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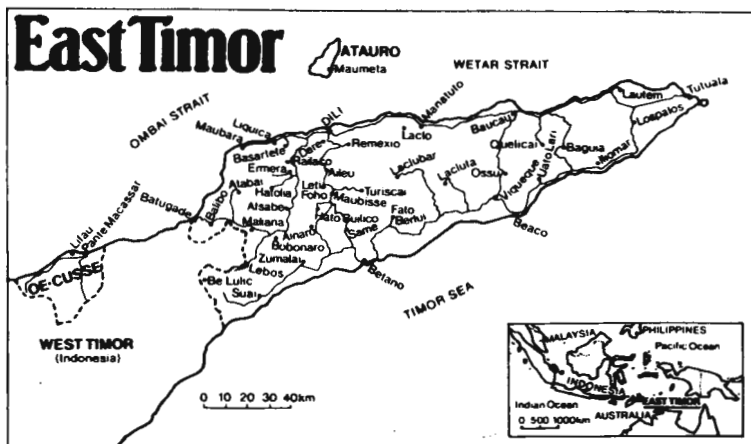
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Reviews

Chronology of a Repression

It is still difficult to piece together and interpret with precision the events that preceded and followed the Pope's visit on October 12. Communications, relatively open in the period following the January 1989 announcement that Timor was an 'open' province, were closed down again after the Mass demonstration. Students have been interrogated, demonstrations violently repressed, priests have become unwilling to speak on the telephone, phone lines have become unobtainable.

It is clear that intimidation is more extreme now than it has been for some years, and that the clarity and simplicity of the local Catholic Church's demand for a referendum has given new heart to the nationalist opposition and presented a fresh obstacle to the Indonesian government's attempts to win credibility within East Timor and abroad.

One old tradition survives: the authorities' first reaction to the new challenge has been to repress and intimidate; and their second to deny or re-invent what has taken place. Below we have attempted to set out a chronology of events. On the back page of this issue is an account of how the authorities in East Timor handled a peaceful protest on January 17.

1988

November 1-2 President Suharto visits Dili; dedication of Dili's new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. Hundreds of Timorese are arrested in a security sweep before Suharto's visit.

December 10 Bp Belo protests in a pastoral letter about the arrests and ill-treatment of Timorese in connection with Suharto's visit.

1989

January 1 The Indonesian government officially declares that East Timor is an 'open' province, on a footing with provinces in other parts of Indonesia. [Over half the territory nevertheless remains subject to special restrictions.]

February 6 Bp Belo writes to the UN Secretary General, calling for a referendum, and in the same month to the Papal Nuncio in Jakarta informing him about recent human rights abuses.

April Bp Belo's letter becomes public, and is promptly denounced as unrepresentative by military spokesmen, politicians and church officials in Indonesia.

A number of Timorese are arrested, probably because they are believed to be associated with Bp. Belo's letter.

Further arrests take place in May,

June and July. In September, Bp Belo estimates that at least 55 people were detained during this period in Dili, Manatuto, Baucau, Los Palos and Viqueque [AFP, Sept. 5]. He also says that in the 3 months leading up to the Pope's visit, there were few arrests [Ouest-France Oct. 12]. Sources associated with the nationalist resistance claim in July that up to 1,500 people were detained in the months before Pope John Paul's visit [Clandestine Front, in *East Timor News Monthly Memo* 28, December 1989].

June 14 Elias Pereira Moniz, a Timorese student, is arrested in Bali; on June 19 six other students seek (and are refused) political asylum in the Vatican and Japanese embassies in Jakarta.

May Amnesty International expresses concern at 11 reported arrests in Dili, and between 40 and 50 arrests in Baucau during this month.

May 28 A crowd composed of Apodeti supporters gathers outside the Bishop's residence to demonstrate against Bp Belo's stand in favour of a referendum. A crowd gathers to support the Bishop. Belo appears and calms the atmosphere. Arrests follow.

June 8 Soon after the Indonesian

bishops return from their *ad limina* visit to Rome, Mgr Darmaatmadja, Chairman of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference, writes to Bp Belo: "We ... have read in the press about your letter [of February 6] and the subsequent reactions to it. Recognising that there are important aims you wish to achieve, and although our views may differ with regard to the best ways to achieve them, you may still count on our esteem".

June 19 Bp. Belo protests to the Indonesian authorities about slanderous accusations made against some of his clergy by members of the Indonesian military.

July Timorese clergy support the stand taken by Bp Belo in his letter of February 6.

August Over 1,300 Catholics in Asia, including 5 Cardinals and 118 bishops, support Bp Belo's letter of February 6.

September Bp Belo gives interviews to foreign press at which he repeats his concern about lack of freedom in East Timor and stands by his letter of February.

October 9 The Pope arrives in Indonesia. At a reception held by Pres. Suharto he declares: "At times nations are tempted to disregard fundamental human rights in a misguided search for political unity based on military or economic power alone. But such unity can easily be dissolved." He says the best basis for Indonesia's unity and development is "a profound respect for human life, for the inalienable rights of the human person and for the freedom of responsible citizens to determine their destiny".

