambassador to Britain in 1950 and was viewed favourably in Britain.⁹²⁴ By the end of Sukarno's rule, British intelligence had interfered in Indonesia's internal affairs for over a decade. This chapter has demonstrated DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy. This is epitomised by British intervention in Indonesia, an Asian-style democracy. Once Suharto replaced Sukarno, Britain began to pivot towards soft power.

i. Conclusion

Despite being an emerging democracy, Indonesia became a target for British covert action. This chapter has demonstrated that when Britain perceived its national interests were threatened by communism, it engaged in covert action. Operations included the use of black propaganda, radio programmes and publications. Although the archival trail dries up on some of the specific operations, the plans illustrate how far national security planners were willing to go to protect British interests. British fears were compounded by the growing influence of the PKI which threatened the stability of AATs. Furthermore, British reports highlighted, with alarm, the increasing growing Russian literature including Soviet style posters.⁹²⁵ Meanwhile, countering Indonesian subversion in Malaysia was a core component of IRD policy. Removing Malaysia as a catalyst of PKI and TNI cohesion, therefore, was paramount. Once Malaysia was dislodged from the minds of Indonesian, British intelligence could begin a propaganda campaign against the PKI and exploit divisions between the two organisations. Material produced by IRD, through Indonesian translators, began to target the intellectual elite and those who resided outside of Java to question the effect of the 'confrontation' on Indonesia's international status and economic development. Contrasting the lifestyle of those in the free world against those in communist countries would sow

⁹²¹ Cormac, Walton, and Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs".

⁹²² From Our Correspondent, "Death Sentence on Dr Subandrio," *The Times* October 25th 1966.

⁹²³ Fred Emery, "Indonesia's Coup Leaders Shot," *The Times* September 29th 1967.

⁹²⁴ Correspondent, "Death Sentence on Dr Subandrio."

⁹²⁵ Office, "Communist Propaganda in Indonesia. Code 962 PFE 1208. FO 953/335."

further division. Moreover, British plans included the dissemination of black propaganda to exploit internal embarrassments. By December 1965, IRD files state that black propaganda had been actively utilised against Jakarta.⁹²⁶ Radio broadcasts, moreover, were transmitted throughout Java inciting violence against TNI officers whilst plans were drawn up on how best to protect the officers including.⁹²⁷

Andrew Gilchrist was instrumental in formulating British foreign policy towards Indonesia. Moreover, SEAMU directly attacked targets on the request of Gilchrist.⁹²⁸ Gilchrist, however, was wary of using the BBC which suggests there were limits to its use in Indonesia. On several occasions, however, Gilchrist's extravagant plans were curtailed by anxious IRD officers. Malaysia, although not directly linked with the Mass Killings, forms part of the narrative of British covert action in Indonesia and Southeast Asia. One successful operation involved a radio broadcast designed to decrease the morale of Indonesian insurgents. The insurgents began to listen to Malaysian radio stations once they had infiltrated across the border. London hoped the broadcasts would lead the Indonesians to question the policy of confrontation. Captured soldiers, moreover, were encouraged to read out pre-arranged scripts denouncing Sukarno and the Confrontation.⁹²⁹ These confessions were broadcast on Malaysian radio stations. Further operational planning included the exploitation of a political embarrassment which involved a staff member at an Indonesian minting facility stealing printed notes.⁹³⁰ Moreover, the IRD exploited a rice shortage which plagued Indonesia. Throughout the mid-1960s Jakarta resorted to importing rice from Thailand, despite Sukarno's policy of self-sufficiency. Of note is the amount of room needed for the intelligence operations. This is best demonstrated by the hiring of Malaysian staff and a lack of space at RAF Changi.

The chapter has benefited from research from obtained under freedom of information requests. This enabled the research to uncover IRD operations in Indonesia. Research on SEAMU, Operation Scrabble, and *Kenjataan2* has provided further knowledge. Meanwhile, as London began to restructure its defence commitments, intelligence operations in the global south became a more viable option. This was compounded by increased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe. DPT would suggest that a democracy would be less inclined to engage in intelligence activities against another democracy. However, as this research

⁹²⁶ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁹²⁷ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda 'Radio' Broadcasts Following Attempted Coup. FCO 168/1668."

⁹²⁸ ———, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

⁹²⁹ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

⁹³⁰ Ibid.

suggests, Britain pivoted to soft power despite Suharto's authoritarian leadership. The following chapter, therefore, will examine this pivot to soft power in Suharto's Indonesia.

Chapter V

Britain's Pivot to Soft Power

Britain's Intelligence Operations in Post-Coup Indonesia

a. Framing

The previous chapter outlined how Britain engaged in intelligence operations against Indonesia, an Asian-style democracy, despite democratic norms such as democratic peace theory (DPT). Under Suharto Indonesia experienced democratic decay and could no longer be classed as an Asian-style or emerging democracy. If democratic peace theorists' assumptions are correct, then Britain would be more inclined to engage in covert action once Suharto was president. Conversely, however, Britain pivoted away from covert action towards a policy of soft power. Democratic decay is signalled by a pivot towards authoritarian policies such as reductions in free speech and elections.⁹³¹ The chapter also contends with selectorate theory which posits that if state A is substantially stronger than state B or if the chance of success is particularly high then state A is likelier to engage in covert action.⁹³² By 1966 Indonesia was in the grips of an internal crisis degrading its integrity and stability making the state weaker. If selectorate theory held true, then Britain would be more inclined to use intelligence operations to fulfil its foreign policy objectives in this scenario.

This poses the question as to why Britain did not pursue regime change. This chapter will demonstrate that Britain stopped pursuing regime change in Indonesia due to the diminished security threat posed by communist forces under Suharto. Central to British foreign policy was the protection of its interests and former colonies. Any communist advances in Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AATs), therefore, were unacceptable. This is demonstrated by Britain's disregard of democratic norms and support of authoritarian leaders linking its behaviour to the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy. This chapter will demonstrate that Britain sought positive engagement with Indonesia. This is emphasised by its pivot to soft power. It is important to note, however, that soft power can still be used to undermine an adversary.

⁹³¹ Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory."

⁹³² Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace." p.817

The chapter has two aims. Firstly, the chapter will critique democratic peace theory (DPT) by demonstrating that when the threat of communism had subsided, Britain pivoted to soft power despite Suharto's authoritarian traits. That Suharto was a more authoritarian leader is supported by academics including Amitav Acharya.⁹³³ This will be demonstrated through the human rights abuses, restrictions of free speech and fair elections under Suharto. Following the coup, Indonesia was still geopolitically significant. For example, to promote Anglo-Indonesian relations London decided to re-establish its British Council operations in Jakarta in 1968 despite financial cutbacks.⁹³⁴ The British Council provided a form of soft power designed to promote the English language and British culture.⁹³⁵ This was a departure from covert action and propaganda of the IRD and supports the theory that once the perceived threat of communism had subsided, Britain used soft power to achieve its foreign policy objectives. This would suggest that DPT does not stand up to scrutiny in the context of Britain's Cold War foreign policy as it supported Suharto despite evidence of democratic decay. This is not to discount other factors including America's drawdown in Vietnam or rising tensions in Northern Ireland.⁹³⁶ Britain's foreign policy in Indonesia was fluid in that it reverted to covert action when it perceived communist expansion was likely. This was usually reflected in counter-subversion operations demonstrating that democracies are quick to react to perceived threats – something that had been questioned by academics.⁹³⁷

The second aim is to propose the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy as an explanation for British intelligence activities and foreign policy in Indonesia. Zonal foreign policy provides a rationale for British foreign policy as AATs assumed temporary importance for national security planners. British intelligence activities in Indonesia subsided when power was transferred to authoritarian figures who denounced communism. If Indonesia's state trajectory was perceived to be leaning towards communism, it would threaten Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Singapore. To negate this, national security planners turned to a policy of covert action. Democratic peace theorists would argue that the likelihood of war decreases due to cultural norms developed between democracies.⁹³⁸ In the case of Indonesia, however, covert action subsided when the more authoritarian figure of Suharto came to

⁹³³ Acharya, "Southeast Asia's Democratic Moment."

⁹³⁴ British Council, "Indonesia: British Council Operations, FCO 13/98," ed. Foreign Office Cultural Relations (London: The National Archives, 1967 to 1968).

⁹³⁵ Ibid.

⁹³⁶ From Staff Reporters in Belfast and Londonderry, "Shooting in Ulster as Rioting Spreads," *The Times* August 14th 1969. These events impacted British foreign policy and its concentration of power.

⁹³⁷ Poznansky, "Stasis or Decay? Reconciling Covert War and the Democratic Peace."

⁹³⁸ Ibid.

power as he was perceived to be less of a threat to national security planners. This would suggest that threat perception superseded international norms and international law. A reduction in intelligence operations and pivot towards soft power despite democratic backsliding is symptomatic of zonal foreign policy.

Britain's pivot to soft power under Suharto suggests that security concerns outweighed democratic norms. The chapter will provide evidence of soft power intervention in Indonesia, including British Council intervention, collusion between the BBC and IRD and British human rights proposals at Tehran. This chapter outlines the treatment of political prisoners as human rights abuses extended into the 1970s. It is important to note that the chapter is not claiming all intelligence operations ended in Indonesia under Suharto. For example, Indonesian soldiers received military training from the United Kingdom Military Training Assistance Scheme into the 1980s.⁹³⁹ The chapter begins by outlining social unrest in Suharto's Indonesia.

b. Social Unrest in Suharto's Indonesia

This section will demonstrate that under Suharto, despite the regime normalising relations with the UN⁹⁴⁰, Indonesia experienced democratic backsliding. National security planners in London hoped Suharto would be pliant and push back against communist advances.⁹⁴¹ Despite his more authoritarian nature, Suharto was perceived to be an anti-communist force in Indonesia. Perceptions of security were at the forefront of British national consciousness. For example, one of the most noticeable changes under Suharto was the reversal of Sukarno's 'guided democracy'.⁹⁴² National security planners were concerned by potential ties to the Chinese Communist Party, however.⁹⁴³ This led to periods of renewed counter subversion effort in Indonesia.⁹⁴⁴ Under Suharto, moreover, human rights abuses continued as the regime began to persecute suspected communists.⁹⁴⁵ Prisoners were given

⁹³⁹ Prime Minister's Office Records, "DEFENCE. Defence Budget; Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980; UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS); part 3," ed. Prime Minister's Office (London: National Archives, January 25th 1980 - October 16th 1980).

⁹⁴⁰ John D. Legge, "General Suharto's New Order," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs) Oxford University Press* Volume 40(1968).

⁹⁴¹ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*.

⁹⁴² Legge, "General Suharto's New Order."

⁹⁴³ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146," ed. Information Research Department (London: National Archives, 1967-1968).

⁹⁴⁴ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁹⁴⁵ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.204

a designated name, *tahanan politik* (political prisoner), abbreviated to TAPOL.⁹⁴⁶ The ethnic stratification of suspected communists amounted to violations of international law.

Cold War Indonesia became an ideological battleground as communist and western states fought for influence. Once Suharto was perceived to take a stronger line on communism, Britain did not pursue regime change. This section will also outline the growing social unrest in Suharto's Indonesia. Social unrest was often met with police brutality and a curtailment of social mobility.⁹⁴⁷ These are symptomatic of democratic decay. Despite this, however, Britain engaged with Suharto and pivoted to a soft power policy. Suharto inherited democratic institutions when he came to power in 1967. However, Suharto also inherited a largely flawed and corrupt system.⁹⁴⁸ To compound this, vast swathes of Indonesia experienced famine and poverty in the late 1960s.⁹⁴⁹ These areas were referred to by the Indonesian government as 'minus areas'.⁹⁵⁰ On occasion, areas which faced severe poverty only found their living standards improved as the government attempted to stem the popularity of the PKI. Suharto emphasised the dire economic position his cabinet inherited. This, Suharto hoped, would remind Indonesians of his calamitous predecessor and the bright future.⁹⁵¹ The Indonesian government had secured numerous financial guarantees, including the relaxations of debt and suitable repayment plans without interest. Several western governments, moreover, had endorsed assisting Indonesia in its economic plight.⁹⁵² By 1971, London offered Jakarta an interest-free loan for economic development despite democratic backsliding.⁹⁵³

The largest military threat to Jakarta did not come from resurgent PKI elements. It did, however, materialise in the form of Sarawakian Chinese dissidents and student movements. Following the coup, student groups formed a major support network for Suharto and Indonesian army.⁹⁵⁴ Following the murder of a student by the Presidential Guard, the student movement gained national sympathy and the student became a martyr of the movement.⁹⁵⁵

⁹⁴⁶ Hugh Mabbett, "Indonesians Exile 5,000," *The Times* August 28 1970.

⁹⁴⁷ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.175

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁹ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

⁹⁵⁰ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.176

⁹⁵¹ Ibid. p.75

⁹⁵² FCO Overseas Development Administration, "Treaty Series No.54 (1971) Exchange of Notes Concerning an Interest-Free Development Loan by the Government of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London, United Kingdom: UK Parliamentary Papers, May 5th 1971).

⁹⁵³ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁴ From Our Correspondent, "Dr Subandrio 'Plotted to Kill General Suharto'," *The Times* March 26th 1966.

⁹⁵⁵ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.175

The student movement commanded respect until their behaviour began to run counter to the peaceful nature of traditional Indonesian values.⁹⁵⁶ The suppression of the student movement was a sign of democratic decay. Meanwhile, an estimated one thousand Chinese separatists crossed the Sarawak border into Indonesia and offered their assistance in the 'Crush Malaysia' campaign.⁹⁵⁷ The Chinese dissidents had been heavily influenced by the Sarawak Communist Organisation and the Sarawak People's Guerrilla Movement (PGRS). When the dissidents discovered that Suharto had reversed Indonesia's policy towards Malaysia, the group began to organise with the intention of attacking targets in Sarawak.⁹⁵⁸ This led to all Chinese citizens being forcibly removed from the Tebedu area of Sarawak.⁹⁵⁹ Not only was this a further sign of democratic backsliding it demonstrates that as British foreign policy began to align with Indonesian interests, London pivoted to a policy of soft power.

Further agitation occurred when TNI forces clashed with the PGRS in July 1967. In the ensuing armed conflict, reinforced TNI units began to slowly degrade PGRS supply lines. By 1969, TNI commanders stated that they had driven the PGRS from Indonesian territory.⁹⁶⁰ PGRS forces had received training from guerrilla forces in North Vietnam.⁹⁶¹ London was aware of this arrangement, as noted by MP Denis Healey. Healey stated in June 1964 that a 'very formidable' clandestine communist force, formed from tribal communities from Sabah and Sarawak, were being trained by the Vietnamese.⁹⁶² The numbers ranged from ca. 800-1000 and some had received training in Hanoi. According to Healey, this was an attempt by the Chinese to subvert Indonesians against Malaysian rule. Healey stated that he believed, in what he termed a British duty, to defend Sabah and Sarawak from communist incursions.⁹⁶³ British and Commonwealth forces, although spread thinly, had the border region under control.⁹⁶⁴

A concern for Indonesian officials was the province of West Kalimantan on Borneo.⁹⁶⁵ The province, part of the wider Kalimantan region, was viewed suspiciously by the

⁹⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁷ From Our Correspondent, "Malaysian Development Plan Impresses Mr Heath," *The Times* January 6th 1966.

⁹⁵⁸ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.165

⁹⁵⁹ Correspondent, "Malaysian Development Plan Impresses Mr Heath."

⁹⁶⁰ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.165

⁹⁶¹ Ibid. p.165

⁹⁶² Twentieth Century House of Commons Papers, "Foreign Affairs Volume 696," ed. Hansards (London: Hansards Sessional Papers, 17 June 1964).

⁹⁶³ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid.

Indonesian hierarchy due to large ethnic Chinese population.⁹⁶⁶ It was believed, moreover, that the ethnic Chinese population had close links to communism and Beijing.⁹⁶⁷ Numerous accounts of foiled 'communist plots' emerged from the region, but there was a significant lack of substantial evidence to prove the existence of these claims. Sino-Indonesian relations soured drastically in the wake of the coup after the Chinese embassy in Jakarta refused to observe the mourning period for the murdered generals. Although Beijing and Jakarta never officially broke diplomatic relations, their diplomatic missions were gutted. Jakarta's foreign policy under Suharto pivoted towards Washington. Moreover, a return to an outward looking foreign policy reversed the isolationist policy of Sukarno.⁹⁶⁸ However, this did not fix Indonesian relations with the West. According to a FO report, Suharto exploited the communist 'bogey' to cover up serious deficiencies relating to poverty and famine.⁹⁶⁹ Moreover, a cultural rift had developed in Indonesian society. According to the FO, student groups had deviated from the tradition of "Eastern good manners".⁹⁷⁰ In turn, student groups charged the government with intransigence. Moreover, Suharto's regime had come under fire from the press which charged Jakarta with corruption and critiqued Jakarta's derisory response to the student protesters.⁹⁷¹ This suggests that Indonesia was no longer as Asian-style democracy. This section has outlined social unrest in Suharto's Indonesia. A state's response to social unrest is a key marker in democratic freedoms. It is evident that under Suharto, Indonesia experienced democratic decay. Despite this, however, Britain pivoted towards soft power policies. This pivot is outlined further in the next section.

c. Britain's Pivot Away from Covert Action

This section will demonstrate that once Indonesia was under Suharto, national security planners in London pivoted away from covert action. This was signalled by a decline in IRD and SIS output and is reflected in the number of IRD files held at the National Archives. Despite Suharto pursuing an anti-communist agenda, Chinese subversion was an ever-present threat. When national security planners perceived Indonesia was at risk of potential communist expansion they reverted to covert action. One of the main organisations

⁹⁶⁶ Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, "Foreign Affairs," ed. House of Commons (London: Hansards, July 20 1967).

⁹⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁸ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.119

⁹⁶⁹ Ministry of Overseas Development and Overseas Development Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214," ed. Ministry of Overseas Development (London: National Archives, 1977).

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁷¹ Legge, "General Suharto's New Order."

designed to combat communism was the Counter Subversion Committee (CSC), an informal arm of the Foreign Office (FO).⁹⁷² Cabinet Office files reveal that the committee could not work without an adequate supply of intelligence.⁹⁷³ The CSC, therefore, worked closely with the Joint Intelligence Committee (J.I.C) to provide policy analysis and guidance to the government. The CSC also worked alongside the Colonial Office and Cultural Relations Office.⁹⁷⁴ For example, in 1964, the CSC set up an independent working group called the Joint Malaysia Indonesia Department.⁹⁷⁵ The working group was established to negate communist subversion from the *Konfrontasi*. CSC activity occurred in both Indonesia and Cambodia which were perceived to be vulnerable to communist subversion.⁹⁷⁶ If communism prevailed in either country, the likelihood of military engagement increased. Countersubversion, therefore, was key.⁹⁷⁷ Countersubversion came in a variety of forms including soft power and covert methods. Kevin Ruane supports this argument suggesting that Britain replaced its military commitments with diplomacy and military assistance schemes.⁹⁷⁸ David Sanders characterises British foreign policy in the 1960s as an attempt to form a proactive defence posture.⁹⁷⁹

The CSC were primarily concerned by Chinese and Soviet attempts to subvert Indonesia.⁹⁸⁰ When Indonesia was perceived to be under threat from Chinese subversion, the CSC used covert action to intervene. The CSC also shared close links with the IRD. Between the Information Research Department (IRD) and Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), the intelligence community engaged in a concerted effort to stymie Chinese influence at the expense of democratic norms and international law obligations. IRD officers fed threat assessment papers to the committee through the J.I.C.⁹⁸¹ Throughout Southeast Asia, most diplomatic missions had been sent 'indicators of subversion'.⁹⁸² According to a CO report, the IRD produced a biannual assessment of communist priorities for subversion.⁹⁸³ Countering subversion in foreign and AATs, as outlined in the introduction, was a delicate task.

⁹⁷² Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. The CSC was established in January 1962.

⁹⁷³ Office, "Counter Subversion Committee: Meetings 1-7, Papers 1-27. CAB 134/2543."

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid. CSC activity was not confined to Indonesia or Cambodia.

⁹⁷⁵ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁸ Ruane, "Reviewed Work(s): Britain's Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice between Europe and the World? by Saki Dockrill."

⁹⁷⁹ Bryant, "Review Work(s): Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: An Introduction to British Foreign Policy since 1945 by David Sanders."

⁹⁸⁰ Office, "Counter Subversion Committee: Meetings 1-7, Papers 1-27. CAB 134/2543."

⁹⁸¹ Ibid.

⁹⁸² Ibid.

⁹⁸³ Ibid.

There were three principal tactics used by the CSC to counter subversion. The first method included the collection of intelligence on clandestine subversion and dissemination to the government it threatened. Secondly, the CSC adopted a more overt approach to combating and pre-empting subversion through the 'activities of the overseas information services.'⁹⁸⁴ Services included the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the British Council and technical assistance schemes.⁹⁸⁵ Technical assistance and aid were features of Britain's post-coup foreign policy towards Indonesia.⁹⁸⁶ It was believed these methods would create conditions where subversion could not proliferate. Thirdly, the CSC countered subversion through covert activities, including propaganda and the training of local police.⁹⁸⁷ Although the CSC lacked the apparatus of an executive body it provided intelligence assessments and policy guidance. Moreover, it was predominantly concerned with counter-subversion measures and lacked direct control over individual operations.⁹⁸⁸ This, however, does not diminish the role it played in countering subversion in Asian-style democracies and undermining the principle of non-intervention.

After an initial slump in IRD output in 1967, mainly due to staff shortages, officers concentrated on creating contacts through other members of the Indonesian mission.⁹⁸⁹ Staff shortages are evident when assessing IRD papers from 1967 onwards. For example, the information officer, who coordinated the IRD effort in Indonesia, had to split his time between Indonesia and Medan resulting in a reduction of new contacts for the department.⁹⁹⁰ Staff shortages may have been a hangover from budget cuts and changing priorities. Gilchrist, concerned by developments, wrote to the Parliamentary Under Secretary stating that the IRD would have to be 'selective' over the material it disseminated.⁹⁹¹ Moreover, Gilchrist was obliged to provide the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with selected extracts from the monthly *Intel Communist Policy and Tactics*.⁹⁹² He sought IRD assistance with providing the material in Bahasa. Copies would be made in London. Ian Sutherland was marked as a potential candidate to take a leading role in the IRD mission in Indonesia. According to a FO report, Sutherland had been transferred from the Northern Department and possessed an intimate

⁹⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁶ House of Commons Hansard, "Preamble, Commons Sitting of Thursday, 27th November, 1969 'Indonesia'," ed. House of Commons (London November 27th 1969).

⁹⁸⁷ Office, "Counter Subversion Committee: Meetings 1-7, Papers 1-27. CAB 134/2543."

⁹⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁸⁹ ———, "Indonesia: Consideration of Level of IRD Work Required and Visit by Miss Gibson, IRD London. FCO 95/147."

⁹⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹⁹² Ibid.

knowledge of developments in the region.⁹⁹³ Interestingly, as Suharto began his presidency, Mr. Ashworth, an IRD officer, was touring other Southeast Asian states determining Jakarta's vulnerabilities to communism.⁹⁹⁴ Ashworth's activities demonstrate that security threats posed by communism were central to planning. If Indonesia was perceived to be susceptible to communism, national security planners would revert to covert action. Britain's pivot away from covert action was supported by diplomats including Paul Gore-Booth in Jakarta. Gore-Booth noted the overwhelming anti-communist sentiment in Indonesia and the vehement opposition to Chinese influence,

Given the still ferocious hostility to communism in this country, it is tempting for us to suppose that there is an open market here for indiscriminate anti-communist doctrine and propaganda. But there is not.⁹⁹⁵

Gore-Booth noted three reasons why Britain could not continue with covert action. Firstly, that Jakarta would resent any foreign intervention in its own suppression of communism. Secondly, Britain could not intervene due to Indonesia's desire to maintain its non-alignment foreign policy. Lastly, Indonesia was trying to maintain friendly relations with Moscow. Indiscriminate propaganda, therefore, might destabilise Indonesia.⁹⁹⁶ Any attempts to undermine these Indonesian susceptibilities would be counterproductive. With covert action becoming an unpalatable option, soft power became an increasingly attractive method. A pivot away from covert action was noted by IRD officer H Philipps who, in correspondence with Valery Gibson, stated that 'with the ending of confrontation and the gradual emergence of a new regime I have already rationalised and streamlined this distribution.'⁹⁹⁷ The distribution Philipps referred to was of IRD propaganda. This would suggest that once communist influence had been degraded in an AAT, national security planners decreased their propaganda output. This was matched by a pivot to soft power.

IRD material, disseminated in Indonesia, was channelled through Malaysia.⁹⁹⁸ Although Malaysia had been selected as a destination for IRD material, there were some officers who

⁹⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁴ _____, "Visits by Mr Ashworth, IRD Hong Kong, to Burma and Cambodia, 2-9 October 1968. FCO 95/447."

⁹⁹⁵ _____, "Indonesia: Consideration of Level of IRD Work Required and Visit by Miss Gibson, IRD London. FCO 95/147."

⁹⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid.

believed the Malaysians lacked the apparatus to disseminate the materials correctly. For example, Stanley Budd suggested that all material should be kept in “our own hands”.⁹⁹⁹ According to FO correspondence, Rounthwaite was keen to supply material in both radio and television formats. For example, when the British Council library opened in Jakarta, IRD officers planned to plant selected books amongst its shelves.¹⁰⁰⁰ IRD material was transported by the Armed Forces Mail team. The head of the Armed Forces Public Relations Office, Commander J Sofan, was a close contact of the IRD.¹⁰⁰¹ Sofan, according to IRD documents, was also responsible for psywar operations in Indonesia.¹⁰⁰² Sofan’s role highlights the incestuous relationship between the intelligence services and diplomats.

Meanwhile, Gilchrist provided extracts from *Communist Tactics* to the Malaysians.¹⁰⁰³ Alongside propaganda campaigns, the British Council provided the IRD with a platform to intervene in the internal affairs of Indonesia. Chris Rounthwaite, in correspondence with Mr P Joy, stated that ‘since the ending of confrontation, we have slowly been re-building our [council] organisation.’¹⁰⁰⁴ Moreover, Rounthwaite suggested that swamping his “contacts” with IRD material was inadvisable.¹⁰⁰⁵ By mid-1967, Rounthwaite had ca. forty contacts in Indonesia receiving copies of *Forum Asia*. Countering Chinese communist subversion in Indonesia was a key policy of the IRD following the removal of the PKI and Sukarno. For example, the IRD produced a newsletter called the *State Committee for Formulating Policy for Settling the Chinese Issue*. Originally produced for Hong Kong, it was suggested the material may be of use for Indonesia.¹⁰⁰⁶ In late December 1967, *Antara* reported that Chinese language publications, destined to be imported into Indonesia, were to be suspended.¹⁰⁰⁷ This would suggest that following the coup, British intelligence sought to prevent a communist resurgence.

Despite a pivot towards soft power, national security planners always sought opportunities to curtail communist influence using propaganda. For example, correspondence between J. O’Connor Howe and Chris Rounthwaite reveal that copies of

⁹⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁰ _____, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹⁰⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰² _____, "Indonesia: Consideration of Level of IRD Work Required and Visit by Miss Gibson, IRD London. FCO 95/147."

¹⁰⁰³ _____, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹⁰⁰⁴ _____, "Indonesia: Consideration of Level of IRD Work Required and Visit by Miss Gibson, IRD London. FCO 95/147."

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid.

IRD materials including, *Asian Analyst*, *China Topics*, briefs on Vietnam and Chinese subversion were disseminated to “friends” in Jakarta.¹⁰⁰⁸ Further plans included a larger distribution of the *Economist*, which was believed to be a useful and indirect way of reaching a wider audience with IRD material. Further correspondence between Rounthwaite and Valery Gibson reveal details of a bilateral Indonesian-Pakistani organisation. In March 1968, Gibson informed Rounthwaite of a so-called television body called the Ministerial Council of the Indonesian-Pakistan Economic and Cultural Cooperation Organisation had recently convened in Jakarta.¹⁰⁰⁹ A previous meeting of the organisation in Dacca, East Pakistan, in December 1966 established radio collaboration between the two countries.¹⁰¹⁰ Rounthwaite’s response corrected Gibson, stating the organisation went far beyond television into cultural and economic spheres.

By April 1968, a periodical review of Pakistani-Indonesian cooperation in economic and cultural fields was brought to the attention of the Southeast Asian R.I.O. According to the report, the meeting garnered very little attention in either country.¹⁰¹¹ This occurred at the same time delegates were preparing to meet in Tehran. Cultural links extended to increasing cooperation between Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and Antara News Agency. IRD officers pondered whether there was an opportunity to channel anti-communist, especially anti-Mao propaganda through *Antara*.¹⁰¹² H. J. Spence believed, however, there would be limited opportunities to disseminate propaganda through the APP.¹⁰¹³ Although the threat of the PKI and Sukarno had been negated, Indonesia, especially its national news agency, became a potential tool for the IRD. This suggests that although there was a pivot towards soft power, despite Suharto’s authoritarian nature, national security planners were prepared to use covert action to stymie communist infringements. The next section examines Britain’s pivot to soft power further using the British Council as a case study.

d. British Council Intervention

This section will provide evidence of British Council intervention in Indonesian affairs from its reopening in 1968. By 1967 Anglo-Indonesian relations were at the forefront of

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁹ _____, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹⁰¹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid.

