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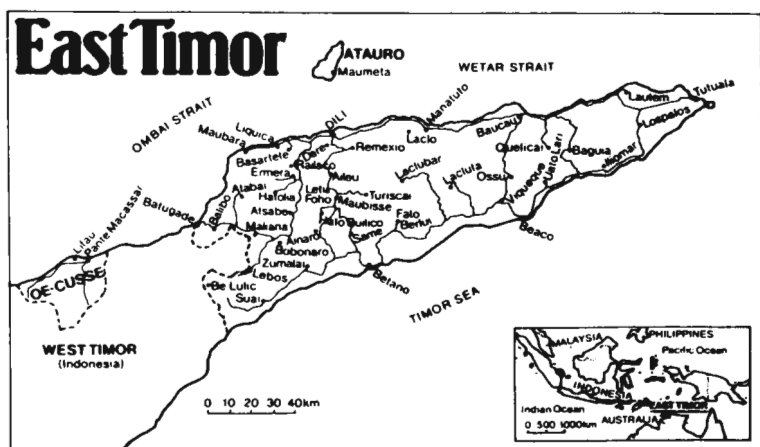
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## EDITORIAL

# Let the people speak

"We, the people of East Timor, think that we must be consulted on the future of our land. That is why I am writing, as a leader of the Catholic church, and as a citizen of Timor, to ask you, as Secretary General, to start in Timor the most normal and democratic process of decolonisation, i.e. the holding of a referendum. The people of Timor must be allowed to express their views on their future through a plebiscite. Hitherto the people have not been consulted. Others speak in the name of the people. Indonesia says that the people of *Timor Timur* [East Timor] have already chosen integration, but the people of Timor themselves have never said this. Portugal wants to let time solve the problem. And we continue to die as a people and as a nation.

"You are a democrat and a friend of human rights. Therefore let your Excellency demonstrate with facts your respect for the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter, which grants to all the peoples of this planet the right to choose their own destiny, freely, consciously and responsibly."

These words were written in February by Mgr Carlos Belo, Apostolic Administrator of the Catholic Church in East Timor to Sr. Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the United Nations. They cut to the heart of the Timor

problem. Apparently Mgr Belo did not intend his letter to be made public. Since it appeared in the Portuguese press in April, however, it has aroused great controversy within Indonesia, in East Timor, and abroad. As we report in this issue, figures as diverse as senior cabinet ministers in Indonesia and the Vatican's diplomatic representative in Jakarta, Archbishop Canalini, have claimed that Mgr Belo has no competence to speak on this matter.

It is true that Mgr Belo has not always spoken his mind clearly. In the past he has been criticised for vacillation and for a lack of leadership. Now, however, he has said a few things simply and to the point. They cannot with honesty be evaded.

As in so many other situations of conflict and oppression, the church's position in East Timor is described as controversial by observers and unrealistic by critics. Yet essentially Mgr Belo, with the support of his clergy, is merely re-affirming the primacy of ethical values in human and political conduct. What can be challenged in his suggestion that the people of the territory should be asked to speak their minds? What he says is profoundly moderate.

Insofar as there is abnormality, it is to be found in the political environment

that the Indonesian government has created and maintained since its invasion in 1975. It is this that should be tested and judged, not Mgr Belo for having had the temerity to speak out.

To write this letter required moral courage. This ought to be recognised by the international community and by the international Catholic church.

First and foremost Mgr Belo's letter addresses the question of a political solution. He says that a settlement must base itself upon the wishes of the people of East Timor. This position should be wholly acceptable to both the international community and the churches. Though principled, it is – as Mgr Belo has been at pains to point out – the contrary of partisan.

It also affirms – and after 15 years of bloodshed who will deny it, that for so long as the present political order is imposed upon the people, the Timor issue cannot be solved but can only be suppressed violently.

If we discount what Mgr Belo has written, setting his letter aside as the word of a priest inexperienced in politics, we do a profound injustice both to Timor and to ourselves. For what is left of international law, of the principles underlying political institutions, of the ethics that govern social relations? Precious little. ■

# Belo's Letter: The Controversy

Ever since two private letters written by the Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Dili, Mgr Belo, were published in April (by *Europeu*, Lisbon, April 16) international support for his call for a referendum has grown.

Many Bishops, and organisations from all over the world, have expressed sympathy. A petition led by two Japanese Catholic bishops, Mgr Hamao Fumio of Yokohama and Mgr Soma Nobuo of Nagoya, was signed by more than 100 Asian Catholic bishops and over 1,250 clergy and laypeople in Asia.

Mgr Belo wrote to the United Nations and to the President of Portugal in February, not long after he broke a long silence to comment upon human rights' abuses in a pastoral letter of December 1988 [ETL 15/16]. He also wrote during the same period to Archbishop Canalini, the Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta.

## Counter-Reaction: From State...

As in 1985, when he signed a long and critical statement about Indonesian rule [ETL 2, June 1985], the bishop immediately came under a barrage of criticism from the Indonesian authorities. One after another, high officials played down the significance of Mgr Belo's initiative, qualifying his position as personal and unofficial.

The Indonesian Minister for Politics and Security Affairs, Sudomo, questioned Belo's patriotism and said that citizens should not make criticisms abroad, adding that "Belo is only presenting a personal proposal. He does not represent any group of people." The Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, said that Belo's appeal to the UN was groundless, because decolonisation had already occurred. The Catholic Defence Minister Beni Murdani – who, as a general, was responsible for managing East Timor's occupation for many years – said that Church leaders should not express political opinions. "Belo became an Indonesian citizen just a few years ago. He should not think that because he is a religious leader he knows about politics," Murdani declared, adding that public opinion is represented by the government, the political parties [Golkar, PPP and PDI] and the armed forces, and not by any church, mosque or temple. Armed Forces Commander Sutrisno also stated that Bp. Belo's letter was out of line with his function as a religious leader. [Quoted in *UCA News*, No. 508, May 31 1989].

The official military view, released to Antara (Indonesia's official news-agency), was clear: "His position is merely as a leader of church members whose responsibility does not cover political affairs." [AFP, in *The Age* 31.8.89].

From within East Timor, Timorese officials such as the Governor, Mario Carrascalao, also criticised Belo. Carrascalao declared that, in his view, the people did not want a referendum: "Once you put the problem to the common people . . . they will refuse because that will mean again bloodshed – killings in East Timor." [The Age, 28.08.89.]

## ... and Church

More surprisingly, some officials in the Catholic church also joined in criticism. Chief among these was the Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta, Archbishop Canalini, whose presentation of the East Timor issue has been questionable in the past [ETL 12/13, April 1988]. *UCA News* reported that Archbishop Canalini described Mgr Belo's letter as personal: it did not reflect the position of the Catholic bishops of Indonesia, nor the aspirations of the people of East Timor. In effect, the man who is Mgr Belo's direct channel for communication with Rome was suggesting that the bishop had no mandate either from above him or below him in the Catholic hierarchy. In going so far, Archbishop

**Economic and political interests cannot serve as reasons for violating the fundamental rights of a people.**

Bishop Belo, Apostolic Administrator,  
March 15 1989

Canalini may have exceeded his brief from the Vatican.

Archbishop Darmaatmadja, Chairman of the Indonesian Bishop's Conference – which Mgr Belo attends, though not as a member – also commented on the letters. He said that "the letter written by Mgr Belo should be interpreted as a personal letter and cannot be interpreted as in the name of the church or in the name of Catholics." [Kompas, 8.06.89.]

## Moral Courage

This is certainly not Mgr Belo's view, or the view of his clergy. On several occasions Belo confirmed that he stood by what he said in his letters and that he was not merely stating a personal opinion. In an interview with Australian journalists, he said "Everybody is obliged to think and do according to the Indonesian political system . . . that they are an integral part of Indonesia and that there is no other way." [. . .] "If we respect truth and justice, for me, there is no other way but to give the possibility to all the East Timorese to

Mgr Belo's letter to Sr Perez de Cuellar, February 6 1989.

Your Excellency,

"First allow me to give you my sincere and respectful greetings.

"I am taking the liberty of writing to your Excellency to draw to your attention the fact that the process of decolonisation of Portuguese Timor has still not been resolved by the United Nations, and it is important that this should not be forgotten. For our part, we, the people of East Timor, think that we must be consulted on the future of our land. That is why I am writing, as a leader of the Catholic church, and as a citizen of Timor, to ask you, as Secretary General, to start in Timor the most normal and democratic process of decolonisation, i.e. the holding of a referendum. The people of Timor must be allowed to express their views on their future through a plebiscite. Hitherto the people have not been consulted. Others speak in the name of the people. Indonesia

says that the people of Timor Timor [East Timor] have already chosen integration, but the people of Timor themselves have never said this. Portugal wants to let time solve the problem. And we continue to die as a people and as a nation.