October 10 Bp Belo says: "They are threatening me physically and psychologically. They send me anonymous letters. They want to kill me." [Telephone interview published in *Independente*, Oct. 13.]

October In advance of the Pope's visit to Dili, the Indonesian military sets up checkpoints every 20 kms along access roads to Tasi-Tolu.

October 12 Pope John Paul II visits East Timor. He consecrates the Cathedral in Dili, where he speaks privately to the priests. He accords prominence to Bp Belo. He celebrates Mass in the open air at Tasi-Tolu before a congregation of some 100,000.

At the end of the Mass, a demonstration takes place, led by a score of young men. Their banners welcome the Pope and support East Timor's independence; one banner of welcome is signed by Fretilin. The crowd shows sympathy for the demonstrators, who are beaten back by police with sticks. Four people are injured. The scene is photographed and observed by foreign journalists,

although the majority of the Pope's press corps had already left when the demonstration took place.

The Pope sees the demonstration, cancels a meeting with the International Committee of the Red Cross, and leaves the territory. The Vatican makes no public protest or comment.

During the day, about 40 young men are arrested. Some are from the Training College at Fatumaka.

Bp Belo protests against the treatment of those arrested. He says on the telephone: "I am shocked that the Indonesian military is extracting false confessions [from those arrested] under torture. The boys were trying to express their discontent with the situation in East Timor. It is a lie that the church was in any way involved in the demonstration."

October 15 Fr Jose Carbonell, Provincial Superior of the Salesian Fathers, and Fr Andreas Calleja and Fr Eligio Locatelli, respectively Rector and Administrator of the St John Bosco Technical College in Fatumaka write to the Indonesian military commander denying their students were involved in the Mass protest, disowning the protest, and expressing deep regret that "some of our students were hunted and arrested indiscriminately during the night of Oct. 12 because wearing the green T-shirt of the School of Fatumaka, they were brought to the police station, beaten (one of them not yet recovered and not yet home), interrogated in a very prejudicial way, trying and forcing them to mention Fr. Locatelli and Fr. A. Callejo as the leaders of the School of Fatumaka who provoked the disorder of Tasi-Tolu at the end of the Mass."

The letter goes on to say that an attempt was made to forge evidence against the students: "The boys who were arrested told us that they were invited to raise streamers (recently painted or the same) like those of the manifestants, while a photo-camera wanted to catch them with the background of the video-screen with the scenes of the tumult of the manifestants at Tasi-tolo..."

"To say the whole truth, our students said that there were police-men with very good manners."

"These happenings at the police station are absolutely unfair..."

[The precise facts about detentions in the period after the Mass demonstration remain obscure. It is not clear how many people were detained, how they were treated, where they were held, or for how long. Telephone lines to church sources were closed down; Indonesian officials and Governor Carrascalao denied there

were detainees; the Red Cross was refused access to detainees; and at different times church sources themselves gave different descriptions of events. There is no doubt that some church personnel were pressured to unsay things that were prejudicial to the authorities.]

November 4 In a disturbance outside the Bishop's residence, rocks are thrown at military vehicles. The disturbance begins after rumours that the Bishop's house is to be attacked. Between 3 and 40 people are arrested and taken away to an unknown place.

November 13 A young man is killed by the security forces near the east Timorese university at Lahane.

November 15 In another incident, this time at Saint Joseph's College, students throw stones and clash with police looking for people involved in the November 4 incident. Shots are fired in the air, at least two students are arrested and one is injured. A group of 16 young men seek refuge in the Bishop's house.

November At end November or the beginning of December, security forces enter the Bishop's residence and cause all the young men who have taken refuge there to leave. Bp Belo receives an assurance from Governor Carrascalao that all will be released after questioning.

December 6 The Indonesian armed forces officially switches its focus from security operations to territorial administration and development.

December 8 Third dedication of Dili's new cathedral in the presence of Gen. Moerdani.

December 24 Fretilin [Canberra office] claims that a group of Timorese youths have raided a "VIP party" in Dili, injuring several Indonesians and damaging vehicles.

December 26 A demonstration by Timorese students in Bali is violently dispersed by the army. Jose Carvalho, a Timorese student, is found dead a few days later, reportedly assassinated. [A Paz e Possivel.]

December 27 Three students are reported wounded in a raid by Indonesian security forces on a party for Timorese students in Dili. One member of the security forces is reported to have been shot dead accidentally [Fretilin, Canberra].

1990

17 January The US Ambassador talks to demonstrators outside the Hotel Turismo in Dili. They are dispersed violently after his departure. At least two are reported killed. The violence is witnessed by US diplomats and Australian tourists. ■

What the Pope said

What message did the Pope leave with you and your Priests?
 Mgr Belo: "That we the Priests must work for reconciliation amongst the East Timorese people and to promote human rights among individuals and families."