¹⁰¹² Ibid.

¹⁰¹³ Ibid.

British foreign policy in Southeast Asia as several national security planners believed that the threat of a further confrontation had dissipated.¹⁰¹⁴ This presented an opportunity to improve bi-lateral relations through soft power. For example, during a House of Commons debate on July 20th, 1966, Tam Dalyell stated that Britain should strengthen its relations with Indonesia.¹⁰¹⁵ Dalyell, moreover, believed that the British presence in the region should be founded upon a non-military approach by focusing on education, medical care, and engineering.¹⁰¹⁶ This would involve the use of soft power instruments such as the British Council suggesting that there was a policy shift in Britain despite evidence of democratic backsliding under Suharto.

Suharto, like his predecessor, faced domestic pressure from anti-communist student movements. One such movement was known as Action Fronts.¹⁰¹⁷ According to the British Council, throughout the student population there was genuine desire to learn English as a second language and gain qualifications in the English language.¹⁰¹⁸ Student representatives, moreover, had obtained a foothold in the Indonesian parliament. British diplomats in Jakarta thought a new TNI-dominated government would be propped up by pro-western student movements.¹⁰¹⁹ It was important, therefore, that the British Council discreetly influence the student body and provide a sympathetic and friendly organisation.¹⁰²⁰ It was vital for national security planners, therefore, that a strong programme of English language courses was provided to the country.¹⁰²¹ English language programmes would provide Indonesian's access to a wider range of literature, including science and technology. It was hoped that the language training would build links between Britain and Indonesia.¹⁰²²

As Britain pivoted to soft power tactics in Indonesia, the British Council became a focal point. The British Council is a form of soft power. By 1968, for example, Whitehall began contemplating a revival of the British Council in Indonesia.¹⁰²³ British Council outposts are designed to promote the English language, knowledge about Britain, and foster economic

¹⁰¹⁴ Hansards Parliamentary Papers, "Commons Sitting of Thursday, 5th March, 1970," ed. 20th Century House of Commons Hansard Sessional Papers (London: UK Parliamentary Papers, 1979). Peter Tapsell was the first MP to visit Indonesia following the coup.

¹⁰¹⁵ Twentieth Century House of Commons Papers, "Indonesia," ed. House of Commons (London: Hansards, July 20 1966).

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁷ Council, "Indonesia: British Council Operations, FCO 13/98."

¹⁰¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁰ Philips to Sir Harold Beeley. Ibid.

¹⁰²¹ Ibid.

¹⁰²² Ibid.

¹⁰²³ Ibid.

and scientific ties with the host country.¹⁰²⁴ Following independence from the Netherlands, English had supplanted Dutch as the language of commerce and science.¹⁰²⁵ This provided an opportunity for Britain to expand its influence by providing English language courses and expanding its cultural significance. According to British Council reports, up until 1964, the Council had been an influential organisation in Indonesia.¹⁰²⁶ Sukarno, however, had expelled all representation from the country during the *Konfrontasi*.¹⁰²⁷ British officials sought compensation from the Indonesian government for the destruction.¹⁰²⁸ It was hoped in the 1967/1968 budget the Indonesian government may pay a partial dividend, however, the report stated that the Indonesians were not keen on the proposal.¹⁰²⁹ Following reconnaissance it was decided the British Council offices would support libraries which would supplement local university English faculties.¹⁰³⁰ As Jakarta sought rapprochement with London, it admitted fault for the damages caused to the British Embassy. According to a British Council report, the embassy would be rebuilt and financed by the Indonesians.¹⁰³¹ This suggests that once the perceived threat of communism had dissipated, national security planners began to pursue soft power policies.

Soft power avoided the high credibility and hypocrisy costs associated with covert action. Once the perceived threat of Sukarno and communism had been eliminated, British intelligence began assisting Jakarta in certain areas.¹⁰³² For example, in 1968, IRD officials took advantage of an FO reception by approaching Indonesian delegates visiting London.¹⁰³³ The delegation included senior education ministers from Jakarta. IRD officer, J. C. McMinnies, spoke at length with minister Sunardjo Kolopaking about the challenges facing Suharto's administration.¹⁰³⁴ For example, universities and schools across the archipelago were struggling to provide textbooks to their students.¹⁰³⁵ Although the IRD could not directly assist Jakarta with this, it offered the Indonesians assistance. Correspondence between McMinnies and Rounthwaite reveal that Stanley Budd could potentially assist the Indonesians with local publishing techniques. By aiding Jakarta through education, it allowed

¹⁰²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰³¹ Papers, "Indonesia."

¹⁰³² Office, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹⁰³³ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid.

the IRD to intervene in the internal affairs of Indonesia without the hypocrisy or legitimacy costs associated with covert action.¹⁰³⁶

London used soft power, such as language training and education, to pursue its objective of containing communism and increasing British influence in Indonesia. In April 1968, the education secretary, Edward Short, approved the British Council offices in Jakarta to reopen.¹⁰³⁷ The British Embassy in Jakarta agreed to help the British Council with administrative assistance in its early months.¹⁰³⁸ British Council operations may not have been facilitated under the anti-imperialist policies of Sukarno and the PKI, but in 1968 the Indonesian government, now under Suharto, approved the reopening of the offices.¹⁰³⁹ An extract from a Steering Committee Paper, dated June 18th, 1968, explored the idea of increasing the annual budget for the British Council from £60,000 to £100,000 p.a.¹⁰⁴⁰ Increases in the annual budget formed part of a non-military effort in the Persian Gulf, Southeast Asia and Australasia.¹⁰⁴¹ Education provided through the British Council was a form of soft power and supplemented British foreign policy.

In Southeast Asia, the Council was represented in Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam. By 1966, operations in Burma and Laos had ceased, however.¹⁰⁴² In the 1967/1968 financial year, discussions were held over the possibility of closing the Vietnamese and Cambodian offices to open an office in the Philippines.¹⁰⁴³ This would suggest Cambodia was not as important as other states in the region. IRD liaison with British Council representatives reported that the funds could not be found from anywhere else, especially with the re-establishment of operations in the UAE.¹⁰⁴⁴ Representation was also sought in Manila, however, finances did not stretch far enough. As with most post-war operations, British Council schemes were subject to stringent financial obligations. Multiple discussions were held between the treasury and the Overseas Department of State concerning the finances for the re-establishment of the Indonesian office. Teacher's pay rates were also debated. A figure of £470,000 was proposed by Council officials to offset financial cuts from the previous year.¹⁰⁴⁵

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁷ Council, "Indonesia: British Council Operations, FCO 13/98."

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁹ *Ibid.* British Council representation transcended eighty countries by 1967.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

In October 1967, the Information Departments prepared a paper on Overseas Information Expenditure.¹⁰⁴⁶ The report discussed the financial implications of British Council activities in Southeast Asia as a best, intermediate, or worst-case scenario.¹⁰⁴⁷ An intermediate scenario would see a scaled back budget but not vulnerable to cuts whereas a worst-case scenario would involve cuts to the Council.¹⁰⁴⁸ Indonesian provisions were deemed best or intermediate scenarios meaning the budget would not be cut. This demonstrates Indonesia's importance as an AAT. A British Council representative, Mr J Fowells, toured Indonesia from September 26th to October 6th, 1967.¹⁰⁴⁹ Fowells' findings were instrumental in re-establishing a British Council presence in Indonesia recommending the presence of two offices, one in Jakarta and one in Bandung.¹⁰⁵⁰ A letter from Iain Sutherland to Robert Cecil at the Cultural Relations Department stated that in the context of British military withdrawal from the region it was important for Britain to maintain a "cultural presence" in Indonesia.¹⁰⁵¹ From Indonesia, Sutherland argued, it would be possible to extend British influence across the region, especially now the confrontation with Malaysia had concluded.¹⁰⁵² Military withdrawal from the region, moreover, was seen by Sutherland as a potential flashpoint in relations with Britain's former colonies, the British Council, he argued, could negate this.¹⁰⁵³

Not all national security planners shared the belief that soft power was a preferential option. For example, in a House of Commons debate in July 1967 John Peel argued British foreign and defence policy was inadequate. Peel's comments followed the 1966 Defence White Paper which outlined the planned withdrawal of British forces from Southeast Asia by mid-1970.¹⁰⁵⁴ This, however, was dependent on the stability of the region. According to Peel, the Malaysian regions of Sabah and Sarawak were 'very much out on a limb' and Indonesia was not yet stable. A further confrontation with Malaysia was also a possibility. Peel called for the strengthening of SEATO and for London to remain in the region until stability returned.¹⁰⁵⁵ This demonstrates that not all national security planners were content with

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵² Sutherland to Cecil. Ibid.

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵⁴ House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, "Statement on the Defence Estimates 1966. Part I. The Defence Review," ed. Ministry of Defence (London, United Kingdom: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, February 1966).

¹⁰⁵⁵ Papers, "Foreign Affairs."

British foreign policy and sought a hard power presence alongside soft power in Southeast Asia.

Education and language training were not just a form of soft power, rather they symbolised a shift towards positive engagement. This is demonstrated through the insistence of national security planners to reopen the British Council in Indonesia. Although Indonesia ceased to be an emerging democracy and had been weakened by domestic events, Britain did not seek regime change as it was perceived communism was less of a threat suggesting perceptions of security underpinned decision-making processes. Soft power, in the form of the British Council, was a more effective tool by the late 1960s. Alongside the British Council, Britain also used the BBC and ITV as soft power platforms. BBC collusion with the IRD will be explored in the next section.

e. BBC as a Soft Power Platform

The aim of this section is to highlight how the IRD used the BBC as a soft power tool to influence events in Indonesia. National security planners pivoted towards soft power when they perceived the threat of communism had subsided despite the more authoritarian nature of Suharto. The 1950s saw increased collusion between the IRD and BBC. According to Lashmar, the IRD had a permanent representative to the BBC.¹⁰⁵⁶ Of particular importance was the relationship between the IRD and Edith Temple Roberts. Temple Roberts, the Topical Talks writer in the BBC's Far Eastern Service, which covered Southeast Asia, received all IRD material on Asia.¹⁰⁵⁷ Temple-Roberts received briefing papers on London's policies in the region along with reports on SEATO. According to FO documents, Temple Roberts had a particular interest in minority peoples including ethnic minorities in Cambodia and Indonesia. In Cambodia it was ethnic minorities, particularly from the Northeast, who formed the bedrock of support for the Khmer Rouge.¹⁰⁵⁸ Dick Noone and Peter Moss, both involved with IRD activities, were earmarked to work with Temple-Roberts.¹⁰⁵⁹ Events in Cambodia are explored further in Chapter Six.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Lashmar, *Spies, Spin and the Fourth Estate: British Intelligence and the Media*. pp.93-94

¹⁰⁵⁷ Office, "UK: Recipients of IRD Material;BBC. FCO 95/1270."

¹⁰⁵⁸ Ben Kiernan, "The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge," (New York: Yale University, 1996). pp.82-83

¹⁰⁵⁹ Office, "UK: Recipients of IRD Material;BBC. FCO 95/1270."

To bolster IRD and SIS operations, the BBC was also utilised by national security planners to advance British interests in the region. The BBC was viewed as an impartial broadcaster, independent of the government.¹⁰⁶⁰ Correspondence argued that the BBC would provide a platform to disseminate propaganda in support of British and American foreign policy in Southeast Asia.¹⁰⁶¹ It was thought Vietnamese citizens would trust BBC news bulletins over the Voice of America. In 1964, the Commonwealth Relations Office proposed the establishment of a new relay service for the BBC in Malaya.¹⁰⁶² This would enable to the BBC to project itself further into Southeast Asia. In 1963, moreover, the BBC had no permanent reporter in Malaysia. The IRD sought to rectify this by allocating money from a counter-subversion fund to finance a reporter to send daily telegrams to Britain.¹⁰⁶³

Throughout the early Cold War period, the relationship between the BBC and IRD was predominantly based around radio broadcasts. By the 1970s, however, television presented a further source for cooperation. IRD were keen to enlist the help of ITV (Independent Television) and discussed ways in which the BBC and ITV could cooperate on projecting Britain's image abroad.¹⁰⁶⁴ Norman Reddaway stressed that any liaison between the two organisations would not impact the statutory independence of either.¹⁰⁶⁵ Reddaway, moreover, hoped the liaison would extend to include the FO and British Council.¹⁰⁶⁶ Examples of IRD cooperation with the BBC and ITV form elements of soft power in projecting a positive image of Britain abroad. BBC involvement in Southeast Asia, however, did have a more covert dimension. For example, in 1963, the CSC discussed the possibility of employing a full-time BBC correspondent in Malaysia to espouse the virtues of federalisation.¹⁰⁶⁷

Throughout 1971 discussions were held in the IRD pertaining to the potential posting of a permanent FO liaison to the BBC.¹⁰⁶⁸ The IRD, moreover, were keen to understand the

¹⁰⁶⁰ _____, "Broadcasting: BBC Far Eastern Service; Exchange of Information with IRD. FCO 95/1796."

¹⁰⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶² Dominions Office, "Proposed BBC Relay Station at Sarawak. DO 187/12," ed. Dominions Office & BBC (London: National Archives, 1963-1964).

¹⁰⁶³ Office, "Broadcasting: IRD Paper on Hostile Broadcasts, Paper on BBC Broadcasts and Services and Questionnaire on Communist Bloc Radio Propaganda. FO 1110/1723."

¹⁰⁶⁴ _____, "UK: Recipients of IRD Material;BBC. FCO 95/1270."

¹⁰⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁷ _____, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ibid.

inner workings of the TV industry.¹⁰⁶⁹ Minutes from a 1971 meeting reveal that the IRD believed certain BBC/ITV programmes would benefit from their material.¹⁰⁷⁰ According to correspondence between Reddaway and Brinson, however, the IRD might struggle to ascertain the decision-making processes of the BBC as it was often 'concealed in fog.'¹⁰⁷¹ It was important for the IRD to gain second rights for film and television programmes. For example, IRD had negotiated second rights for television programmes such as *Remember Czechoslovakia*.¹⁰⁷² Moreover, it was common practice by the 1970s for the IRD to update the BBC on papers and programmes of interest to the organisation.¹⁰⁷³ For example, in 1975, the IRD highlighted a newspaper of interest. It was suspected the relatively unknown Malaysian *Peoples Newspaper* had links with communist China.¹⁰⁷⁴ The *Peoples Newspaper* consistently quoted Mao and was of particular interest to the BBC Far Eastern Service.¹⁰⁷⁵ This suggests that threat perception was an ever-present feature of British foreign policy.

A further example of IRD-BBC cooperation concerned IRD officer, N H Marshall, who cultivated three personal contacts at the BBC.¹⁰⁷⁶ Correspondence highlights the positions the contacts held. For example, Aubrey Singer, Head of Features was a key contact along with Tom Mangold, Current Affairs, and 24 Hours editor, Gordon Carr.¹⁰⁷⁷ A further contact of Marshall's was Robin Warren-Smith, a research assistant at the BBC.¹⁰⁷⁸ Although none of the contacts were formal, they all benefitted from access to the FO's research output. Warren-Smith was granted ad-hoc clearance to attend IRD briefings.¹⁰⁷⁹ In November 1971, Temple-Roberts visited Bangkok where she met with Peter Moss who shared IRD material with the reporter.¹⁰⁸⁰ During a meeting in Marshall was advised, in strict confidentiality, that the BBC's Central Research Unit was to close in April 1971.¹⁰⁸¹ IRD officers, who caught wind of the departments foreseeable closure, bemoaned the development as the unit had been a great source for IRD output.¹⁰⁸² It was reported in 1975 that the Vietnamese listened to BBC services dedicated to the news. Due to the 'vast gulf' in cultural difference, however,

¹⁰⁶⁹ _____, "UK: Recipients of IRD Material;BBC. FCO 95/1270."

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷² Ibid.

¹⁰⁷³ _____, "Broadcasting: BBC Far Eastern Service; Exchange of Information with IRD. FCO 95/1796."

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁶ _____, "UK: Recipients of IRD Material;BBC. FCO 95/1270."

¹⁰⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸² Ibid.

all other programmes dedicated to British life and politics lacked popularity.¹⁰⁸³ This suggests there were limitations in using the BBC as a soft power platform.

The BBC formed an integral part of Britain's soft power platform in Indonesia. Increased cooperation between the BBC and IRD benefited national security planners. The BBC provided the IRD with a vessel to disseminate propaganda whilst maintaining its perceived impartiality. Moreover, the BBC provided national security planners with a soft power option. In the wider context of DPT, this would suggest that Britain was willing to engage in covert action if a state was perceived to pose a communist threat against a former colony. The next section outlines how Britain's human rights proposals at Tehran. This will allow the chapter to expose contradictions in British foreign policy.

f. Britain's Human Rights Proposals at the Tehran Conference

Little scholarly attention has been granted to British attitudes towards the 1968 Tehran Conference. This section, therefore, seeks to address this neglect whilst exposing contradictions in British foreign policy. This will be achieved through an examination of London's proposals at the 1968 Tehran Conference. The aim of the conference was to intensify national and international undertakings in the field of human rights.¹⁰⁸⁴ The conference resulted in the Tehran Proclamation reaffirming the principles set out under international law.¹⁰⁸⁵ Unlike the Helsinki Accords, zonal foreign policy did not play a major role in decision making at Tehran as Britain acted without considering the implications for Southeast Asia. Despite proposing a series of human rights bills at the conference Britain had been complicit in destabilising Indonesia. This is evident through the incitement of violence towards suspected communists.¹⁰⁸⁶ Britain's behaviour at Tehran, therefore, strikes as insincere. Moreover, some of the language used by diplomats sounded defeatist in tone leaving questions hanging over the true nature of British intentions at the conference. Britain's intelligence activities prior to the conference suggest that its proposals at Tehran were merely symbolic.

¹⁰⁸³ ———, "BBC External Services: Review of Far Eastern Service. FCO 21/2961." By the mid-1980s, the BBC had vernacular services in Malay, Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese

¹⁰⁸⁴ United Nations General Assembly, "Resolutions Adopted on the Reports of the Third Committee. Designation of 1968 as International Year for Human Rights," ed. UNGA (New York: United Nations, 1963). The designation was designed to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the UDHR.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Office, "The International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 22 April - 13 May 1968. Research and Analysis. FCO 160/311/7." At the 1279th plenary meeting of the UNGA, Resolution 1961 (XVIII) Designation of 1968 as International Year for Human Rights, was adopted.

¹⁰⁸⁶ ———, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

This amounted to the interference in the internal affairs of another state, which violated democratic norms. During the conference British diplomats proposed a new 'Rights of the Detained Persons' bill.¹⁰⁸⁷ This highlights a contradiction in British foreign policy, whereby it brought attention to human rights abuses whilst contravening international norms. This would suggest that Britain was not serious about stronger human rights standards. The inclusion of authoritarian states, such as Spain and Greece supports this theory further.

To prepare for the conference, national security planners proposed a series of meetings, to be held in New York, comprising of Western countries between February 1968 and the beginning of the conference in April.¹⁰⁸⁸ These PrepCom meetings allowed Britain to influence other like-minded states attending the conference. Britain included Spain and Greece in the PrepCom, however, other members questioned their participation due to their poor human rights record.¹⁰⁸⁹ Austria, Denmark, and Sweden, had dealt with Greek human rights violations through the Council of Europe, and decided to withdraw from the meetings.¹⁰⁹⁰ London hoped to coordinate policies and the agenda for Tehran before circulating draft resolutions.¹⁰⁹¹ During the PrepCom Western delegations opted for two committees. Nigeria and Pakistan, however, pushed for three.¹⁰⁹² By the conclusion of the PrepCom, the Nigerian delegation conceded, and the committee proceeded with two. Committee I dealt with apartheid, colonialism, and slavery and Committee II considered wider human rights issues.¹⁰⁹³ British documents pertaining to the conference reveal that none of the objectives were met.¹⁰⁹⁴ Committee II was, according to the analysis, the principal disappointment for the British delegation.

One of the main contradictions of British foreign policy was its support for Suharto's Indonesia despite the democratic decay and treatment of political prisoners. Eighty-five states, more than a quarter from the west, attended the conference, with several NGOs and inter-governmental agencies also in attendance.¹⁰⁹⁵ Britain was part of the seventeen-strong Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) attending five sessions before the conference. When the

¹⁰⁸⁷ ———, "The International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 22 April - 13 May 1968. Research and Analysis. FCO 160/311/7."

¹⁰⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹² Ibid.

¹⁰⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid.

final report was issued, however, it lacked a consensus and highlighted the contrasting policies of the committee members.¹⁰⁹⁶ Britain played a key role in the PrepCom meetings. In the context of DPT, national security planners would be more likely to engage in covert action against Suharto as he was authoritarian. However, Britain pivoted to soft power. It was not in Britain's national interest to interfere as Jakarta had locked up potential communists who could harm British interests in Malaysia. This again would suggest that Britain's proposals lacked sincerity.

Meanwhile, plans were drawn up by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), following an application by Jamaica, to bring human rights to the forefront of international attention.¹⁰⁹⁷ The Human Rights Commission would gather to develop and guarantee the progression of political, economic, and civil rights.¹⁰⁹⁸ Public diplomacy focused on maintaining Britain's identity as a western liberal democracy who championed human rights causes. For example, Harold Wilson sent a note to the conference stating that Tehran provided 'an appropriate moment for the nations of the world to reaffirm, through their representatives assembled in Teheran [sic], the principles of tolerance, non-discrimination, individual freedom and dignity.'¹⁰⁹⁹ Britain sat as vice-president for the West European and Others Group.¹¹⁰⁰ Notably, only one Southeast Asian country, the Philippines, held the role of vice-president for the conference.¹¹⁰¹ The British delegation composed of Evan Luard, Goronwy Roberts, Samuel Hoare and two other diplomats.¹¹⁰² British delegates proposed Resolution VI of Committee II titled *The Rights of Detained Persons*. Likewise, Resolution X, the *Model Rules of Procedure for Bodies Dealing with Violations of Human Rights*, was a further British initiative.¹¹⁰³ The delegation believed their resolution on detained persons was of particular importance.

British delegates were concerned that political differences between states would inhibit the progress of the conference. It was, therefore, of paramount importance to London that political conflict did not cloud the progress of the conference. Britain's resolution on the

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid. For example, several countries were firmly opposed to the attendance of NGOs. Consequently, following mediation from UNGA, NGOs were able to submit applications to attend in a consultative role – no separate forum was held for NGOs.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Committee, "Chiefs of Staff Committee: Minutes of Meetings Now 69-72 (Described at Item Level) DEFE 4/177."

¹⁰⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹⁹ United Nations, "Final Act of Tehran Conference," ed. United Nations General Assembly (New York: United Nations Legal Archive, May 1968).

¹¹⁰⁰ Office, "The International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 22 April - 13 May 1968. Research and Analysis. FCO 160/311/7."

¹¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰² Ibid.

¹¹⁰³ Ibid.

Rights of the Detained Persons required states to review their laws with the aim of avoiding prolonged periods of detention without trial. London lobbied like-minded delegations, namely Argentina, Austria, Venezuela, and Chile to co-sponsor the resolution.¹¹⁰⁴ The Greek delegation approached the British with an amendment to the resolution namely that derogation may occur during a state of emergency. However, the British did not agree with the proposal and the Greeks did not pursue the amendment.¹¹⁰⁵ A report by Luard following the conference struck a conciliatory tone. Committee I, which was expected to prove difficult for the British, went better than expected. According to the final report, the British were not directly attacked, and the question of Rhodesia was not brought up on as many occasions as first expected.¹¹⁰⁶ Committee II was not as successful, however.

Progress was slow during the first week of the conference as Arab-Israeli exchanges appeared antagonistic and unconstructive.¹¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, no substantive work on human rights was undertaken. Over the following two weeks, the Proclamation of Tehran, alongside the twenty-five resolutions, was drafted and adopted by acclamation.¹¹⁰⁸ Committee I adopted seven resolutions designed to combat colonialism, apartheid, and slavery. Committee II adopted a further seventeen resolutions based on wider human rights questions. Both sets of resolutions were adopted by the Plenary without debate.¹¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, deliberations amongst members of the MPRS, the Indonesian parliament, were held to assess the deposition of Sukarno and the possibility and implications of him standing trial for his past indiscretions against the state.¹¹¹⁰ Nasution was removed from his position inside the MPRS following criticism of the government. This signalled further democratic decay in Indonesia. Indonesia, however, was subject to the same laws under the principle of *uti possidetis juris* whereby a newly independent state is still under the same obligations when it was under colonial rule.¹¹¹¹ This meant that Indonesia was obligated under the same provisions. The text of the proclamation stated the 'international community fulfil their solemn obligations to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinctions of any kind.'¹¹¹² Sir Samuel Hoare reiterated Britain's commitment to international norms when he spoke at the conclusion of the conference. Hoare stated

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹¹⁰ Legge, "General Suharto's New Order."

¹¹¹¹ Allen, *International Law*. p.252

¹¹¹² Office, "The International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 22 April - 13 May 1968. Research and Analysis. FCO 160/311/7."

Britain believed it had a moral obligation to uphold principles of human rights law.¹¹¹³ Although the declaration was not legally binding, Hoare reiterated that Britain supported the advancement of human rights.¹¹¹⁴

The Tehran Proclamation, although a reaffirmation of human rights development, provides an important juncture in assessing British foreign policy. For example, national security planners proposed a detained persons bill at the conference. This would suggest London sought to portray itself as a liberal democracy. Despite this Britain still engaged in counter subversion activities in Indonesia. Although it is not possible to directly attribute the illegal detention of political prisoners to British intelligence operations, the interference in the internal affairs of Indonesia did undermine the government. Findings of the International People's Tribunal support this argument.¹¹¹⁵ Although Tehran was not as high profile as the Helsinki Accords, it reinforced the principles of international law. Meanwhile, the CSC were containing communist influence in Indonesia. Tehran provides a lens through which we can examine British foreign policy. Tehran occurred at a political juncture in Indonesia's Cold War history as Suharto assumed power. As the previous section suggested, Indonesia ceased to be an Asian-style democracy under Suharto. Despite this, Britain supported the authoritarian.

g. Evidence of Human Rights Abuses in the 1960s & 1970s

This section will demonstrate that Britain ignored human rights abuses in Indonesia despite the Tehran proposals and democratic backsliding throughout Indonesia. Advocates of selectorate theory would argue that a breakdown of democratic norms and a weakening of the state would increase the probability of Britain engaging in covert action. As Indonesia experienced democratic backsliding, Britain would be exposed to fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs if it intervened. For example, Britain could claim that any intervention was justified along humanitarian lines. Despite evidence of democratic decay, however, Britain pivoted towards soft power. This would suggest that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy in Indonesia. Although state sanctioned violence occurred under Sukarno, it increased following the coup.¹¹¹⁶ Evidence of democratic decay

¹¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹¹⁵ Klinken, "Genocide Finally Enters Public Discourse: The International People's Tribunal 1965."

¹¹¹⁶ Helen Fein, "Revolutionary and Antirevolutionary Genocides: A Comparison of State Murders in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975 to 1979, and in Indonesia, 1965 to 1966," *Comparative Studies in*

existed in Indonesian elections. Even though legislative elections were held, they were mired by press censorship.¹¹¹⁷ A senior editor of Indonesia's largest newspaper claimed that the government would call the paper if it crossed the government line.¹¹¹⁸ This would suggest that although elections were held, they were influenced by Suharto. This is supported by Joseph Wright and Escribà Folch who suggest that 'legislative institutions can help sustain the dictator in power.'¹¹¹⁹ Despite democratic decay in Indonesia, Britain explored closer bilateral economic and political ties.¹¹²⁰ A pivot towards positive relations is also evident here. Positive engagement was a clever policy which carried fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs.

Throughout the late 1960s anti-communist sentiment grew in Indonesia. This was compounded by the public nature of the coup and the death of one of the general's infant daughters.¹¹²¹ Both Sukarno and Suharto took punitive measures against the PKI. When power transferred to Suharto, he spoke of his desire to bring harmony to Indonesia.¹¹²² However, Suharto inherited sweeping powers providing him with unprecedented authority. This allowed Suharto to exercise greater control over Indonesia resulting in democratic backsliding. One of the first major symptoms of democratic decay was the establishment of Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (KOPKAMTIB). KOPKAMTIB officers had the power to arrest and detain any person suspected of harbouring communist sympathies.¹¹²³ By 1968, however, it became a tool to crush wider dissent in Indonesia. Throughout the late 1960s, signs of an increasingly authoritarian rule being imposed by Suharto began to emerge. To assist with KOPKAMTIB operations, Washington provided Jakarta with lists of suspected communists.¹¹²⁴ Following the coup, suspected communists were imprisoned without trial.¹¹²⁵ According to Polomka, ca. 120,000 political prisoners were detained throughout 350 prisons across Indonesia.¹¹²⁶ KOPKAMTIB

Society and History Volume 35, Number 4.(October 1993). p. *Vide* ethnic cleansing of rebellious factions in South Sulawesi and Maluku Islands.