"You are a democrat and a friend of human rights. Therefore let your Excellency demonstrate with facts your respect for the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter, which grants to all the peoples of this planet the right to choose their own destiny, freely, consciously and responsibly. Your Excellency, there is no more democratic means of ascertaining the supreme desire of the Timorese people than the holding of a referendum promoted by the United Nations for the people of East Timor.

"Sr Perez de Cuellar, I thank you for all your sympathy with the people of Timor and conclude by expressing once again my best wishes."



express their ideas and desires to whom they should belong without pressure and without force." [*The Age*, 28.08.89.]

Observers have been impressed by the fact that Mgr Belo stood his ground, because he has not always done so. In January 1985, he signed an important statement prepared by the Catholic Council of priests [*ETL* 2, June 1985.] Under enormous pressure,

support since he was catapulted into authority by the Vatican after Mgr. da Costa Lopes, his predecessor, was retired in 1983. In this instance, however, the diocesan clergy clearly rallied behind him – confirming Belo's claim that he was not speaking in a purely personal capacity. In July, they wrote to state that, in calling for a referendum, Mgr Belo has spoken for his church and for the people.

swoop into eccentricity or a sudden conversion to nationalism. Mgr Belo has merely restated – in very clear language, it is true – a position which Catholic church leaders in East Timor have affirmed consistently.

In a commentary to his letter, and in his letter to the Portuguese Bishop of Setubal, Mgr Belo is at pains to point out that the church does not take sides



Mgr Belo (right) with his predecessor Mgr da Costa Lopes (centre) in 1983

he was induced to deny his involvement with the document. This time, he refused to be intimidated.

This took moral courage – all the more because Mgr Belo has looked an increasingly isolated figure in recent months. He has been worn down by the tight surveillance of the Indonesian authorities, and nationalist leaders recently attacked him personally for attempting, as they saw it, to persuade Fretilin to surrender. His decision to accept funds from the Indonesian government and from the army to build a new Cathedral was not well received, and many Timorese have been deeply frustrated by the Catholic church's recent silence on social issues and human rights.

Belo himself clearly feels that he may have passed a point of no return by making his views public at this time. Rumours have circulated for some time that he may be replaced, and he hinted as much to an AFP reporter recently, saying that he would accept the Vatican's decision if he was asked to serve in another place. [*AFP*, 5.09.89.]

### Support of the clergy

Mgr Belo's relations with his clergy have never been easy either. Many of them have not felt able to give him their

### A Moderate Course

In view of the controversy aroused by the letters – controversy which can only intensify as the Pope's visit approaches – it is important to reaffirm the essential moderation of Mgr Belo's position and that of the clergy. Mgr Belo's letters do not represent a swing to radicalism, a

### Mgr Belos Commentary

"My letter is neither in favour nor against anyone.

"The letter sets out the position of the head of Timor's Catholic Church with respect to the Timor conflict or problem (. . .)

"The letter does not seek to speak in the name of the people. It merely suggests that the people should be given the opportunity to exercise their sovereignty, by a referendum, by a secret, free and universal ballot.

"The letter seeks to alert the world: economic and political interests cannot serve as reasons for violating the fundamental rights of a people, however small."

with one party to the conflict or another, but affirms the simple proposition that East Timor's tragedy will not end until justice is done, and that justice requires granting to the people of the territory a chance to decide what sort of government they want.

### Letter of Timorese Clergy July 1989

"As priests, composing the clergy (presbyterium) of the diocese of Dili, joined with the successor to the Apostles the bishop of Dili, we have lived in recent times the joys and grief, the moments of difficulty and anguish of our bishop and the people of Timor. From the beginning we have followed with careful and objective attention everything to do with our bishop, sharing fully his feelings, desires and fears, and now more closely his pain. The time has come to break silence. We are not asking for permission to speak, we want recognition of our right to be heard (. . .)

"The Church has the right and duty to illuminate by its words and its teaching the various human situations which engage the dignity of the individual and of peoples. This is how to understand the letter of February 6 1989 written by the Apostolic Administrator of Dili in which he declares that in Timor's cur-

rent situation the only just solution to the armed conflict and to the Timor question is that the people should exercise their right, a right never exercised until now. (. . .)

"The clergy of Dili reject the opinions and suggestions, tendentious and counter to the spirit and teaching of the Church, that have been advanced by certain manipulated church and lay figures. The bishop is theologically, juridically and ecclesiastically, in all respects, the representative of the local Church, and when he speaks as such, in the line of the Church and in line with the feelings of the clergy and the people, he is an authority that must be respected and given weight.

"We hope that our appeal and our explanation will assist the authorities and ecclesiastical officials to understand what the Church and Timor's people feel, as it is explained in the letter of the Apostolic Administrator of Dili dated February 6."



# Conviction of the Clergy

We quote below excerpts from a statement given by Timorese clergy to an Australian visitor in August 1989. It is a further indication of the strong support which Mgr Belo's stand has generated – and of the anger which attempts to marginalise him have aroused within the Timorese church.

"[. . .] How is it possible that the Nuncio [Mgr Canalini, *Eds.*] thinks that despite Bishop Belo being the leader of the local Church, his letter of 6 February 1989 does not represent or reflect the wishes of either the Church or the people of East Timor, when in the letter he says explicitly that he is writing as the leader of the Catholic Church and as a citizen of East Timor?

In our view the Pro-Nuncio is questioning the moral integrity of the Bishop with the intention of isolating him from the people, thereby serving the politics of oppression of the Indonesian Government. One would hope for better from the Nuncio who himself elevated Mgr Belo to the episcopacy less than one year ago!!! [. . .]

The Apostolic Administrator [Mgr Belo, *Eds.*] is accused of playing politics. We wonder whether it is only politics when one talks against the regime in power? Or isn't it politics when one talks in favour of the government?

**Letter from Cardinal Simonis, Monseignor,**

*With deep respect for your courage I have taken notice of your plea to hold a referendum for the people of East Timor in your letter to the secretary-general of the United Nations Dr Javier Perez de Cuellar of February 1989. Knowing very well how difficult your situation already is, I am deeply convinced that your frank and bold plea for a referendum as the most democratic means of ascertaining the supreme desire of the Timorese people, can only be the fruit of ample thought and bitter experience since your consecration as Apostolic Administrator in 1983 of the miserable plight and unrelenting suffering of your own beloved people.*

*As a sign of brotherhood, and as a token of evangelical hope and love I want to offer you and your people the earnest sympathy and strong support of the Dutch Catholic community with your courageous struggle.*

*Be assured of our continuing attention in our daily prayers and otherwise for your unrelentingly persevering endeavour for a more just, peaceful and democratic Timorese society.*

What do *Gaudium et Spes* and *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and other Church documents teach?

Only a just solution which respects the fundamental rights of the people and the teaching of the Church can guarantee a true and lasting peace. History teaches us that the bargaining of a people's destiny in exchange for immediate political and religious dividends is both abominable and doomed to failure. Such actions do not guarantee that the objectives of the bargaining will be achieved. It is not by sacrificing East Timor that Indonesia will be saved! [. . .]

Mgr Canalini is aware that the issue of East Timor is still waiting for a solution. Therefore it is not necessary to explain why the Bishop of the Catholic Church who loves his Church and his people has taken such an admirable position. [. . .]

The visit of the Holy Father will be the moment of truth for everybody. The teaching of the Church is never neutral. It has always been for man and in defence of man, whatever the circumstances and history of the situation.

We urge that there be more human and christian understanding, sincerity and honesty in the face of the problems of a whole people at this dramatic moment in its history. [. . .]" ■

**"The visit of the Holy Father will be the moment of truth for everybody. The teaching of the Church is never neutral. It has always been for man and in defence of man . . .**

The clergy of East Timor, August 1989

**Mgr Belo's letter to the Bishop of Setubal, February 6 1989**

(. . .) It is a question of insisting to the United Nations Secretary General that he take the initiative to hold a REFERENDUM so that the people may choose their destiny. If they (the people) want integration, with Indonesia, then let the people say so by voting, not, as it has been done since 1976 until now, by weapons, psychological pressure or fear. If the people choose to maintain their ties with Portugal, the Government of your most Reverend Excellency should respect this historic and moral bond with the people. If the people choose self-determination, this right should be recognised. But not to allow the people of Timor to express what they feel is a refined slavery which only generates discontent, injustices and slow death.

I ask you, Mgr Manuel, to help me in this battle for a referendum for East Timor.