What did the Pope tell the people of East Timor when he visited last October? Little attention has been given to his speech at the Papal Mass because it was immediately overshadowed by the drama of the protest demonstration and by subsequent arrests. Moreover, in customary fashion, his language was oblique, if not ambiguous.

Symbols

The event itself saw much exploitation of symbols. First of all, the kiss. The Pope did not kiss the earth of East Timor when his plane landed — a decision that was interpreted, particularly by the American press, as illuminating the Vatican's foreign policy towards East Timor, even though the Pope himself had stated on his plane to Indonesia that the Vatican's policy on East Timor was unchanged.

However, Pope John Paul did kiss a crucifix laid on the ground before him at the site of the Mass — an act which Vatican officials described as a pastoral gesture without special significance but which some Timorese certainly took to signify that the Pope was on their side. As Bishop Belo told Peter Philp of the Australian Catholic paper *The Advocate*:

Belo: "I was disappointed that he [the Holy Father] did not kiss the land as a gesture of love. But on the other hand ... he knelt before the altar and kissed the crucifix at Taci-tolu before the Mass ... This had profound significance because the crucifix showed the suffering Christ and the bodies and souls of so many East Timorese people. So the Pope wanted to kiss the crucified Christ there.

Philp: Would you have liked to see the Pope kiss the ground at the airport?

Belo: Yes, that was my desire. During the journey I asked his Holiness that if he didn't kiss the land at the airport, at least kiss the ground at Taci-tolu. He accepted the request."

Manipulation was certainly not absent from the Indonesian government's preparations. A huge

picture of President Suharto was erected alongside that of the Pope at Taci-Tolu — good for television, though not, one suspects, for relations with East Timor's people. Even the platform on which the Pope stood at the Mass was fashioned, according to one Indonesian official, to represent the values of Pancasila.

Language

Before the Pope's arrival, there had been much discussion of whether he would speak in Bahasa Indonesia as

desired by the government in Jakarta, in Tetum as desired by the Timorese — or even, in a surreal diplomatic manoeuvre, in Latin.

In the event Pope John Paul opened in Tetum, and then spoke chiefly in English, to an audience estimated to number about 100,000. This was less than advance publicity had anticipated.

The Pope also spoke privately to Bishop Belo and to the clergy of East Timor during his visit to Dili, where he blessed the new Cathedral. His meeting with the priests was apparently



East Timorese kneel before the Pope on his arrival in Dili.

a moving experience. One person in a position to know what happened said that John Paul gave more help in those few minutes than Portugal had achieved in 15 years.

Speaking to Peter Philp, Bishop Belo also commented on the people's response:

Philp: Did the Pope leave hope and comfort with your people?

Belo: Yes. Many of them cried because they understood that the Pope was speaking to them directly. So I believe all of them were happy.

Below, we reprint some of the salient passages in the Pope's homily at Taci-Tolu.

"Salt and Light"

The Pope began by saying how close he felt to the people:

"... From the very beginning of my Pontificate I have followed your situation with deep concern. It has long been my wish to express to you that the whole Church, and the Pope in a particular way, holds you in esteem and in affection."

In a passage that surely attempted to reassure the people of Timor that they have not been abandoned, he went on to consider the images "salt of the earth" and "light of the world". Salt is spiritual wholeness, he said, light the wisdom that comes from experience of life:

"Therefore when we heed Christ's call to be the 'salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world' we help to build up the Church not only in our local communities, but as the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church spread throughout the world. For the Church is one in all the earth and the same in every place. She is both 'universal' and 'local'."

Respect for rights

This is followed by the most direct reference in the homily to the recent suffering and experience of Timor's people.

What does it mean to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" in East Timor today? For many years now, you have experienced destruction and death as a result of conflict; you have known what it means to be victims of hatred and struggle. Many innocent people have died, while others have been prey to retaliation and revenge. For too long you have been suffering a lack of stability which has rendered your future uncertain. This distressing situation causes economic difficulties which, in spite of some relief, still exist, preventing

A priest comments...

"The Holy Father's visit was successful on both levels [religious and political]. The end was magnificent, but the consequences were terrible."

This is an extract from the first document to emerge from East Timor since the Pope's visit. Written by a priest, it confirms that those who demonstrated at the end of the Mass were mixed in with students from the Salesian College in Fatumaca, that Fatumaca students were subsequently arrested, beaten and forced to make false statements implicating the College and its staff; and that (according to the priest), although the military later recognised their mistake, "three students are still missing".

The letter reveals how strikingly different were local and foreign perceptions of the Pope's visit. "It was a success that he knelt at Taci-Tolu to kiss the cross," the priest declares. "He was to have done it at the airport but the *bapak* didn't let him." The letter notes that the East Timorese were pleased that the Pope "never spoke a word in Indonesian and did not once 'dirty' his mouth with the word Indonesia."

The letter further says that, although "neighbouring bishops and priests came and went into the Cathedral without being invited, they had little luck, not one of them kissed the Holy Father's hand because he remained all the time with us."