¹¹¹⁷ David. A Andelman, "Indonesia's 'fine line' of censorship before the elections " *The Times* June 29th 1976.

¹¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹⁹ Joseph Wright and Abel Escribà - Folch, "Authoritarian Institutions and Regime Survival: Transitions to Democracy and Subsequent Autocracy," *British Journal of Political Science* Vol.42, No.2(April 2012). p.284

¹¹²⁰ Prime Minister's Office, "Indonesia: Visit to the UK by President Suharto of Indonesia. PREM 19/68," ed. Prime Minister's Office (London: National Archives, 1979).

¹¹²¹ Fein, "Revolutionary and Antirevolutionary Genocides: A Comparison of State Murders in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975 to 1979, and in Indonesia, 1965 to 1966." p. 806

¹¹²² Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.150

¹¹²³ *Ibid.* p.151

¹¹²⁴ *Ibid.* p.151

¹¹²⁵ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/213."

¹¹²⁶ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*.

sources, moreover, estimated that there were ca. 300,000 PKI cadres still operating inside Indonesia.¹¹²⁷ Suspected communists were categorised into four groups, Categories A through D. Category A prisoners were regarded by Jakarta as prominent communists based on the severity of their crimes. Category D prisoners suspected involvement or guilty of subversive behaviour against the state.¹¹²⁸ Twenty-five years after the coup suspected communists were still exposed to harsh treatment in employment, politics, and other fields.¹¹²⁹

PKI leadership faced punitive measures under Suharto.¹¹³⁰ For example, in July 1967, Sudisman, PKI general secretary, stood trial at the Extraordinary Military Tribunal. During Sudisman's trial, he stated that the PKI would not die with him, and that the PKI would rise again in Indonesia.¹¹³¹ Sudisman was executed by a military court in October 1968.¹¹³² In the same year, a network of communists was discovered operating in Central and Eastern Java.¹¹³³ Suharto used this as excuse to extend the power of the state, signalling further democratic decay. National security planners in Britain welcomed this move¹¹³⁴ suggesting that perceptions of security superseded democratic norms. According to Polomka it was difficult to ascertain the real threat level posed by the communists in 1968.¹¹³⁵ Despite this, fear and intimidation by Indonesian security forces was an ever-present feature in Suharto's Indonesia. For example, *The Times* reported in June 1978 that one of Indonesia's foremost poets, Mr W. S. Rendra, had been arrested and unlawfully detained.¹¹³⁶ Although this was ten years on from Suharto coming to power, it still highlights how illegal detention was part of Jakarta's domestic policy. Admiral Sudomo, commander of KOPKAMTIB, stated that Rendra's poetry had incited dissent against the government.¹¹³⁷ Reports emanating from Jakarta suggested that security forces had thrown ammonia bombs into the crowd attending the poetry recital.¹¹³⁸ This is a further sign of democratic decay under Suharto. Despite this, Britain did not seek regime change despite DPT suggesting that Britain would be more

¹¹²⁷ Ibid. p.161

¹¹²⁸ Ibid. p.173

¹¹²⁹ Fein, "Revolutionary and Antirevolutionary Genocides: A Comparison of State Murders in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975 to 1979, and in Indonesia, 1965 to 1966." p. 807

¹¹³⁰ Richard Attenborough, "Indonesian Human Rights," *The Times* 10th June 1978.

¹¹³¹ Emery, "Indonesia's Coup Leaders Shot."

¹¹³² Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.160

¹¹³³ Attenborough, "Indonesian Human Rights."

¹¹³⁴ Office, "Indonesia: Consideration of Level of IRD Work Required and Visit by Miss Gibson, IRD London. FCO 95/147."

¹¹³⁵ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*.

¹¹³⁶ Attenborough, "Indonesian Human Rights."

¹¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹¹³⁸ Ibid.

inclined to. An argument can be made that this was due to his hard-line stance on communist activity.

Reprisals for the attempted coup took different forms across Indonesia. For example, in Java the 'black shirted youth', otherwise known as Ansor, of the Moslem Teachers' Party, the Nahdatul Ulama, were ordered by the TNI to attack members of the PKI in the name of *jihad*.¹¹³⁹ Consequently, the Nahdatul Ulama issued a *fatwah* against the PKI.¹¹⁴⁰ According to Helen Fein, Chinese Indonesians, moreover, became a target of these movements.¹¹⁴¹ This is supported by CSC material which suggested Chinese subversion was prevalent in Indonesia.¹¹⁴² Some nationalists believed the Chinese Embassy had supported the killings of the six generals.¹¹⁴³ Government figures suggest that one in two PKI members were slain, although the PKI suggested that one in three was a more accurate figure which is still an extraordinary number.¹¹⁴⁴ Jakarta's actions were condemned at the 1977 UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.¹¹⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Indonesia received a complaint, otherwise known as a "communication", from Amnesty International.¹¹⁴⁶ The UN and Amnesty International reports suggest Indonesia was in a state of democratic decay. Despite this, Britain continued to support Suharto.

Throughout the 1960s stories began to emanate from prison camps of human rights abuses.¹¹⁴⁷ In 1965, allegations of torture and violence at the Central Javanese prison, located near the town of Purwodadi, began to percolate British newspapers.¹¹⁴⁸ Moreover, a penal colony was established by Jakarta on Buru Island in the Moluccas. The move drew a virulent response from the Indonesian press which drew comparisons with similar tactics

¹¹³⁹ Fein, "Revolutionary and Antirevolutionary Genocides: A Comparison of State Murders in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975 to 1979, and in Indonesia, 1965 to 1966."

¹¹⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 804

¹¹⁴¹ Ibid. p.804

¹¹⁴² Records of the Cabinet Office, "Counter Subversion Committee: Composition and terms of Reference. CAB 165/408," ed. Cabinet Office:Committees (C Series) Files (London: The National Archives, October 1964-January 1969).

¹¹⁴³ Ibid. the six generals were Siswomiharjo, Pandjaitan, Suprpto, Yani, Parman, and Haryono.

¹¹⁴⁴ Fein, "Revolutionary and Antirevolutionary Genocides: A Comparison of State Murders in Democratic Kampuchea, 1975 to 1979, and in Indonesia, 1965 to 1966." p.

¹¹⁴⁵ United Nations, "United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities 30th Session ", ed. United Nation (Geneva: United Nations Digital Library, August 15 - September 2 1977).

¹¹⁴⁶ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁴⁷ From Our Correspondent, "To What Future Are They Released?," *The Times* December 21st 1977. According to a report in *The Times*, throughout late 1965, there was growing suspicion that the abortive coup was carried out by a group of left wing TNI officers and not the PKI.

¹¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

employed by Dutch colonists in the 1930s.¹¹⁴⁹ Buru Island was hidden from the international community. However, investigative journalists uncovered the detention centre and by 1972, news of Buru began to filter through western newspapers as investigative journalist, Dom Moraes, reported from the island.¹¹⁵⁰ Buru was home to prominent TAPOLs including Ananta Toer, a novelist, and the law professor Dr Surapto.¹¹⁵¹ Moraes claimed that the conditions were tantamount to psychological torture.¹¹⁵² Moreover, labour conditions coupled with the lack of communication with family and friends led to serious mental health conditions. Alongside mental health implications, the conditions inhibited the ability for TAPOLs to form individual thought. After 1971, except for a brief visit by a Dutch reporter in 1976, no foreign visitors were permitted to visit Buru. In 1973, however, the Dutch section of Amnesty International produced a thirty-one-page report on the conditions at Buru Island.¹¹⁵³ Officials in Jakarta were unable to diffuse the controversy surrounding the island, leading to increased media speculation. A *Times* report in 1977 likened the detention centre on Buru to a tropical Siberia.¹¹⁵⁴

In late August 1970, *The Times* reported that *ca.* five thousand communists were transported from Java to Buru Island.¹¹⁵⁵ According to the report, there were around two and a half thousand inmates already present on the penal colony.¹¹⁵⁶ A further ten thousand category B suspected communists were awaiting transportation to the colony. 'Category B' inmates were believed to be ardent communists, but the state lacked evidence for a trial.¹¹⁵⁷ Those inmates on Buru were given around eight months' worth of food and were expected to become self-sufficient.¹¹⁵⁸ By 1970, five thousand 'category A' prisoners were awaiting trial in Indonesia's overwhelmed justice system. Five years following the coup only twenty-five of the five thousand had been processed through the justice system.¹¹⁵⁹ Buru Island became the centre of the forced labour debate with numerous accounts of TAPOLs subjected to the practice emanating from the island.¹¹⁶⁰ By 1973, the practice of forced labour was under

¹¹⁴⁹ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.174

¹¹⁵⁰ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁵¹ Correspondent, "To What Future Are They Released?."

¹¹⁵² Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵⁴ Correspondent, "To What Future Are They Released?."

¹¹⁵⁵ Mabbett, "Indonesians Exile 5,000."

¹¹⁵⁶ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁵⁷ Mabbett, "Indonesians Exile 5,000."

¹¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶⁰ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

scrutiny. However, a British report suggested Jakarta still planned to utilise prisoners for labour purposes in 1974.¹¹⁶¹ Jakarta justified forced labour under the principle of *Pancasila* which stated that all Indonesian citizens were obliged to work to the best of their abilities to build a prosperous society regardless of their status.¹¹⁶² According to an Indonesian report submitted to the UN, the ability of TAPOL detainees to obtain work would allow them to uphold their integrity as human beings.¹¹⁶³ London was concerned that the profits earned under forced labour were not being meted out to the prisoners. Moreover, working conditions differed significantly from place to place. For example, in some areas, TAPOLs worked under armed guard.¹¹⁶⁴ Prisoners were employed in a variety of roles, from menial labour to professional work.

By late the 1970s Indonesia began releasing political prisoners.¹¹⁶⁵ Ministry of Overseas Development documents suggest pressure from London and other western nations facilitated the release of TAPOL prisoners.¹¹⁶⁶ A report dated October 1977, suggested that Jakarta was taking the release of prisoners seriously.¹¹⁶⁷ The report followed a tour of prisons in Kalimantan and Java by British diplomats.¹¹⁶⁸ However, by 1977 Jakarta's transmigration programme was under scrutiny. FO officials were seeking reassurances from Indonesian officials that the migration policy would not lead to the forced displacement of TAPOL prisoners to outlying regions of Indonesia.¹¹⁶⁹ Any British aid provided to Indonesia, therefore, would not be available for developing a programme of migration that was repugnant to British opinion.¹¹⁷⁰ British diplomatic efforts formed part of Britain's pivot to soft power.

British documents reason that Western democratic intervention was a key component in the release of TAPOLs.¹¹⁷¹ Interest in London had been maintained by a former detainee, Mrs Carmel Budiardjo, who had been incarcerated during the 1960s.¹¹⁷² Budiardjo,

¹¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹¹⁶² Ibid.

¹¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁵ Ibid. *Operasi sakti* (operation supernatural power) was the Indonesian codename for the release of political prisoners.

¹¹⁶⁶ _____, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/213."

¹¹⁶⁷ _____, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁰ _____, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/213."

¹¹⁷¹ Prime Minister's Office, "Indonesia: Visit to UK by President Suharto of Indonesia: Meeting with Prime Minister. PREM 19/68," ed. Prime Minister's Office (London: National Archives, 19 June 1979 - 27 November 1979).

¹¹⁷² Ibid.

moreover, was also the wife of detained communist. Budiardjo, who held dual British-Indonesian citizenship, had renounced her British citizenship but successfully re-acquired it facilitating her return to the UK. Following twelve years imprisonment, her husband had secured release and fled to Britain.¹¹⁷³ Following his release Budiardjo set up an NGO named TAPOL deriving from Indonesian word Tahanan Politik. By 1979, between 2,000-4,000 detainees were still in prison throughout Indonesia. A report by the Southeast Asian Department revealed that during a meeting a high-ranking police officer let slip that seventy-nine of the 'diehard' fanatics would not be released from prison.¹¹⁷⁴ According to, an Amnesty International report concerning the slow release of TAPOLs had embarrassed Indonesian officials.¹¹⁷⁵ Jakarta scrambled to reassure London that TAPOL detainees would be released at the rate agreed.¹¹⁷⁶

Further examples of forced labour were uncovered by Amnesty International.¹¹⁷⁷ Some TAPOLs worked for TNI officers as housekeepers and assistants.¹¹⁷⁸ For example, a local TNI officer in Sulawesi used 168 TAPOLs to help build and maintain the roads without any payment.¹¹⁷⁹ A further TNI officer used skilled TAPOLs to provide home improvements without payment.¹¹⁸⁰ TAPOLs being held in Salemba Prison in Jakarta were forced to grow vegetables to feed themselves. Working conditions inside Indonesian prisons were incompatible with life. According to a FO report, it would take a month for a TAPOL to raise the equivalent of one US Dollar.¹¹⁸¹ In Malang Prison, East Java, TAPOLs were caught in a vicious cycle of poverty and imprisonment. Malang's prison warden used the profits from forced labour to fortify the security throughout the prison.¹¹⁸² According to a report in the military-sponsored newspaper, *Suara Karya*, TAPOLs were mobilised to work on the Meraramptih Project in South Sulawesi. The work included forced agricultural labour. Policymakers in London were concerned that numerous projects were being set up throughout Indonesia without local or international knowledge.¹¹⁸³ TAPOLs detained on Buru Island were expected to wake at 05:30 and work through the heat to 16:00. The military

¹¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁵ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹¹⁸² Ibid.

¹¹⁸³ Ibid.

command provided just 40 kilograms of cassava for 200 persons plus the prison guards.¹¹⁸⁴ Cigarette money was allocated to each prisoner instead of a salary.

Buru Island was not the only penal colony in Indonesia. Nusakambangan, an island located off the south coast of Central Java, became the feature of an Amnesty International report. According to the report, 2,052 TAPOLs had been sent to the island. Conditions on the island were poor. TAPOLs were given a small plot of land, usually surrounded by tropical jungle to live and work on. *Le Monde* reported that forced labour was part of island life, directly benefitting those in charge of the camps.¹¹⁸⁵ Women TAPOLs were subjected to similar treatment. A prison camp named Plantungan, located in Java, saw an influx of 550 'Category B' inmates between May and November 1971. Dutch film crews captured footage of the female inmates in Plantungan with a further news team visiting in 1977.¹¹⁸⁶

Prisoners hoping to escape from the prison system had several obstacles to clear. Firstly, prisoners had to renounce any association with the PKI and pledge loyalty to Suharto. Secondly, prisoners had to demonstrate they could adhere to the approved Indonesian doctrine of *Pancasila*, the state ideology under Sukarno.¹¹⁸⁷ Lastly, prisoners had to gain consent from their families to receive them back in their towns and villages. According to *The Times*, up to ninety-five per cent of families refused to accept their relatives' home, citing security fears.¹¹⁸⁸ Families who accepted their relatives back would have to seek permission from their neighbours.¹¹⁸⁹ Prisoners, moreover, would require guaranteed employment and remain under house arrest for the first six months of their release. Following their house arrest, they would still face restrictions on their movements and would be required to report to four government departments per week.¹¹⁹⁰ Families who had lost relatives in the mass killings were far more likely to experience financial uncertainty. Moreover, the children of suspected communists were not able to obtain school education led many officials in Jakarta believing they would form a bitter and rebellious faction in society.¹¹⁹¹ TAPOL treatment is a key indicator of democratic decay.

By the mid 1970s, Jakarta's punitive policies towards TAPOLs succumbed to international pressure. Indonesian officials announced that by 1979 no TAPOL detainee

¹¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁷ Correspondent, "To What Future Are They Released?."

¹¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹⁹¹ Polomka, *Indonesia Since Sukarno*. p.172

would be incarcerated without trial, meaning some prisoners were held for fourteen years without trial.¹¹⁹² Moreover, Jakarta, in return for financial aid, had assured London that TAPOL detainees would be free to migrate around Indonesia upon release.¹¹⁹³ For those who met the onerous tests, they had the option of being received at state run resettlement centres. Resettlement centres were concentrated on the islands of Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan.¹¹⁹⁴ Colonel R Sardjono, an officer of the Jakarta Military Command, believed that all emancipated TAPOLs posed a fundamental risk to Indonesia. Upon the release of 8,000 prisoners, he stated that the risk of communist subversion ran high, and the prisoners would always create disorder in society.¹¹⁹⁵ High profile celebrities also faced detention throughout Indonesia. For example, Pramudya Ananta Tur, a prolific Indonesian novelist, was being held in the prison system without trial.¹¹⁹⁶ FO files reveal the extent of democratic decay under Suharto. Despite this, Britain engaged with Jakarta on several fronts and did not pursue regime change.

By April 1977, London and Jakarta had signed an understanding for a grant of up to ten million pounds sterling, for mutually determined development projects.¹¹⁹⁷ Adam Malik, Indonesian minister for foreign affairs, signed the understanding in Jakarta.¹¹⁹⁸ FO officials instructed the Indonesian government to open a bank account solely for the use of transferring the funds along with a list of those authorised to access the account.¹¹⁹⁹ According to FO reports, British projects targeted the poorest in Indonesia and provided employment for urban and rural communities.¹²⁰⁰ The geopolitical positioning of Indonesia provided a potential lucrative market for foreign investment. Direct foreign investment in Indonesia also increased. However, certain stipulations proposed by Jakarta deterred potential investors. By the mid-1970s, forty foreign companies had invested in Indonesian oil and other natural resources.¹²⁰¹ Meanwhile, by the 1980s, Indonesia was in receipt of British military assistance through the UKMTAS.¹²⁰² Between 1974 and 1980, 653 members of

¹¹⁹² Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/213."

¹¹⁹³ _____, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹¹⁹⁴ Correspondent, "To What Future Are They Released?."

¹¹⁹⁵ From Our Correspondent, "Jakarta Releases 8,000 Political Prisoners," *The Times* July 27th 1978.

¹¹⁹⁶ David Watts, "Amnesty Asks If Indonesia Will Keep Word," *The Times* November 27th 1979.

¹¹⁹⁷ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "UK Aid to Indonesia: Human Rights Concerns. FCO 15/2244," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1977).

¹¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁰ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰² Records, "DEFENCE. Defence Budget; Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980; UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS); part 3."

Indonesia's armed forces received training in MOD establishments. Arms exports to Indonesia, moreover, amounted to *ca.* £25 million.

A visit by Suharto to London in 1979 provided a timely opportunity for officials in London to confront the atrocities. CO documents reveal that Margaret Thatcher planned to avoid discussing the mass atrocities to preserve bilateral relations.¹²⁰³ This may signal a policy shift in Thatcher's approach to human rights abuses. Despite the mass atrocities, Suharto was afforded full state visit privileges in 1979.¹²⁰⁴ During the state visit it was recorded that many of 650,000 suspected communists, detained following the coup, had been released.¹²⁰⁵ Indeed, only two years prior to the visit of Suharto to London there were 1,925 category A TAPOLs awaiting trial in Indonesian prison system.¹²⁰⁶ Many of those released from their unlawful detention, were released due to pressure from the West.¹²⁰⁷ TAPOLs released from detention, however, did not enjoy the full political and social civil liberties. Moreover, released detainees were not eligible for employment. Under Suharto there was clearly democratic decay in the form of election fraud, illegal detention, and corruption. British policymakers, however, decided not to pin Suharto on the violations to avoid a potential diplomatic embarrassment. Policymakers concluded that enhancing bi-lateral trade was paramount.¹²⁰⁸

By the mid-1980s, human rights abuses were still being recorded by the FO.¹²⁰⁹ In 1984, correspondence revealed the plight of a married couple, caught in the Indonesian prison system.¹²¹⁰ Gatot Lestario and his wife, Pudji Aswaiti had been arrested in 1966 on suspicion of conspiring against the government. Lestario, after spending nine years on remand, was sentenced to death. Aswaiti was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment, not including time spent on remand.¹²¹¹ Lestario had exhausted all legal avenues before directly appealing to Suharto. No decision had been made on his fate by 1984. Tim Rathbone MP wrote to the FO asking representation to be made to Jakarta over the fate of the detainees. Rathbone

¹²⁰³ Office, "Indonesia: Visit to the UK by President Suharto of Indonesia. PREM 19/68."

¹²⁰⁴ From Our Correspondent, "Court Circular," *The Times* November 15th 1979. Suharto met with members of the royal family during the state visit.

¹²⁰⁵ Office, "Indonesia: Visit to UK by President Suharto of Indonesia: Meeting with Prime Minister. PREM 19/68."

¹²⁰⁶ Correspondent, "To What Future Are They Released?."

¹²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁸ Office, "Indonesia: Visit to UK by President Suharto of Indonesia: Meeting with Prime Minister. PREM 19/68."

¹²⁰⁹ UK Parliamentary Papers, "First Report from the Foreign Affairs Committee: South East Asia. Observations by the Government," (London: Command Papers, 1986-1987).

¹²¹⁰ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Human Rights in Indonesia. FCO 15/3986," ed. Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1984).

¹²¹¹ *Ibid.*

stated that the conditions the pair were detained in were intolerably cruel.¹²¹² Rathbone had approached the Indonesian Embassy in London for comment but had not received a response from the authorities concerned. Further human rights abuses carried out by the Suharto regime occurred in East Timor. Meanwhile, London sold BAE Hawk aircraft to the Suharto government which were used throughout East Timor despite several UK based NGOs calling for an arms embargo.¹²¹³ Anglo-Indonesian relations were not disrupted by this development, however. This section has outlined human rights abuses in Suharto's Indonesia. Moreover, it demonstrated significant democratic decay. Human rights abuses occurred throughout Indonesia during the late 1960s and 1970s. This section was primarily concerned by the treatment of TAPOLs. Despite evidence of democratic decay, Britain continued to pivot towards soft power policies. This would suggest national security planners were not principally concerned by human rights abuses despite diplomats proposing series of acts at Tehran.

h. Conclusion

Even if one were to argue that Indonesia was not an emerging democracy or lacked democratic credentials, there was clear democratic backsliding under Suharto. Moreover, Indonesia had been weakened by the coup. If selectorate theory held true, then Britain would be emboldened to engage in covert action. If DPT provided a framework for British foreign policy, then national security planners would be more inclined to engage in covert action under selectorate theory. Under Suharto, however, Britain pivoted to soft power. Soft power could still be used to undermine an enemy, and amounted to interference and demonstrates that Britain's perceptions of security outweighed its obligations to democratic norms and international law. There was also a marked shift towards positive engagement with Suharto. Selectorate theory, therefore, does not provide a rationale for British foreign policy in Indonesia. Zonal foreign policy, underpinned by perceptions of security, does, however.

Two aims were stated in the introduction. Firstly, that the chapter would outline the limitations of DPT by demonstrating that Suharto was more authoritarian than his predecessor. Democratic decay is demonstrated through the illegal detention of TAPOLs, press censorship, corruption, and electoral fraud. If selectorate theory provided a model for

¹²¹² Ibid.

¹²¹³ Foreign Affairs Committee, "Foreign Policy and Human Rights," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: Hansards, 10th December 1998).

British foreign policy, then national security planners would be more inclined to engage in covert action. Moreover, if Britain was concerned by democratic decay, it would not support a more authoritarian leader. Although Indonesia experienced democratic decay, it is worth noting that under Suharto, Indonesia normalised its relations with the UN. The second aim of the chapter was to demonstrate that zonal foreign policy provides an explanation for British foreign policy in Suharto's Indonesia. The chapter reasoned that Indonesia, as an AAT, assumed temporary importance for national security planners. This is demonstrated through a reduction in intelligence operations and pivot to soft power. The reopening of the British Council in Jakarta is testament to this policy. This would suggest that when an authoritarian leader denounced communism, they presented a favourable option over a democratically elected leader who entertained Marxist-Leninist ideology. This pattern of behaviour is symptomatic of zonal foreign policy and provides a rationale for British intelligence activities in Indonesia.

This chapter has provided evidence of democratic decay and a pivot to soft power. If selectorate theory provided a model for British foreign policy then under Suharto, national security planners would be more inclined to use covert action against an authoritarian government. The pivot to soft power does not discount other factors including America's withdrawal from Vietnam nor rising violence in Northern Ireland. National security planners were concerned by AATs pivoting towards communism. Isolating Anglophile states from communism, therefore, was a priority for British policymakers. Counter subversion operations allowed London to bypass its commitments to international norms and intervene in the internal affairs of Indonesia. In line with covert action counter-subversion activities were multi-faceted and were designed to maintain plausible deniability. By 1968 the IRD began to explore options involving the Indonesians disseminating anti-communist propaganda.¹²¹⁴ Moreover, protecting Indonesia from Chinese communist subversion was a priority for British policymakers. This would suggest that throughout the 1960s Indonesia was still an ideological battleground.

Meanwhile, Britain sat as vice-president for Western Europe at the 1968 Tehran Conference. British values and aims at Tehran contradicted the practices of covert action. For example, Resolution VI of Committee II titled *The Rights of Detained Persons* was a British initiative. Likewise, Resolution X was a further British initiative.¹²¹⁵ *The Rights of a*

¹²¹⁴ Office, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹²¹⁵ _____, "The International Conference on Human Rights, Tehran, 22 April - 13 May 1968. Research and Analysis. FCO 160/311/7."

Detained Persons could have aided TAPOLs in Indonesia. Meanwhile in 1968, IRD officers explored the possibility of using the Antara News Agency to disseminate anti-communist and anti-Maoist propaganda.¹²¹⁶ This meant that whilst Britain sat on the Preparatory Committee for the 1968 Tehran Conference whilst drawing up plans to destabilise the archipelago. This would suggest that once the influence of the PKI and Sukarno had been curtailed, London used Indonesia as a base for disseminating propaganda whilst attending conferences condoning human rights abuses. The newly reopened British Council library provided IRD officers a chance to plant its own books amongst its shelves.

TAPOLs were kept in deplorable conditions, often exploited by Jakarta with examples of forced labour with little or no remuneration.¹²¹⁷ British politicians, Amnesty International and TAPOL pressed for the release of political prisoners in Indonesia. London would not provide aid to Indonesia if the detainees were forced to resettle in the outer regions of Indonesia.¹²¹⁸ London worked with its international partners and NGOs to secure the release of all TAPOL prisoners, who were not due to be tried, by 1979.¹²¹⁹ Seventy-nine of the suspected communists would never be released from detention in Indonesia. Despite this, British policymakers did not want to jeopardise economic links with Jakarta.¹²²⁰ British national security planners posited that western diplomatic pressure was a key component in securing the release of the political detainees.¹²²¹ However, economic necessities began to outweigh human rights violations as demonstrated by Suharto's state in 1979. Despite mass atrocities being committed by Indonesia, Suharto was afforded lavish treatment when he arrived. Moreover, London provided Jakarta with a grant of up to ten million pounds sterling for mutually determined development projects.¹²²² Britain, moreover, was engaged in aid programmes during the 1970s including the expansion of a major spinning mill in Semarang, Central Java.¹²²³ This would suggest that Britain would support a more authoritarian figure if they denounced communism. Although the IRD was disbanded in 1977 a familiar pattern of covert action including military training and propaganda developed in Cambodia - this continued under Thatcher's government. Let us now, therefore, shift focus to Cambodia.

¹²¹⁶ _____, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹²¹⁷ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹²¹⁸ _____, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/213."

¹²¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²²⁰ Office, "Indonesia: Visit to UK by President Suharto of Indonesia: Meeting with Prime Minister. PREM 19/68."

¹²²¹ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

¹²²² Office, "UK Aid to Indonesia: Human Rights Concerns. FCO 15/2244."

¹²²³ Administration, "Representations About Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia. OD 39/214."

Chapter VI

Sailing Between Scylla and Charybdis

Covert Action in Pre-Revolutionary Cambodia

a. Framing

This chapter introduces an underdeveloped area of research, namely British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. The chapter has two aims. The first aim is to demonstrate that Britain used covert action against pre-revolutionary Cambodia despite it being an emerging democracy. Supporting the notion of zonal foreign policy, national security planners perceived there to be fewer credibility and hypocrisy costs associated with Cambodia. The second aim is to outline similarities between Indonesia and Cambodia. Despite not being the colonial power in Cambodia, Britain shaped developments in the country through covert action. This will be achieved by demonstrating that once Lon Nol came to power in 1970, Britain once again pivoted to soft power drawing parallels with Suharto's Indonesia. This is demonstrated, in part, through a planned expansion of BBC services in the country.¹²²⁴ Moreover, under Lon Nol Cambodia experienced democratic decay. Selectorate and democratic peace theory (DPT) would suggest Britain would seek regime change. Lon Nol despite displaying autocratic traits, was supported by Britain, however.

This chapter will argue that this was due to Britain's perception that Lon Nol was less susceptible to communism. Previous intelligence research on Cambodia has been limited to the 1980s. Even then, the research is insufficient. For example, in *Disrupt and Deny*, Cambodia is only afforded two pages. Furthermore, there is no mention of the United Kingdom Military Training Assistance Scheme – which is covered in the following chapter. Research in this chapter will help unpack further British intelligence activities in Cambodia and establish why Cambodia is classed as an Anglophile Adjacent Territory (AAT).