# The Papal Visit

As Pope John Paul's visit to East Timor approached, concern over the political use that might be made of it sharply increased. We discuss the reasons why the local Timorese church, and sympathetic church organisations around the world, have expressed reserve about a pastoral visit which, in other circumstances, East Timor's people could have welcomed wholeheartedly.

## The Programme

Pope John Paul II is scheduled to visit Indonesia and East Timor on his way to Mauritius after attending the International Eucharist Assembly in South Korea. His visit to Indonesia will last from October 9 to October 14, during which time he will visit Jakarta, Yogyakarta, East Java, Flores – and East Timor.

He is due to arrive in East Timor at 08.30 on on October 13, and to leave around lunchtime of the same day. During this period of about four hours, he will briefly visit Dili to meet the priests and will celebrate mass at Tacitolu, an open space near the airport. Tacitolu is known in East Timor as a site of execution.

Many thousands of Timorese are expected to make the pilgrimage to see the Pope. Tens of thousands of Indonesians from adjacent islands will also be ferried into East Timor for the occasion.

Citing the presence of so many non-Timorese, the authorities requested that Mass should be celebrated in *bahasa* Indonesian. Timorese, including apparently Mgr Belo, protested that *bahasa* is the language of occupation, and that Tetum should be used. Odds are that the mass will now be celebrated in . . . Latin, which almost no-one in the congregation will understand.

It has been officially agreed that the Pope's visit to East Timor is 'pastoral' in character. The Vatican, the Indonesian authorities, and Mgr Belo himself have formally stressed this fact. At the same time, John Paul II will be welcomed in Indonesia as a head of state, and his hosts will be the Indonesian government not the Indonesian Bishops' Conference. (According to *CISSET Newsletter* [No 1 1989], this is in deference to Muslim sensibilities.) The trip will be funded essentially by the Indonesian government.

Pope John Paul II's decision to return to Indonesia after Dili, and to incorporate his stopover in East Timor within the longer trip to Indonesia is a

major cause of further grievance. Many Timorese fear that the Indonesian government will exploit the visit as evidence that Indonesia's "incorporation" of the territory has been recognised by the Vatican. Some indeed believe that 'the entire trip has been planned in a way that implies the Vatican has moved *de facto* towards recognition.

Certainly the fear that Indonesia will exploit the visit politically is well founded. Despite undertakings to the Vatican, during UN Hearings at Geneva in August, the Indonesian ambassador used this argument in two speeches to the Sub-Committee on Human Rights.

**If the Pope comes, let him come!  
We will receive him with love, in  
prayer, silently, leaving to  
foreigners brought for the  
ceremony from other islands the  
task of shouting: Long Live  
Integration, Long Live the Pope,  
Long Live Tim-Tim, Long Live  
Indonesia, Long Live the  
glorious and invincible  
Indonesian armed forces! . . . We  
will place our final hope in God,  
praying in silence. We have  
nothing else to say. Let him who  
has ears, hear.**

A group of lay Catholics in East Timor,  
1989

## Clash of interests

The fact that the Pope has twice cancelled visits to Indonesia in recent years, Yprobably at least partly because of East Timor, suggests how sensitive the Timor question is.

In effect, the problem for Rome is that its interests conflict. On the one side, East Timor is among the most devout areas in the region, a local centre of catholicism that needs nurture and support. We may also assume that at high level the Vatican is well-informed about what has taken place in East Timor, and understands the alienation, anger and trauma that Timorese people feel. The moral issues raised by East Timor are also undeniable, and have been pressed, no doubt resolutely, by the Timorese clergy.

Against this, the Vatican needs to weigh the interests of Indonesia's own, larger Catholic church – dispersed across a predominantly Muslim country. Indonesia's government may be authoritarian, it may oppress and deny civil freedoms to many of its people: but Indonesia is seen to permit secular values and religious freedoms, and for this reason is considered to be a frontier of Christianity, a society in which Catholicism can just maintain life –

where no action should be taken that may prejudice the survival of the Church.

This is the sense behind the now notorious remark of Fr. Tucci, who visited Dili during April to prepare the Pope's visit. Challenged by Mgr Belo, who said that it would be disastrous for East Timor's church if the Pope's visit appeared to give support to integration, the Pope's representative replied: "For 400,000 [Timorese] Catholics, we aren't going to sacrifice the whole [Indonesian] church." [*La Paix est Possible au Timor Oriental*, No 30, August 1989.]

## Lack of Confidence

The ambiguities apparent in Vatican policy have created considerable unease within the Timorese church. Refugees who recently arrived in Portugal have described the apprehension felt by Timorese about the visit – which, after all, is being organised by the Indonesian government, will take place within a visit to Indonesia, and will last just a few hours, during which mass will be (celebrated at one of the territory's most notorious killing fields.

Such is the unease that in April Mgr Belo issued a pastoral letter enjoining Catholics to accept the visit:

*"His Holiness feels that he cannot return to Rome without touching Timorese soil and communicating to his Timorese sons a word of comfort, hope and moral and spiritual support. He knows that his gesture is open to political interpretation, but he has decided to run the risk of being misinterpreted (. . .) The Pope does not come to defend integration, nor to defend independence, nor to suggest political solutions for the problem of Timor. (. . .) For our part, we cannot and must not accuse him of coming to play politics and still less exploit his presence among us to wave party flags. The Pope is above parties, ideologies and governments (. . .) Let us prepare ourselves by a true conversion . . ."*

He then appealed by turns to the priests, to the religious and to the lay community to show enthusiasm. *"If the Timorese Catholics are the first to mistrust the Pope's visit, if they display indifference, if they are doubtful when they hear news of the Pope's coming, one has to ask: Are we Catholics? If we don't want the Pope to come, what other Pope are we waiting for? What other Pope do we want? Who is our Pope? (. . .) Dear believers, a truly faithful attitude leads us to accept the Pope, whether or not he is pleasing to our taste."* [Translated from the French version published in *La Paix est Possible au Timor Oriental*, No.30, August 1989.]



## Catholic critiques

Letters received abroad provide a measure of the anger generated during the planning visit led by Fr. Tucci in April.

Several priests wrote (in Italian) to Fr. Tucci:

*"The war goes on. In the last few days the Indonesians have taken many prisoners from among the civilian population in the region of Baucau and Venilale.*

*"The people do not accept the current situation under the Indonesian government.*

*"The current social situation: illnesses, famine, systematic arrests without trial, corruption, prostitution, the presence everywhere of Indonesian soldiers, the collapse of moral, Christian and cultural values, and the loss of Timorese identity which is organised and implemented according to a well-defined plan which aims to Indonesia-nise East Timor.*

*"Today no-one here in Timor wants integration with Indonesia, not even the small number of Timorese who fought for integration in the early years. Even they reject the idea of integration today, but are obliged to keep silent.*

*"Much is said about the socio-economic development promoted by the Indonesians. It is true that they have built many houses for government officials, and tarred many roads; they have opened schools but the teaching level is extremely low and is aimed at advancing the indonesianisation plan. This development is of advantage only to the Indonesians who have taken over the jobs here in Timor.*

*"What does the Pope's visit mean under these circumstances, after the genocide of more than 200,000 people, most of them practising Catholics? That is the question of the Timorese Christian population, who look upon the Church as their final hope. Many wonder if the Holy Father is coming to conclude and approve this atrocious and unspeakable process of integration.*

*"The supreme military Commander here in Timor has strongly criticised the bishop and priests saying that the (East*

*Timorese) Church has been unwilling to co-operate, and remains resistant to integration, but 'we have been able to make the Pope come here, we have succeeded'."*

[Transl. from *La Paix est Possible au Timor Oriental*, No 30, August 1989.]

## Let him who has ears, hear!

In another undated letter from a group of lay Catholics, who also refuse to sign their names, Fr. Tucci is also taken to task:

*"We are not going to sacrifice the whole of Christianity for 400,000 Catholics'. These are the words spoken by Fr. Tucci, Jesuit, when several priests wished to show him how ambiguous will seem to the people this visit by the Pope, organised by the Indonesians (. . .) So the Pope's visit flies above human rights, above the Gospel where the Good Shepherd abandons 99 lambs to search for the one which was lost.*

*"There is a certain connivance between the Vatican and Indonesia. In the long term this policy will backfire: Indonesian Catholics collaborate with the Government in order to oppress, in a concealed but real way, the Muslims. This situation will nourish a future Islamic revolution which will do much damage to the Indonesian church. The Indonesian Church will not be saved by sacrificing Timor History teaches this to us, and everything suggests that the social forces in Indonesia are generating major transformations. (. . .)*

*"Rome does not hear us! Our appeals, those of our priests, fall on deaf ears. . .*

*"There have been repeated appeals and proposals for the resistance to surrender and be realistic. Not once, apart from 1975 in the United Nations, has the Church called on the invasion forces to retire. Several months ago the Bishop of Dili called for a referendum. He has no support from the Dome [of St. Peter] Under pressure perhaps he will have to deny being the author of the letter or disown what it says. (. . .)*

*"If the Pope comes, let him come! We will receive him with love, in prayer, silently, leaving to foreigners brought for the ceremony from other islands the task of shouting: Long Live integration, Long Live the Pope, Long Live Tim-Tim, Long Live Indonesia, Long Live the glorious and invincible Indonesian armed forces! For three hours! If the Pope comes, let him come! We will place our final hope in God, praying in silence. We have nothing else to say. May he who has ears, hear!"*

[Transl. from *La Paix est Possible au Timor Oriental*, No.30. August 1989.]