A Paz e Possivel em Timor Leste, which reports the content of the letter, adds this commentary:

"Some of these remarks, or the feelings they reveal, will appear excessive to a distant observer. 15 years after the invasion, they demonstrate how totally the occupation is rejected and how strong is the will to resist. They also show how much, in this unequal struggle, the Timorese transform the smallest matter that passes before them into a message of salvation, enabling them at least momentarily to catch their breath." ■

the development needed to face the burden of hunger and indigence, of unemployment and lack of prospects.

Respect for the rights which render life more human must be firmly ensured: the rights of individuals and the rights of families. I pray that those who have responsibility for life in East Timor will act with wisdom and good will towards all, as they search for a just and peaceful resolution of present difficulties in order to bring about a speedy improvement of conditions of life which will permit you to live in social harmony, according to your own traditions and requirements, in serene and fruitful productivity."

Reconciliation

The core of the Pope's homily was a forceful appeal for reconciliation. He did not say who should be reconciled to whom. He could well have been speaking about the need for Timorese to renew relations with each other as well as about an eventual settlement of the conflict with Indonesia.

Significantly the Pope referred several times in his remarks to the need for reconciliation in the church, among the clergy. Here no doubt is a reference to the known mistrust between Timorese and Indonesian priests and religious and to the sharp disagreements over Timor's future that have surfaced between foreign as well as Timorese clergy.

"Your land is much in need of Christian healing and reconciliation. But the ecclesial community itself must be a reconciled community if it is to fulfil the important role that springs from Christ's words: 'you are the salt...you are the light'. It is not always easy to find the courage, determination and patience needed for reconciliation. Yet we know in faith that love transcends every boundary between nations, peoples and cultures. No matter what the differences, no matter what the grievances or injuries, we who are Christ's followers must take to heart his words: 'Forgive, and you will be forgiven.' 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.'"

Family life, culture

In the second half of his homily, as he continued his theme, the Pope emphasised, perhaps in coded language, the importance of Timor's cultural identity — a point made famously in 1984 when the Pope spoke of the Vatican's concern for the "ethnic, religious and cultural identity of the people" of East Timor.

"You who are Catholics in East Timor have a tradition in which family life, education and social customs are deeply rooted in the Gospel, and this tradition is a great part of your identity. Yours is a tradition imbued with the teachings and spirit of the Beatitudes, one of humble trust in god, of mercy and forgiveness and, when necessary, of patient suffering in time of trial. There are situations in which the ecclesial community needs to be especially capable of living the evangelical message of love and reconciliation. The strength to do so comes from interior conversion. Only when we are reborn in the Spirit do we understand the force of the Gospel words: "Blessed are the meek... Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness... Blessed are the peacemakers... The call to be "salt" and "light" is no easy task. It is nothing less than the call to be fully "mature in Christ".

Honesty and competence

In a passage that pursues his discussion of Timor's moral culture, the Pope refers to the values that should inform public as well as private life: his words no doubt made good sense to an audience that has become familiar with administrative corruption and inequity under Indonesian rule.

"Furthermore, your parishes, your catechesis, your Catholic schools, your small communities and other forms of association, all have a role to play in educating for a strong family life which respects God's plan for life and love, for honesty and competence in the world of work and public affairs, for virtue and goodness in all areas of human endeavour. We must show ourselves worthy of your Christian calling, which is a call to holiness, to prayer, to the practise of the sacraments and to the self-sacrifice without which discipleship is impossible. I urge you to persevere in your calling. I exhort you all to live "in the bond of peace", in union with the Pope and with the Apostolic Administrator and priests of your diocese, who have been so generous in their work in these difficult years. The Lord who sees and knows all things will reward the Religious Brothers and Sisters, and those members of the laity who have been specially committed to serving the needs of others. A special word of esteem must go to the valiant missionaries who have stayed near to the people in the most trying moments of your recent history..."

Comment

Reading the runes

The first thing that can be said about the Pope's homily is that he recognised explicitly that the people of East Timor have suffered very greatly. This is at the heart of East Timor's experience in recent years, and the Pope's explicit affirmation of this suffering is important and necessary — and could not be taken for granted beforehand.

Secondly, the homily is seeded with references — many of them veiled or coded — which acknowledge that the sufferings of East Timor's people are underpinned or directly caused by injustices. Indeed, the Pope's emphasis on reconciliation makes little sense unless this is assumed.

Thirdly, it needs to be remembered that the Pope's visit to East Timor was very carefully defined as a pastoral visit: the Vatican made it clear beforehand that the Pope would not address the political issues raised by East Timor. The weight of the homily becomes apparent only when it is read within this artificially constrained context.

Who's Forgiving Whom?

The interesting question to ask is why the Pope chose to give so much emphasis to the idea of reconciliation — especially since Bishop Belo adopted the same theme for his own Christmas homily at the end of 1989.