Although intelligence scholars such as Rory Cormac have researched covert action in 1980s Cambodia¹²²⁵, the research does not cover the pre-revolutionary period nor the

¹²²⁴ Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹²²⁵ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. pp.241-242 Covert action in Vietnamese occupied Cambodia will be addressed in chapter eight.

implications for international law or democratic norms. Following regime change in 1970, Cambodia was consumed by civil war pitting pro-western government forces against a communist insurrection. The communist insurrection in Cambodia had profound consequences for Cambodian society and regional stability. To understand how Cambodia reached this point, it is important to understand the role of covert action. It is important to note, however, that the chapter is not suggesting British covert action was a factor in the communist revolution, although it is an area of potential further study. Unlike Indonesia, Cambodia did not pose a direct threat to a former British colony. This is reflected in the modest output of the IRD compared to Indonesia. Cambodia was an AAT, however, and national security planners responded accordingly when it was perceived communist elements gained ground politically. In the context of zonal foreign policy, Cambodia gained temporary importance when it was perceived to be susceptible to communist subversion.

In the years preceding the communist revolution, Britain was engaged in propaganda operations through the Information Research Department (IRD) and British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). As in Indonesia, London viewed a possibility of furthering its foreign policy objectives through covert action in Cambodia. Once Sukarno was removed from power in Indonesia and Washington decoupled itself from Vietnam, Cambodia became less of a security concern for Britain. Perceptions of Cambodia's state trajectory under Sihanouk, however, were scrutinised by national security planners in London and Singapore. Despite international norms of non-interference and international law conferences denouncing such behaviour, such as Tehran, Britain continued to engage in covert action. British perceptions of state trajectory, therefore, were key. Ultimately, once the perceived communist threat had subsided in Cambodia, intelligence activities began to decrease. As in Indonesia, zonal foreign policy was a feature of Britain's regional objectives as Cambodia gained temporary importance to national security planners. In a similar pattern to events in Indonesia, once the perceived threat had been neutralised, it pivoted to soft power and positive relations despite the ascension of a more authoritarian leader.

As a former French colony, there was communication between Paris and London over events in Cambodia.¹²²⁶ Due to space limitations, however, the thesis did not engage with those materials. A further area of research could consider the interplay between French and British intelligence agencies in former French colonies and discern whether French foreign policy followed a similar pattern to its British counterparts. The chapter contains research

¹²²⁶ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Activities of Prince Sihanouk in Exile. FCO 15/1750," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1973).

obtained under a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. The request, submitted in February 2022, pertains to Cambodian hill tribes who were perceived to be vulnerable to communist subversion.¹²²⁷ Multiple FOI requests were rejected by the Foreign Office (FO) on several grounds, posing a series of methodological challenges.¹²²⁸ The main methodological issues concerned access to documents held under Section 40(2) of the Public Records Act. Notably, this section prohibits the release of any materials that may contain the personal details of anyone who may still be alive. It was hoped the rejected files may have contained further planned intelligence operations in Cambodia. For example, further IRD country assessment briefs would have aided the research. The chapter will begin by outlining how Sihanouk transformed Cambodia into an Asian-style democracy.

b. Evidence of Democracy & British Covert Action

In pre-revolutionary Cambodia Sihanouk established a national assembly and parliamentary democracy in the 1950s.¹²²⁹ Indeed, Norodom Sihanouk proposed a series of electoral reforms before abdicating in March 1955 and entering politics.¹²³⁰ These reforms were designed to promote democratic elections. The 1950s saw the beginning of direct involvement of Cambodian citizens in the political life of the country.¹²³¹ Sihanouk established “direct democracy”, though this did not stop his attempts at discrediting the anti-monarchy Democrat Party.¹²³² According to a FO report on Cambodian elections, the inclusion of Pracheachun, the legal front of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, in the 1955 election signalled a pivot towards democracy.¹²³³ Moreover, the report claimed that there was ‘great electioneering’ in Cambodia before the election.¹²³⁴ All political parties, for example, were able to outline their manifesto pledges in newspapers. The thesis, therefore, argues that pre-revolutionary Cambodia was as an emerging democracy. This chapter will

¹²²⁷ Office, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹²²⁸ Section 40 (2) was often cited by the Foreign Office to retain requested material.

¹²²⁹ Serge Thion, "The Pattern of Cambodian Politics," *International Journal of Politics* Vol.16, No.3(Fall 1986). p.115

¹²³⁰ House of Commons Commons Papers, "Cambodia No.2 (1955) Second Progress Reports of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Cambodia for the period Jan 1st to March 31st: Appendix J Cambodian Government Communiqué," ed. Parliamentary Papers (London: Hansards, March 15th 1955).

¹²³¹ Smith, "Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia."

¹²³² Ibid.

¹²³³ House of Commons Sessional Papers, "Cambodia No.1 (1956) Fourth interim report of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Cambodia for the period April 1 to September 30, 1955," ed. House of Commons (London: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, 1955).

¹²³⁴ Ibid.

also argue that universal principles of democracy also underpinned Cambodia's transition towards democracy.

Although Sihanouk launched numerous initiatives to increase Cambodian participation in politics, national security planners still perceived there to be a pivot towards communism and, therefore, a risk of communist expansion in Cambodia.¹²³⁵ To avoid this spilling over into a former colony, British intelligence engaged in covert action. British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia began in the early 1960s. According to a paper obtained under a FOI request, the IRD were eager to understand the hill tribes located in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam.¹²³⁶ In early 1962, the anthropologist, Dick Noone, published a paper on hill tribes in Southeast Asia. J Spears sent the paper to his counterpart in the IRD, D. Rivett-Carnac, in May 1962.¹²³⁷ Correspondence between the pair branded the hill tribes 'primitive' and 'culturally backward'.¹²³⁸ Noone outlined the languages, major produce, and locations of the hill tribes throughout Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand.¹²³⁹ Many hill tribes were reliant on opium production for their income.¹²⁴⁰ Known colloquially as the Golden Triangle, the region is synonymous with opium production. According to Noone, approximately forty per cent of the hill tribes had no contact with local officials.¹²⁴¹ This created problems for central government. The report suggests Noone was working directly with the IRD as he was asked for his opinion on similar American papers.¹²⁴²

Sihanouk, according to the IRD, had been politically successful, however economically, his policies had been disastrous.¹²⁴³ Attempts to channel imports and exports through state enterprises had reduced agricultural output and increased inflation.¹²⁴⁴ Only Sihanouk's semi-divine status, according to the IRD, maintained his power.¹²⁴⁵ The only threat to Sihanouk came in the form of the upper right-wing classes.¹²⁴⁶ By 1969, distribution had dried up and the IRD awaited further opportunities to exploit the small but politically

¹²³⁵ Information Research Department, "Cambodia. Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639," ed. IRD (London 1969).

¹²³⁶ Office, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹²³⁷ Ibid.

¹²³⁸ Ibid.

¹²³⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹²⁴¹ Ibid.

¹²⁴² Ibid.

¹²⁴³ _____, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁴⁴ Department, "Cambodia. Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁴⁶ Ibid.

influential country.¹²⁴⁷ Meanwhile, in North-eastern Cambodia, hill tribes lacked contact with local and central government. Isolated from local government officials, hill tribes provided communist factions with an opportunity to recruit from their ranks. This phenomenon transcended Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Burma. Alongside the hill tribes, several armed insurgencies, not controlled by any state, roamed the border regions between Thailand and Burma.¹²⁴⁸ These consisted of the Shan, Karen, and Red Lahu factions.¹²⁴⁹ Noone suggested that the insurgencies were working with communist elements outside of the region.¹²⁵⁰ To combat communist subversion, Noone suggested information pamphlets be disseminated throughout the region. Due to low literacy rates amongst the hill tribes, the pamphlets would display images and slogans.¹²⁵¹ Alongside the pamphlets, Noone believed a series of brightly coloured posters displayed around hill tribe villages would be equally effective.¹²⁵² This signalled early attempts by the British to curtail communist influence in Cambodia suggesting that DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for Cold War British foreign policy.

Meanwhile, Cambodia was targeted by the British Council to enhance British prestige in the region and counter the perceived communist threat. A British Council report stated that Cambodia was a country of major significance to London.¹²⁵³ Following the cessation of Colombo Plan technical aid assistance in Cambodia, all non-diplomatic activity was limited to English language teaching. Phnom Penh renounced economic aid from Washington in November 1963.¹²⁵⁴ This was followed by major economic reforms in Cambodia. Throughout this transitional period Phnom Penh nationalised its banks, insurance systems and foreign trade to negate the influence of external interference.¹²⁵⁵ The report suggested that the work of the British Council may be built on by the Information Departments.

¹²⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁴⁸ Office, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹²⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹²⁵¹ Ibid.

¹²⁵² Ibid.

¹²⁵³ Council, "Indonesia: British Council Operations, FCO 13/98."

¹²⁵⁴ UK Parliamentary Papers, "The Colombo Plan for co-operative economic development in South and South-East Asia. Cmnd.3521," ed. Foreign Affairs Committee (London & Rangoon: 20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1967).

¹²⁵⁵ Ibid.

Throughout the 1950s, British foreign policy in Cambodia revolved around maintaining its neutrality.¹²⁵⁶ On the face of it, neutrality would ensure Cambodia would not pivot towards communism. By 1964, Sihanouk had approached London to secure a further conference on Cambodian neutrality. Cambodian neutrality was welcomed by British policymakers who believed it provided stability to the region.¹²⁵⁷ Sihanouk's threats to abandon neutrality and align itself with China was perceived to be a security risk by national security planners. A conference was a priority for London, therefore. By the Second Indochina War the issue had not dissipated, however. Cambodian foreign policy was officially unaligned and maintained *de facto* neutrality. Sihanouk, however, vacillated between forces on both the left and right. His party, Sangkum, was left leaning but members of his entourage espoused anti-communist views.¹²⁵⁸ Moreover it contained elements of conservatism despite the party's name.¹²⁵⁹ By the late 1960s, a resurgent nationalist and right leaning movement inside Cambodia pushed the state's foreign policy towards Washington. An IRD report from 1969 stated that

Cambodia observes strict neutrality, but accepts military assistance from Russia, China, and France. In 1960 she [Cambodia] signed a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-aggression with China¹²⁶⁰

As early as 1967 South Vietnamese forces violated Cambodian territory as units engaged in cross border attacks.¹²⁶¹ Sihanouk, therefore, sought assurances from the UN over Cambodia's neutrality. According to a Cabinet Office reports, London wished to reassert Cambodian neutrality.¹²⁶² In parliament, Christopher Mayhew suggested that any delay to a conference on Cambodian neutrality would harm Sihanouk's trust in the British government.¹²⁶³ Under international law, a neutral power must abstain from participation in

¹²⁵⁶ Command Papers, "Recent Diplomatic Exchanges Concerning the Proposal for an International Conference on the Neutrality and Integrity of Cambodia. CMND 2678," ed. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (London: Hansards, 1965).

¹²⁵⁷ Office, "Political Relations: Cambodian Declaration of Neutrality and Request to Convene a Conference. FO 371/175442."

¹²⁵⁸ Weatherbee, *International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy*. p.81

¹²⁵⁹ Smith, "Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia." p. Sihanouk's party was called *Sangkum Reastr Niyum*, which translates into English as People's Socialist Community

¹²⁶⁰ Office, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁶¹ Cabinet Office, "Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings. CAB 128/45/19," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 30th April 1970).

¹²⁶² Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Laos and the Role of Neutral European Countries. FCO 15/1963," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1974).

¹²⁶³ House of Commons Sessional Paper, "Cambodia," ed. Twentieth Century Papers (London: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, 13th April 1964).

an armed conflict. There is no evidence to suggest Britain engaged in covert action to halt Vietnamese encroachments. However, to appease the Americans, Britain did support the war effort with intelligence activities.¹²⁶⁴ According to British report, in the Spring of 1965, London had exerted its diplomatic clout swaying the governments of America, Thailand and South Vietnam to agree to an international conference on the neutrality of Cambodia.¹²⁶⁵ Following a research sabbatical in Southeast Asia, the former foreign secretary Patrick Gordon Walker, was instrumental in the formulation of the British response. Walker, moreover, had toured Southeast Asia as the special representative of the Foreign Secretary and British government.¹²⁶⁶ British policymakers, therefore, believed an international conference was the only way to safeguard Cambodia from violations of international law. FO mandarins were concerned that Sihanouk was sceptical of the benefits an international conference. According to cabinet office papers Harold Wilson had been in personal contact with Sihanouk to espouse the cause.¹²⁶⁷

In 1969 a 'Country Assessment Sheet' produced by the IRD, suggested that the primary aim of the IRD was to disseminate propaganda that exposed a communist disregard towards Cambodian independence and integrity.¹²⁶⁸ This would agitate Cambodian nationalists who feared communist intervention in Cambodian affairs. Secondary aims of the IRD in Cambodia involved the dissemination of propaganda which would expose North Vietnamese ambitions in Cambodia.¹²⁶⁹ IRD officials would also distribute material espousing the virtues of wider Asian peace processes in contrast with communist obstructiveness.¹²⁷⁰ The distribution of IRD material in Cambodia, however, was disrupted due to security risks posed by Sihanouk.¹²⁷¹ Security risk revolved around perceptions of communist activity. National security planners were concerned by Cambodian behaviour at the UN. Although Cambodia had no intention of withdrawing from the UN or helping establish a competitor like Sukarno, Phnom Penh did believe reform was necessary.¹²⁷² Moreover, Sihanouk sought to curtail

¹²⁶⁴ John Dumbrell and Sylvia Ellis, "British Involvement in Vietnam Peace Initiatives, 1966-1967 Marigolds, Sunflowers, and "Kosygin Week"," *Oxford University Press* Vol.27, No.1(January 2003). p.118 British intelligence activities in Vietnam is an area of further interest.

¹²⁶⁵ Papers, "Recent Diplomatic Exchanges Concerning the Proposal for an International Conference on the Neutrality and Integrity of Cambodia. CMND 2678."

¹²⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁶⁸ Department, "Cambodia. Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁶⁹ Office, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁷⁰ Department, "Cambodia. Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁷¹ Ibid.

¹²⁷² Foreign Office, "Press and Propaganda. FO 371/180503," ed. Foreign Office (London: National Archives, 1965).

American influence and focus on Afro-Asian priorities.¹²⁷³ Cambodia espoused China's admittance to the UN causing agitation in the West. Copies of Sihanouk's correspondence over the matter was sent to IRD officers and the UK mission to the UN.¹²⁷⁴

As the war in Vietnam intensified, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs commissioned a report into British involvement in the Indo-China conflict. The document stated that British foreign policy in Indochina revolved around three distinct policies.¹²⁷⁵ Firstly, to promote peaceful settlements in Indochina. Secondly, to support and assist British allies in the region and lastly, to promote peace and support paths to independence and prosperity.¹²⁷⁶ Covert action in Cambodia did not support these policy goals, however. National security planners perceived Cambodia to pose little threat to regional or international security.¹²⁷⁷ This did not dissuade the intelligence services from engaging in covert action, however. British foreign policy in Cambodia revolved around the suppression of communist activity. The historian can observe similarities between Sihanouk and Sukarno. Both, for example, displayed narcissistic tendencies and engaged in dialogue with communist factions. Moreover, Cambodia, like Indonesia, was perceived to be susceptible to communist subversion.¹²⁷⁸ The IRD used intelligence reports to gather information on developments throughout the country.¹²⁷⁹

In 1969, the British had seven UK based diplomatic staff dealing with Cambodian affairs.¹²⁸⁰ According to FO files, London had little interest in Cambodia's quarrels with its neighbours.¹²⁸¹ However, this did not stop national security planners from engaging in covert action when they perceived communism posed a risk to an AAT. Meanwhile, anti-Chinese sentiment was increasing throughout Cambodia as Sino-Khmer merchant classes prospered.¹²⁸² Moreover, Chinese subversion was thought to be rife in Cambodia, sparking

¹²⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷⁵ Command Papers, "Miscellaneous Number 25. Documents Relating to British Involvement in the Indo-China Conflict 1945-1965.," ed. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (London: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, 1965).

¹²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷⁷ Office, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸⁰ Papers, "Recent Diplomatic Exchanges Concerning the Proposal for an International Conference on the Neutrality and Integrity of Cambodia. CMND 2678."

¹²⁸¹ Office, "Political Relations: Cambodian Declaration of Neutrality and Request to Convene a Conference. FO 371/175442."

¹²⁸² Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Valedictory Despatch by John Ernest Powell-Jones, UK Ambassador in Phnom Penh. FCO 15/2051," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1975).

concern in London.¹²⁸³ London's anxiety was well-founded. Sihanouk's behaviour, for example, had become erratic. After visiting Moscow and Beijing, despite the deteriorating situation in Phnom Penh, he made an uncharacteristic rant in which he stated he would jail and execute officials back in Cambodia. Sihanouk's attacks caused unrest amongst his officials when it was broadcast back in Phnom Penh. On March 11th, 1970, major protests in Phnom Penh occurred. The peaceful demonstrations deteriorated into a violence leading to the ransacking of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese embassies.¹²⁸⁴ This led to Lon Nol seizing power in a bloodless coup. Drawing comparisons with Indonesia in 1966, the events would suggest Cambodia was in a state of democratic decay.

Geographically, Cambodia's flat plains and fluid borders with Vietnam allowed Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces to cross without resistance. This increased the risk of communist subversion. Sihanouk's foreign policy exacerbated the situation further as he granted safe refuge to communist forces.¹²⁸⁵ Britain had a vested interest in maintaining the *status quo* in the region and defending its former colonies. Consequently, anti-communist IRD material targeted Vietnamese communists throughout South Vietnam destabilising the region further.¹²⁸⁶ By early 1970, Cambodia became an American vassal state. The full extent of Washington's involvement in the coup is unknown. Through testimonies of Lon Nol officials, however, it is clear the CIA aided the nascent government. Meanwhile, Washington maintained plausible deniability.¹²⁸⁷ According to a FO report, Phnom Penh's prestige was dented as it was heavily reliant on Washington's approval for any operation.¹²⁸⁸ Alongside London's diplomatic and economic efforts, Washington also provided aid to Cambodia. Indeed, by 1974 almost ninety per cent of Cambodia's imports were financed through the American Commodity Import programme.¹²⁸⁹ Washington was the first capital to recognise the new leadership of Cambodia.¹²⁹⁰ As the chapter will demonstrate, Britain decreased its intelligence activities once Lon Nol was in power. Throughout the 1950s Sihanouk bought democracy to Cambodia. This transformed the country into an Asian-style democracy. According to DPT, this would suggest Britain would not engage in covert action against a

¹²⁸³ Ibid.

¹²⁸⁴ William Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*, Second Edition ed. (London: Hogarth Press, 1986). pp.117-118

¹²⁸⁵ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹²⁸⁶ _____, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹²⁸⁷ Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. p.

¹²⁸⁸ Office, "Valedictory Despatch by John Ernest Powell-Jones, UK Ambassador in Phnom Penh. FCO 15/2051."

¹²⁸⁹ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Diplomatic Despatches 1974-1975 (Described at Item Level). FCO 160/166," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1974-1975).

¹²⁹⁰ Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. p.129

fellow democracy. However, hill tribes, for example, provided national security planners with a platform to counter communism. Due to their geographic location and lack of contact with central government, there was low credibility and hypocrisy costs. The next section examines the role of the IRD, BBC and British Council in Cambodia.

c. Demonstration of BBC, IRD and British Council Collusion

Previous research on British covert action in Cambodia was limited to the military training assistance scheme in the 1980s.¹²⁹¹ Under Sihanouk, however, Cambodia provided British intelligence with an opportunity to counter communism and disseminate propaganda. National security planners perceived Sihanouk to be susceptible to communism and used myriad organisations, including the IRD, BBC and British Council, to intervene. Drawing similarities to Indonesia, the Counter-Subversion Committee (CSC) were active in Cambodia. Although Cambodia was not considered a priority by British intelligence, it still provided a platform to counter communism.¹²⁹² It was thought a trivial amount of British assistance in Cambodia would protect London's large investments in the region.¹²⁹³ In 1969, the Information Research Department stated that

Cambodia is a small country, but one whose political orientation to some extent governs the degree of communist penetration in Indo China. Our own direct interests are minimal but in the general interests of peace and stability in the area, our political influence can be useful in helping Cambodia maintain her independence¹²⁹⁴

IRD reports included material on Cambodian propaganda including publications by Sihanouk. In April 1965, for example, Sihanouk launched a new periodical, "*Kambuja*".¹²⁹⁵ The material *inter alia*, pertained to Sihanouk's enmity towards Washington.¹²⁹⁶ The British

¹²⁹¹ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.241.

¹²⁹² Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.." Cambodia was not categorised a country of importance by the Counter Subversion Committee

¹²⁹³ Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565." This was also the belief for Thailand where national security planners believed a small amount of assistance would protect the kingdom from communist interference.

¹²⁹⁴ _____, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹²⁹⁵ _____, "Press and Propaganda. FO 371/180503."

¹²⁹⁶ Ibid. Sihanouk's relationship with Washington was often strained.

embassy in Phnom Penh corresponded with Washington over the publications.¹²⁹⁷ According to Leslie Fielding, a diplomat in Phnom Penh, the Americans took everything Sihanouk said, “rather literally”.¹²⁹⁸ Fielding, moreover, labelled Sihanouk the most sensitive Head of State in the world.¹²⁹⁹ This presented an opportunity for British intelligence to meddle in the internal affairs of Cambodia. In 1964, an American book, titled “Sihanouk Speaks”, was published in New York.¹³⁰⁰ John Armstrong produced the material mainly from quotations and speeches contained within *Réalités Cambodgiennes*.¹³⁰¹ A copy of the publication was ordered for the Chancery Library.¹³⁰² British reports in 1965 indicated that Sihanouk was particularly sensitive to critical articles published in the international press.¹³⁰³ Sihanouk’s *bête noire* revolved around references to Cambodia’s small geographical size and lack of influence on the world stage.¹³⁰⁴ For instance, in 1964, he lashed out at several American journals for referring to Cambodia as a small country.¹³⁰⁵ Sihanouk’s personal assistant would provide him with weekly press clippings from around the world on Cambodia. Sihanouk would scrutinise every article.¹³⁰⁶ IRD reports also covered Sihanouk’s speech at the *Faculté de Droit* in 1964, which was considered his political testament.¹³⁰⁷ Sihanouk’s publications provided British intelligence with an insight into Cambodia’s state trajectory and political alignment.

By August 1965, Sihanouk possessed a further propaganda tool in the form of *Le Sangkum, Revue Politique Illustrée*.¹³⁰⁸ The periodical had been compiled under the direct supervision of Sihanouk. *Le Sangkum* was exclusively political and based around Sihanouk’s political party.¹³⁰⁹ According to FO reports, Cambodian propaganda primarily targeted South Vietnamese instability and portrayed an anti-American sentiment.¹³¹⁰ *Le Sangkum, Revue Politique Illustrée* provided the IRD and FO with Cambodian views on Britain, America, and Vietnam.¹³¹¹ Sihanouk’s inability to protect Cambodia’s borders provided the IRD with further scope to target him. Throughout the mid-1960s IRD officers

¹²⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹³⁰¹ Ibid.

¹³⁰² Ibid.

¹³⁰³ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹³¹⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹¹ Ibid.

were keen to establish the true nature of Viet Cong activity in Cambodia.¹³¹² In keeping with zonal foreign policy, an enlargement of Vietnamese influence or intervention in an AAT was unacceptable for national security planners. Increasing Viet Cong activity was perceived as inimical to British interests and warranted intervention. As noted in the next chapter, Vietnamese expansion and hegemonic ambition were the catalysts for further British intervention in the 1980s. A report on communist activity was shared amongst numerous departments including the South East Asian Department.¹³¹³ It was important for British intelligence to understand how susceptible Cambodia was from communist advances.

Unlike Indonesia, however, the IRD did not have a newspaper in circulation throughout Cambodia. To increase cooperation and to start circulating IRD material, Tony Ashworth, an IRD officer, visited Burma and Cambodia in 1968.¹³¹⁴ Ashworth, following a successful meeting with the official responsible for information, reported that his one-week trip did not raise suspicion with the Cambodian government who were particularly concerned by threats to internal security.¹³¹⁵ Ashworth believed that communism would not be able to flourish in Cambodia and there was no significant communist activity in political or social life.¹³¹⁶ All information media in Cambodia was controlled by the Under Secretary of State for Press Affairs, Tep Chhieu Kheng. Sihanouk, however, controlled the Cambodian press. Although Sihanouk was supposedly anti-communist, Cambodian press outlets struck a non-aligned tone.¹³¹⁷ Moreover, the IRD perceived Sihanouk to be untrustworthy and began to feed material to trusted news outlets.¹³¹⁸ For example, Ashworth held meetings with Tep Chhieu Kheng and Vann Vikramuditt, the editor of the *Agence Khmer Presse*, the official government news agency.¹³¹⁹ Following Ashworth's meetings with Tep Chhieu Kheng it was decided that IRD material would be shared with the Cambodian government, specifically Kheng.¹³²⁰ IRD material would focus predominantly on "China Topics" and "Asian Analysis".¹³²¹ According to Ashworth, no special news agency existed for the ca. 400,000 ethnic Chinese living in Cambodia.¹³²² IRD material would target ethnic Chinese citizens. This provided the IRD with an opportunity to counter communism and influence the

¹³¹² _____, "Meetings with BBC: Notes on Scope of IRD Research. FO 1110/873."

¹³¹³ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁴ _____, "Visits by Mr Ashworth, IRD Hong Kong, to Burma and Cambodia, 2-9 October 1968. FCO 95/447."

¹³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³²¹ *Ibid.*

¹³²² *Ibid.*

Cambodian press. This is evidence of further British covert action in an Asian-style democracy.

Ashworth's report dated 16th October 1968, stated that Phnom Penh was sensitive to internal security threats and that 'communism would not be allowed to develop unopposed.'¹³²³ Fears of communist activity were still prevalent, however. For example, Tep Chhieu Kheng informed Ashworth that he for certain 'that a Cambodian shadow Government has been formed in Hanoi in readiness for "der Tag"'.¹³²⁴ Without substantive evidence, it is difficult to confirm these claims. However, it is evident a Vietnamese backed government in Phnom Penh would undermine British security and former colonies.

By the late 1960s regional instability forced London to review its foreign policy objectives in Cambodia. Interestingly, it was thought a reorganisation of the Thai Army's counter subversion unit would stabilise not only Thailand against its separatist insurgency, but also Cambodia against communism.¹³²⁵ According to correspondence between Alec Douglas-Home and Robert Thomas, it was thought London should offer to help reorganise the unit.¹³²⁶ This would represent a trivial amount of aid in the wider context of protecting British investments in the region.¹³²⁷ For example, London looked at appointing civilian advisers to the Thai government's Communist Suppression Operations Command.¹³²⁸ Bangkok's inability to contain the insurgency was inimical to British interests and countering communism in Cambodia. Thailand, an AAT, and Asian-style democracy, provides another example of Britain intervention designed support its foreign policy objectives.

Meanwhile, Khmer Rouge activity intensified near the Vietnamese border.¹³²⁹ According to a local French national, the Cambodian Army had installed a series of fortifications, including barbed wire fences, to stop Khmer Rouge forces from entering the region.¹³³⁰ By the late 1960s Max McCann and the Regional Information Office in Singapore, sought regular intelligence reports on Cambodia.¹³³¹ Intelligence reports were gathered by the military attaché to Cambodia. To facilitate this, in early 1969, the British military attaché

¹³²³ Ibid.

¹³²⁴ Ibid.

¹³²⁵ _____, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹³²⁶ Ibid.

¹³²⁷ Ibid.

¹³²⁸ Ibid.

¹³²⁹ _____, "Intelligence Gathering Visits Within Cambodia. FO 1119/1."

¹³³⁰ Ibid.

¹³³¹ Ibid.

toured Cambodia.¹³³² During his tour, rice smuggling was noted by the delegation. According to the report, low-income villagers would smuggle rice to Vietnamese communist forces in exchange for money.¹³³³ This led to an IRD report titled 'Intelligence Gathering Visits within Cambodia' being published by the department. This is evidence of covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. Meanwhile violence in Vietnam intensified considerably, signalled by the Tet Offensive in 1968. IRD files pertaining to the era paint a bleak picture for Sihanouk. In October 1973, for example, IRD publications discussed clashes between Vietnamese and Cambodian communists.¹³³⁴ Sihanouk distrusted the Khmer Rouge who he branded too Stalinist.¹³³⁵ IRD used extracts from *Phnom Penh Radio* to gather intelligence on the communist insurgency. According to intelligence reports, a rice shortage was driving intra party fighting amongst communist forces.¹³³⁶ London was aware of the growing communist threat in Cambodia. As in Indonesia, the BBC was used to spread British influence, especially through English language training.

d. BBC & British Council

The BBC provided the IRD with a soft power asset in Lon Nol's Cambodia. One key attribute of the BBC, according to its representatives, was the organisations inferred independence from the British government.¹³³⁷ This legitimised the BBC's output and garnered trust amongst its listeners. According to Douglas-Home, 'this asset is unique to the BBC and one which in times of crisis has proved valuable to Her Majesty's Government.'¹³³⁸ Throughout the early 1970s, FO officials posited the establishment of a BBC Khmer Service to aid the Khmer Republic in their war effort against the Khmer Rouge.¹³³⁹ According to FO reports, assisting the Khmer Republic was a 'political objective of strategic importance.'¹³⁴⁰ BBC Khmer would be based upon the Vietnamese Service which was popular and viewed as an impartial service especially when the Voice of America (VOA) was viewed with suspicion.¹³⁴¹ In Cambodia, however, the situation was different. VOA commanded respect

¹³³² Ibid.