## Nationalist critique

Much of the animosity felt towards the Catholic hierarchy has its source in the Church's attempt (as perceived in certain quarters in Timor) to persuade Fretilin nationalist guerrillas to surrender [ETL 15/16]. The very sharp language used by Xanana Gusmao, Commander in Chief of the nationalist resistance in East Timor, in a letter to Archbishop Canalini, the Vatican's representative in Jakarta, shows the depth of mistrust and sense of deception that exists outside church circles. [The letter was reported by the Portuguese *Sabado* on May 13; our source is *Monthly Memo* No. 24 of 21 June 1989.]

**If the Vatican looks upon a few tarmac-covered roads, a few zinc huts, some TV aerials and an Italian-style bustle of cars in Dili as a fair price to pay for the increased number of Catholics in Timor, then I believe it incorrectly perceives the problem of our faith.**

Xanana Gusmao, Commander in Chief of the nationalist resistance movement.

Xanana criticised the Catholic church for trying to persuade the guerrillas to surrender, and for subordinating Timor to its interests in Indonesia.

"The Church in Timor," he wrote, "lives on because of the abnegation of the missionaries who understand our people and feel what our people feel, and if the Vatican continues to take away this moral support from the people, then the Indonesian fathers or those priests who have been carefully chosen will finish off what is left of the confidence and respect in which our people have held the Church for so long."

Professing to be a Catholic – though above all Timorese – Xanana went on to say; "If the Vatican looks upon a few tarmac-covered roads, a few zinc huts, some TV aerials and an Italian-style bustle of cars in Dili as a fair price to pay for the increased number of Catholics in Timor, then I believe it incorrectly perceives the problem of our faith."

Xanana challenged Archbishop Canalini to "appeal to the Jakarta government to immediately free the Catholic prisoners in Cipinang prison, and to stop killing old, infirm, women and children who are in the bush" and stated his conviction that "Our people would accept a clear and open Vatican position, but never a cunning attitude in which the political machinery tries to convince us to surrender."

**"Monsignor Belo's request for a democratic solution to the tragic situation in East Timor cannot be ignored . . . To request a free and fair election is no crime and should not be met with threats, implicit or explicit."**

Dave Durenberger, United States Senate, 8 June 1989



## Diplomatic Fog

Unfortunately, on the eve of the Pope's historic visit to East Timor and Indonesia, the Vatican's diplomacy seems exactly that: cunning – to a point where it is likely to make the most negative impression on Timorese. It is possible, certainly, to conclude from the evidence that it is the Vatican's intention to accept Indonesia's occupation, even though this involves overruling the local bishop and the clear desire of the local church. The Vatican's willingness to allow Indonesian officials to make the arrangements; its decision to amend the itinerary so that East Timor – previously a separate destination – is amalgamated in the visit to Indonesia; the failure of Vatican diplomats to protest when, at the UN, the Indonesian Ambassador claimed in front of them that the Pope's visit amounted to full recognition; Archbishop Canalini's disparagement of Mgr Belo's letter; the comment of Fr. Tucci, so bitterly remembered in Timor . . .

If it is too soon to make such a judgement, it must be said that the preparations for this visit have been extraordinarily badly managed. How often does so experienced a body of diplomats make such a hash of its public relations? One has to conclude that the Vatican does not know exactly what its policy is towards Indonesia and Timor; or that it does not care very much that its diplomatic manoeuvres are causing ill-feeling and widespread confusion, and that consequently East Timor is not very important to its calculations; or that there are such severe differences of opinion within the Vatican about its policy towards East Timor and Indonesia that they are allowed to surface in public.

In all three cases, it is Indonesian diplomacy which will gain. And, unless John Paul II acknowledges on the fields of Taci-tolu his heartfelt understanding of the tragic experiences of the Timorese who have gathered to hear him, it is the people of East Timor who will be most bitterly deceived by his visit.

*"We felt stunned by this silence which seemed to allow us to die deserted . . . We could not understand why the Indonesian and the Roman Catholic Church had not yet stated, openly and officially, their solidarity with the church, the people and the religious of East Timor."* So wrote the Association of Religious in East Timor in 1981 to the Association of Religious in Indonesia. What has changed? ■

## NEWS FROM INSIDE

# Political Pressure on the Church

In its Memo of April 1989 [No. 22], *East Timor News* reported an analysis dated June 1988 and sent from inside East Timor. This document condemned attempts by the Vatican to persuade the guerrilla resistance to surrender, and emphasised the crucial place of the Catholic church as the only local institution capable of communicating with the outside world. The document stated that it was the strategy of the Indonesian authorities to co-opt or discredit the local Church. Recent events suggest that such a strategy is still being tried, but has so far failed.

The reports concerned were sent to the Mr Costa Lobo, then Portuguese Ambassador in Geneva, and to the Fretilin solidarity committee in Darwin. The writer affirmed that Timor's people "are aware of the necessity for unity on the part of all Timorese to overcome the occupying power" and said that attempts to persuade the guerrillas to surrender will fail. The report specifically stated that, on behalf of the Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta, some priests (including Mgr Belo) had conveyed to Xanana Gusmao, as Supreme Commander of Falintil, "his opinion, which is also that of the Vatican, that they should lay down arms, enter into dialogue and surrender because later it would be too late to save their lives".

The document went on. "All the actions of the Indonesian Intel [Intelligence agency, *Eds.*] at present centre around procuring a way to succeed in isolating East Timor and its armed Resistance from the outside world. It has already succeeded, in collusion with Mr Bob Hawke's government, in silencing our transmission and broadcasting equipment based in Darwin. As the East Timor Catholic Church and its bishop comprise the only embassy of the outside world and the only entity which can still speak, the Indonesian intelligence has turned on them and has been putting pressure on them."

## Infiltration

The document reports that, in pursuit of its policy, "a team of political police led by a Major Andri, a catholic, was sent to East Timor in April 1987. Through a contact named in the document as Mario do Carmo, this team attempted to co-opt the local clergy by

offering various kinds of assistance. "For example Fr. Eliseo Locatelli, SDB . . . was given carte blanche to contact the guerrillas and persuade them to give themselves up." [For discussion of this apparent attempt at mediation, see *ETL* 15/16, 17.]

The document affirms that Mgr Belo, "though hesitant", did not agree to accept integration. But it says that in November 1987 the intelligence team did dismantle a clandestine network in Dili and that, in relation to that operation, Mgr Belo was called in for interrogation, as were several priests and religious including Fr Domingos Morata de Cunha, Fr João de Deus and Fr Locatelli.

TAPOL has also reported, without citing sources, that the Indonesian military has set up underground networks in the cities to infiltrate the nationalist opposition movement. For its part, the latter has apparently developed a cell system precisely to reduce the risks of infiltration. The presence of Indonesian agents posing as dissidents may have explained Mgr Belo's comment to the Pro-Nuncio that "We don't know whether the *Yayasan* [Association of St Anthony] was set up just by Timorese or whether there are unknown forces behind it". [See the Association of St Anthony article in this issue.] *Tapol* speculates that the recent wave of arrests in April and May may be attributable to successful penetrations. [*Tapol* No.94, August 1989.]

## Apodeti

The officer responsible for the counter-intelligence programme is President Suharto's son-in-law, Colonel Prabowo, who commands Battalion 328 and runs an operational base from both Baucau and Dili. On his second tour of duty, the Colonel is said to have re-activated his connections with leaders of Apodeti and to be prosecuting a campaign against the Catholic church particularly aggressively.