One view is that the Vatican would like to see peace break out at all costs in East Timor — essentially without regard to whether a settlement of the war with Indonesia is just. Such a view assumes that the Catholic church is itself 'reconciled' to Indonesia's incorporation of East Timor. On this interpretation, Vatican policy is designed essentially to shorten the period of transition before the incorporation can be recognised and reduce the suffering involved for East Timor's people.

There is a more interesting and also more defensible interpretation of the church's recent positions, however. It certainly makes more sense of Bishop Belo's actions even if it cannot be assumed that the Vatican hierarchy shares his perspective.

This approach assuming that East Timor is a deeply divided society. It has been divided by the bitter violence, oppression and isolation of the last 15 years. At the same time, Indonesian rule has only sharpened and deepened social and political divisions in Timorese society that were set in place or exacerbated by the backward

colonialism practised by Portugal. Both governments of occupation have benefited from fomenting and sustaining these divisions. And on top of all this, the period of civil war in 1975 laid down bitter and politically sectarian memories which have not been completely effaced — and are concealed only by the presence of a larger and more dominant enmity towards the Indonesians.

In this perspective, reconciliation between Timorese becomes a fundamental precondition for long term survival of Timor's culture and people. Viewed in such a light, Belo's letter of February is so significant not only because it raised fundamental issues clearly, but because it brought East Timor's political community together. Its language and its message were essentially acceptable to almost all sections of opinion in East Timor.

It is also significant because it was written at a time of dramatic movement in the comportment of East Timor's political leaders. Since 1985, when UDT and Fretilin agreed to form a common front, the emphasis has increasingly been on developing a nationalist consensus within East Timor, broader in appeal than any particular ideology or party could be. This has now culminated in Xanana's decision to leave Fretilin — symbolically separating the liberation movement from the rancour and bitterness of its own past. [See the article in this issue.]

What if this was the context that Bp Belo and John Paul II were thinking of? Their words acquire sudden relevance. Rather than tired pieties or mealy-mouthed references to Indonesia's responsibility, their remarks address an urgent and fundamental need for (political) unity, something that East Timor's people must achieve if they are to continue the long struggle for their freedom and their identity. Yet (political) unity will surely remain unachievable unless the bitter divisions of the past are recognised and acknowledged. This is a human process of healing as much as it is a political process of development. Expressed in moral rather than political terms, it requires a profoundly difficult act of comprehending and forgiving others. Reconciliation. ■

What the Press saw

We reprint below excerpts from some of the many reports published at the time of the Pope's visit. 123 journalists accompanied the Pope to East Timor. Though promised complete freedom to report what they saw, the foreign press was subsequently criticised by Foreign Minister Alatas for one-sided and biased reporting. [Tapol, No 96, December '89.] Indonesia's own sheet was not unblemished, however. Several foreign journalists were refused visas to join the Pope's entourage; and the film of some photographers who took pictures of the Mass demonstration was seized and exposed.

From Actuel, September 1989

A young javanese in jeans and sneakers welcomes us at Dili airport. He says he's a guide but he examines our passports, takes note of the number and suggests we drop by the police station next day where we get a little interrogation. Plainclothes cop, he'll watch us and make sure we are followed throughout our stay.

We hire a bike and set off inland ... Dili, Metinaro, Manatuto. We follow the coast: coral, ricefields, palm trees, thatched huts, huge ancient trees. A tropical paradise where the singing and dancing has stopped.

Laleia, Vemasse, Bucoli. Armed soldiers everywhere controlling the "main roads". We pass some tanks. Filthy, their kit in rags and their faces drawn, a score of exhausted men are sprawled beside the road. Their leader comes from Solo, Suharto's home village. He tells me they've been combing the countryside for a week, they've been in combat up in the mountains, one of them is dead, soon they will kill Xanana, leader of the Fretilin guerrillas.

Baucau, Laga, Berecoli. Torpor. The people are afraid. At the first question, they duck away and flee. Even the priests shut up. "For your safety and ours," they explain.

In Baucau, we stay at the Hotel Flamboyant... At 5 am twenty lorries drive out taking troops to the front... In the village, scarcely any men are left. We meet only women, children and the old. When we ask where their husbands are, the women all say they're at work in the fields. We inspect the paddyfields: only women again. The men are dead, in gaol or at war...

Mark Hackett

Newsweek

The following two reports were written by Rod Nordland, who wrote a



dramatic report on East Timor following an earlier visit in 1982.

The Indonesian colonel opened the door to show off his "trophies", 15 prisoners of war captured during his tours as a battalion commander ... "That one," said the colonel pointing to Bai Meta, "was the bodyguard of Fretilin's leader Xanana." The POW stood leaning on one crutch held in front of him, and his legs began shaking violently when the colonel pointed him out. "This one was a political commissar," the colonel said; Leandro da Silva snapped to attention and his eyes grew wide. The colonel strode across the room to Antonio Pinto, and put his arm around the POW's

shoulder. "I remember you," he said. Pinto winced, as if bracing for a blow. "I took him in a firefight, where we even lost one of our own men. And you see, we haven't harmed him."

