

The background of the cover is a light yellow-green gradient. It is decorated with several stylized, light green leaf motifs that appear to be floating or falling from the top left towards the bottom right. These motifs are scattered across the entire cover, with some appearing near the top and others near the bottom.

# DEATH WAITS IN THE “DARK”

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**The Senoi Praaq, Malaysia’s Killer Elite**

**Roy Davis Linville Jumper**

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# Death Waits in the “Dark”

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## The Senoi Praaq, Malaysia’s Killer Elite

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Roy Davis Linville Jumper

Foreword by Charles H. Ley

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# Abbreviations

AAP	Aboriginal Auxiliary Police.
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam. The army built up by the United States in South Vietnam.
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations.
BBS	Borneo Border Scouts. A primitive collection of indigenous troops, mostly Dayaks from Sarawak, taken over from John P. Cross and developed by R.O.D. Noone into a clone of the Senoi Praaq.
BN	Barisan Nasional. The ruling coalition group comprised of UMNO, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC).
BOA	Bamboo Operations Area. That part of Malaya/Malaysia under DOA control.
BOC	Bamboo Operations Committee.
BRIAM	The British Advisory Mission to the Government of South Vietnam. Headed by Sir Robert G. W. Thompson, 1961-1965.
CCO	Clandestine Communist Organization. Active on Borneo during the Indonesian Confrontation. Sometimes called the Communist Terrorist Organization (CTO). Not to be confused with the peninsular communists (MCP).

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (United States).
CID	Criminal Investigations Division (Malaysia).
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group. The successor to and amalgamation of a half-dozen or so paramilitary type operations in South Vietnam.
COMINT	United States Communications Intelligence.
CONUS	Continental United States. U.S. military vernacular for the United States land mass between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.
CPMAL	Communist Party of Malaysia. The revamped MCP that remained a thorn in GOM's side well into the 1980s.
CRW	Communist Revolutionary Warfare. An acronym employed by the British to differentiate communist sponsored trouble from garden variety disturbances and/or the usual bush wars.
CTs	Communist Terrorists. Coined during the Malayan Emergency as a term of reference for communist combatants inclusive of Min Yuen members.
DOA	Department of Aborigines and parent organization to the Senoi Praaq. Established in 1950 and first led by P.D.R. Williams-Hunt. However, R.O.D. Noone presided over its critical expansionary phase and created the Senoi Praaq.
DRVN	Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam).
FARELF	Far East Land Forces (Great Britain).
FULRO	United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Peoples. A Montagnard based political organization active in South Vietnam's central highlands.
GOC	General Officer Commanding (in British Army terms).
GOE	Government of Egypt. Similar abbreviations are used by United States Department of State personnel to refer to most world governments.

GOF	General Operations Force. The new designation put in place by GOM for the PFF. Its motto, "Speed, Efficiency and Courtesy," was chosen for public relations purposes to demonstrate that the RMP is a people-friendly organization. This catchy sounding little phrase when translated into Bahasa sounds much less ominous than some variation of a "Death Before Dishonor" type slogan.
GOI	Government of Indonesia.
GOM	Government of Malaysia. Malaysia gained her independence from Great Britain in 1957 and has a Westminster Parliamentary style of government. GOM is led by His Excellency, the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamed and the United Malay National Organization (UMNO).
GVN	Refers in a Senoi Praaq context to the Government of South Vietnam.
IGP	Inspector General of Police. The titular head of the RMP. Directs law enforcement in Malaysia, controls substantial paramilitary forces.
JHEOA	Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli. The Department of Orang Asli Affairs for peninsular Malaysia. Originally known as the Department of Aborigines (DOA) and initially created during the Malayan Emergency to work with the Orang Asli and wean them away from MCP influence.
JWS	Jungle Warfare School. Members of the Senoi Praaq imparted their jungle survival/tracking skills to Commonwealth and other forces at this institute located near the village of Kota Tinggi. One of several military type training facilities set up by Great Britain and Malaya to foster their own activities and later to transfer their knowledge to the U.S. and U.S. sponsored forces fighting in Vietnam.
KKO	Korps Komando Operasi (Indonesian Marine Commandos). Active during the landings at Pontain and elsewhere along Malaysia's east coast. They were excellent troops and were well respected by British and Malay personnel.
KMT	Kuomintang. The official ruling party of the Republic of China (i.e., Taiwan) and designation for anti-communist Chinese.
LLDB	Luc Lang Duc Biet. South Vietnam's special forces. President Diem attempted to direct these troops himself and initially at least they