According to *A Paz é Possivel*, in the Eastern districts of Baucau, Viqueque and Lospalos Colonel Prabowo organised public meetings to denounce the influence of the Church. "The Church, the priests and the religious," he is reported to have said, "are the three factors which threaten East Timor's integ-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 COL. 3



# The Association of St Anthony

Last December, Mgr Belo publicly protested against human rights abuses committed against followers of the sect of St Anthony, many of whom were arrested immediately before the visit to Dili in November of Indonesia's President Suharto [ETL 15/16]. In words now famous, Mgr Belo declared that *"We do not agree with this barbarous system and we condemn the lying propaganda which claims that there is no abuse of human rights in East Timor."* Until this incident, the existence of such sects was largely unknown outside East Timor. In a letter written on February 16 to Archbishop Canalini, Mgr Belo writes at length about the origins and beliefs of this group, and another called the Clandestine Party. His remarks shed light on East Timor's secret political life and we reprint extracts here.

## Yayasan Santo Antonio

Mgr Belo begins by explaining that the *Yayasan Santo Antonio* [Association of St Anthony] is a clandestine organisation founded by a man from Oecusse called Ananias do Carmo, a teacher at the Catholic primary school in Balide (Dili). According to do Carmo, "he disappeared when he was seven years old and re-appeared when he was nine. Since then, he has been immune to disease and to bodily wounds. His body is protected by special powers and is immune to bullets." From around 1984, he gathered support "among teachers, pupils and civil servants, to defend the Catholic religion against Islam and Protestantism, which is why he dedicated his worship to Saint Anthony. They say their prayers in front of the altar with candles and they pray for the sick. They are known to each other by a cross branded with a hot iron onto the palm of a hand or the arm. This practise has been followed in schools from Dili to Los Palos.

"At the same time, another group called the Clandestine Party became bactive. Being political, it attracted East Timorese who were dissatisfied with the situation [the Indonesian Occupation]. Among its leaders were Afonso Pinto and Lafaik and its members included Timorese from the military, members of the police, civil servants and students. According to Lafaik the aim of the organisation was

to fight corruption. Around the end of 1987, its existence was discovered and in early 1988 Lafaik was sent to Viqueque to fight the guerrillas of the Front [Fretilin].

"Some time in 1988, the two organisations joined forces with the objective of assassinating the President [Suharto] when he visited East Timor last year. But there was a misunderstanding between them at Uatolari, followed by mutual recriminations which led to the military discovering their existence.

"A wave of arrests and interrogations followed (men, women and students). The women and young girls were raped. The men were beaten up and kicked. All this led to reactions among the people, as a result of which the Church had to take a position which was expressed in the Pastoral Letter of 5 December.

"At present the situation is calm. Some of the leaders are under arrest. Will they be tried? I don't know. We don't know whether the Yayasan was set up just by Timorese or whether there are unknown forces behind it. The worst thing is that the frantic waves of arrests and interrogations were set up by some officers trying to seek favours from Suharto!" ■

## NEWS FROM INSIDE

# Arrests

Several sources, including *Amnesty International* have reported concern at a new wave of arrests in East Timor from April onwards, following the arrests in November 1988 at the time of President Suharto's visit to the territory.

As usual it has been hard to confirm information, but *Amnesty* felt confident enough to be able to report to the UN Decolonisation Committee in mid-August that it "is concerned by reports of widespread arrests since October 1988 and that we believe that many of those detained have been arrested because of their political activities and beliefs. We have compiled the names of over 200 people reportedly detained between October 1988 and July 1989. The actual number of people taken into custody for political reasons since October 1988 is undoubtedly far greater, although it appears that the majority

were quickly released after interrogation."

*Amnesty's* statement went on: "Among those arrested are people who are known to have expressed opinions critical of the Indonesian government or to have participated in non-violent activities in pursuit of political change in East Timor. Others are known to have assisted in the preparation and dissemination of letters and documents, including some signed by Bishop Belo, which call for a referendum on the political status of East Timor, and which detail human rights abuses committed by Indonesian security forces in the territory."

Among those arrested for compiling information about human rights *Amnesty* mentioned Filomeno Gomes (arrested November 1988), Lazaro Ribeiro (October 24 1988) and Jaime dos Santos (5 November 1988). All were reportedly tortured.

**"Hitherto the people have not been consulted. Others speak in the name of the people.**

**Indonesia says that the people . . . have already chosen integration, but the people of Timor have never said this.**

**Portugal wants to let time solve the problem. And we continue to die as a people and as a nation."**

Bishop Belo, Apostolic Administrator,  
February 1989

Indonesian officials have acknowledged arresting 25 people in May and early June, allegedly to ensure safety of the Pope, whose visit only takes place, of course, in October.

*Amnesty* expressed particular concern about the fact that some detainees are held incommunicado, sometimes for quite long periods, in military detention centres that are not subject to the normal judicial restraints and are not visited by international humanitarian organisations. Two such places were mentioned: the *Flamboyant* hotel in Baucau and the former house of Joaquim Babu in Dili. It is in such places, before charges are laid, that *Amnesty* considers torture takes place most frequently. "The forms of torture reported" to *Amnesty* "include: beating and kicking; burning with lighted cigarettes; electrical shock; placing a prisoner's foot under the leg of a chair which is periodically sat on by the interrogator; submersion in a tank of water for several hours at a stretch; forcing a prisoner to drink salt water, or to stand in boiling water; threatening a prisoner with the bite of a large alligator-like lizard; and in the case of women, sexual abuse."

*Amnesty* also reported that several of those recently arrested have 'disappeared'. It cited the cases of Manuel

Fatima Guterres, who was taken from his home in Dili on May 25 1989; Elias Pereira Moniz, reportedly arrested in Denpasar (Bali) on June 14 1989; policeman Victor da Silva, arrested on November 14 1988 for allegedly distributing tracts; and Herminio da Silva da Costa, an employee in the Governor's office in Dili, who is thought to have passed one of Bp. Belo's letters to an outside source and was arrested on May 24 1989.

According to Amnesty, at least five people "and possibly many more, were unlawfully executed by members of the military between March and June 1989". Those named were Juliao Freitas, killed on May 14 by members of Battalion 315; Gaspar de Sousa and Felix Ximenes, both killed on June 11 by members of Battalion 315; Aleixo Ximenes, killed on March 23 in Venilale by a member of Battalion 328; and Joachim Ximenes, killed in April by members of Battalion 328.

Another source, the Indonesian Institute for the Defence of Human Rights, reported having received information to the effect that 40 people had been arrested and seven executed by Battalions 315 and 328. In a letter dated June 15 to General Try Soetrisno, Commander-in-Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces, the Institute said that it had been informed that "at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of May, hundreds of people had been arrested and there had even been executions of people without trial. They were detained on suspicion of supporting Bishop Belo's letter to the United Nations. These actions are not only in conflict with basic human rights but also infringe the provisions of the Constitution and the Criminal Procedures Code (KUHP)." The Institute requested General Sutrisno to look into the allegations and investigate the activities of those responsible if they were true. [Reported in *Tapol* No. 94, August 1989.]

In its August issue, *Tapol* concludes that since April arrests have taken place in Dili, Baucau, Venilale, Manatuto, and Ainaro (among other places) and that dozens of individuals may have been summarily executed, including 20 people reported killed in Bere-Coli between March 12 and March 15 by Battalion 328.

"We have received several lists which include altogether more than a hundred names of people held since mid-April. According to one report, a hundred students were arrested in Dili in 13 and 14 May though only one name is available. On 29 May, students at the university of East Timor (Untim) wrote protesting against the Dili arrests, following which seven more students, whose names are not available, were arrested. All the detainees are being held at army detention and interrogation centres, not in prisons to which the International Red Cross has access." [*Tapol* No. 94, August 1989.] ■

## NEWS FROM INSIDE

# Students Refused Asylum

On June 19 four Timorese students sought asylum in the Vatican Embassy in Jakarta and two more in the Japanese Embassy. Their action followed the arrests of many Timorese in East Timor and Indonesia. [See elsewhere in this issue]. Their appeal for asylum was refused. The six students were placed in the care of Francisco Lopes da Cruz, an East Timorese member of the Indonesian Parliament.

The students made their move after the arrests of fellow student Eilis Pereira Moniz in Bali (June 14), and Lucas da Costa (June 15). The six tried to enter the Swedish Embassy before making their bid for asylum with the Vatican and Japan, but were refused access.

Eilis Pereira Moniz was studying at Udayana University in Bali; he has not been located since his arrest, and his case has been taken up by *Amnesty International*. Lucas da Costa is a teacher at the St. José Catholic school in Dili. A rather brilliant student who had previously worked at the Regional Development Bank in Dili, he was among those arrested during November 1988 in connection with the visit to East Timor of President Suharto and (according to *East Timor News* [SM 19, 14 July 1989]) was tortured. Lucas da Costa was reportedly arrested while trying to enter the Australian embassy in Jakarta.

## "Afraid"

Vatican officials who commented to *Reuters* staff in Jakarta described the students as "really intimidated" and confirmed that they were "afraid of torture and that they might be arrested." [*East Timor News* SM 19, 14 July.]