¹³³³ Ibid.

¹³³⁴ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Unattributable Printed Briefs B Series May 1973 - January 1974. Described at Item Level. FCO 95/2125," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1973).

¹³³⁵ Ibid.

¹³³⁶ Ibid.

¹³³⁷ Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹³³⁸ Ibid.

¹³³⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹³⁴¹ Ibid.

and benefitted from a medium range transmitter based in Manila.¹³⁴² Some officials inside the FO believed, therefore, that a BBC Khmer Service may not be in the interest of London.¹³⁴³ Moreover, Britain only had access to a short-wave radio, which was felt too small to reach many Cambodians.¹³⁴⁴ It was believed Cambodians would only tune into short-wave radio to listen to VOA and announcements from Sihanouk, who was now residing in Beijing following the coup.¹³⁴⁵ The BBC representative to the Khmer Republic was called Brian Denney.¹³⁴⁶ Denney spent time questioning local Cambodians about their radio equipment. To his surprise some Cambodians did own short-wave sets. This, however, was seen as a status symbol rather than an attempt to listen to radio broadcasts.¹³⁴⁷

It was believed Lon Nol was losing his grip on Cambodia as early as 1972 and that a BBC Khmer Service would “do wonders” for the morale of the country.¹³⁴⁸ Moreover, FO officials believed that the Khmers were “pathetically grateful” for any external assistance.¹³⁴⁹ According to the report, the annual cost associated with a daily fifteen-minute broadcast was ca. £30,000.¹³⁵⁰ Denney suggested that the BBC Asian Service or British Council might provide a better platform than a dedicated BBC Khmer Service or whether an English BBC service in Cambodia would provide better opportunities for the FO.¹³⁵¹ A further thought involved English language teachers in Cambodia playing the BBC Overseas Service during their classes.¹³⁵² Moreover, the Information Administration Department suggested that contemporary services should be strengthened, and additional specialist material provided for the programmes.¹³⁵³

Edward Heath and Douglas-Home did not support the introduction of a dedicated BBC Khmer Service citing economic concerns.¹³⁵⁴ There would, moreover, be a detrimental effect on “marginal” languages such as Burmese, Persian, Greek, and Somali due to a lack of funds.¹³⁵⁵ The FO, therefore, looked to increase the level of English language broadcasts. According to correspondence, the balance between English language broadcasts and

¹³⁴² *Ibid.*

¹³⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵² *Ibid.*

¹³⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

vernacular ones was very fine. In 1972, the BBC had a far higher percentage of English language. Meanwhile, it was proposed, if the BBC service was not tenable, that the British Council step up its operations.¹³⁵⁶ As in Indonesia, the British Council was an important tool for increasing British influence.¹³⁵⁷ There was, according to correspondence between IRD officers Wilford and Squire, a desire for English language teaching throughout Cambodia. There was, moreover, a growing number of young Cambodians who sought emancipation from French influence. This provided British intelligence with a platform to espouse the virtues of the English language and British culture. In 1972, the percentage of the BBC's output of English language broadcasts was considerably higher than their competitors. The figure stood at 28% compared to VOA (12%) and Soviet broadcasts (9%).¹³⁵⁸ BBC output in terms of hours stood at 200 per week compared to the VOA's (228).¹³⁵⁹ In a valedictory dispatch, Harold Brown, British Ambassador to Cambodia, noted the enthusiasm of local Cambodians in learning English.¹³⁶⁰ According to the report, local Cambodian women, mainly married to high-ranking Cambodian officials would attend coffee mornings to learn English. Brown suggested this was the old Cambodia preparing for the new one.¹³⁶¹ As the situation in Vietnam began to deteriorate further, politicians in London were concerned about the capacity of Lon Nol to stave off communist attacks.¹³⁶² Britain's pivot to soft power enabled it to support this endeavour.

Plans for a BBC Khmer Service were dropped by 1975.¹³⁶³ Despite the dropping of the planned service, the BBC's mission in Cambodia did evaporate nor did it solely encompass language training. It also provided charitable services. On November 1st, 1979, for example, the children's television show, *Blue Peter*, launched an appeal raising one hundred and fifty thousand pounds for Cambodian refugees.¹³⁶⁴ Within two days the amount had doubled and by December increased to ca. two million pounds.¹³⁶⁵ By early 1985 a designated Cambodian service was back on the FO/BBC agenda.¹³⁶⁶ It was thought London was under pressure from Lee Kuan-yew, the Singaporean Prime Minister, to establish the service.¹³⁶⁷

¹³⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁵⁷ Council, "Indonesia: British Council Operations, FCO 13/98."

¹³⁵⁸ Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹³⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁶⁰ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Diplomatic Despatches - 1970 - Described at Item Level. FCO 60/115," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1970).

¹³⁶¹ Ibid.

¹³⁶² Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹³⁶³ Ibid. This was due to the communist revolution.

¹³⁶⁴ Mr Peter Shore, "Cambodia," ed. House of Commons (London: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, December 6th 1979).

¹³⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶⁶ Office, "BBC External Services: Review of Far Eastern Service. FCO 21/2961."

¹³⁶⁷ Ibid.

Cambodia would be covered by the new Hong Kong Relay Station.¹³⁶⁸ [see Appendix 1] Only English or Khmer would be used, any third language, such as French, would not be viable.¹³⁶⁹ A Khmer service would complement the military training provided to anti-Vietnamese coalition forces. Issues arose, however, over the viability of the service. Finding native Khmer speakers who also spoke English would prove difficult.¹³⁷⁰ Moreover, there was little to no audience research on Cambodia. A daily thirty-minute service to Cambodia would cost ca. £175,000 p.a.¹³⁷¹ This section has demonstrated that the BBC was involved in overt action throughout pre-revolutionary Cambodia. Despite Lon Nol proving to be a more authoritarian figure, Britain pivoted towards overt action in Cambodia post 1970. This would suggest the DPT does not provide an adequate explanation for British foreign policy.

e. **Soft Power Pivot**

This section will demonstrate that once Lon Nol established his anti-communist government in Cambodia, Britain decreased its covert operations despite democratic decay. There is a marked difference in the source material available after Lon Nol established power. For example, there are currently only eight files held at the National Archives relating to the Khmer Republic. One of those concerned financial aid and another concerned the wider treaties the Khmer Republic was party to. In fact, the national archives hold more records pertaining to Sihanouk's activities in exile.¹³⁷² This would suggest that once the perceived threat of communism had subsided, national security planners began to pivot towards overt action including aid donations. Although other factors, such as budgetary constraints and the closure of the IRD in 1977 could have hastened the decline in activity, there is a marked difference. Moreover, geopolitical factors such as the American withdrawal from Vietnam and escalating violence in Northern Ireland would have shifted priorities for policymakers in London. DPT and specifically selectorate theory suggests that Britain should have perceived communist advances in Cambodia as a sign of democratic decay and seek regime change.¹³⁷³ However, Lon Nol was supported by Britain through soft power methods noting a significant decline in intelligence activities once Lon Nol asserted control.

¹³⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹³⁷¹ Ibid.

¹³⁷² _____, "Activities of Prince Sihanouk in Exile. FCO 15/1750."

¹³⁷³ _____, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

Lon Nol attempted to persuade Sihanouk to adopt a more aggressive policy towards Vietnam, and pivot away from China.¹³⁷⁴ Throughout the last six months of Sihanouk's rule, Cambodia experienced political unrest. For example, Lon Nol organised anti-Vietnamese rallies in Eastern Cambodia whilst Sihanouk told Parisian officials that Hanoi-Phnom Penh relations were improving.¹³⁷⁵ In March 1970, Prince Sihanouk was overthrown by Lon Nol and Sihanouk's cousin Prince Sirik Matak in a bloodless coup.¹³⁷⁶ Lon Nol immediately pulled his forces out of North-eastern Cambodia effectively surrendering the area to the Khmer Rouge. According to a valedictory by Powell Jones, Britain's last Ambassador to Cambodia before 1975, the events did not amount to a revolution except in a palace sense.¹³⁷⁷ Those who assumed power, he argued, were not new figures in Cambodian society, having enjoyed service in Sihanouk's government.¹³⁷⁸ Following the coup Sihanouk established a rival government in exile. According to Cabinet Office papers, however, London was conducting day-to-day business with Lon Nol.¹³⁷⁹ Cabinet Office reports, moreover, stated that the Cambodian government's main aim was to expel communism from the country.¹³⁸⁰ London welcomed the development and supported Cambodia's return to the International Control Commission.¹³⁸¹ Meanwhile, Britain pivoted to soft power to support Lon Nol whilst he engaged in a propaganda campaign against Sihanouk. Once Sihanouk arrived in Beijing, he forged alliances with former foes including the Khmer Rouge and formed the National United Front of Kampuchea which finally obtained a figure head who possessed international recognition.¹³⁸² Sihanouk, moreover, accepted the leadership of the Cambodian Communist Party (CPK).¹³⁸³ Britain's security perceptions of Sihanouk were vindicated.

Britain's pivot to soft power was exemplified by loans and investment. For example, by the early 1970s London had donated £200,000 to the Khmer Exchange Stabilisation Fund.¹³⁸⁴ British officials in Phnom Penh, moreover, sought a soft loan for Cambodia to

¹³⁷⁴ Peter Strafford, "China Fails to have Lon Nol Regime in Cambodia Expelled From UN Assembly," *The Times* November 29th, 1974.

¹³⁷⁵ Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. p.117

¹³⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p.112

¹³⁷⁷ Office, "Valedictory Despatch by John Ernest Powell-Jones, UK Ambassador in Phnom Penh. FCO 15/2051."

¹³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁹ Cabinet Office, "Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings. CAB 128/45/14," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 26th March 1970).

¹³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸² Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. p.246

¹³⁸³ From Our Correspondent, "Prince Sihanouk Wins Full Backing of Communists," *The Times* April 13th 1973.

¹³⁸⁴ Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

important British goods through the Aid Framework.¹³⁸⁵ Throughout the early 1970s, moreover, Britain invested in Cambodia infrastructure projects. For example, Britain had invested \$1 million in a multinational dam project in Cambodia at Prek Thnot.¹³⁸⁶ According to an IRD report, however, the situation in Cambodia by early 1973 was amongst the highest priorities for Soviet-American bilateral talks.¹³⁸⁷ It was likely, moreover, that during Kissinger's visit to Moscow the issue was discussed. IRD officials believed that the Cambodian issue would have to be addressed if Brezhnev's visit to Washington was to be fruitful.¹³⁸⁸ Documents pertaining to the troubled Khmer Republic suggest that American-Soviet policy on the matter was not too far apart. Both states believed the legitimate government in Cambodia to be that of Lon Nol which created a paradoxical situation for the Soviet regime.¹³⁸⁹ Soviet policy towards Sihanouk's Chinese-backed government was simple, it refused to have anything to do with it, however, its close ally, North Vietnam, was directly assisting Khmer Rouge forces in its fight with Phnom Penh.¹³⁹⁰ It appeared to the IRD at this stage, a negotiated ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Vietnamese forces was the only viable option left for Washington and Moscow to pursue.

Following the removal of Sihanouk, Cambodia experienced political turmoil. Yem Sambaur, the new Cambodian Foreign Minister, was appointed once Sihanouk was deposed.¹³⁹¹ According to Brown, he had fallen out of favour with the prince.¹³⁹² Yem set about his task as he quickly established his government's policies and held diplomatic meetings with his counterparts.¹³⁹³ Lon Nol's administration, however, was plagued by confusion and corruption signalling democratic decay in Cambodia. For example, in April 1971, Nol resigned citing health concerns only to be asked to form a new government the following day.¹³⁹⁴ According to a report in *The Times*, the situation in Cambodia was so perilous, that Lon Nol was the only leader who could save the Cambodian state from collapse.¹³⁹⁵ Meanwhile, Cambodia's economic performance became untenable leading to

¹³⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁸⁶ _____, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹³⁸⁷ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Ker Chhieng, former Chief of Protocol; Prince Sihanouk, former Head of State. FCO 168/5083," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1973).

¹³⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹³⁹¹ Office, "Diplomatic Despatches - 1970 - Described at Item Level. FCO 60/115."

¹³⁹² Ibid.

¹³⁹³ Ibid.

¹³⁹⁴ Wilson, "General Lon Nol asked to form new Government."

¹³⁹⁵ Ibid.

British fears that communist forces would sweep to victory.¹³⁹⁶ According to the annual report for Cambodia, hyper-inflation and the continual erosion of real income severely weakened the government.¹³⁹⁷ Hyper-inflation stood at around three hundred per cent in 1974.¹³⁹⁸ Meanwhile, Lon Nol displayed authoritarian characteristics. This is supported through the annual dispatch from the British Embassy in Phnom Penh which stated that 'Lon Nol's extreme conservatism played a role in the 'narrowing of the Republic's political base.'¹³⁹⁹ Despite this, Britain pivoted towards soft power demonstrated by a reduction in intelligence operations.

Meanwhile, America began to intervene in Cambodia. On June 1st, 1973, the US Senate suspended White House funds for its bombing campaign in Cambodia and Laos.¹⁴⁰⁰ Following political and public pressure Nixon stopped the bombing campaign. In the fourteen months following the end of Washington's bombing campaign, Kissinger made no attempts to formulate a peace plan.¹⁴⁰¹ Many in Washington feared that the US could become embroiled in a similar quagmire like Vietnam. The initial justification for the military campaign inside Cambodian territory was the protection of American servicemen in Vietnam.¹⁴⁰² However, the Moose-Lowenstein Report for the Foreign Affairs Committee, declared Washington's bombing campaign in Cambodia illegal.¹⁴⁰³

By late 1973 the Paris Peace Accords had been ratified. Although forces under the command of Lon Nol upheld the ceasefire, Khmer Rouge forces did not reciprocate.¹⁴⁰⁴ Article 20 of the Peace Accords stipulated that all foreign forces should return to their country of origin. By mid 1973, it was estimated *ca.* 40,000 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong soldiers were still active in Cambodia.¹⁴⁰⁵ According to the IRD, the Vietnamese soldiers were supporting the fragmented Khmer Rouge throughout this period.¹⁴⁰⁶ The US used the breaching of Article 20 as justification for intervention in Cambodia.¹⁴⁰⁷ Rogers stated that

¹³⁹⁶ Office, "Diplomatic Despatches 1974-1975 (Described at Item Level). FCO 160/166."

¹³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁹ _____, "Valedictory Despatch by John Ernest Powell-Jones, UK Ambassador in Phnom Penh. FCO 15/2051."

¹⁴⁰⁰ Patrick Brogan, "US Senate cuts off White House Funds for Continuation of Bombing in Cambodia and Laos," *The Times* June 1st 1973.

¹⁴⁰¹ Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. p.335

¹⁴⁰² *Ibid.* p.130

¹⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Ker Chhieng, former Chief of Protocol; Prince Sihanouk, former Head of State. FCO 168/5083."

¹⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰⁷ Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. p.400

due to the presence of North Vietnamese servicemen in Cambodia, it threatened the self-determination of the South Vietnamese. However, the justification ignored the fact that Cambodia was not party to the agreement and therefore did not fall under its jurisdiction.¹⁴⁰⁸ Cambodia's foreign ministry sought an international guarantee of its neutrality and territorial integrity akin to guarantee afforded to Laos in 1962.¹⁴⁰⁹ This would protect it from external forces.

Meanwhile, peace talks became a component of Cambodian foreign policy as a combination of internal and external crises threatened the Lon Nol administration. Lon Nol's entire diplomatic effort, according to the FO, was to retain its seat at the UN.¹⁴¹⁰ Lon Nol, therefore, put forward unconditional peace offer to the warring factions. Nol looked towards the UN Secretary General, ASEAN states and the West for assistance,¹⁴¹¹ In 1973, the Non-Aligned Movement met in Algiers. According to report in *The Times*, fighting in Cambodia intensified as the conference drew nearer with rebel factions hoping to take Kompong Cham and establish it as Cambodia's new capital as leverage.¹⁴¹² Despite evidence of democratic decay and a deterioration of the security situation, Britain continued to support Lon Nol.

In 1974, Sino-Cambodian relations deteriorated after Beijing attempted to block Lon Nol's government from attending the UN.¹⁴¹³ Chinese delegates argued that Lon Nol's government was an American puppet and Sihanouk controlled ninety per cent of Cambodian territory despite being in exile.¹⁴¹⁴ Cambodia's neighbours, such as Thailand and Indonesia urged the international community to respect the democratic right of Cambodians to self-determination.¹⁴¹⁵ At the UNGA British diplomats called for a peaceful solution to the situation in Cambodia.¹⁴¹⁶ According to a report in *The Times*, British diplomat, Ivor Richard, claimed it would set a bad precedent for the UN to admit a country with a leader in exile. Moreover, Richard claimed, "it would be a gross interference in Cambodian affairs".¹⁴¹⁷ British diplomats were quick to raise issues of non-intervention when it feared Chinese

¹⁴⁰⁸ Ibid. p.277

¹⁴⁰⁹ Papers, "Miscellaneous Number 25. Documents Relating to British Involvement in the Indo-China Conflict 1945-1965.."

¹⁴¹⁰ Office, "Diplomatic Despatches 1974-1975 (Described at Item Level). FCO 160/166."

¹⁴¹¹ Ibid.

¹⁴¹² From Our Correspondent, "Cambodia's Third Largest City in Peril," *The Times* September 5th, 1973.

¹⁴¹³ Strafford, "China Fails to have Lon Nol Regime in Cambodia Expelled From UN Assembly."

¹⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴¹⁶ UK Parliamentary Papers, "United Nations No.1 (1975) Report on the Proceedings of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (New York: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, 1974).

¹⁴¹⁷ Strafford, "China Fails to have Lon Nol Regime in Cambodia Expelled From UN Assembly."

diplomats were encroaching on Cambodian internal affairs despite engaging in similar behaviour. Denouncing Beijing for meddling in the internal affairs of Cambodia exposes contradictions in British foreign policy.

By 1974, communist forces had captured vast swathes of land including the eastern regions of Cambodia, inhabited by the hill tribes Dick Noone contacted.¹⁴¹⁸ The power base for the Khmer Rouge centred around the north-east region where the revolution had begun.¹⁴¹⁹ Due to the precarious position of the Khmer Republic, British diplomats kept a close eye on developments and drew up contingency plans for a potential evacuation.¹⁴²⁰ The evacuation plans stated civilian aircraft might not be suitable for such an undertaking. Under British plans Air Support Command would be tasked with evacuating up to 200 people, mainly British and Australian nationals.¹⁴²¹ Those evacuated would be taken to Singapore and then able to return to their countries of origin.

According to a 1974 FO report, North Vietnam viewed the Lon Nol government as a puppet of American foreign policy. Moreover, the Khmer Rouge were too independent of Vietnam and aligned to Beijing.¹⁴²² During a speech on July 4th, 1974, Lon Nol offered 'unconditional negotiations' to the Khmer Rouge who dismissed them accordingly.¹⁴²³ Sihanouk, from his Beijing residence, likewise dismissed the offer from Lon Nol.¹⁴²⁴ FO reports reveal that communist propaganda targeted the corruption of Lon Nol's government offering a different vision of Cambodia's future.¹⁴²⁵ The propaganda claimed that the Khmer Rouge occupied territories that boasted enhanced irrigation systems and an abundance of food.¹⁴²⁶ It was thought, however, that most Cambodians were wary of these claims. As early as 1972, it was thought that Lon Nol was losing his grip on reality as he faced threats to his presidency through internal power struggles and disenfranchisement of his policies.¹⁴²⁷ For example, in June 1974, a group of students kidnapped and murdered the Minister for

¹⁴¹⁸ Office, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹⁴¹⁹ Kiernan, "The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge." p.

¹⁴²⁰ Ministry of Defence, "Services Assisted Evacuation of the Khmer Republic: Joint Theatre Plan (East) Operation Faldage. DEFE 5/191/37," ed. Ministry of Defence (London: National Archives, 17th December 1971).

¹⁴²¹ Ibid.

¹⁴²² Office, "Diplomatic Despatches 1974-1975 (Described at Item Level). FCO 160/166."

¹⁴²³ Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia*. pp.356-357

¹⁴²⁴ Ibid. p.380

¹⁴²⁵ Office, "Valedictory Despatch by John Ernest Powell-Jones, UK Ambassador in Phnom Penh. FCO 15/2051."

¹⁴²⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴²⁷ _____, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

Education Keo Sangkim and the President's Adviser for Youth, Thach Chia.¹⁴²⁸ To counter communist subversion, Britain engaged in soft power including BBC services and British Council activities. This was supplemented by charity donations and education campaigns. This section has demonstrated that covert action in Cambodia subsided upon the establishment of a right leaning government under Lon Nol.

f. Conclusion

Two aims were identified in the introduction. Firstly, that the chapter would demonstrate that despite being an Asian-style democracy, Britain engaged in covert action in Cambodia when it perceived its security was at risk. This suggests that perceptions outweighed international norms, specifically the principle of non-intervention. Moreover, this allows the chapter to critique DPT. State trajectory was central to British foreign policy. Perceptions of poor security led to the IRD compiling intelligence reports from within Cambodia.¹⁴²⁹ IRD officers visited Cambodia meeting with senior members of Sihanouk's entourage and publicists. The IRD provided material to Cambodian newspapers to counter communist advances in the country. Moreover, the IRD published reports on Sihanouk's propaganda campaigns and traits. The chapter used a mixture of archival materials, newspapers reports and parliamentary debates to draw inferences pertaining to British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia. Britain began assessing communist activity throughout Cambodia in the early 1960s with a paper on hill tribes published by Dick Noone.¹⁴³⁰ Noone's report indicated that hill tribes were susceptible to communism. To counter this, Noone suggested that the IRD disseminate posters around the tribal areas.

The second aim was to demonstrate that once Lon Nol was in power, national security planners pivoted to soft power to achieve policy goals. For example, it was thought a dedicated BBC Khmer Service would bolster Cambodian morale against the communist advances in the East.¹⁴³¹ The BBC enjoyed a superb reputation for impartiality and independence from the government which the IRD and FO exploited. This was especially true when compared to its competitors, the VOA and Soviet radio stations.¹⁴³² The BBC

¹⁴²⁸ ———, "Diplomatic Despatches 1974-1975 (Described at Item Level). FCO 160/166."

¹⁴²⁹ ———, "Intelligence Gathering Visits Within Cambodia. FO 1119/1."

¹⁴³⁰ ———, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹⁴³¹ ———, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹⁴³² Ibid.

provided the intelligence services with a vessel for propaganda and counter subversion activities. As in Indonesia, the BBC was perceived to be an impartial voice. However, as Cambodia was regarded by national security planners as less of a threat, the BBC Khmer service was shelved. Communist revolutionaries in Cambodia used hill tribes to fill their ranks. According to research by the anthropologist, Dick Noone, hill tribes had limited or no contact with either local or national government¹⁴³³ and formed the bedrock of Khmer Rouge support. British intelligence services explored ways to counter communist subversion. This would be achieved through a propaganda campaign targeting illiterate members of the tribes.

There was a marked drop in intelligence activities in Cambodia following the establishment of the Lon Nol government. Moreover, Lon Nol was more authoritarian in nature than his predecessor. This would suggest that threat perception outweighed democratic decay, norms, and obligations to international law. By the time the Khmer Rouge seized power in 1975, British foreign policy objectives had changed. America, for example, had withdrawn from Vietnam and domestically, the threat of the Irish Republican Army had grown. Although Britain had not committed conventional forces to Vietnam, it engaged in intelligence activities.¹⁴³⁴ The imminent closure of the IRD affected British foreign policy. Cambodia, therefore, lost importance in Britain's strategic framework in the region. However, if national security planners perceived Cambodia was vulnerable to communist influence, it reverted to covert action. Covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia carried had fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs than riskier operations inside Europe, supporting the notion of zonal foreign policy. National security planners were quick to raise issue of Chinese intervention in Cambodian affairs despite their own interference.¹⁴³⁵ Cambodia, after all, was an AAT although it was not perceived to be as detrimental to British foreign policy.

Previous intelligence research addressed covert action in Vietnamese occupied Cambodia.¹⁴³⁶ As this chapter has demonstrated, however, covert action was not limited to this period. Cambodia and specifically Sihanouk became a target of intelligence operations throughout the 1960s. This was mainly characterised by propaganda. BBC, IRD and Counter Subversion were all key facets of covert action. The BBC, who enjoyed an envious

¹⁴³³ ———, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹⁴³⁴ Dumbrell and Ellis, "British Involvement in Vietnam Peace Initiatives, 1966-1967 Marigolds, Sunflowers, and "Kosygin Week"."

¹⁴³⁵ Strafford, "China Fails to have Lon Nol Regime in Cambodia Expelled From UN Assembly."

¹⁴³⁶ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. pp.241-242.

reputation, acted as a vessel for IRD material. Moreover, BBC funded programmes such as *Blue Peter* raised millions of pounds for refugees.¹⁴³⁷ Meanwhile, Britain engaged in covert action in Cambodia whilst attending PrepCom meetings within the CSCE.¹⁴³⁸ This would suggest that national security planners were not concerned by international developments in law or norm building. Early 1979 saw Vietnamese forces successfully occupy Cambodia. Despite ending the mass atrocities in Cambodia, the Vietnamese occupation was viewed by the West as detrimental to regional peace. Britain, therefore, engaged in covert action to remove the Vietnamese backed regime. This is explored in the next chapter. Neither democratic norms or international law provided a barrier for covert action to flourish in pre-revolutionary Cambodia nor did not signal the end of British interference in Cambodian affairs. The next chapter will demonstrate that covert action intensified in Cambodia despite the signing of the Helsinki Accords suggesting that security concerns outweighed international norms and law. This will enable the thesis to ascertain whether there was a pivot in British foreign policy away from covert action in the 1980s.

¹⁴³⁷ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴³⁸ Office, "Information Research Department: NATO and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). FCO 168/7994."

Chapter VII

United Kingdom Military Training Assistance Scheme

Cambodia & the Vietnamese Occupation

a. Framing

As the rains began to re-inherit the Cambodian skyline in spring 1979, Vietnamese forces, who invaded Cambodia in late 1978, had forced the Khmer Rouge leadership into exile throughout Thailand. Following four years of mass atrocity with limited international attention, Cambodia was subjected to further regime change, this time in the form of Vietnamese occupation. Developments in Cambodia altered Britain's foreign policy agenda. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, National security planners viewed the invasion as expansionist.¹⁴³⁹ Moreover, Cambodia was still an Anglophile Adjacent Territory (AAT) and its occupation by Vietnamese forces posed a risk to former colonies. Secondly, due to increasing hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe, Vietnam's invasion provided an opportunity for Britain to undermine one of the Soviet Union's closest allies. Furthermore, following Washington's unsuccessful intervention in Vietnam, it provided a platform to degrade Hanoi's ambitions.

This chapter has two aims. Firstly, it will demonstrate that the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia provided national security planners with an opportunity to discredit a close ally of the Soviet Union demonstrating that Vietnamese foreign policy posed a threat to Britain's interests. The decreased hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Cambodia enabled Britain to engage in covert action supporting the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy. As demonstrated in previous chapters, zonal foreign policy suggests Cambodia assumed temporary importance when there was a perceived threat. Zonal foreign policy, therefore, provides a model for British foreign policy into the 1980s.

The second aim is to demonstrate that international law did not induce a pivot in British foreign policy away from covert action if it perceived its security was endangered by communism. In this instance, the critique of democratic peace theory (DPT) and selectorate theory does not apply as Cambodia had been ruled by an authoritarian regime and

¹⁴³⁹ Mr Stan Thorne, "Cambodia," ed. Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers (London: Hansards, 3rd April 1980).

subsequently occupied by a foreign power.¹⁴⁴⁰ What this chapter does demonstrate, however, is that despite advancements in international law, Britain used covert action to instigate regime change in Cambodia and oust the Vietnamese backed government. Meanwhile, Britain attended international law conferences designed to restore peace in Cambodia. For example, Britain was party to the International Conference of Kampuchea (ICK) and Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM). This again raises questions around Britain's self-perception.