provided him with leverage over conventional military forces.

MAAG	Military Assistance and Advisory Group. This command was setup in 1955 and managed the US military effort in Vietnam prior to escalation and formation of MACV.
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Formed in 1962. MACV absorbed MAAG two years later in 1964.
MAF	Malaysian Armed Forces. United States designation for the Malaysian military.
MCP	Malayan Communist Party. The political organization led by a Malayan Chinese, Chen Peng, sponsored to a limited extent by the Peoples Republic of China, which offered ideological legitimacy to the insurgents.
MIS	Ministry of Internal Security. Controlled the Senoi Praaq at one time but is now defunct.
MOD	Ministry of Defense. Refers in the context of this work to the Malaysian Ministry of Defense.
MNUSD	Ministry of National Unity and Social Development. This body formerly oversaw the activities of the JHEOA.
MPABA	Malayan Peoples Anti-British Army. Successor to the MPAJA and forerunner to the MRLA.
MPAJA	Malayan Peoples Anti-Japanese Army.
MRLA	Malayan Races Liberation Army. The military arm of the MCP.
NKNA	North Kalimantan National Army. The front organization used by Indonesia to strike the first blows during the Indonesian Confrontation (on Borneo).
NVA	North Vietnamese Army.
OSCAJA	Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army. Military arm of the KMT eradicated by communist Chinese forces prior to commencement of hostilities against the governments of Malaya and Great Britain during the Emergency.

PAAC	Perak Aboriginal Areas Constabulary.
PAG	Police Aboriginal Guard.
PAS	Parti Islam Se-Malaysia. Malaysia's Islamic fundamentalist political party and constant thorn in UMNO's side.
PFF	Police Field Force. The counterpart to regular military forces that worked very closely with civilian intelligence organizations both in Malaya and Vietnam. Very useful in this respect but also quite practical in the sense that such obfuscation helped to deflect hostility away from the regular military.
PG	Persian Gulf. The wellspring of cheap oil and <i>sine qua non</i> of U.S. Middle East Policy. A large part of the cost of this oil is associated with its delivery to market. Any deviation from existing supply routes, many of which pass through the Straits of Malacca, would drastically raise its price. The economies of key United States trade partners, Japan, Korea and Taiwan, would be badly affected.
PGA	Police Gerakan Am. The Bahasa designation for the Police Field Force. Currently no longer in use.
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia. Indonesia Communist Party.
POASM	Persatuan Orang Asli Semenanjung Malaysia. A national Orang Asli association with branches in most states dedicated to advancing the Orang Asli position in Malaysian society. POASM operates as a proto political party and is the flagship organization of the Orang Asli political movement. POASM was initially sponsored by the JHEOA and the two organizations were at first on very friendly terms. However, POASM began its break away from JHEOA tutelage under the leadership of Majid Suhut.
PRC	Peoples Republic of China.
RAF	Royal Air Force (i.e., that of Great Britain).
RMP	Royal Malaysia Police. One of the more important institutions bequeathed by Great Britain to Malaya upon Independence. The tradition of excellence instilled in the RMP by Great Britain is comparable to that of police forces in Canada and Australia.