Lt. Col. Prabowo, commander of the Indonesian Army's 328th battalion, brought the POWs secretly to a safe house in Dili for what he said was an unauthorised public-relations effort ... The palpable fear among the Fretilin POWs, however, suggested that Indonesia still deserves its unsavoury reputation. Once the POWs had been left alone with two journalists — and two Roman Catholic nuns serving as interpreters — they recounted lives in Indonesian captivity that, to an outsider at least, seem to be little better than slavery [...]

In some cases, they have been compelled to track down their comrades in the mountains. Officially, such Fretilin POWs do not exist; on the record, Indonesian authorities deny they have any such prisoners [...]

Around the soldiers, they responded more like chronically abused dogs. POW Manuel Soares, 35, was captured this year. When a journalist lightly touched him on the shoulder, he involuntarily jumped back, tripped over a chair and fell against the wall.

The Indonesians claim there are only 200 Fretilin guerrillas still left, most of them reduced to robbing civilians to stay alive. But piecing together accounts from six of the POWs who were captured in 1989, there seem to be five Fretilin companies of 120 men each at large in the Venilale-Baucau districts... and that is only one of four major zones of conflict in East Timor. In the Lospalos zone there seem to be at least two Fretilin companies. That would mean a minimum of 840 guerrillas still in action. "We were fighting for freedom," said one of the POWs. "Now the war will still continue, because there are still Fretilin. We don't feel it's lost."

Nevertheless, Fretilin is fighting a hopeless war, with most of its energy devoted to hunting food in mountainous areas which have been denuded of the peasant population base by Indonesia's strategic hamlet program. Most of the POWs said their companies rarely sought out Indonesian troops, attacking only when cornered. Prabowo claimed that [his battalion] the 328th has killed 80 and captured 18 Fretilin in the past year...

[November 6, 1989]

The gates of the Santa Cruz military cemetery in Dili... are kept locked — with good reason. Indonesian officials publicly maintain that none of their troops have been killed in the troubled province in years. But tombstone No. 353 marks the last resting place of infantryman Abdul Rowran Pratu, who died on September 12 1989. He was shot to death, like most of those lying near him. [...]

Colonel Brimo Prekarsa, the chief of military intelligence in Dili, estimated that at most 200 or 300 Fretilin guerrillas remain active, out of a force that he said once numbered 25,000 armed men... In Viqueque, Army commander Lt. Col. Bambang Sudarmo said that weakness had reduced the 30 Fretilin in his area to robbing civilians.

Graveyards told a different story. Just outside the remote mountaintop village of Uatolari, a hillside cemetery bristled with new crosses, many of them marked with the word *gugur*: "shot". Local farmers said the victims were Timorese militiamen, impressed by the Army for guard duty and killed in Fretilin guerrilla attacks. At a new Indonesian military cemetery in Baucau — one of three main ones in the province — were 175 Muslim soldiers' graves and 40 Christian ones, most also marked *gugur*. Sixty three dated from 1988. Col. Sudarmo said the soldiers must have been shot in accidents. Fretilin is "still fighting," [said Bp Belo] "and most people still sympathise with them." [...]

Indonesia has ended some of the harsher aspects of the occupation. People are no longer starving due to forced relocation to 'strategic hamlets'. A notorious concentration camp at Atauro Island is closed. The borders are now officially open, and residents can in theory travel within the province and to other parts of Indonesia. In practice, people's movements are controlled by a pervasive security apparatus. The police and Army stop and question travellers at checkpoints that appear as often as once every five or ten miles [...]

[October 23 1989]

"You people live in Jakarta. We live here in East Timor. We know what people here talk about, we know their complaints about things that are not yet running properly. We want to resolve these things so that the situation in East Timor can calm down... so that *Intel* people are not always listening in and following people around. [...] Things have to change: people want to move around, to think freely."

Bishop Belo, in the *Editor*,
October 14 1989



Fretilin guerrillas in camp, 1988.

Le Monde

"A referendum? What for?" asked the Governor, Mr. Mario Carrascalao, the other day in Dili. "The people here don't even know what the word means." A contemptuous judgement nevertheless confirmed by a western diplomat in Jakarta. "Nearly half Timor's population is illiterate. Most have been impoverished and undernourished for centuries. Portuguese or Javanese occupation for them comes to more or less the same thing. What they want is to be left in peace and, to be sure, they haven't found it." [...]

Officially, the security forces — militia, police, special army units — number 13,000. To finish off "a few groups of famished rebels without any popular support," as the governor said? How could that make sense? "Well...you know," he replied, a little embarrassed, "in my view there *are* too many of them... at least to deal with Fretilin... But they're needed for other tasks, especially for aid and development." And to line their pockets on the side... Everyone says so, starting with one of the few westerners authorised to do humanitarian work in the territory.