Nevertheless, the Embassy did not permit the students to stay and on June 20 the four students left. The following day, June 21, the two students in the Japanese embassy also left. All six were placed in the care of Francisco Lopes da Cruz, who was reported by *Kompas* as saying that they were "very tired and still afraid . . ."

"Even at his house," *Kompas* went on, "they remained very suspicious. They had asked for asylum because they had received news from East Timor that many students there had been questioned by the authorities. They were afraid and had asked for passports from Portugal."

The four students who sought asylum in the Vatican Embassy were: João dos Reis, Avelino Coelho da Silva, Agapito Cardoso and Marciano Garcia da Silva. Carlos da Silva Lopes and Fernando de Araujo sought refuge in the Japanese Embassy. Both Embassies were given guarantees as to the students' safety before they released them into the care of Mr Lopes da Cruz. ■

POLITICAL PRESSURE  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

ration within Indonesia. The people should turn against them." [*Le Paix est Possible au Timor Oriental* No. 30, August 1989.]

In April, Col. Prabowo is reported to have invited Apodeti leaders to a dinner to discuss ways in which to consolidate the integration process. Here too, the Colonel is said to have pressed his guests to organise a demonstration against the church.

Though written, Mgr Belo's letter to the UN Secretary General was not publicly known at this time. When the news leaked out, Timorese members of the Indonesian parliament were immediately asked to give their view. According to *A Paz é Possivel* most abstained from taking a position (Clementino dos Reis Amaral, Salvador Ximenes Soares) or declared their support for Mgr Belo (Francisco Lopes da Cruz, Mrs Petronela) – though Clementino dos Reis Amaral and Lopes da Cruz subsequently made public statements supporting Indonesia.

"The demonstration against the bishop which Colonel Prabowo had proposed did not take place until May 30. According to *Netherlands Radio*, Mgr Belo came out to speak to the ex-Apodeti and to onlookers who had gathered in front of his residence, in order to explain his position. *Netherlands Radio* reported that Mgr Belo was then applauded by the Timorese who had been sent to protest against him." [*A Paz é Possivel* No. 30, August 1989.] ■



# Mgr Belo on Human Rights

We have reported Mgr Belo's condemnation of arrests and abuses in previous issues of *Timor Link* [ETL 15/16]. On February 2, writing privately to the Pro Nuncio in Jakarta, Archbishop Canali, Mgr Belo went into greater detail about the character of oppression in East Timor. We quote from his letter. "Specific cases of recent abuses against human rights:

"I. Because of the Indonesian invasion and military occupation of East Timor, it has not been possible for the people of East Timor to express their feelings, which is in itself an abuse of human rights, in contravention of the United Nations Charter.

"II. The prohibition to talk about politics, the absence of freedom of association and assembly and to go out at night-time, these are everyday facts of life. It is forbidden to talk about independence, to talk about autonomy and to talk about a referendum. Concerning religion, there is no right to have no religion, to be an atheist or an animist. Everyone has to choose a religion."

Mgr Belo goes on to describe several recent killings by the Indonesian military but says very clearly that "The abuses mentioned under I and II are even graver."

He continues:

"Psychological pressure has been ex-

erted on officials not to divulge anything about these assassinations on threat of losing their jobs and their lives. Things like this have been going on since 1976...

"Since 1983, the year when I was appointed Apostolic Administrator, we have been witnessing such abuses every year. We have talked to the authorities, but the results have always been the same. It is the people who suffer. This is why it is urgent to conduct a referendum, to ask the people of East Timor whether they accept integration. In East Timor we live under the yoke of a dictatorship." ■

# Freedom of Movement

In the latest of its short reports on East Timor, *A Paz é Possível em Timor Leste* examines freedom of movement. The report can be obtained from rua de Campolide, 215-4D, 1000 Lisboa, Portugal. We summarise its findings.

The authors begin by pointing out that foreigners who have attempted to travel in the territory since it was "opened" in January [ETL 15/16, 17] have had a variety of experiences. The situation is still confusing.

However, East Timorese continue to face rigorous and restrictive controls. They must present passes [*surat jalan*], properly stamped, when they travel even short distances. "The *surat jalan* contains not only the owner's identifying characteristics, including his description, but indicates the starting point and purpose of the journey as well as the date on which it should take place. On arrival at his destination, the bearer must hand it in to the authorities." Information suggests that the *surat jalan* system is still applied in the five Eastern districts which have not been declared fully 'open', and that in the eight Western districts that are 'open' "military checks have continued as before and people are required to show personal identity cards".

The authors emphasise the extreme dislocation of social life since 1975, taking as their starting point remarks by Governor Carrascalao who admitted in 1988 that about 90% of the whole population had been displaced of

whom only about 20% had since been authorised to return to their place of origin. [*Far Eastern Economic Review* of 8/9/88.]

It should be noted that the figure of 20% refers to people allowed to resettle in their home area; it does not mean they were authorised to go back to their original homes. Indeed it is known, from the case of many deportees to Atauro, for example, that many people have been relocated to strategic hamlets and should therefore still be described as displaced.

Finally, the report describes how Indonesia's strategic hamlet policy has concentrated a dispersed population into a small number of controllable centres, and has deprived the population of normal access to the land they need to produce food for themselves.

The document reproduces Indonesian maps of the area of Lospalos, Teimoco/Titilari, Motolori-I/Bauro, Assalaino/Luavai, Iralafai/Sepelata and Maina- I that were sent abroad by Xanana Gusmao in 1986. These show how the authorities have marked out two zones around each camp, one for food cultivation and the other for food gathering. The military consider people found outside these areas as military targets.

The authors conclude that the system institutionalises hunger, because "These two zones ... are often insufficient to provide food for the basic survival of the camp's population: in certain places, when the military consider

it desirable, collective expeditions are organised under military guard to old dwelling areas where crops continue to grow even though abandoned (coconut trees, banana plants etc)."

The maps show that in the above areas "the population has been regrouped into 28 strategic hamlets" and that "the land normally accessible (for crops and food gathering) amounts to hardly 5% of the land area concerned".

Though the maps date back to 1985, the authors conclude that the overall situation has not changed, and cite incidents that took place in middle and late 1988 when several people were interrogated or killed because they were searching for food outside the official zones. ■



## REVIEW

# NEW

**Timor – Terra Sangrenta** by Jill Jolliffe  
Published by *O Jornal*, Lisbon. 179 pages, photographs, maps. May 1989. In Portuguese.

Jill Jolliffe, who collaborates with *Timor Link*, is an acknowledged expert on East Timor. A journalist who was reporting from Dili until shortly before the invasion, she is the author of a standard work on the subject – *East Timor, Nationalism & Colonialism* (University of Queensland Press, Australia, 1978, 362 pp.) – and has written numerous articles in the English language press.

The new book is a general study, which brings up to date her previous book, but it also looks more closely at Portugal's colonial record and includes the personal stories of some of those caught up in the tragedy.

Recommended for those who can read Portuguese.

Edições O Jornal, Av. de Liberdade, 232, r/c-Dt., 1200 Lisbon.

**East Timor: To be liberated or to be exterminated – that is the question** by Pedro Pinto Leite.

Published by X Minus Y, the Indonesia Committee and the Dutch East Timor Group. 1989, 37 pp. Price: 4 Dutch florins plus postage.

This pamphlet was designed as a campaigning document to influence the

Non-Aligned nations. The English translation is not good and this undermines the author's arguments. But, usefully divided into short sections, it tackles many of the standard Indonesian defences against criticism.

Komitee Indonesie, PO Box 40066, 1009 BB Amsterdam, Netherlands.

**Human Rights in Indonesia and East Timor** by Diane F. Orentlicher.

Published by Asia Watch, 1988. 270 pp. Price US\$ 15.00.

Only 24 pages of this Asia Watch report are given over to East Timor. Nevertheless, like those by Amnesty International, Asia Watch reports carry weight. This is a useful reference text.

36 West 44th St., Suite 911, New York, NY 10036, USA.

**East Timor – The Hidden War: the struggle for justice at home and abroad**

by Ian Bell, Glenda Lasslett, Georg Preston and George Tieman.

Published by the Australia-East Timor Association, Melbourne, July 1989. 32 pp. Photos. Price: Australian \$ 2.00, plus postage.

This short pamphlet is excellently presented and deserves wide circulation. Though oriented towards an Australian public, it contains a lot of information in a few pages and is highly accessible.

Recommended as an educational pamphlet.

PO Box 93, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065, Australia.

## Forthcoming:

**The Indonesian Occupation of East Timor, 1974-1989 – A Chronology** by John Taylor. Published by CIIR, London, late 1989. Hardback. Photos, map. Price: UK £14.99 post free. Special Price to *East Timor Link* readers: UK £9.99.