During the mass atrocities, British foreign policy revolved around assisting Cambodian refugees in Thailand.¹⁴⁴¹ Ironically, this is when the international community would hold legitimacy to intervene directly. Between 1975-1979 Cambodian foreign policy did not threaten British security nor did it threaten a former colony. Khmer Rouge expansionist desires were limited to Vietnam or border incursions into Thailand. Following the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia London pivoted towards covert action. Meanwhile, Britain attended several international law conferences. International norms had been codified by the International Law Commission (ILC). One of the ten finalised articles at Helsinki, for example, espoused the virtues of non-intervention in the internal affairs of another state.¹⁴⁴² However, by the mid-1980s, a decade after signing the declaration, Britain was engaged in intelligence operations in Cambodia. Covert action in Cambodia centred around the United Kingdom Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS) which provided military training to pro-Sihanouk forces.¹⁴⁴³ As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is the first research on the role of the UKMTAS in supporting British foreign policy in Cambodia. The chapter will begin by examining British soft power in Cambodia during the mass atrocities, including its charitable efforts to support refugees in Thailand and Vietnam, before outlining the pivot towards the use of covert action through the UKMTAS.

b. Use of Soft Power during Genocide

The previous chapter outlined how zonal foreign policy provides a rationale for Britain's behaviour in Cambodia and how that state assumed temporary importance during the latter stages of Sihanouk's premiership. The research in this chapter is no different, suggesting

¹⁴⁴⁰ Shore, "Cambodia." The Vietnamese occupation followed the Cambodian genocide following a series of border incursions.

¹⁴⁴¹ From Our Correspondent, "Humanitarian and other aid towards liberation," *The Times* May 5th 1977. Genocide was only proven towards minorities, including the Cham population for example.

¹⁴⁴² (OSCE), "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act."

¹⁴⁴³ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

that by the mid-1980s, Cambodia again became a target of British intelligence activities. Despite its communist ideology the Khmer Rouge did not pose a threat to British interests. During the mass atrocities Britain used soft power and positive engagement to assist Cambodian refugees. In keeping with the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy, therefore, this section will demonstrate that when an AAT did not pose a security threat to Britain, national security planners pivoted away from covert action.

British reports on Khmer Rouge atrocities relied on refugee testimonies with eye-witness accounts generally corroborating the information.¹⁴⁴⁴ When pressed by Anthony Royle on the action taken in response to the reports of mass murder in Cambodia, Luard claimed that the British government could not 'divulge the details of the methods we [the government] use.'¹⁴⁴⁵ Luard, moreover, claimed that although there was no diplomatic representation in Cambodia, the government had found alternative avenues to express concerns.¹⁴⁴⁶ British aid efforts targeted refugees and those effected by famine. According to Wain, a higher percentage of the population died from poor living conditions than state sanctioned murder.¹⁴⁴⁷ To remedy this, Britain supported Cambodia through a collective group called the Exchange Support Fund.¹⁴⁴⁸ Meanwhile, Britain approached the UN Human Rights Commission over events in Cambodia.¹⁴⁴⁹ Alongside appeals to the UN, London lobbied Southeast Asian countries to open their borders to refugees. London commended Bangkok for opening its borders to Cambodian refugees.¹⁴⁵⁰ According to British MP, David Ennals, Bangkok were preparing tented accommodation for up to ca. 650,000 refugees.¹⁴⁵¹ According to a FO report, Britain contributed £750,000 per annum to the refugee program. Britain's use of soft power demonstrates that when a state did not pose a threat to a former colony, it pivoted away from the use of covert action.

In a Commons session on December 6th, 1975, Peter Shore argued that it had been Conservative backbenchers pursuing the topic of Cambodia as he argued Labour had let the topic slip from the national consciousness.¹⁴⁵² Shore, however, lambasted the Conservative

¹⁴⁴⁴ ———, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁴⁴⁵ Mr Philip Goodhart, "Cambodia," ed. Twentieth Century House of Commons Hansards Sessional Papers (London: Hansards, October 20th 1976).

¹⁴⁴⁶ Ibid. Luard did not online them in the Commons.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Hurst Hannum, "International Law and Cambodian Genocide: The Sounds of Silence," *Human Rights Quarterly. The John Hopkins University Press* Volume 11, No. 1(February 1989). p.91

¹⁴⁴⁸ Office, "Diplomatic Despatches 1974-1975 (Described at Item Level). FCO 160/166."

¹⁴⁴⁹ From Our Correspondent, "'Barbarous British' told not to interfere in the affairs of Cambodia," *The Times* May 16th, 1978.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁵¹ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229." £750,000 by 1977.

¹⁴⁵² Hansards Sessional Papers, "Address in Reply to Majesty's Most Gracious Speech," ed. Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers (London: Hansards, 27th April 1966).

Party for insinuating that Britain had become an increasingly in-ward looking country under the party.¹⁴⁵³ In response, the Labour Party published a report on July 14th, 1978 stating that it would raise its concerns to the UNHRC. Labour politicians welcomed the government's new policy as it demonstrated a pivot away from the untenable position of supporting the Khmer Rouge.¹⁴⁵⁴ Some UN member states believed Cambodia should be excluded from the organisation. London, however, pursued a pluralist policy whereby Britain opposed the expulsion of member states.¹⁴⁵⁵ Simons, a British diplomat within SEAD, stated that Britain had gone further than other countries, but there was only a limited amount of work London could do to assist Cambodians externally. Dr Alan Glyn MP, claimed during an evening session of the House of Commons in late 1979 that the British record in Cambodia was good.¹⁴⁵⁶ Glyn's farcical comments do not reflect the true number of those murdered by the Khmer Rouge. London, moreover, had been reluctant to supply financial assistance to the victims. Officials in Washington, meanwhile, released a public statement. It read, 'it is time that some of us stood up to be counted and condemned those who played a disgraceful part in the matter.'¹⁴⁵⁷ It was not until the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia that Britain and America began to reengage meaningfully, and that was on security grounds.

During a Commons debate on July 7th, 1976, Ted Rowlands, a junior FO minister, answered questions from Patrick Wall. Wall asked if the British government had any intelligence on the events occurring in Cambodia to which Rowlands stated that due to the expulsion of foreign nationals, it was impossible to collect intelligence.¹⁴⁵⁸ Mr Rowlands also confirmed that Britain had approached the Cambodian regime to establish representation in Phnom Penh.¹⁴⁵⁹ This would have enabled Britain to monitor the situation and provide a clearer intelligence picture.¹⁴⁶⁰ The British request did not receive a reply, however. Of note, the Labour party believed that if Britain could not muster enough support from the UN, it would be unwise for the British to pursue a course of unilateral action in Cambodia. Unilateral action, they argued, may prove to have a deleterious effect on Britain's international standing and invite criticism from hostile powers.¹⁴⁶¹ Moreover, Britain's

¹⁴⁵³ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁵⁴ Knipe Wood, "Britain Announces Shake up in Policy Towards Cambodia," *The Times* November 9th 1989.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁴⁵⁶ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Mr Wall, "Cambodia," ed. Twentieth Century House of Commons Sessional Papers (London: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, 7th July 1976).

¹⁴⁵⁹ ———, "Cambodia," ed. Twentieth Century House of Commons Hansards Sessional Papers (London: Hansards, July 7th 1976).

¹⁴⁶⁰ Wall, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

intervention may have drawn criticism from non-aligned states. This demonstrates that British politicians were keen to avoid hypocrisy and legitimacy costs associated with intervention.

Britain used soft power to collect evidence of mass atrocities in Cambodia which allowed it to raise concerns to the UN. As early as May 1976, HM Ambassador in Vientiane, Donald Cape, raised Cambodia's human rights record with his Cambodian counterpart but received no reply.¹⁴⁶² Policymakers in London, moreover, were concerned the regulatory Genocide Convention would not deter the perpetrators.¹⁴⁶³ Officials in London collected and collated evidence of mass atrocities in Cambodia. Without evidence, the document suggested the UNHRC would not permit intervention and was powerless to intervene.¹⁴⁶⁴ By 1977, no other government had supported London or raised concerns to the UN. Moreover, previous attempts to bring up human rights abuses in Cambodia were hindered by other events at the UNHRC. The Cambodian Foreign Ministry failed to send a delegation to the Commission as they were "tied up" carrying out official business for the government.¹⁴⁶⁵ Britain had little choice but to increase its aid contributions to refugees in Thailand.

Meanwhile, British politicians were pressured by Cambodian refugees for support. On December 18th, 1977, David Owen received a letter from a group of Cambodian refugees residing in Britain.¹⁴⁶⁶ The letter stated that Cambodia belonged to all Cambodians and not to a 'group of bandits' who had placed a bayonet behind the backs of the Cambodian people.¹⁴⁶⁷ The refugees praised Owen for his article in *The Times* which stated London was seeking to bring the fragrant violation of human rights to the UNHCR.¹⁴⁶⁸ By early 1978, London, against the advice of SEAD, raised Cambodian human rights violations with the UNHCR.¹⁴⁶⁹ The British delegation asked for an inquiry into allegations of human rights abuse in Cambodia.¹⁴⁷⁰ Britain's actions at the UN did not attract international acclamation, however. For example, although the Soviet Union publicly denounced the Khmer Rouge and its rule over Cambodia it vetoed the British proposal.¹⁴⁷¹ Labour politician, Ted Leadbitter, raised several questions viz. Cambodia inquiring as to why there was no condemnation from

¹⁴⁶² Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁴⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Correspondent, "'Barbarous British' told not to interfere in the affairs of Cambodia."

¹⁴⁶⁶ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶⁹ Correspondent, "'Barbarous British' told not to interfere in the affairs of Cambodia."

¹⁴⁷⁰ William Shawcross, *The Quality of Mercy: Cambodia, Holocaust and Modern Conscience*, First ed. (London: Simon & Schuster, 1985). p.65

¹⁴⁷¹ Shore, "Cambodia."

the UN. Moreover, the UN's recognition of the Khmer Rouge as the legitimate leaders of Cambodia was a barrier to the distribution of aid.¹⁴⁷² According to a Commons sitting, the ICRC and UNICEF had applied for access to Cambodia in February 1979, which was eventually accepted in July.¹⁴⁷³ Only one representative from each organisation was permitted to enter Cambodia.¹⁴⁷⁴ By August, six relief agency workers were allowed to operate in Phnom Penh. They were, however, confined to the city as they did not possess authorisation to travel to other regions of Cambodia.¹⁴⁷⁵

British diplomatic relations with Cambodia were also fraught. When pressed by the MP for Beckenham, Philip Goodhart, about the restoration of a British diplomatic mission in Cambodia, Evan Luard claimed that Britain had approached Phnom Penh for permission to base a non-resident ambassador to the country.¹⁴⁷⁶ Three months later, according to Hansards parliamentary records, there had been no change.¹⁴⁷⁷ Only once the country had transitioned from UN control to full independence did London re-establish full diplomatic relations.¹⁴⁷⁸ According to a British report, all other major powers had destabilised the region including the Soviets, Americans, Chinese and French.¹⁴⁷⁹ The report stated that the natural leader in restoring peace and supplying aid should be the British.¹⁴⁸⁰ The report does not account for British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia, however.¹⁴⁸¹

Throughout the Khmer Rouge regime, Britain explored methods designed to exert political pressure on Cambodia. For example, in late 1977, Lord Goronwy Jones pledged to the House of Lords that Britain would expose Cambodian atrocities at the UN Human Rights Commission.¹⁴⁸² Moreover, Britain would accept asylum applications from Cambodian refugees with previous connections to the country.¹⁴⁸³ London's move, however, drew criticism from Phnom Penh. Cambodian representatives declared that the only human rights British people possessed were 'those to be slaves, thieves, prostitutes or jobless [sic].'¹⁴⁸⁴

¹⁴⁷² Thorne, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁷³ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Goodhart, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷⁸ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸⁰ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁸¹ As ever, the "success" or "effect" of covert action is difficult to ascertain. For further debate *vide* Cormac and Calder *What Constitutes Successful Covert Action?*

¹⁴⁸² From Our Correspondent, "Britain to Raise Cambodia Atrocities at UN," *The Times* December 13th 1977.

¹⁴⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸⁴ Correspondent, "'Barbarous British' told not to interfere in the affairs of Cambodia."

Moreover, the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the move with the 'utmost vigour'. The Cambodian government claimed that

the odious interferences of the British government which has assailed honour and dignity of the people of Kampuchea and the sovereignty of Democratic Kampuchea¹⁴⁸⁵

In December 1979, as famine crippled Cambodia, British politicians discussed the events during a Commons debate.¹⁴⁸⁶ Stan Thorne MP, stated that the famine was engineered by Khmer Rouge cadres who did not represent communism or socialism.¹⁴⁸⁷ In response, FO minister, Peter Blaker, stated that he had visited Thailand in January 1980 reporting that ca. 250,000 Cambodian refugees were living in tented villages along the border.¹⁴⁸⁸ Blaker stated that for peace to be brought to Cambodia, the Vietnamese occupation had to end.¹⁴⁸⁹ The Lord Privy Seal vouched for Britain's support of universal suffrage and free elections following a Vietnamese withdrawal.¹⁴⁹⁰ Blaker finished his response by stating that one of Britain's priorities in Southeast Asia would be to secure peace in Cambodia. National security planners used covert action to support its foreign policy objectives in Cambodia. This was primarily to check communist expansion in a region associated with fewer hypocrisy and legitimacy costs.

In parliament David Ennals claimed that the BBC and *Daily Mirror* should be praised for raising awareness of the events occurring inside Cambodia.¹⁴⁹¹ Ennals stated that Britain's withdrawal of recognition for Pol Pot was a sensible move.¹⁴⁹² Not recognising Samrin's government, moreover, was an equally sensible measure. By recognising Samrin, it had the potential to harm Sihanouk. In 1979, the Cambodian government called for a UNSC meeting to discuss the Vietnamese invasion.¹⁴⁹³ Chinese and Russian delegations were opposed to

¹⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸⁶ Thorne, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸⁸ Ibid. Blaker was one of the first British citizens to visit post-genocide Cambodia.

¹⁴⁸⁹ Ibid. Blaker claimed that Cambodians had long feared their Marxist neighbours supporting the claim that Cambodia had a difficult relationship with Vietnam.

¹⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹¹ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁴⁹² Ibid.

¹⁴⁹³ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Soviet Intentions in Indo-China: Soviet Aspects of Vietnam's Invasion of Cambodia and Conflict with China. FCO 28/3875," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: National Archives, 1979).

any UN meeting. Norway, Portugal, and the US all advocated the move. Meanwhile, the French were unsure any benefits arising from a meeting. London instructed its diplomats to

encourage the President of the Council to pursue his consultations with all Council members about a meeting. And to lend our support for calling a Council meeting if other Western members of the Council agree to seek one.¹⁴⁹⁴

Following the end of the Second Indochina War, Britain distributed aid to Vietnam.¹⁴⁹⁵ By 1978, however, Thatcher's government ceased distribution until the ongoing situation in Cambodia had resolved itself¹⁴⁹⁶ demonstrating the early signs of zonal foreign policy. During a Cabinet Office meeting on December 6th, 1979, Douglas-Home stated that London was to rescind its recognition of the Khmer Rouge regime.¹⁴⁹⁷ Douglas-Home described the regime as 'unsavoury'.¹⁴⁹⁸ A Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC) Report on Southeast Asia stated that the motivations of the Vietnamese occupation were unknown, but it was clear Vietnam's previous policy was to extend Vietnamese and communist hegemony over Cambodia and Laos.¹⁴⁹⁹ This posed a security risk to Britain and provided an opportunity for Britain to use covert action against Vietnam.

Intelligence was difficult to gather during the Khmer Rouge era. According to Chandler, there was little documentary evidence of life inside Cambodia during the genocidal years.¹⁵⁰⁰ This is supported by James Lamond who was the only British politician to have visited Cambodia and witness the conditions.¹⁵⁰¹ However, there is sufficient government documentation in Britain pertaining to the era.¹⁵⁰² Intelligence, moreover, was gathered through the pro-western Thai government.¹⁵⁰³ When questioned in parliament as to how Britain could respond to the ongoing atrocities in Cambodia, the government responded that although Britain did not have diplomatic representation with the Khmer Rouge, it had attempted to open dialogue. London, moreover, did not have defence facilities or military

¹⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹⁵ Foreign Affairs Committee, "Southeast Asia," ed. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (London, United Kingdom: Hansards Parliamentary Papers, December 1986).

¹⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹⁷ Cabinet Office, "Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings (1-26). CAB 128/66/24," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 6th December 1979).

¹⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Committee, "Southeast Asia."

¹⁵⁰⁰ Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*.

¹⁵⁰¹ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁵⁰² Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁵⁰³ Ibid.

treaties with Cambodia.¹⁵⁰⁴ Intelligence, therefore, was mainly gathered through refugee testimonies and the activities of the Cambodian leadership.¹⁵⁰⁵ This demonstrates that there was a lack of desire to gather intelligence in a meaningful way when an AAT did not pose a direct threat to Britain's security.

Although there was little knowledge in Britain about the mass atrocities in Cambodia, parliamentarians were questioned by their constituents regarding the government's response. There was also differing views on whether the mass atrocities constituted a genocide. For example, during a Commons debate on December 6th, 1979, David Ennals was the only member to use the term 'genocide'; it was only mentioned once throughout the entire session.¹⁵⁰⁶ Meanwhile, Mr Humfrey, a diplomat on secondment to SEAD, requested a report on the atrocities being committed in Cambodia arguing that sporadic newspaper reports in *Le Monde* would not suffice.¹⁵⁰⁷ Meanwhile, Evan Luard was approached by the government to undertake an examination of British policy in Cambodia.¹⁵⁰⁸ Numerous constituents wrote to their MPs about the atrocities in Cambodia. The government provided a uniformed response to public concerns. This comprised of informing constituents that MPs had frequently stated their opposition to the genocide and that Britain had no diplomatic representation in Cambodia.¹⁵⁰⁹ Britain, moreover, had pledged £250,000 to UN High Commissioner for Human Refugees.¹⁵¹⁰ Alongside constituent's concerns, parish Churches, lobbied their local MPs over the events unfolding in Cambodia.¹⁵¹¹

Alongside aid, Britain offered asylum to Cambodians. During a House of Lords sitting, Lord Elton claimed that 142,000 people had been displaced since 1975.¹⁵¹² By 12th November 1977, the British government had granted asylum to 153 Cambodian refugees.¹⁵¹³ The UN Refugee Commission reported that camps across the Thai border were not fit for purpose and were overwhelmed with refugees. According to Lord Elton, the

¹⁵⁰⁴ _____, "Information Research Department: Cambodia; Country Assessment Sheet. FCO 168/3639."

¹⁵⁰⁵ _____, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁵⁰⁶ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁵⁰⁷ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹¹ Cabinet Office, "'Cambodia'. Conclusions of Cabinet Meeting. CAB 128/66/24," ed. Cabinet Office (London December 6th 1979).

¹⁵¹² Lord Elton, "Cambodian Refugees in Thailand," ed. Hansards Sessional Papers (London: Twentieth Century House of Commons Papers, 12th December 1977).

¹⁵¹³ Office, "'Cambodia'. Conclusions of Cabinet Meeting. CAB 128/66/24."

British government had responded by providing £1 million worth of aid.¹⁵¹⁴ A significant refugee camp had been constructed in the Thai town of Aranyaprathet, four kilometres from the Brévié demarcation line, in the border province of Sa Kaeo.¹⁵¹⁵ By late 1977, the camp had ca. 7,000 refugees residing in tented accommodation. The official capacity of the camp was just 4,000.¹⁵¹⁶ Lord Elton, had visited the camp in 1977 along with other refugee camps in the province of Prachinburi.¹⁵¹⁷ Although Britain had only accepted a marginal number of refugees, it signalled that London was concerned about its perception and utilised soft power to influence events in Cambodia when it did not pose a threat to national security.

Following the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Indonesia in 1974, Suharto visited London in 1979.¹⁵¹⁸ During the trip he held top-level diplomatic meetings with the Margaret Thatcher.¹⁵¹⁹ Thatcher explained to Suharto that HMG were under increasing pressure to withdraw its recognition of Pol Pot as 'many of his actions in the past had been intolerable.'¹⁵²⁰ Suharto expressed that he was shocked by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.¹⁵²¹ Moreover, during the meeting, it transpired that Vietnam would not withdraw its forces from Cambodia because they were concerned that Pol Pot seize power.¹⁵²² Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia posed a security risk to British interests in the region and provided an opportunity to check communist expansion.

The former Lord Privy Seal, Ian Gilmour, blamed Vietnamese foreign policy for the deterioration in regional relations, branding the Vietnamese as occupiers not liberators.¹⁵²³ Furthermore, Gilmour stressed that although the Khmer Rouge regime was abhorrent, the Vietnamese invasion had exacerbated the civilian populations suffering.¹⁵²⁴ Some parliamentarians, however, believed that the Vietnamese had liberated Cambodia but were not treating the population with respect and dignity.¹⁵²⁵ National security planners perceived Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia as a security threat.

¹⁵¹⁴ Lord Elton, "Written Answer - House of Lords," ed. Hansards Parliamentary Papers (London, United Kingdom: Hansards, August 2nd 1978).

¹⁵¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵¹⁶ Elton, "Cambodian Refugees in Thailand."

¹⁵¹⁷ _____, "Written Answer - House of Lords."

¹⁵¹⁸ Office, "Indonesia: Visit to UK by President Suharto of Indonesia: Meeting with Prime Minister. PREM 19/68."

¹⁵¹⁹ _____, "Indonesia: Visit to the UK by President Suharto of Indonesia. PREM 19/68."

¹⁵²⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵²¹ _____, "Indonesia: Visit to UK by President Suharto of Indonesia: Meeting with Prime Minister. PREM 19/68."

¹⁵²² _____, "Indonesia: Visit to the UK by President Suharto of Indonesia. PREM 19/68."

¹⁵²³ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁵²⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵²⁵ Ibid.

In December 1986, the FAC published a report on Southeast Asia to examine the development of Britain's bilateral relations with the six nations which comprised ASEAN in 1986.¹⁵²⁶ By 1986 Britain still lacked diplomatic representation in Cambodia and therefore a delegation could not visit the country. However, the delegation did hold meetings with two prominent Cambodian resistance groups who found sanctuary in Thailand.¹⁵²⁷ Vietnam was supported by Moscow who provided financial assistance to Hanoi. Hanoi's relationship with Moscow created tension along the Sino-Vietnamese border. A government report stated that Britain's main links with the region were mainly economic and historical.¹⁵²⁸ The report, moreover, stated that Britain was not a major aid donor to Vietnam and relied on expertise in technology and education for soft power. The report does not include intelligence operations. Peter Shore addressed the treatment of Cambodian citizens in parliament. According to Shore, there were no judicial hearings, no courts, no defence, and complete suppression of the Buddhist religion of which, he suggested, eighty-five per cent of the population subscribed to.¹⁵²⁹ British foreign policy aimed to curtail communist expansion and check Vietnamese hegemony over mainland Southeast Asia. This was achieved through the UKMTAS.

By November 1989 Britain had distanced itself from any association with the Khmer Rouge and was an active member of the United Nations Resolution of Southeast Asian Nations on Cambodia, which London had co-sponsored.¹⁵³⁰ In effect, Britain was pursuing a humanitarian and peaceful transition of power in Cambodia. A further Cabinet Office report from November 1989, reported that the British government's policy towards Cambodia had been reviewed considering a series of cosmetic constitutional changes inside Cambodia.¹⁵³¹ These alterations introduced by Hun Sen included a change to Cambodia's name to the State of Cambodia. Meanwhile, Britain would increase its foreign aid package to Cambodia, which would be channelled through a series of non-governmental organisations. For example, London pledged £250,000 to UNICEF to avoid financially backing the regime in Phnom Penh directly.¹⁵³² This again demonstrates that when the security threat had been negated, Britain pivoted to soft power.

¹⁵²⁶ Committee, "Southeast Asia."

¹⁵²⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵²⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵²⁹ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁵³⁰ Cabinet Office, "Conclusion of Cabinet Meeting. CAB 128/94/13," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 1989).

¹⁵³¹ Ibid.

¹⁵³² Ibid.

Britain perceived Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia as expansionist and posed a risk to its security interests. To counter this, it engaged in a military training scheme. Although London espoused the virtues of non-interference in Cambodian affairs and attended several international conferences designed to stabilise the country, it engaged in covert action throughout the Vietnamese occupation. Aid allowed Britain to maintain its soft power credentials and reduce hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. The next section addresses the UKMTAS mission to Cambodia.

c. UKMTAS in Cambodia

In December 1977, Phnom Penh broke off diplomatic relations with Hanoi following a series of border incursions by Cambodian forces, leading to a full-scale invasion in late 1978. The invasion proved a significant blow to the regional peace and reconciliation process.¹⁵³³ Hanoi's actions, moreover, had the unintentional effect of agitating national security planners in Britain, who perceived the invasion as expansionist leading to an intensification in intelligence activities during the mid-1980s.¹⁵³⁴ This section will outline the role of UKMTAS in Cambodia demonstrating that when national security planners perceived there to be threat to its security it reverted to covert action. The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia provided national security planners with an opportunity to check communism in Southeast Asia and discredit the Soviet Union which was unable to protect its ally.

During the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, numerous factions fought for control over the country. Western states, including Britain, backed pro-Sihanouk forces.¹⁵³⁵ Although Britain provided military training to pro-Sihanouk forces, British diplomats were quick to stress that the assistance did not stretch to weaponry.¹⁵³⁶ As stated in the introduction, covert action usually revolves around three types of activity.¹⁵³⁷ In this instance, Britain engaged in military training to pro-Sihanouk forces in Cambodia during the Vietnamese occupation. According to a Cabinet Office report, in 1990, a documentary by the film maker John Pilger titled 'Cambodia – The Betrayal' claimed the British special forces had trained

¹⁵³³ Weatherbee, *International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy*. p.75 The invasion of Cambodia by Vietnamese forces reinforced centuries of political and ethnic competition spurred by nationalism.

¹⁵³⁴ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁵³⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵³⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵³⁷ Cormac, Walton, and Van PuyVelde, "What constitutes successful covert action? Evaluating unacknowledged interventionism in foreign affairs".

elements of the Khmer Rouge.¹⁵³⁸ National security planners strenuously denied the report and claimed that British Armed Forces were not involved in training Khmer Rouge cadres.¹⁵³⁹ The research conducted for this thesis revealed that British forces did train ANS forces through the UKMTAS.¹⁵⁴⁰

Military support provided by London operated under the codeword 'PRIPER'.¹⁵⁴¹ According to a policy paper, UKMTAS provided London with a platform to counter communism demonstrating that when Britain perceived the threat of communism had increased it engaged in covert action.¹⁵⁴² In Cambodia, this became the preferred tool to combat Vietnam. Officials believed the scheme benefitted British foreign policy. For example, Lord Carrington stated that 'pound for pound I can think of no other form of assistance which stands us in such good stead with countries in the third world.'¹⁵⁴³ There was a financial aspect to the UKMTAS. For example, Margaret Thatcher commented that Britain was not exporting enough military equipment overseas arguing that exporting armaments would help fund further UKMTAS missions.¹⁵⁴⁴ Thatcher was, according to Cormac, an advocate of covert action.¹⁵⁴⁵ Exposing as many foreign personnel as possible to British equipment was a priority for the MOD. This, the report argued, would lead to an increase in arms exports.¹⁵⁴⁶ This would suggest that Britain prioritised finances over its obligations to international law and norms. According to FO correspondence, however, Cambodia was not offered armaments.¹⁵⁴⁷ Alongside Cambodia, the Middle East and Caribbean were areas that could be exploited through the UKMTAS. Omand attached tables to the correspondence outlining the progress of UKMTAS including sales and training. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand all received assistance.¹⁵⁴⁸ No European states received training from the UKMTAS reinforcing the notion that hypocrisy and legitimacy costs were too high in Europe.

¹⁵³⁸ Cabinet Office, "Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings. Cambodia. CAB 128/97/12," ed. Cabinet Office (London: National Archives, 18th October 1990).

¹⁵³⁹ Ibid. The programme first aired on ITV in October 1990.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴² Records, "DEFENCE. Defence Budget; Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980; UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS); part 3."

¹⁵⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴⁵ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.214.

¹⁵⁴⁶ Records, "DEFENCE. Defence Budget; Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980; UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS); part 3."

¹⁵⁴⁷ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁵⁴⁸ Records, "DEFENCE. Defence Budget; Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980; UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS); part 3."

Military training assistance schemes were viewed as a cost-effective measure against planned defence cuts.¹⁵⁴⁹ Unlike financial aid, military training sits within one of the three broad definitions of covert action. 1980 saw a squeeze on Britain's defence budget.¹⁵⁵⁰ According to prime ministerial papers, the MOD were tasked with saving £250 million over the financial year.¹⁵⁵¹ In 1980, the UKMTAS' budget stood at £7.2 million.¹⁵⁵² Military training was a relatively inexpensive option and acted as a force multiplier. For example, a team of 58 trainers over a six-month period cost the government £750,000.¹⁵⁵³ By 1980, the UKMTAS had provided military training and equipment to 56 countries.¹⁵⁵⁴ According to correspondence between MOD officials Michael Alexander and David Omand, most service personnel had received training at British establishments. In the case of Cambodia, however, the training was provided in country.¹⁵⁵⁵ This would suggest that national security planners wished to avoid domestic and international scrutiny.