RMR	Royal Malay Regiment. That aspect of the MAF dependent exclusively upon Bumiputra sources of manpower.
RPKAD	Indonesian Para Commandos. Elite troops active on Borneo and later dropped at Labis by the Indonesians.
RTG	Royal Thai Government.
RTP	Royal Thai Police.
RVN	Republic of Vietnam (i.e., South Vietnam).
SAS	Special Air Service. The elite British force that trained the Senoi Praaq in the use of weaponry and assault tactics. The SAS also gave the Senoi Praaq the right to wear the SAS red beret. However, since 1958 all SAS units have worn beige and not red berets, in keeping with wartime SAS practice. Note further that Australia, New Zealand and the United States also maintain their own versions of the SAS.
SBS	Sabah Border Scouts. Set up/taken over by R.O.D. Noone in May 1964 using mainly Murut tribesmen and headquartered at Keningau in Sabah. These forces were then operated in conjunction with BBS elements heretofore led by John P. Cross. Subsequent to R.O.D. Noone's departure for Thailand the SBS came under the control of Charles H. Ley.
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization. Originally established as part of an alliance strategy to help mobilize support for American policy in Southeast Asia. Unlike NATO, SEATO is now defunct. SEATO did not fair well due to SVN's collapse.
SEP	Surrendered Enemy Personnel. During the Malayan Emergency SEPs were treated much better by the government than MRLA members taken captive subsequent to engagement with security force personnel. Many SEPs were recycled into the struggle against the communists.
SOVF	Special Operations Volunteer Force. Usually comprised of SEPs. However, some of the early SOVF like units also recruited Orang Asli.
SVN	South Vietnam.

TNM	Tentara Nasional Malaya. A front organization similar to the NKNA put into place by GOI during the peninsular phase of the Indonesian Confrontation. Specifically, the TNM purported to be the army of the Malayan people seeking liberation from neo-colonial domination.
UMNO	United Malay National Organization. The political party which controls the Barisan Nasional (BN), a coalition of several ethnic based political parties, and which has dominated Malaysian politics since 1957.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development. A branch of the United States Department of State that dispenses foreign aid and thus facilitates the cultivation of ties with third world leaders.
USOM	United States Operations Mission. The designation of the United States aid agency operating in South Vietnam in the 1950s.



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## Foreword

*Death Waits in the "Dark"* brings to light with great clarity the legend of heroic exploits by Malaysia's unique paramilitary fighting force, the Senoi Praaq. This remarkable study takes the reader into peninsular Malaysia's tortuous jungle where Senoi Praaq troopers successfully engaged communist terrorists in protracted, yet defining, battle for control of the newly independent state; then to the war in central Vietnam where a contingent of Senoi Praaq troopers and British officers sought to build a fire wall among indigenous mountain tribes in a secretive, failed attempt to shut down the progression of Viet Cong fighters into South Vietnam's southern and eastern provinces; and finally, to the island of Borneo and to the southmost states of Malaysia's mainland where the troopers helped play a signal role in turning back invading forces from Indonesia.

I was privileged to work with the enigmatic Dick Noone during these events which Roy Davis Linville Jumper so ably brings to life and I have now had the pleasure of reliving some very interesting days. He is to be congratulated on his noteworthy achievement in drawing together a morass of details and opinions concerning a chain of activities when few reliable records were ever made—particularly so inasmuch as inevitably opinions and the degree of veracity of accounts vary somewhat from source to source in these matters. My own recollections and thoughts are no exception.

This first study of Malaysia's unique fighting force fills a significant void in the military history of Malaysia and Southeast Asia. It also provides some hardy grist for the mill of readers who are concerned today with Malaysia's national security issues and the stability of the region along the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea.

Charles H. Ley  
Wiltshire, 2001

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# Preface

This study provides the reader with a straight forward, realistic account of Malaysia's legendary special forces unit, the Senoi Praaq. The unit, originally a creature of British military intelligence, was set up in 1956 to fight communism during the Malayan Emergency. Its troopers fought in the deep jungle as Special Air Service (SAS) proteges, eventually replacing Her Majesty's best upon Malayan independence from Great Britain. They then served as mercenaries employed under South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)/United States Central Intelligence Agency (USCIA) auspices in Vietnam and a short time later fought on Borneo during Malaysia's own undeclared war with Indonesia.