"Either on their own account or through frontmen, the soldiers manage every profitable activity in the territory, such as the coffee trade. They also cream off between 20% and 30% of the development aid sent from Jakarta." A few details. The Indonesian government claims proudly, and it is apparently true, that the "centre" spends two or three times more on Tim-Tim than elsewhere. The Portuguese did nothing. Jakarta has developed an

infrastructure, put the children in schools, established a certain level of health and, despite the claims of Fretilin propaganda, has not tried to convert the local people to Islam. [...]

The government's plan is evidently designed to cause the people to accept more easily their forced annexation by Indonesia. But there's still a long way to go... The GNP per head in Tim-Tim is still half that of the rest of the archipelago. By contrast, corruption and repression are in inverse proportion...

"For 10 US dollars," we were promised by a corrupt policeman in Dili, "I'll get you a motorbike for hire. For five times that I'll put a driver on it, and if you double that again I guarantee you can go where you like..." The deal was struck one tedious evening in the grimy, sticky hall of the Turismo, Dili's "premier" hotel. In practise a fool's contract. Making a discreet departure from East Timor's "capital" — population 80,000, 3 pitiful hotels, nine taxis, two telephone lines — is an act of prowess. There are checkpoints everywhere, approximately one every 20 kilometres, and the redcoats who man them aren't easy-going, even though the region was officially declared open at the beginning of this year. [...]

"Mass arrests, torture of prisoners, summary executions are in practise ordinarily accepted here," confirmed the official of a major international organisation. According to him, Timor is "the only region in the archipelago where the dictatorship of Papa Suharto makes its presence painfully felt." [...]

Patrice Claude, 25 October 1989

Students Sign Protest

On September 1 1989 100 students from East Timor who are studying in Indonesia signed a statement addressed to the United Nations Secretary General in New York. The statement vigorously supports selfdetermination for East Timor's people, denounces Indonesia's claim to sovereignty over East Timor, calls for the withdrawal of all Indonesian officials and soldiers and protests against violations of human rights.

It is not the first time that East Timorese students in Indonesia have been critical of Indonesia. In the past many documents and statements have been written or circulated by student groups.

What is significant about this statement is that it has been publicly and individually signed by so many — especially at a time when East Timorese students in Indonesia have been subject to severe surveillance and intimidation. Earlier in 1989, during May, it was reported that students were being questioned about their mail and their political contacts [*East Timor News*, Monthly Memo 28, December 1989] In previous issues, we have also reported on allegations that students have been murdered or arrested or have mysteriously disappeared. On

two occasions groups of students have also sought asylum in foreign embassies in Jakarta.

This new act of defiance, calculatedly public, suggests that the students in Jakarta sense they can use the new political space that Indonesia has created by "opening" East Timor; and also that they have learned how to protect themselves by appealing publicly to internationally recognised institutions. For if Indonesia is to sustain its claims, it cannot afford to repress peaceful expressions of opinion even, or especially if these are critical. [But see back page of this issue...]

Like the Mass demonstration on October 12, the statement is an important reminder, both to Indonesia and abroad, that nationalism is alive and flourishing among the young and among East Timor's academic elite — the territory's future leaders. If Jakarta (and, who knows, other governments) hoped that opposition to integration would exhaust itself with the death of the generation of radical nationalists who inspired Fretilin, that view is now hard to sustain. Not only is the younger generation resisting Indonesian rule, it is doing so on a foundation of greater knowledge and experience — and it is apparently just as unafraid. ■

Reviews

The Christian Movement for Peace [CMP] adopted East Timor as its campaign theme for 1989, and it has now published a pamphlet to support its international work on the issue.

The 24 page pamphlet is titled *East Timor — No Development without Justice* and covers the consequences of the war, diplomatic responses, and the effects of Indonesia's economic policies in East Timor. Appendices include the testimony of Jose Guterres, Fretilin's Peace Plan of 1983, and the European Parliament's Resolution on East Timor of September 1988.

It can be obtained from CMP's international office for Europe, at rue Stevin 92, B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgium [Tel: (032)(2) 230.8499]; or from any of CMP's national office. The pamphlet costs £1.00 in the UK.

Organisations interested in East Timor might like to know that several CMP groups intend to continue their work on East Timor into 1990. Timor Working Groups can be contacted in the Netherlands [ICVD, Postbus 377, NL-1012 CA Amsterdam, Tel: (020) 253150]; Portugal [Movimento Cristao Para a Paz, rua Cidade de Poitiers 44-1, P-3000 Coimbra, Tel: (039) 34217] and the United Kingdom [Christian Movement for Peace, Bethnal Green URC, Pott Street, London E2 0EF]. ■

Can Leopards change their Spots?

During the Pope's visit, numerous journalists, interviewing government and army officials, and Governor Carrascalao, were told that, in line with their decision to 'open' the territory, the Indonesian government would change the military profile of the troops in East Timor.

Thus Gov. Carrascalao told *Le Monde* that there were more than enough troops to deal with Fretilin, but they were needed for development work. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* wrote: "The special command, *Kopscam*, which ran the show in the heyday of Indonesia's military rule, is scheduled to be dismantled before the end of the year. Two battalions are returning to Jakarta and Gen. Sintong Panjaitan, the highly regarded military commander of the region based in Bali, will assume responsibility for all military personnel in East Timor." [16 November 1989.]