On February 8th, 1981, Prince Sihanouk offered to cooperate with the Khmer Rouge to oust the Vietnamese occupation.¹⁵⁵⁶ Under Samrin's Vietnamese-backed government, Cambodia, now known as the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), was not recognised by the UN.¹⁵⁵⁷ PRK representatives lost the Cambodian seat at the UNGA following a vote of 91 to 21 opposing its admittance.¹⁵⁵⁸ Furthermore, opposed to the creation of the PRK, was a three strong coalition formed by the Khmer Rouge, Sihanouk's National United Front and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front.¹⁵⁵⁹ The three factions formed the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) which had international recognition but a limited impact in Cambodia itself.¹⁵⁶⁰ Against Vietnamese and Soviet bloc opposition, an international conference was convened to stabilise Cambodia.¹⁵⁶¹ The International Conference of Kampuchea (ICK) was held in July 1981¹⁵⁶² with Hanoi seeking to bring stability to the border region through bi-lateral talks with Bangkok. Vietnamese officials

¹⁵⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵⁶ The Times, "Sihanouk Offer to Khmer Rouge," *The Times* February 9th 1981.

¹⁵⁵⁷ David Watts, "Vietnam Offers Plan to Ease Kampuchea Border Tension," *The Times* October 3rd 1980.

¹⁵⁵⁸ Office, "Soviet Intentions in Indo-China: Soviet Aspects of Vietnam's Invasion of Cambodia and Conflict with China. FCO 28/3875."

¹⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶¹ Watts, "Vietnam Offers Plan to Ease Kampuchea Border Tension."

¹⁵⁶² Ibid.

originally proposed a de-militarised zone along the Thai-Cambodian border.¹⁵⁶³ However, it was then proposed that in return for Thailand moving Khmer Rouge camps away from border regions, Vietnam would implement a gradual withdrawal of its soldiers from Cambodia.¹⁵⁶⁴ Hanoi was concerned that the Khmer Rouge's main supporter, Beijing, would use any withdrawal to help the faction back to power, however.¹⁵⁶⁵

Outside of international efforts, British policymakers relied on covert action throughout the mid-1980s to shape events in the country. London, alongside other western powers, was unable to pursue a policy of conventional force to dislodge the Vietnamese so began training pro-Sihanoukist rebels.¹⁵⁶⁶ An FAC report stated that 'the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia must be resisted because it threatens both the independence of Cambodia itself and the security of Thailand.'¹⁵⁶⁷ Committee reports also suggested that Britain would gain very little from a resumption of direct rule of the Khmer Rouge.¹⁵⁶⁸ Any negotiations on Cambodia in 1986 were unviable due to a lack of agreement on a framework. Britain was to support pro-Sihanouk forces in their fight against Vietnamese occupation. SAS soldiers would train Thai special forces, who in turn, would train anti-Vietnamese forces. The policy was quickly reversed due to the increasing expenditure and potential public exposure. This led British forces to directly train the forces themselves. There is little documentary evidence to suggest the SAS directly trained Khmer Rouge soldiers. According to Cormac, however, the Khmer Rouge did benefit from British training.¹⁵⁶⁹ Cormac's research contributed to our understanding of British intelligence activities in Cambodia but was limited in scope. In Cormac's defence, he never set out to provide a detailed history of Anglo-Cambodian relations nor is he a Southeast Asian expert.

London had previously used special forces in Southeast Asia to support counter-insurgency operations. In March 1985 forty-eight pro-Sihanoukist rebel soldiers began training with the SAS.¹⁵⁷⁰ Britain adopted a train the trainer approach. Between 1985-1989 ca. 250 soldiers were trained by SAS forces and infiltrated back across the border into Cambodia to fight the Vietnamese led government.¹⁵⁷¹ Thatcher's government was keen to

¹⁵⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶⁶ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁵⁶⁷ Foreign Affairs Committee, "South East Asia and Indo-China," ed. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London: House of Commons, Session 1986-1987).

¹⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶⁹ Cormac, *Disrupt and Deny*. p.242.

¹⁵⁷⁰ Ibid. p.241.

¹⁵⁷¹ Ibid. p.241

avoid any association with the Khmer Rouge, however, pro-Sihanoukist forces did pass their expertise onto communist factions leading to increased Khmer Rouge activity. Members of the Khmer Rouge had taken western hostages throughout Cambodia during the 1980s.¹⁵⁷² This highlights the potential negative effects of covert action. Moreover, it demonstrates that that Britain could control the effects of its policymaking. Further research into this could be fruitful.

Parliamentary debates in the late 1980s called on the British government to alter its policy towards Cambodia.¹⁵⁷³ Labour politician, Gerald Kaufman, likened the mass atrocities in Cambodia to the Holocaust claiming that the British government was assisting pro-Sihanoukist armies dominated by the Khmer Rouge.¹⁵⁷⁴ Kaufman, moreover, suggested that western foreign policy towards Cambodia was driven by anti-Vietnamese sentiments and that it clouded policymakers decisions.¹⁵⁷⁵ In 1986, the FAC deduced that the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia was the principal threat to regional stability.¹⁵⁷⁶ According to the FAC report, Khmer Rouge forces formed the largest component of the three resistance groups.¹⁵⁷⁷ It is plausible that those responsible for committing the genocide in Cambodia received indirect support from the British government. This also highlights the threat perception of national security planners.

By 1983, the CGDK began to fracture. London decided to support Sihanouk over the Khmer Rouge.¹⁵⁷⁸ A strong ANS, SEAD argued, would dispel the Chinese argument that the Khmer Rouge were the only force capable of retaining power in Cambodia.¹⁵⁷⁹ Discussions, moreover, were held amongst FO staff as to whether London could provide training to a bodyguard unit for Prince Sihanouk.¹⁵⁸⁰ In March 1988, the FO Finance Department explored the modalities of providing training to a bodyguard unit for Prince Sihanouk.¹⁵⁸¹ According to the documents, training costs were not expected to exceed £25,000.¹⁵⁸² Meanwhile, Sihanouk had pressed the French for increased military assistance.¹⁵⁸³ On October 25th 1988, Sihanouk met with Thatcher where he expressed his gratitude for the

¹⁵⁷² Mark Dodd, "Cambodia Army Joins Kidnap Talks," *The Times* 1994.

¹⁵⁷³ UK Parliamentary Papers, "Commons Sitting of Monday 13 November 1989," (Hansard, 1989).

¹⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷⁶ Committee, "South East Asia and Indo-China."

¹⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷⁸ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*

military training assistance London had provided his forces.¹⁵⁸⁴ Whilst staying at the Hyde Park Hotel, Sihanouk disclosed to Geoffrey Howe that the Americans were aiding the ANS.¹⁵⁸⁵ This would suggest that Britain and American were acting in concert. Howe approached members of the British press to stop the publication of Sihanouk's claims.¹⁵⁸⁶ This would allow London to maintain plausible deniability and avoid hypocrisy and legitimacy costs.

According to the 1986 FAC report, British government representatives had been approached by pro-Sihanoukist factions for enhanced military and economic aid.¹⁵⁸⁷ Citing humanitarian causes and the diminished ability to negotiate a peace settlement in the eventuality of becoming embroiled in a military campaign, London turned the pleas down.¹⁵⁸⁸ Only increased levels of humanitarian aid channelled through the United Nations Border Relief Operation (UNBRO) was considered by British policymakers.¹⁵⁸⁹ It is not possible from archival materials to ascertain whether the FAC was aware of the military assistance being afforded to rebel factions through the UKMTAS. According to a parliamentary debate, the 'pitiful' amounts of international aid channelled through NGOs was not adequate to support the swollen refugee population along the Thai-Cambodia border.¹⁵⁹⁰ Thailand, meanwhile, was harbouring anti-government factions whilst supporting ca. 230,000 refugees along its border with Cambodia. According to correspondence British officials did not approach Thai authorities over their links with the Khmer Rouge because they were also complicit in the civil war.¹⁵⁹¹ By the mid-1980s, policymakers in Washington grew concerned that Thai resolve was beginning to wane. The removal of the Vietnamese backed government of Cambodia, therefore, was vital.¹⁵⁹² This was a view shared by national security planners in Britain.

During Sihanouk's trip to Europe in 1988, the prince made similar comments whilst transiting through a Parisian Airport.¹⁵⁹³ Sihanouk claimed that British military officers were providing the ANS with artillery training.¹⁵⁹⁴ British officials warned Sihanouk that further

¹⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸⁷ Committee, "Southeast Asia."

¹⁵⁸⁸ ———, "South East Asia and Indo-China."

¹⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹⁰ UK Parliamentary Papers, "Commons Sitting of Friday 26th October 1990," in *Hansard* (20th Century House of Commons Hansard Sessional Papers, 1990).

¹⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹² Ibid.

¹⁵⁹³ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

comments would jeopardise future training missions.¹⁵⁹⁵ Furthermore, upon Sihanouk's departure, he met with ASEAN ambassadors where he joked about the military assistance that was being provided by the West and other ASEAN states. Sihanouk informed the ambassadors that he was not allowed to discuss the assistance publicly.¹⁵⁹⁶ Fortunately for British policymakers, there was little reaction in the French press about Sihanouk's comments. If Sihanouk repeated the claims, the MOD had been briefed to distance itself from him.¹⁵⁹⁷ Moreover, FO documents reveal that policymakers had prepared a defensive response if Sihanouk repeated his claims of British assistance.¹⁵⁹⁸ Interestingly, correspondence reveal that the Foreign Secretary asked the press to keep Sihanouk's accusations out of their publications.¹⁵⁹⁹ An editorial in *The Independent* suggested that during a trip to Cambodia in 1988, Margaret Thatcher expressed strong support for Sihanouk and informed reporters that Britain did not wish to see the return of the Pol Pot regime.¹⁶⁰⁰ However, whilst Thatcher was visiting, it was also reported that Khmer Rouge forces were strengthening their positions in Cambodia.¹⁶⁰¹ Although London supported Cambodian resistance movements it was not their 'practice to comment on speculation concerning the nature of our relations with the Cambodian resistance.'¹⁶⁰²

M Claude Martin, Director for Asia, and the Pacific, held meetings with his French and Australian counterparts in July 1988 to discuss the political stalemate in Cambodia.¹⁶⁰³ During the meeting Martin informed the group that he had held talks with Chinese and Thai officials. He told them that they would have to make a choice between Sihanouk and the Khmer Rouge as they could no longer work together.¹⁶⁰⁴ Yves Bertin, of the Quai D'Orsay's Asia and Pacific Directorate, informed Claude that France did not wish to arm one faction of the CGDK to fight another.¹⁶⁰⁵ Claude agreed and informed Bertin that Britain had not armed any faction in Cambodia.¹⁶⁰⁶ Francois Martin, whilst serving in the French Embassy in Bangkok, reported that Paris was exploring both covert and overt military assistance to the ANS. According to Martin, both had their advantages.¹⁶⁰⁷ FO documents reveal that Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the second son of Sihanouk, had improved the effectiveness of the

¹⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰² Ibid.

¹⁶⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

ANS.¹⁶⁰⁸ ANS strength in 1988 was estimated to be ca. 17,000 strong but the actual fighting force was probably closer to 10,000.¹⁶⁰⁹ Moreover, a well-supplied ANS would also provide the West with an opportunity to persuade Beijing to stop supplying Khmer Rouge forces.¹⁶¹⁰ In May 1980 Francis Pym, the defence secretary, discussed the use of UKMTAS to provide subsidised military equipment in an emergency.¹⁶¹¹ However, as of late July 1988, London had not provided the ANS with weaponry. If London were to assist Sihanouk further, it would be important to place him in a position to implement a settlement rather than escalate the civil war.¹⁶¹² This would also suggest London worked in unison with like-minded states.

Derek Tonkin, British Ambassador to Thailand, wrote to London in July 1988 concerning the geopolitical situation in Cambodia. Throughout July 1988, Tonkin held meetings with his Cambodian contacts including Sihanouk and Ranariddh.¹⁶¹³ According to Tonkin, the common thread from his interactions were fears that the supply lines to the ANS were insufficient.¹⁶¹⁴ Moreover, ANS soldiers had been under sustained pressure from the 'wilder' elements of the Khmer Rouge under the command of Pol Pot and Ta Mok.¹⁶¹⁵ Tonkin, therefore, was in favour of arming the ANS.¹⁶¹⁶ Tonkin believed it would assist the ANS in defeating the Vietnamese occupation and increase the ability of the ANS to defend themselves from Khmer Rouge attack arguing that if London wished a future Cambodian government to be non-aligned and neutral, it had to support non-communist factions.¹⁶¹⁷ Meanwhile Ranariddh lobbied London to support the ANS with arms. This supports the notion that national security planners perceived communism to pose the greatest threat to regional stability.

Thailand was a further concern for national security planners. British parliamentary papers suggest Bangkok struggled to control its military. According to the documents, the military often acted unilaterally undermining the national government.¹⁶¹⁸ Officials in Bangkok, moreover, were keen to clear the Thai-Cambodian border of the Khmer Rouge. The Thai military, however, deviated from the policy. For example, some officials in the Thai

¹⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹¹ Records, "DEFENCE. Defence Budget; Statement on the Defence Estimates 1980; UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS); part 3."

¹⁶¹² Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁶¹³ Ibid.

¹⁶¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶¹⁵ Ibid. The pressure led to the deaths of fourteen ANS soldiers in July 1988 alone.

¹⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶¹⁸ Papers, "Commons Sitting of Friday 26th October 1990."

military believed a strong Khmer Rouge would provide a buffer zone between Thailand and Vietnam.¹⁶¹⁹ Thep Devakul, Political Director at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with Tonkin to discuss the situation in Cambodia.¹⁶²⁰ Tonkin informed Thep that Sihanouk was instrumental in shaping the future of Cambodia. Without Sihanouk, Tonkin argued, progress would be difficult.¹⁶²¹ Thai military intervention was also inhibiting arms supplies from reaching the ANS.¹⁶²² Devakul acknowledged that Thai military were suppressing the weapons supplies. According to Devakul, the natural inclination of the Thai military was to allow the weapons to fall into the hands of the Khmer Rouge who were a more efficient fighting force.¹⁶²³ MFA policymakers struggled to control the Thai military, who Tonkin argued, had suspect motives. Thai officials understood the aversion to arming the Khmer Rouge but were sceptical about the proliferation of arms in the border areas.¹⁶²⁴ This suggests Britain had to work with regional partners to stabilise Cambodia, despite potential security implications.

Meanwhile, ASEAN states sought to establish an international peace-keeping force to disarm Cambodian factions.¹⁶²⁵ Thai foreign policy distrusted Samrin's government. Policymakers in London and Paris, therefore, sought to augment their policies and seek an understanding with Bangkok in backing non-communist resistance.¹⁶²⁶ An exclusion zone stretched as far as the Mekong, would protect the Thai against Vietnamese aggression. Tonkin suggested that London provide a small quantity of weaponry to non-communist resistance forces, especially the ANS, to ensure regional stability.¹⁶²⁷ If London demonstrated its resolve in backing Sihanouk, it would weaken the Khmer Rouge. Tonkin, moreover, spoke of the importance of restricting power to the Khmer Rouge and reaffirming Thailand's responsibility in controlling the wilder elements of the group.¹⁶²⁸

This section has demonstrated that when Britain perceived its security was threatened, it reverted to covert action. The UKMTAS was a cost-effective method of intervening in Cambodian affairs without the hypocrisy and legitimacy costs associated with Europe. By targeting Vietnam, Britain was able to counter communist expansion against one of the

¹⁶¹⁹ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²² *Ibid.*

¹⁶²³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*

Soviet Union's closest allies. There were implications to this policy, however. Elements of the Khmer Rouge benefitted from the UKMTAS and engaged in sporadic acts of violence. This raises several ramifications for international norms and international, which the next section will address.

d. **International Norms & International Law**

Summer 1975 saw the conclusion of the Helsinki Accords.¹⁶²⁹ International law conferences are designed to be authoritative. The Helsinki Conference, however, was limited to establishing European norms. Helsinki provides an opportunity to discern whether there was a pivot in British foreign policy away from covert action following the Accords. Britain's intervention in Vietnamese occupied Cambodia raises several queries around international norms and international law. These queries are predominantly around the principle of non-intervention. This section will demonstrate that security perceptions outweighed obligations to international norms and international law and that the Helsinki Accords reinforced the perception that hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe were too high whilst highlighting contradictions in Britain's foreign policy in Cambodia. Whilst Britain engaged in covert action, it used international legal mechanisms to oust the Vietnamese backed government. Despite the mass atrocities, the Khmer Rouge posed little threat to Britain's regional security as most cross-border violence occurred with Vietnam and Thailand. This activity did not concern national security planners as it did not threaten British interests. The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, however, altered Britain's threat perception and provided an opportunity to check the advances of a close Soviet ally.

Meanwhile, Britain attended the Helsinki conference. Although state behaviour is codified in most international treaties, Helsinki is important due to its limited geographic scope. In terms of zonal foreign policy, the Helsinki Accords reinforced the idea that hypocrisy and legitimacy costs in Europe were too high. Amongst the declarations of Basket One, were the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state and principle of sovereign equality.¹⁶³⁰ It is clear, however, that the UKMTAS in Cambodia was an intervention in the internal affairs of another state. Britain bound itself to principles of non-intervention with limited compliance, especially outside of Europe. Even though Helsinki

¹⁶²⁹ (OSCE), "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act."

¹⁶³⁰ Ibid.

marked a high point in Cold War relations, Britain sought to countervail communism through the UKMTAS.

Meanwhile, Britain attended two international conferences designed to stabilise Cambodia, the International Committee on Kampuchea (ICK) and the Jakarta Informal Meeting (JIM)¹⁶³¹. By mid-1988 officials in Jakarta had negotiated a series of informal meetings with Hanoi that Cambodian political factions would attend. According to Weatherbee, the aim of if the JIM was for all foreign forces to withdraw from Cambodia and for free elections to be held.¹⁶³² This would allow Cambodians to exercise the right to self-determination. The JIM would sit twice, once in July 1988 and in February 1989.¹⁶³³ Sihanouk boycotted the talks and rejected the proposed Vietnamese peace plan.¹⁶³⁴ Khmer Rouge leaders also boycotted the first meeting, slowing the peace process further.¹⁶³⁵ The second JIM failed to produce any meaningful resolution to the conflict. Consequently, the Khmer Rouge abandoned a brokered five-week ceasefire.¹⁶³⁶

Even though London supported the pluralist notion of an international community whereby states were admitted to the UN, the events following Helsinki would suggest otherwise. This would suggest that the trend of post-war pluralism began to fail. Moreover, Britain came under attack from Phnom Penh over its own record with a Cambodian report branded the British government "imperialists" who had engaged in illegal detention, massacres and resorted to perfidious measures.¹⁶³⁷ The Ministry for Foreign Affairs argued that Britain had built its fortune through "savage brute force" and not on humanitarian grounds. Therefore, according to the publication, the British could not lecture any country on human rights.¹⁶³⁸ Despite this, Britain continued to engage in covert action as hypocrisy costs were lower in Cambodia than checking the Soviets in Europe.

The UK mission to the UN stressed that although Cambodia had been subjected to mass atrocities and had raised 'grave concern at the inhumanities taking place in Cambodia' it did

¹⁶³¹ Michael Leifer, "The International Representation of Kampuchea," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1982).

¹⁶³² Weatherbee, *International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy*. p.78

¹⁶³³ Leifer, "The International Representation of Kampuchea."

¹⁶³⁴ From Our Correspondent, "Sihanouk Rejects Phnom Penh offer of new Peace Plan," *The Times* July 27th 1988.

¹⁶³⁵ From a Correspondent, "Boycott by Khmer Rouge Deals Blow to Cambodia Talks," *The Times* October 21st 1988.

¹⁶³⁶ From Our Correspondent, "Ceasefire Over," *The Times* June 7th 1991.

¹⁶³⁷ Correspondent, "'Barbarous British' told not to interfere in the affairs of Cambodia."

¹⁶³⁸ Ibid.

not excuse the Vietnamese invasion nor the violation of Cambodian sovereignty.¹⁶³⁹ In response, London suspended all aid to Vietnam until the occupation ceased, excluding humanitarian and disaster assistance.¹⁶⁴⁰ A FO report labelled the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia as reminiscent of the Blitzkrieg style attack developed by Nazi Germany.¹⁶⁴¹ Although the UN was designed to maintain international peace and security, it lacked the determination to address the issue of mass atrocities in Cambodia.

When faced with similar mass atrocities in South Africa, Britain raised its concerns at the UNSC. Luard, however, suggested that a similar move was not acceptable in the case of Cambodia.¹⁶⁴² Luard implied that the policy pursued by the South African government alongside its increasing armaments posed a threat to international law and security, whereas the atrocities in Cambodia, did not. Moreover, South Africa was a former British colony and national security planners were unable to engage in covert action. The plight of the Cambodians did not threaten international stability and consequently did not receive the scrutiny it deserved.¹⁶⁴³ The Vietnamese invasion did, however. As Cambodia emerged from the Vietnamese occupation it transitioned to UN control under the Transitional Authority in Cambodia which held elections and attempted to normalise Cambodian society. By 1987, dialogue over Cambodia's future had begun between Hun Sen and Sihanouk.¹⁶⁴⁴ Hostilities were officially ended in October 1991 following the Paris International Conference on Cambodia.¹⁶⁴⁵ This section had demonstrated that British perceptions of national security outweighed its obligations to international norms and law. Helsinki reinforced the idea that Europe was effectively out of bounds for covert action. Cambodia, therefore, provided an opportunity for Britain to dent Soviet prestige in Southeast Asia.

e. Conclusion

This chapter had two aims. Firstly, to demonstrate that the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia provided Britain with an opportunity to counter the Soviet Union with reduced hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. This was, in part, due to the reinforcement of high costs by

¹⁶³⁹ Office, "Soviet Intentions in Indo-China: Soviet Aspects of Vietnam's Invasion of Cambodia and Conflict with China. FCO 28/3875."

¹⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴² Hansards Parliamentary Papers, "Cambodia," ed. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (London: Hansards Twentieth Century Parliamentary Papers, 17th December 1977).

¹⁶⁴³ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁶⁴⁴ From Our Correspondent, "Concessions in Indochina," *The Times* December 7th 1987.

¹⁶⁴⁵ Weatherbee, *International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy*. p.97

the Final Act. The chapter also demonstrated that Britain did not pivot away from covert action despite signing the Helsinki Accords. National security planners in London viewed Helsinki and CSCE as a pan-European phenomenon. No European state was in receipt of UKMTAS training, reinforcing the point further. The second aim of the chapter was to demonstrate that international law did not induce a pivot in British foreign policy away from covert action. Britain used covert action to achieve its policy goals in Cambodia. As with zonal foreign policy in pre-genocidal Cambodia, national security planners attached greater importance to security perception than international law or norms. British foreign policy pivoted to soft power when the perceived risk of communist expansion into AATs was negated. For example, even though the Khmer Rouge were a communist force, their foreign policy did not threaten a former British colony.

Previous research on covert action focused on the role of special forces who trained ANS soldiers through the UKMATS, under the codename PRIPER. This chapter built on the research by incorporating zonal foreign policy. Following the success of the Helsinki Accords in 1975, Britain engaged in covert action in Cambodia. Although the Accords did not hold treaty status, it codified how states should interact and had universal characteristics. London's actions, therefore, contravened its obligations to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of another state. In the context of international relations, it is evident that non-European States were not afforded the rights as their Western counterparts. It is evident that although the Helsinki Accords were primarily intended for European peace and security, Britain's perceived its actions in Cambodia as legal. Moreover, London did not want non-aligned states to intervene in the PrepCom meetings.¹⁶⁴⁶ In the context of zonal foreign policy, this demonstrates that states outside of Europe were not considered part of the negotiations.

This would suggest that London used international law to mask its covert activities. Meanwhile, London was using covert action to train the ANS.¹⁶⁴⁷ This allowed London to espouse the virtues of its charitable nature whilst engaging in military training. At the same time Paris and Washington considered overt and covert measures in Cambodia.¹⁶⁴⁸ According to FO reports, it would require trivial amounts of effort to reorganise the Thai counter subversion unit.¹⁶⁴⁹ If London could help reorganise the unit, it would allow Bangkok

¹⁶⁴⁶ Office, "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Proposal for a Magazine. FCO 26/966."

¹⁶⁴⁷ _____, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴⁹ Ibid.

to counter communism in Cambodia and within its borders.¹⁶⁵⁰ Moreover, London sought to insert a civilian adviser to the Thai government's Communist Suppression Operations Command.¹⁶⁵¹ This is a further example of British intervention in an emerging democracy. British policymakers perceived the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia as an attempt to establish communist hegemony in the region.¹⁶⁵² This provided Britain with an opportunity to check communism and counter one of the Soviet Union's closest allies, without the associated hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. Although London trained pro-Sihanouk forces, it did not provide armaments through the UKMTAS. This point was clarified during multilateral talks between Britain, France, and Australia.¹⁶⁵³ The axiom that London was focused on the removal of the Vietnamese occupation over human rights abuses in Cambodia is challenged by the research. Indeed, Britain provided training to pro Sihanouk forces, aiding the Khmer Rouge, whilst attending international conferences designed to stabilise Cambodia.¹⁶⁵⁴

Documents from the National Archives, however, suggest otherwise. The research establishes that national security planners in London brought the issue of human rights abuses to the UNHRC.¹⁶⁵⁵ The research suggests that the British government had a firm grasp on the events that unfolded in Cambodia but did not act because the prevailing attitude in international law that a State should interfere in the internal affairs of another State. By the mid 1980s, however, Britain had engaged in military training in Cambodia despite contravening international law. Although it is difficult to assess the true impact of covert action on Cambodian internal affairs it can be argued that British foreign policy had a deleterious effect on society as loyal government troops who may have received, or benefitted, from British military training used their expertise against civilians and their property.¹⁶⁵⁶

Britain was instrumental in its aid efforts. For example, £750,000 per annum was donated by Britain to aid Cambodian refugees who found sanctuary in Thailand.¹⁶⁵⁷ Although London provided humanitarian assistance, it engaged in covert action in Cambodia in the 1980s despite signing the Helsinki Accords. Moreover, whilst engaged in covert operations in Cambodia, Britain sent delegates to the Jakarta Informal Meeting and International Committee on Kampuchea. Both conferences were designed to bring peace and stability to

¹⁶⁵⁰ ———, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵² ———, "Conclusions of Cabinet Meetings (1-26). CAB 128/66/24."

¹⁶⁵³ ———, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁶⁵⁴ Watts, "Vietnam Offers Plan to Ease Kampuchea Border Tension."

¹⁶⁵⁵ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁶⁵⁶ Neil Kelly, "Cambodians Flee as Troops Rampage Through Port," *The Times* February 9th 1990.

¹⁶⁵⁷ Office, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

Cambodia. IRD officials approached Cambodians who were interested in using IRD material on China and wider Asian analysis. Meanwhile, London used the platform of the UN to denounce Chinese interference in Cambodian affairs whilst engaging in covert operations inside Cambodia. British diplomats at the UN denounced Beijing for meddling in the internal affairs of Cambodia despite the presence of the IRD, BBC and British Council.¹⁶⁵⁸ Moreover, Britain interfered in Cambodian affairs during the Vietnamese Occupation through military training.¹⁶⁵⁹ The UN invested ca. three billion dollars into Cambodia to build a democratic infrastructure. London, for example, had donated £200,000 to the Khmer Exchange Stabilisation Fund.¹⁶⁶⁰ However, Hun Sen made a mockery of the system and retained power through voter intimidation and vote buying.¹⁶⁶¹ This concludes the case studies of British covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia. The following chapter concludes the thesis.

¹⁶⁵⁸ Strafford, "China Fails to have Lon Nol Regime in Cambodia Expelled From UN Assembly."

¹⁶⁵⁹ Office, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁶⁶⁰ _____, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹⁶⁶¹ Scott Luftglass, "Crossroads in Cambodia: The United Nation's Responsibility to Withdraw from the Establishment of a Cambodian Tribunal to Prosecute the Khmer Rouge," *Virginia Law Review* Volume 90(May 2004). p.942.

Chapter VIII

Conclusion

a. Contribution to Theory & Practice

This chapter will outline the contribution the thesis has made to historical theory and practice. Based upon a combination of archival research, historiography, and analysis of democratic peace theory (DPT), specifically selectorate theory, the thesis has demonstrated that DPT does not provide a rationale for British foreign policy in the context of Indonesia or Cambodia between 1965-1985. Four research questions were posed in the introduction –

- Why did Britain support more authoritarian leaders over their democratically elected counterparts?
- Did national security planners consider international law or democratic norms as a barrier to covert action and did the principle of non-intervention apply?
- What was the role of the Information Research Department in shaping developments in Indonesia and Cambodia?

The thesis has answered the research questions outlined in the introduction through an exposition of archival research and secondary readings. Britain offers a unique case study enabling the thesis to provide a nuanced approach to the study of covert action and its relationship with DPT. Democratic peace theorists argue that democratic norms would prevent Britain from engaging in covert action against either state. However, the thesis has demonstrated that Britain engaged in covert action against two elected governments in Cold War Southeast Asia contravening international law and democratic norms. The thesis highlighted an area of under researched history, namely how Britain shaped developments in countries it did not colonise, termed here as Anglophile Adjacent Territories (AATs), through covert action and soft power. The research introduced the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy as a model for British foreign policy in Indonesia and Cambodia. Zonal foreign policy contributes to our understanding of British foreign policy and its relationship with intelligence activities in the non-European context.