Today the unit, largely comprised of non-Malay tribal peoples known collectively as the Orang Asli of peninsular Malaysia, remains under arms and heads up a large paramilitary apparatus maintained in conjunction with conventional military forces. I contend in this research that the Senoi Praaq played a pivotal role in Malaya's transition from colony to independent nation and remains today a unique fighting force upon whom Malaysia must rely to preserve her national security interests both within Malaysia proper and along the perimeter of the vital international passage route, the Malacca Straits.

The evidence and argument put forward in my analysis drawn in important measure from interviews with veteran Senoi Praaq commanders and troopers refutes the contentions of social activist researchers who hijacked the persona of the Orang Asli tribes in the 1960s and continue to this day to depict Malaysia's indigenous peoples as primitive, lost and helpless victims of modernization who are disgruntled wards of the state. Their publications harm the very peoples they purport to champion. Nonetheless, beefed up political pamphlets are hustled towards just such an end thinly disguised as academic scholarship and published by a variety of institutes and centers for this or that Orang Asli concern. The authors of these works only replicate in Malaysia a pattern spun by advocacy oriented writers in other countries around the world, *vis-à-vis* a multitude of indigenous peoples, but hardly applicable in Malaysia. A discerning observer

understands however that the Orang Asli peoples—albeit a disadvantaged ethnic group—constitute an absolutely indispensable human resource which needs to be cultivated and channeled over time into productive rather than confrontational relations with the state.

While my study pays the Orang Asli their due as a people it also shatters the passive and stereotypical stigma which marks their public image. *Death Waits in the "Dark"* is not a wholesome book about nice people, friendly places and quaint things. Ambushes, assassinations and assorted dirty deeds, the very essence of irregular warfare in counterinsurgency operations, are taken to chilling extremes by the unit's Orang Asli, Malay and British personnel. Their story is a fast paced and often graphic account of a virtual killing machine in action. Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Borneo and Singapore are all venues of Senoi Praaq operations where the business end of the intelligence game is brought to bear and played to the max.