This book tells the story of East Timor through the reports filed in the English language press. Entries are highlighted, as well as referenced and cross-referenced. There is a full index.

John Taylor's book is the first of its kind. Designed for libraries and people with a specialist interest in East Timor, such as solidarity groups and academics, we believe it will be an essential resource for anyone who needs to sort out the facts on an issue which has been clouded by propaganda and allegation.

Available from CIIR, 22 Coleman Fields, London N1 7AF. ■



# Visits

More people are visiting East Timor since it was opened in January. We reproduce below part of a report which was sent to us. We do not know the identity of the author.

## Government

Outsiders often forget that the civilian government, whilst undoubtedly weaker than the parallel military structure and its business interests, is yearly growing more established. On the executive side, most major positions are held by East Timorese, from the governor all the way down to village heads. Considerable efforts are being made to educate East Timorese for public service jobs. Not half, but a good deal of the army too for that matter is Timorese: certainly Hansip, who are armed and feared in East Timor. The *kabupaten* level representative assembly (DPRD-II) is often a sham by being stacked with men in green, a phenomenon not restricted to East Timor. Some people see Indonesian permanence mostly in terms of the apparent solidity of civil government institutions. Governor Carrascalao is indeed quite popular amongst East Timorese of all stripes for his fierce stand against corruption. Many would like to see him stay for a third term.

## Church

Bishop Belo's letter to the UN, asking for a referendum on the future of East Timor, made him very popular overnight. Before that he had not been outspoken, preferring quiet diplomacy directly with the military. When a village head was killed near Viqueque the church brought the case to Korem, to the panglima, to the governor, all without success, the bishop himself approached the military but was merely asked where his proof was. It was then he decided to go public with his letter to the UN. One foreign priest commented that the bishop had failed to see the difference between western and eastern authority. Instead of shaming the Indonesians into action, as he perhaps expected, the letter has simply infuriated them. The Vatican also has not supported the letter. Apparently a Vatican delegate toured East Timor in July. In a meeting with the bishop he expressed his anger and even struck the table [ . . . ]

Church workers sent from Java have a difficult time finding acceptance. One complained: "the people think I have

come with the soldiers, but that is not at all the case". Javanese nuns of the Ursuline order have difficulty relating to the East Timorese Canossian order of nuns, and know little about what is going on [ . . . ]

## The Mood

Despite the constant barrage of propaganda over the television and radio, and the fear of detention over a casual conversation, everybody seems to know the names of Fretilin leaders. No-one except officials used the term "integration" to mark the events of 1976, instead they talk about "the war". There are many bitter memories of atrocities, particularly the Operasi Kikis in 1983. Village graveyards are eerily full of graves dated between 1977-1979. Nevertheless, Fretilin is clearly unable to engage widely in propaganda activities.

The atmosphere is extremely tense. It is not possible for a foreigner to hold a conversation about life in East Timor in which the other does not sooner or later come out with a strong political statement: either pro- or anti-Indonesian. This requires no provocation except an unwillingness at times to accept what is obviously a party line. A truck driver who had Indonesian soldiers on board proclaimed loudly how he had been mistreated by Fretilin, and



how different this behaviour was from that of the "gentlemen" from Indonesia. But when pressed to tell more, he suddenly looked depressed and said: "I only want to make a living, I am afraid, that is why I told you that fib just now. I once took some foreigners around, and afterwards I was interrogated for several days without food". The rest of the trip passed in painful silence.

East Timorese, like people throughout the archipelago, are traditionally warm and hospitable. But now they dare not entertain foreign visitors, in case they are interrogated about it af-







terwards. Their pain is that what is a duty to them is made impossible by fear. One priest commented over and over: "The atmosphere here is oppressive. You just live here for 2 or 3 months and you will feel how it is". A visiting Javanese academic, after an absence of 8 years, spoke about "the psychology of fear", and expressed disappointment that "so little has changed since 1981".

Even pro-Indonesian people are unwilling to accede to Indonesian propaganda about the Portuguese time. One person got angry about TV claims that there were no primary schools outside the capital before 1976, and that the Portuguese discriminated against poorly dressed people in parks and on aeroplanes. He recognised that the Indonesians are widely regarded as hated enemies, but only felt that there is no alternative to Indonesian rule. He did not believe the story that Apodeti was the major party when it "invited" Indonesia to take over, and recognised that most Timorese continue to want independence. The dominant reason given for the stand taken by pro-

Indonesian East Timorese officials is that "it is better not to live in a dream, we have suffered enough. A referendum on East Timorese independence, as asked for by the bishop, would be war all over again". This is a valid reason, though hardly an enthusiastic endorsement of Indonesia.

Indonesian economic development is quite visible: especially infrastructure such as roads, schools and television repeaters. But most of these facilities are there not altruistically but for purposes of control. One priest commented: "we remain human beings, even if we are given a golden bed to sleep in". He went on to quote the story of an 80-year old man who wanted to leave, because "it is better to die in freedom".

Javanese often make typical colonial comments about the low intellectual capacities and the laziness of the East Timorese. A recent series of newspaper articles (Kompas 10-13/7/1989) apparently quoted without comment the view that low coffee prices were a good thing, because East Timorese only waste their money on parties (fiesta).

A priest replied: "We suffer when we are invited to a fiesta: outwardly we celebrate, but inside it is different. The situation today is just the same as it was in 1976". ■

You may wish to write letters of support and sympathy to Mgr Belo. If so, you may write:

Directly to him:

Mgr Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo,  
SDB  
Camara Ecclesiastica  
Dili  
Timor Timur                      Indonesia;

Or via the Nunciature in Jakarta:

Mgr Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo,  
SDB  
Embassy of the Holy See  
PO Box 4227  
Jakarta Pusat                      Indonesia

If you write via Jakarta, please attach a note requesting the Embassy to pass your letter on to Mgr Belo.



## Tourism for Timor

LPPS Forum, published by the Catholic Institute of Social Research and Development (LPPS), reports that the Indonesian authorities have opened eight districts in East Timor to tourism. The eight – Dili, Ainaro, Covalima, Aileu, Ermera, Liquisa, Bobonaro and Ambeno – are all considered to have 'adequate infrastructure'.

Five more districts – Manatuto,

Manufahi, Baucau, Viqueque and Lautem – will be declared 'visiting areas' when adequate facilities are available, according to the Minister for Tourism, Post & Telecommunications Soesilo Soedarman. [*LPPS Forum*, No. 8, July 1989].

It will be noted that the first group of eight districts are all in the West of East Timor, and the second group of 'visit-

ing areas' in the East. In effect, this division corresponds to the "East-West" division applied by the security forces. When East Timor was declared "open" in January, the new arrangements applied only to the Western districts. Access to the "Eastern" sector – in which nearly two thirds of East Timor's people live – remains subject to restriction. ■

## UN Sub-Commission Re-Adpts Timor

Last year the UN Commission on Human Rights, meeting in Geneva, dropped the issue of East Timor from its agenda. Indonesia claimed that this 'victory', due in fact to a procedural debate, meant the end of the issue at Geneva.

Indonesian diplomats were therefore caught off balance when a new resolution was submitted by the Greek, Norwegian, Japanese and Mexican members of the Commission, supported by 15 non-governmental organisations.

Though diplomats were immediately flown in from Jakarta, the resolution was carried by 12 votes to 9, with 3 abstentions – a majority probably assisted by the fact that the vote was (unusually for the UN) by secret ballot.

### Text of the Resolution

*The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities*

*Guided by the Universal Declaration*

of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the universally accepted rules on international humanitarian law,

*Recalling* its resolutions 1982/20 of 8 September 1982, 1983/26 of 6 September 1983, 1984/24 of 29 August 1984 and 1987/13 of 2 September 1987 concerning the situation in East Timor,

*Considering* the repeated allegations that the people of East Timor continue to be subjected to gross violations of human rights,

1. *Welcomes* the action taken by the Secretary-General regarding East Timor;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to encourage all parties concerned, that is the administering Power, the Indonesian Government and representatives of the East Timorese people, to co-operate in order to achieve a durable solution, taking full account of the rights and wishes of the people of East Timor;

3. *Takes note* of the letter from Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, dated 6 February 1989 (A/AC.109/991), addressed to the Secretary-General calling for a referendum in East Timor;

4. *Appreciates* the Indonesian Government's new policy of openness in East Timor since January 1989;

5. *Regrets however* that more arrests, torture and summary executions are alleged to have taken place since the end of 1988;

6. *Hopes therefore* that the Indonesian Government would go a step further to allow representatives of human rights organisations to visit the territory;

7. *Recommends* to the Commission on Human Rights that it consider, at its forty-sixth session, the human rights situation and fundamental freedoms in East Timor. ■

### INTERNATIONAL ROUND-UP

## Fifth Christian Consultation

The Fifth Consultation of European Christians on East Timor was held this September in Brussels. Organised by the Belgian Justice & Peace Commissions, the Christian Movement for Peace and the research institute Pro Mundi Vita, and sponsored by the Netherlands Justice & Peace Commission, the Portuguese group *A Paz é Possível em Timor Leste* and CIIR, it brought together some 30 delegates from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and West Germany.

