

Sukarno Warned

British May Bomb Indonesian Bases

By Flora Lewis

The Washington Post Foreign Service

LONDON, Sept. 11—At the beginning of Malaysia, Britain has worked out a staged program to provide a firm deterrent against further Indonesian attacks, it was learned today.

The United States has been informed that the British retaliation would include air or sea bombardment of Indonesian bases if intermediate steps fail. President Johnson's action against North Viet-Nam after the Gulf of Tonkin attack on U.S. destroyers is considered a solid and successful precedent.

It was understood that

Washington has neither disapproved nor approved of this contingency planning, but has asked to be kept advised because of possible U.S. involvement if a conflict should spread.

The first deterrent effort is concentrated in the United Nations, however. Britain hopes for a strong Security Council resolution denouncing Indonesian sea and paratroop landings in Malaya. It is thought this might persuade Indonesian President Sukarno

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to be cautious even if there is a Soviet veto.

The second part of the deterrent is the dispatch of new British land, sea and air reinforcements to the Far East. They have a dual purpose in the second phase. One is to serve as a show of Britain's determination, which may in itself restrain further Indonesian ventures. The other is to knock out any Indonesian sea or air expeditions clearly heading for Malaya before they reach the target.

This is the defensive part of the operation. The purpose goes beyond defense, however, to the hope that the loss of a couple of plane loads of paratroopers or boat loads with landing parties would deter Sukarno from trying again.

At this stage, it is also likely that British reconnaissance planes might make sorties over Indonesia to pinpoint targets if retaliation became necessary. Such flights would also be intended to have a deterrent effect.

Landings Ruled Out

But the determination extends to a third stage, if attacks should be repeated, which would be the bombardment of Indonesian bases. There is no question of landings in Indonesia.

The reinforcements being sent to the Far East are primarily defensive but include weapons suitable for retaliation.

In addition to some 500 troops from an anti-aircraft regiment in Germany, Britain is sending the 30th Escort Squadron of its Mediterranean fleet to Singapore, it was reported today. It consists of two 2100-ton frigates, the Falmouth and the Brighton, the destroyer Cassandra, and the fleet radar picket Aisne.

It was also disclosed that four V-bombers, which have both nuclear and conventional capability, three reconnaissance Canberras and two sea-reconnaissance Shackletons have been sent to Aden. They may proceed to Singapore at short notice.

Risk of Escalation

It is emphasized here that the purpose of the entire program is deterrence. But the risk of escalation is recog-



Associated Press

Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman of Malaysia displays a light machine gun that reportedly was taken from an Indonesian parachutist on the Malaysian

mainland during recent fighting. This and other seized weapons were part of an exhibit in the Malaysian parliament building in Kuala Lumpur this week.

nized if the situation reaches the point where a return blow is ordered.

Strikes at Indonesian bases could evoke a strong counter-blow, possibly on Singapore. New Zealand and Australia could be drawn in because of their commitment to defend Malaysia. That could lead to Indonesian raids on those countries. Through the ANZUS pact, the U.S. is committed to help in their defense in case of attack.

However, there are strong feelings among those involved that Indonesian harassment of Malaysia can only be stopped by firmness and that a weak reaction will only lead to worse trouble.

There have been, of course, no public announcements of these decisions. But neither is there any sign of official discomfort at their becoming known since awareness of this new British resolve could also give President Sukarno second thoughts.

U.S. Position

Although the U.S. is signing no blank checks, unofficial but well-informed British sources said they were convinced London would not have determined on the clear-cut stages of deterrence unless it felt sure that U.S. opposition at the crucial points was unlikely.

Meanwhile, the British Defense Ministry announced a new development in the Sunda Straits dispute. Britain and the U.S. consider the 16-mile-wide Straits between Java and Sumatra as international waters and have been perturbed and puzzled at Indonesian statements claiming warships went through illegally.

Now, London said, Djakarta has sent out notice that while it respects the right of other nations' ships to use the Straits, it is conducting naval exercises there between Sept. 10 and Oct. 10. The British said they would route their shipping through the Lombok Straits at the other end of Java during that period.