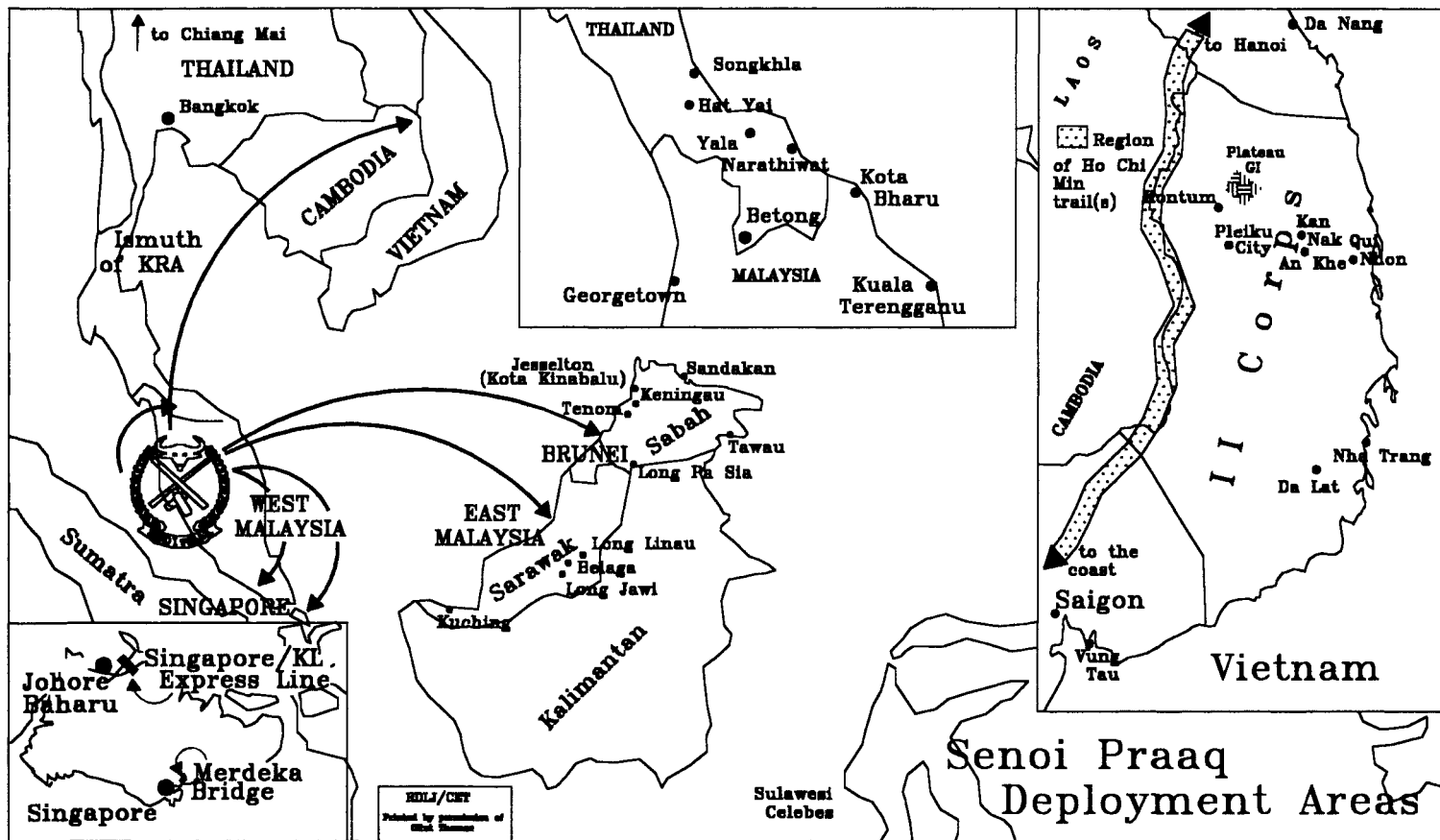
If the Orang Asli embody the altruistic qualities often associated with Jean Jacques Rousseau's much heralded noble savage they likewise exhibit any number of dark Hobsian traits conveniently ignored by some researchers. This ugly truth points up admirably the fact that there is no anthropological or sociological Shangri-la wherein resident peoples are incapable of being taken and trained either to kill or to kill more efficiently. Killing for that matter comes easy in the jungle.

The evidence assembled in this research corroborates the paradigm in Orang Asli studies first put forward by John D. Leary, who brought us *Violence and the Dream People*, and extended by myself in several studies of the Orang Asli polity. These texts make one point perfectly clear: The Orang Asli peoples give as good as they get. They are not stereotypical patsies. Time and time again they prove themselves able to achieve satisfaction in return for their troubles whether they be political or military.

Many people were helpful in the preparation of this book. Some do not wish to be acknowledged in the usual manner since they remain active professionally and are involved in sensitive matters. In these instances a generic thank you to the Royal Malaysia Police is in order. However, several individuals now retired or otherwise employed may be thanked for their most helpful contributions. These men are of different nationalities and come from a variety of backgrounds but they all share an abiding interest in the Orang Asli. They deserve a special "thank you" and include Mohamed Ruslan bin Iskandar Abdullah, Sambut Anak, Haji Ahmad bin Khamis, Mike G. Jones, Charles H. Ley, Desmond Lawrence, and Mat Noor.

Finally, I am particularly indebted to Clint Thomas, Professor Emeritus, Eastern Michigan University and formerly Professor Indiana University Shah Alam, Malaysia who once again constructed the necessary maps and helped in countless other ways. This is the third book he has helped me pull together and there really is no way to adequately acknowledge such support in words but I can try—thank you Clint.

Roy Davis Linville Jumper  
Kuala Lumpur 2001



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