The thesis contributed to our understanding of British foreign policy, intelligence, and international law through two case studies of covert action in Southeast Asia. One of the principal contributions concerned how Britain supported authoritarian leaders over their democratically elected counterparts if they espoused anti-communist rhetoric. This support is demonstrated by Britain's pivot to soft power and reduction in covert action when the authoritarian leader assumes power. This suggests that DPT does not provide a rationale for British foreign policy during the Cold War. Alongside the research, the thesis introduced the concept of zonal foreign policy. Retaining close connections with former colonies was a priority for national security planners. This was especially true in countries that were perceived to be geopolitically important. Zonal foreign policy is linked to hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. Arguably Britain's national security planners were particularly sensitive to high hypocrisy and legitimacy costs due its colonial past. These costs were perceived to be too high to use covert action in Europe. Moreover, Britain had prohibited covert action in its colonies adding a further layer of complexity.¹⁶⁶² International law conferences such as the Helsinki Accords reinforced this perception further. Zonal foreign policy suggests that AATs gained temporary importance when national security planners perceived there to be communist threat. Once that threat had been negated, Britain pivoted towards soft power. National security planners supported Suharto and Lon Nol despite exhibiting autocratic behaviour. This suggests the DPT does not provide a framework for British foreign policy. A further area of research would be to deduce whether British practices altered in different regions of the world or if the hypothesis is transferrable for another great power, for example France, which shared a similar decolonisation process and engaged in covert action.

The research demonstrated that despite being obligated by international law, specifically the principle of non-intervention, Britain continued to interfere in Indonesia and Cambodia when it perceived its national security was threatened by communism. Perceptions of security, therefore, underpinned British foreign policy rather than democratic norms or international law. Although Indonesia and Cambodia experienced regime change in the Cold War, it is important to note that the thesis does not suggest Britain was responsible for regime change in either state. Nor did the thesis assess the "success" of covert action. Myriad considerations, including local factor and non-state actors may have had a profound effect on the outcomes. Britain, however, was found to be complicit by the International People's Tribunal to be complicit in intervening in Indonesia¹⁶⁶³ demonstrating its complicity in destabilising Indonesia. That Britain was complicit in destabilising both states is clear. This

¹⁶⁶² Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

¹⁶⁶³ Klinken, "Genocide Finally Enters Public Discourse: The International People's Tribunal 1965."

viewpoint, supported by academics such as Paul Lashmar¹⁶⁶⁴, suggests Britain has to reconcile with its past colonial endeavours. Research presented in this thesis has dealt with the morality of IRD operations and their consequences. It is up to future historians to hold the security services to account for their actions.

A secondary finding of the research concerns Britain's role in world affairs since decolonisation. An Information Research Department (IRD) document inferred that Britain had been confronting communism in each geographic region throughout the 1960s.¹⁶⁶⁵ Although the pace and scope of covert action may have dissipated throughout the 1970s, the IRD believed Britain would continue to shape events in countries in the global south.¹⁶⁶⁶ Britain's actions in Cambodia during the 1980s supports this argument countering the orthodox notion that Britain forfeited its global ambitions during the 1960s. Further research based upon this IRD material could bolster revisionist accounts of British foreign policy.

Mass atrocities in Indonesia and Cambodia provide a lens through which the historian can discern how national security planners engaged in intelligence activities in AATs. Both mass atrocities shared a geographic and temporal scope. Moreover, in both states, national security planners perceived that communism posed a direct threat to its former colonies. DPT argues that democratic states are less likely to engage in covert action against each other. Britain's use of covert action in Indonesia and Cambodia demonstrated that London was willing to contravene democratic norms and international law. The research has demonstrated that national security planners believed the Helsinki Accords and CSCE were a pan-European mechanism designed reduce cultural and political barriers in Europe. This did not reinforce cultural and democratic norms outside of Europe, however. This is evidenced through Britain's foreign policy in Cambodia throughout the 1980s. The research also suggests that Britain pursued an anti-pluralist international system despite espousing the values of political pluralism in CSCE memorandums.¹⁶⁶⁷

This thesis has been privy to archival material previously unseen by historians adding to the collective weight of intelligence history. Methodological issues concerning the availability of Secret Intelligence Service and IRD materials has been a persistent feature of the research, however. Multiple Freedom of Information (FOI) requests were sent to the Foreign

¹⁶⁶⁴ Lashmar, Gilby, and Oliver, "Slaughter in Indonesia: Britain's secret propaganda war."

¹⁶⁶⁵ Department, "Future of the Information Research Department. FCO 79/183.."

¹⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶⁷ Office, "Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE): Proposals regarding the rule of law. FCO 28/10225."

Office and National Archives. Although achieving some success, there were archival materials not disclosed by the government. One prime ministerial paper from 1979, for example, remained closed under section 27 (2) of the 2000 FOI Act as the information held within the document was from another state. A further methodological issue concerned the plausibility of the intelligence operations outlined in the archival material. For example, it is not known whether the planned dissemination of propaganda from a Royal Navy submarine occurred as the archival trail ran cold. It is possible, however, to understand British foreign policy through these papers, as it often exposes national security planner's machinations. Even if IRD operations did not materialise, it is possible to deduce that Britain was attempting to undermine security in AATs and neutralise any communist threat. What follows is a thematic conclusion highlighting intelligence operations which Britain undertook in Indonesia and Cambodia and the original contribution to knowledge.

b. Evidence of Zonal Foreign Policy in Indonesia

Indonesia provided the first example of zonal foreign policy in an emerging democratic state. Indonesia was perceived by British intelligence as susceptible to communism as early as 1948 when Soviet literature became readily available throughout the country.¹⁶⁶⁸ Britain perceived Indonesia as a potential hot bed of communist activity, especially with the growing influence of the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI). To stymie communist gains across Indonesia and to end the *Konfrontasi*, British intelligence engaged in covert action. Countering Indonesian subversion in Malaysia was a fundamental policy of the British intelligence apparatus.¹⁶⁶⁹ Removing Malaysia as a catalyst for PKI and TNI cohesion, therefore, was paramount. Once the *Konfrontasi* was resolved, British intelligence could begin a propaganda campaign against the PKI and exploit divisions between the two organisations. This supports the notion of zonal foreign policy whereby a state gains temporary importance when there is a perceived security threat.

Propaganda produced by the IRD, through Indonesian translators, began to target the intellectual elite and those who resided outside of Java to question the effect of the 'confrontation' on Indonesia's international status and economic development.¹⁶⁷⁰ National security planners argued that contrasting the lifestyle of those in the free world against those in communist countries would sow further division. Moreover, British plans included the

¹⁶⁶⁸ _____, "Communist Propaganda in Indonesia. Code 962 PFE 1208. FO 953/335."

¹⁶⁶⁹ _____, "Counter Subversion Fund: Malaysia; Police Training Programme. FCO 95/465."

¹⁶⁷⁰ _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

dissemination of black propaganda to exploit internal embarrassments.¹⁶⁷¹ By December 1965, IRD files indicate that black propaganda had been used against Jakarta alongside personal attacks on Sukarno, Subandrio and Suharto.¹⁶⁷² All three politicians were perceived by national security planners to pose a risk to British interests. Countering communist expansion was central to intelligence operations in Indonesia.

The retention of close connections with former colonies was a pillar of Britain's Cold War policy. For example, Malaysia was classed as a Category I country which Britain perceived as vital to its interests in Southeast Asia.¹⁶⁷³ Communist advances in Indonesia threatened Malaysian security. To add a further layer of complexity, as a former colony Britain was unable to use covert action in Malaysia. National security planners, therefore, responded by engaging in covert action in Indonesia. For example, Ed Wynne and the South East Asia Monitoring Unit (SEAMU) were instrumental in disseminating propaganda throughout Indonesia. SEAMU was responsible for several initiatives targeting Sukarno the PKI including the publication *Kenjataan*.¹⁶⁷⁴ The role of the publication was to highlight corruption and scandal within the government.¹⁶⁷⁵ Copies of the publication were distributed to eleven SIS stations in the region and infiltrated back into Indonesia to maintain the appearance that the paper was written by expatriates. This demonstrates Britain's interference in the internal affairs of an AAT to protect its interests.

The 1965 coup provided SIS and the IRD with further opportunities to exploit perceived weaknesses in Indonesian politics. For example, the IRD discussed the use of submarines and long-range transmitters to disseminate propaganda throughout coastal areas of Indonesia.¹⁶⁷⁶ One successful operation involved a radio broadcast designed to decrease the morale of Indonesian insurgents.¹⁶⁷⁷ According to the IRD, insurgents listened to Malaysian radio stations began to question the policy of confrontation. Captured Indonesian soldiers were encouraged to read out pre-scripted material denouncing Sukarno's policies.¹⁶⁷⁸ This proved to be one of the more successful intelligence operations in Indonesia with tangible results. Further propaganda campaigns targeted Indonesian soldiers fighting in Malaysia. IRD publications reported on conditions facing Indonesian soldiers and

¹⁶⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷² Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

¹⁶⁷³ Committee, "Counter Subversion. DEFE 11/371.."

¹⁶⁷⁴ Office, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

¹⁶⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷⁶ _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1642."

¹⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.

their families at home.¹⁶⁷⁹ For example, one extract reported that the partners of serving personnel were forced into prostitution to afford food.¹⁶⁸⁰ Operation Scrabble was a further attempt by the IRD to plant propaganda into a *Perwarta-Surabaya*¹⁶⁸¹ allowing the IRD to subvert Indonesian personnel and damage the Jakarta's confrontation with Malaysia. Undermining Indonesian morale was paramount for London. For example, Andrew Gilchrist, alongside the IRD, incited violence against Indonesian army officers whilst offering them protection.¹⁶⁸² This allowed British diplomats to maintain plausible deniability and violate international law.

According to an IRD report, throughout the 1960s, corruption plagued Sukarno's government.¹⁶⁸³ The IRD also exploited national scandal and embarrassments throughout Indonesia. For example, in 1965 a worker at a minting factory stole a series of banknotes.¹⁶⁸⁴ Officials in Jakarta attempted to cover up the story fearing the saga would be perceived as a sign of ineptitude. British intelligence services were quick to exploit the episode, however. IRD propaganda suggested that subversive elements in society were behind the disappearance of the bank notes.¹⁶⁸⁵ Meanwhile, the IRD disseminated easy to decrypt messages in Malaysian radio shows to confuse the Indonesian intelligence services. IRD officers also exploited Jakarta's derisory response to a volcanic eruption which had caused widespread damage in Bali.¹⁶⁸⁶ A mixture of corruption and lack of resources plagued rescue efforts. The IRD sought to exploit this through propaganda campaigns targeting the local population to sow dissent.¹⁶⁸⁷

Meanwhile, individuals became the target of covert action. For example, Subandrio was a target of a concerted British propaganda campaign through the 'voice from the well'.¹⁶⁸⁸ Subandrio was sentenced to death by an Indonesian court in October 1966 for his role in the coup.¹⁶⁸⁹ Despite the intelligence community's vilification of Subandrio, his life was spared

¹⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸⁰ _____, "Propaganda Warfare Against Indonesia. FO 1101/4.."

¹⁶⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸² _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

¹⁶⁸³ Department, "Indonesia - FCO 168 1148."

¹⁶⁸⁴ Office, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1645."

¹⁶⁸⁵ _____, "Malaysia: IRD Output, BBC Coverage, Threat to Malaysia Borneo Territories, Psychological and Information Operations and Indonesian Publication 'The Problem of Malaysia'. FO 1110/1693."

¹⁶⁸⁶ _____, "Propaganda Against General Nasution of Indonesia. FO 1101/8.."

¹⁶⁸⁷ _____, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; Propaganda. FCO 168/1642."

¹⁶⁸⁸ Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

¹⁶⁸⁹ Correspondent, "Death Sentence on Dr Subandrio."

thanks to a personal request from Queen Elizabeth.¹⁶⁹⁰ This exposes the historian to several juxtapositions in British foreign policy supporting the notion that once the perceived threat of communism had subsided, it used soft power to influence events abroad.¹⁶⁹¹ National security planners did not limit the scope of intelligence operations to the leaders of Indonesia. For example, Subandrio's spouse became a target of British intelligence following a personal attack on a British diplomat in the Indonesian press.¹⁶⁹² British intelligence, therefore, did not limit their remit. Security was paramount.

This thesis has contributed to our understanding an area of undeveloped research, namely the Tehran Conference. Previous research into international law had not accounted for the norms established at the conference. The findings of the research suggest the conference had little influence British foreign policy. Covert action provided London with an opportunity to pursue its aims of containing communism in Indonesia, securing the independence of Malaysia, and supporting its international partners whilst maintaining the perception it abided by democratic norms and international law. Britain's support of Suharto suggests that democratic decay was not a consideration for national security planners. Security, therefore, underpinned Britain's foreign policy and was not constrained by democratic norms in AATs. Moreover, covert action was used to provide a platform for soft power opportunities. A pivot towards soft power once an authoritarian leader established power diminishes the role of DPT.

c. Evidence of Zonal Foreign Policy in Cambodia

Cambodia provided the second case study of zonal foreign policy in an emerging democracy. Following an examination of secondary materials, a lacuna in our understanding of British covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia was discovered. This thesis provided new insights into intelligence activities of the IRD and SIS in Cambodia. Moreover, research on Sihanouk was underdeveloped. Cambodia underwent a democratic shift under Sihanouk during the 1950s as he attempted to assimilate with the western world.¹⁶⁹³ These attempts to democratise did not stop British intelligence activities, however. Covert action in Cambodia

¹⁶⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹¹ For further research on the relationship between the Royal Family and the intelligence community *vide* Richard J. Aldrich and Rory Cormac, *The Secret Royals: Spying and the Crown. from Victoria to Diana*, First Edition ed. (Ormond House, London: Atlantic Books Ltd., 2021).

¹⁶⁹² Department, "Information Research Department: Indonesia; 'Voice from the Well', Propaganda Tapes. FCO 168/1673."

¹⁶⁹³ Correspondent, "Cambodia Elections in September."

was far more ambiguous than Indonesia. IRD reports from 1968 suggest Cambodia was a peaceful country but susceptible to communism.¹⁶⁹⁴ To negate communist influence Britain engaged in covert action. Drawing comparisons with Indonesia, Cambodia assumed temporary importance whilst national security planners targeted security threats. Sihanouk, for example, used articles from favourable publicists to promote Cambodia globally and was known to be sensitive about how Cambodia was portrayed in foreign press outlets.¹⁶⁹⁵ IRD material revealed that Sihanouk was particularly susceptible to attacks on Cambodia's relatively small size and poor economic performance in the press - something the IRD sought to exploit.¹⁶⁹⁶

A lack of secondary material on covert action in pre-revolutionary Cambodia posed a methodological issue. To atone for this several FOI requests were made to the National Archives for material relating to Cambodia with some success. This included a paper by an IRD contact Dick Noone.¹⁶⁹⁷ Noone's paper revealed the main source of income for Cambodian hill tribes and outlined how they were often reliant on the opium trade to finance their livelihoods.¹⁶⁹⁸ Furthermore, most hill tribes had little or no contact with central government¹⁶⁹⁹ allowing communist forces to subvert the tribes. This was compounded by the Second Indochina War which spilled across the borders into Cambodia. Hill tribes, especially in Eastern Cambodia, provided the Khmer Rouge with personnel to attack government forces throughout the early 1970s. Developments in Cambodia did not pose a threat to former colonies, however. As events in Vietnam and Northern Ireland shifted British priorities, national security planners pivoted towards soft power.

Although Cambodia did not pose a great risk to British security, the IRD routinely visited the country. For example, Mr Ashworth visited Cambodia in 1968.¹⁷⁰⁰ Whilst in Cambodia, Ashworth held meetings with Tep Chhieu Kheng, the minister for information and editor of *Depêche du Cambodge* and Vann Vikramuditt, the editor of the *Agence Khmer Presse*, the official government news agency.¹⁷⁰¹ Following Ashworth's meetings with Tep Chhieu Kheng

¹⁶⁹⁴ Office, "Indonesia: Visit of Stanley Budd, IRD Kuala Lumpur, and Miscellaneous Information Requests. FCO 95/146."

¹⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹⁷ _____, "Information Research Department: 'Countering Communist Subversion of Backward Ethnic Minorities in South East Asia', paper by Captain Dick Noone, Anthropologist and Adviser on Aborigines in Malaya (Malaysia). FCO 168/608."

¹⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰⁰ _____, "Visits by Mr Ashworth, IRD Hong Kong, to Burma and Cambodia, 2-9 October 1968. FCO 95/447."

¹⁷⁰¹ Ibid.

it was decided that IRD material would be shared with the Cambodian government, specifically Kheng and Sihanouk.¹⁷⁰² This demonstrates that Britain attempted to shape events in pre-revolutionary Cambodia despite a shift towards democracy.

When Lon Nol succeeded Sihanouk national security planners pivoted to soft power. For example, Britain was a leading aid donor to Cambodian refugees.¹⁷⁰³ By 1977, £750,000 p.a. was provided to Cambodian refugees.¹⁷⁰⁴ Charitable efforts were not limited to central government, however. For example, Blue Peter also raised money for Cambodian refugees.¹⁷⁰⁵ The BBC formed an essential component in Britain's soft power arsenal throughout Southeast Asia. Similarly, to Indonesia, the BBC was used to spread influence throughout Cambodia. For example, a dedicated BBC Khmer Service was proposed in 1972 by the IRD.¹⁷⁰⁶ It was believed the service would provide the IRD with direct access to Cambodians who were susceptible to communism. Although the plan was scrapped due to budget constraints¹⁷⁰⁷, it is evident that national security planners used soft power to influence events in Cambodia. This pivot to soft power, despite Lon Nol's autocratic leadership, suggests that there are limitations in DPT.

The thesis demonstrated that covert action extended into Vietnamese occupied Cambodia. Drawing similarities with other examples of zonal foreign policy, Cambodia assumed temporary importance during the mid-1980s when Vietnam invaded. Hanoi's occupation of Cambodia provided Britain with an opportunity to contain communist advances without the associated costs of confronting communism in Europe. Although Sihanouk was not trusted, it was perceived his forces provided the best possible chance of undermining the Vietnamese occupation.¹⁷⁰⁸ Military training was provided through the United Kingdom Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS)¹⁷⁰⁹ providing an effective tool for national security planners. It provided Britain with a platform to counter communism in Southeast Asia without the hypocrisy and legitimacy costs. Britain's mistrust of Sihanouk was well placed. For example, whilst touring Europe, Sihanouk made comments to journalists whilst transiting through a Parisian airport regarding the military training his forces were receiving from Britain.¹⁷¹⁰ British diplomats scrambled to negate the potential inflammatory response in

¹⁷⁰² Ibid.

¹⁷⁰³ ———, "Atrocities by Khmer Rouge in Democratic Kampuchea. FCO 15/2229."

¹⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰⁵ Shore, "Cambodia."

¹⁷⁰⁶ Office, "Proposal for a BBC Service in Khmer Republic. FCO 15/1565."

¹⁷⁰⁷ Ibid. A daily thirty-minute service to Cambodia would cost ca. £175,000 p.a.

¹⁷⁰⁸ ———, "Cambodia: UK Military Training Assistance Scheme (UKMTAS). FCO 15/5289."

¹⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷¹⁰ Ibid. France and the US also supported his forces.

the press.¹⁷¹¹ This would suggest national security planners were concerned by legitimacy costs posed by Sihanouk's claims. One of the more controversial aspects of the military training concerned the Khmer Rouge. Although London maintained the military training did not extend to Khmer Rouge forces, they inevitably benefitted due to the incestuous nature of the resistance movements. This presents a further layer of complexity and a potential avenue of inquiry.

Although regional security in Southeast Asia has stabilised since the Cold War, it still faces many challenges. As Britain "tilted" its foreign policy toward the Indo-Pacific in the 2021 integrated review¹⁷¹² it has found itself in a familiar position of countering a communist state whilst attempting to safeguard regional allies. As Britain continues to compete for influence in the post-Brexit world, covert action will remain a potent tool in its arsenal. In an increasingly polarised world Britain will be forced to adapt to threats from cyber security to confronting nefarious state and non-state actors whilst operating in the so-called "grey zone". The international community, therefore, will require new laws to protect the rules-based international system. How far international law and democratic norms can shape future foreign policy is yet to be determined, however.

¹⁷¹¹ Ibid.

¹⁷¹² Government, "Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy."

Agenda & Further Research

This has been an enjoyable project that has provided an opportunity to view archival papers previously unseen by historians. It is hoped this will provide a spring board into future research into British intelligence, zonal foreign policy, and international law. As stated in the conclusion, further areas of research include using the hypothesis of zonal foreign policy as a template for British foreign policy in other regions of the world including Africa and the Middle East. This could also be widened to include French and American case studies. France provides a similar case study as a former colonial power attempting to maintain power in its former colonies in Africa and the Far East. Researching post-war France presents further layers of complexity and it strove to repair its reputation following the collaboration of Vichy France. America provides a nuanced case study to zonal foreign policy as it was an emerging super power engaged in conflict with the Soviet Union for global supremacy. American intelligence was also involved in high-profile attempts at regime change in Central and South America. Does DPT, therefore, provide a rationale for American foreign policy? Moreover, without the imperial hangover, did zonal foreign policy provide a strategic tool for Washington?

Further areas of interest would be a comparative study of British actions in Indonesia and American intervention in Vietnam. Where Washington was unsuccessful in its campaign, Britain managed to avoid a conventional conflict with Indonesia. This comparison could be fruitful. Other research interests include publishing journal articles based around diplomatic histories of Britain's foreign policy. The objective is to become an expert in the field. This process has already begun with a paper on British zonal foreign policy in the Global South and collaborating with other academics in the faculty on British intelligence activities in Northern Ireland during The Troubles.

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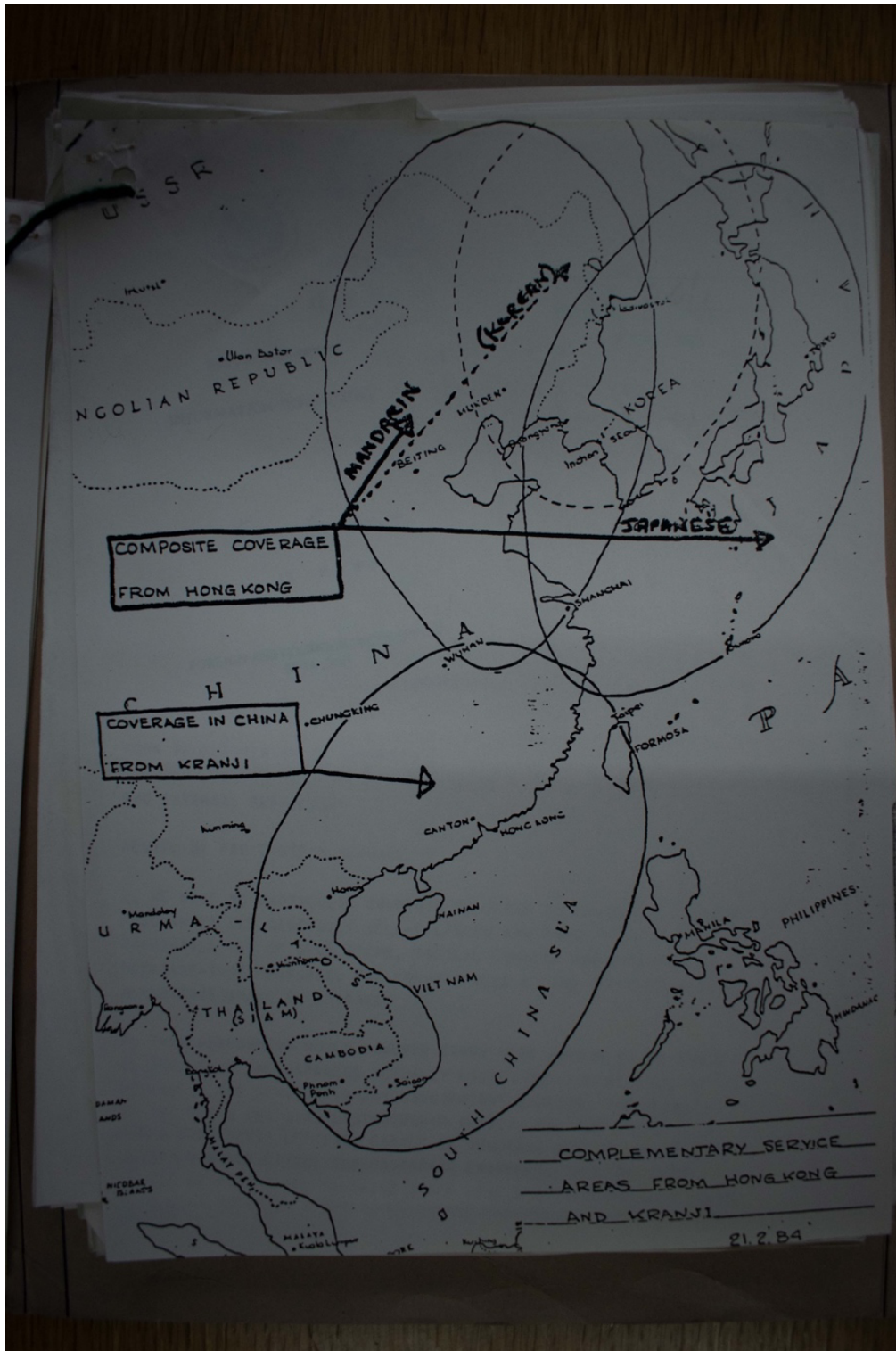
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[Appendix 1] BBC Coverage Provided to Southeast Asia from its relay station in Hong Kong.¹⁷¹³



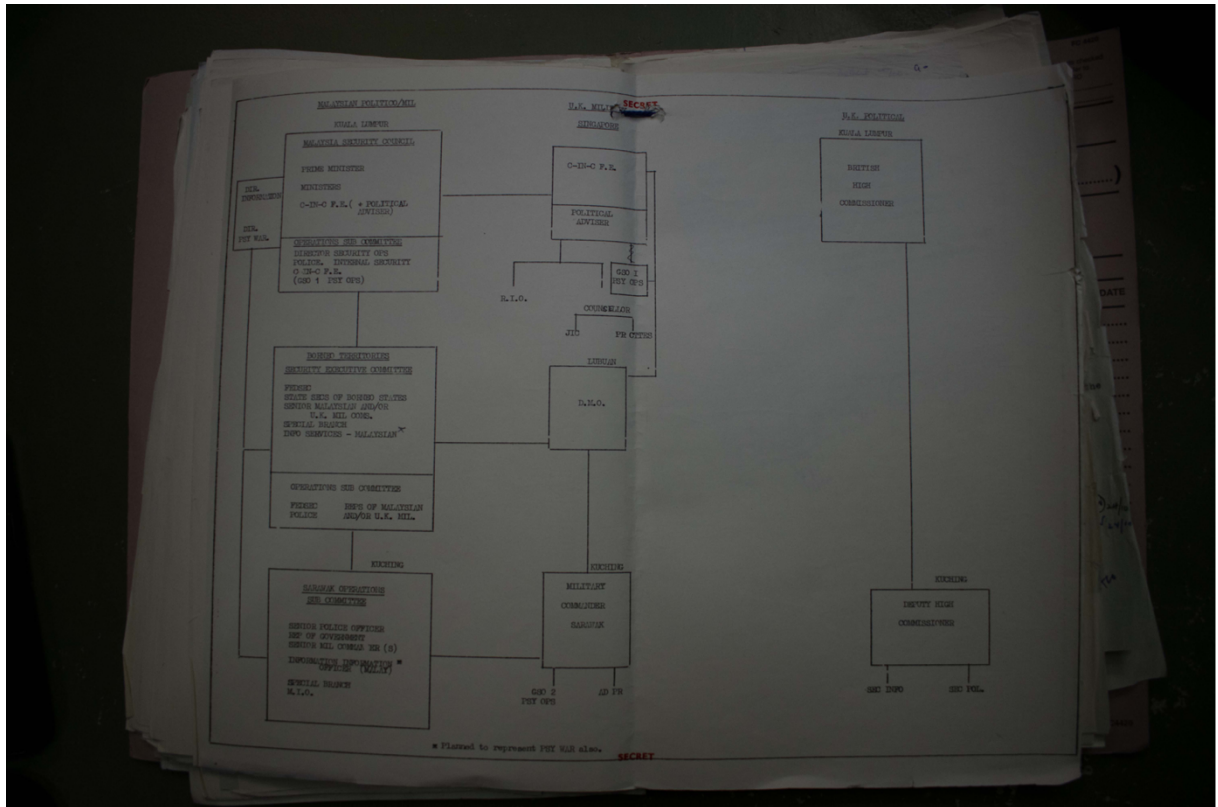
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[Appendix 2] - Photo of Cambodia (Democratic Kampuchea)¹⁷¹⁴



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[Appendix 3] – Outline of Chain of Command in Malaysia¹⁷¹⁵



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