This year's theme, *Justice and Development*, highlighted Indonesia's development programme in East

Timor, and the continued absence of justice, which means that the majority of East Timor's people do not benefit from the Indonesian government's spending on roads, health services and the economy.

At the end of the meeting, during which participants heard the report of a Timorese refugee recently arrived in Lisbon, the Consultation published a press release which drew attention to Timorese anxieties about the conditions in which the Pope's visit in October has been organised.

It was agreed that a letter would be written to Mgr Belo to express sympathy and support for the position he

and the Church in East Timor have taken.

Participants took advantage of their presence in Brussels to meet Members of the European Parliament and the Belgian Parliament, and to meet Mr Abilio Araujo, Chief Representative of Fretilin's External Delegation, who visited Brussels at the invitation of the Christian Movement for Peace on his way back from Rome where he had been received by the Vatican.

The Consultation took place at the Jacques Brel International Youth Centre from September 5-8 1989. As always, the Consultation's discussions were private.

# United States

**East Timor remains on the US agenda in its relations with Indonesia.** The issue was raised both by Vice-President Quayle during a visit to Jakarta in May, and by US Congressman when President Suharto went to Washington in June. We report on the new letter from Congress.

For an issue which barely squeezes on to the inside pages of major Western newspapers, East Timor has been given exceptional attention in the United States. In late 1988, no less than 47 Senators – almost half the US Senate – and 229 Members of Congress signed letters asking the American Administration to take up the question of East Timor with President Suharto's government.

That such pressure exists is due to two American parliamentarians in particular – the Republican Senator Dave Durenberger and the Democratic Congressman Tony P. Hall, both of whom have consistently drawn attention to human rights and humanitarian issues in the territory.

Sen. Durenberger spoke again in the US Senate on June 8, on the eve of President Suharto's meeting with President Bush. "I firmly believe," said Sen. Durenberger, "that the United States should support the continuation and expansion of the small international humanitarian presence in East Timor,

so that the people of the island may receive the greatest amount of international observation and relief possible. I also advocate the reduction of restrictions on movement in and out of the territory, and respect for human rights. Finally, Monsignor Belo's request for a democratic solution to the tragic situation in East Timor cannot be ignored."

With respect to Mgr. Belo's letter, Sen. Durenberger was clear: "To request a free and fair election is no crime and this should not be met with threats, implicit or explicit."

## Congress to Bush: Raise ET

In their letter to President Bush on June 8, 118 Members of Congress formally requested President Bush to discuss the issue of East Timor at his meeting with President Suharto.

Though they approved the 'opening' of East Timor, the letter noted that "several journalists and parliamentarians . . . have reported that they were inhibited in their contact with the Timorese" and that church and press reports "make it clear that severe violations of human rights, including executions, rape, and beatings, are a recurring problem."

"We believe," they say, "that the United States should firmly support the continued presence in East Timor of international humanitarian organizations, as well as the efforts of human

rights groups to obtain unrestricted access to the territory. International humanitarian organizations with existing programs in East Timor, and others that wish to initiate programs, should be allowed to provide expanded assistance and protection for the East Timorese, including political detainees and their relatives.

"There appears to be a need for additional medical care and supplies in certain rural areas of the territory. Further, concern has been raised about Indonesia's birth control activities in East Timor in view of the large-scale loss of population there."

Finally, the letter drew the US president's attention to the letter sent by Mgr. Belo calling for a referendum, "based on the view that a peaceful resolution of the conflict in East Timor, which is the source of much of the humanitarian need in the territory, should address the concerns and interests of the Timorese people themselves", and ends by encouraging Mr Bush "to support discussions with the United Nations, Indonesia, Portugal and all interested parties, that seek to secure a just and lasting peace for the people of East Timor".

It is significant that such a letter can still attract over 100 signatures at the beginning of a new Congress, at a time when many Members will be unfamiliar with the issue. ■

# European Parliament

In May of this year, the European Parliament adopted a further resolution on the situation in East Timor [Doc. B2-170/89].

The new Parliament was convened at the beginning of September, and it is understood that an East Timor group will again be created. The issue will therefore be kept alive.

## Text of the Resolution:

– Having regard to the resolutions of 10 July 1986 [OJ C262, 10/10/1986, p.142] on the situation in East Timor,

A Aware of the dramatic appeal from Bishop Dom Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, Apostolic Administrator of East Timor, to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Perez de Cuellar, where he states: "we are dying as a people as well as a nation",

B Whereas the Indonesian Government has stated that it is not prepared to consult the people of East Timor about their own future.

1 Repeats its point of view that it is a fundamental right of all peoples freely to choose their own future;

2 Calls again upon the Foreign Ministers meeting in European Political Cooperation to take diplomatic steps in order to achieve the right to self-determination for the people of East Timor;

3 Urges the Commission to provide all possible aid to the refugess camps in East Timor as well as in Portugal, and to inform Parliament about their actions;

4 Requests its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Foreign Ministers meeting

in European Political Cooperation, the Secretary General of the UN, the Government of Indonesia and to the Assembly of the Non-aligned Countries. ■



# An Appeal to the Pope

## From the East Timorese Community in Australia.

Holy Father,

We, the East Timorese people living in exile in Australia, wish to convey to Your Holiness, with our deepest respect, our sentiments regarding your visit to our homeland on October 12.

We are deeply moved by your wish to visit our small country to pray with our people. Your visit will be an historic moment in East Timor and a great honour and comfort to all Timorese. We believe that because you are the Universal Pastor and have a special responsibility for East Timor, you have both a right and an obligation to express your personal solidarity in faith and worship with our people, the majority of whom are now Catholics.

At the same time, however, we are deeply concerned that your visit will be manipulated for political purposes and that its pastoral character will be compromised.

We are concerned, for example, over reports that your visit to East Timor, whose integration with Indonesia is opposed by most East Timorese and is not recognised by the United Nations, will be preceded and followed by visits to Indonesia and, further, that all arrangements are being made by the

Indonesian Government as the host of your visit. Though this is not your intention, we believe that cooperation with such arrangements will allow Indonesia to claim Papal recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, thereby politicising your visit and detracting from its pastoral purpose. Indonesia has already made such claims in recent speeches to the United Nations. We therefore strongly urge you to visit East Timor solely as our Pastor and religious leader and not as a guest of the Indonesian Government.

The international media has decided, rightly or wrongly, that if you do not kiss the ground on arrival in East Timor this will mean you regard East Timor as part of Indonesia. We respectfully ask that you do greet us with this beautiful gesture, and that this gesture be offered, and be seen to be offered, simply as a sign of your pastoral affection not as a political statement.

It has also been reported that the Papal Mass in Dili will be celebrated in either Bahasa Indonesia or Latin. In our view, neither language is appropriate or necessary. We do not understand why Mass for an East Timorese congre-

gation would not be celebrated in Tetum, the language of the people, which is already used regularly throughout East Timor for this purpose. The use of the Tetum vernacular would also appear to be more consistent with your welcome appeals in 1984 and 1986 in defence of the ethnic and cultural identity of the East Timorese people.

The historical circumstances of the Timorese people's mass conversion to the Catholic Church cannot be ignored. Our people have turned to the Church for protection and the advocacy of their rights. Our basic aspiration has recently found fresh expression in a letter, written by your Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, to the United Nations calling for the people to be consulted about their future, a plea we wholeheartedly endorse.

We urge you to listen to this aspiration and to be sensitive to the events which have shaped our faith and relationship with the Church. We urge that no arrangements be entered into which might offend or scandalise our people's faith in the Church.

When Your Holiness celebrates the death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ at Tacitolu, a notorious killing field in East Timor, we ask that you will remember our 200,000 loved ones who have perished from war since 1975.

Finally, Holy Father, we ask God to bless you. We pray that your visit to East Timor will be a clear sign of hope, a source of new unity and strength for our people, and a vindication of our trust in God and the Church.

On behalf of the East Timorese community in Australia:

Thomas de Jesus, President,  
Timorese Association of Victoria

Domingos Oliveira, Perth

Alfredo ferreira, Darwin

Joao Carrascalao, Sydney.

September 15 1989

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