A date to remember?

On December 6 (on the eve of the anniversary of East Timor's invasion in 1975) the switch was made. ABRI changed its focus from security operations to territorial administration. According to Governor Carrascalao [*UCA News* No. 540, Jan. 1990] the change is drastic: henceforth ABRI will concentrate on enhancing public welfare.

Addressing the same theme on December 27 in Dili, Gen. Try Sutrisno — Commander-in-Chief of Indonesia's armed forces — was even more fulsome. Speaking at a Christmas celebration attended by ABRI and government officials, church leaders and local Catholics, he declared: "The presence of ABRI in East Timor, as the nation's fighting armed forces, is to serve the noble and holy mission of dynamizing national development, and together with the whole of the people, including the East Timor people, to

guard, to make a success of and to secure development." [*UCA News* No 540, quoting the official Indonesian news agency *Antara*.]

Western governments already attach significance to the implementation of this decision, on the grounds that it implies Indonesia will replace hardened combat battalions with less battle-hungry forces. It does not mean that the military will be less omnipresent in East Timor, however, for the army is present at every level throughout Indonesia and the assumption is, rather, that the occupation will be less violent, less directly oppressive.

The new development clearly accords with, and is indeed made necessary by Indonesia's decision to 'open' East Timor in January 1989. It remains to be seen whether this softening of the military's role will be as partial as the territory's 'opening' last year, and whether the army can indeed mend its ways. ■

New Statement from Xanana Gusmao

On October 5 1989, a week before Pope John Paul II landed in Dili, Xanana Gusmao signed a long declaration, written in Portuguese in his own hand. An important document, it re-affirms principles that have underpinned previous policy declarations of the nationalist resistance movement and makes public its negotiating position. It includes a Peace Plan and a list of commitments designed to disarm Indonesian and regional anxieties and open the door to dialogue.

Most interestingly, it reframes the nationalist movement's political positions within a new political context in which, notably, Fretilin is no longer pre-eminent. At different points in the statement, Xanana Gusmao is quite clear. He challenges the legitimacy of Fretilin's Marxist-Leninist ideology in the Timorese context. He commits the nationalist movement to making sure that Fretilin modifies its political objectives in appropriate ways. He affirms that the nationalist armed forces [Falintil], of which Xanana is Commander-in-Chief, shall be wholly apolitical — meaning that Falintil will positively oppose being identified with any particular party. He states that neither he nor Falintil belong any longer to Fretilin. He declares that the political authority representing the Timorese people is the National Council of Timorese Resistance [CNRM].

Below, we reproduce the final sections of Xanana's document. These contain specific proposals towards a political solution. The text has been translated from Portuguese into French by *A Paz e Possivel em Timor Leste*, which comments on it in the following terms: "This is not just the history of 15 years of foreign occupation from the guerrillas' perspective. It is a critical analysis of the entire process and of its principal actors ... a text that, more even than the facts it contains, reveals the personality of its author — the unifier and unchallenged leader of the Timorese resistance movement."

Text of the Statement

[...] When one speaks of perspectives in the search for peace for East Timor, some of those who defend Jakarta's policy of genocide show disquiet [...] For such people, neither the people of East Timor nor their leaders have any capacity, even to think. The truth is that they are afraid the people of Timor will say what they want. Indonesia is also afraid of dialogue, and above all fears a referendum. Those in government in Jakarta know well that



Fretilin guerrilla.

the people of Timor passionately reject Indonesia's presence. If [Foreign Minister] Ali Alatas was sure that the people had freely chosen integration in 1976, he would not object now to consulting them, freely and democratically, under United Nations' supervision. Bishop Ximenes Belo was clear. One must listen to the people of Timor to know, obviously in the light of the law, what their real aspirations are: to maintain links with Portugal, independence, or integration with Indonesia [...] Because now "others speak in their name"! Bishop Ximenes Belo does not formally propose independence or linking with Portugal, and he does not categorically affirm that the people of East Timor do not want integration. Ali Alatas' response shows how fragile Indonesia's positions are and how empty and false its claims. [...]

We know that, above everything else, there are strategic considerations to consider, but on several occasions we have already stated our willingness to contribute to the peace and stability of the region.

Today the Timorese Resistance movement has a united and solid leadership, which includes a wide range of social and political forces and truly represents the aspirations of East Timor's people.

The leadership of the Timorese people has been forged out of past errors and rests on the principles of a Nationalist Convergence, reinforced

by the support of East Timor's Catholic church and strengthened by Falintil's absolute neutrality with respect to political parties ["apartidarisme"].

Under the auspices of the United Nations' Secretary General, conversations have taken place between Portugal and Indonesia. The people of East Timor, who are the most interested party and the only ones affected by the war which Indonesia has imposed on them, have not been invited to discuss their future — merely because of the intolerance of Jakarta's political leaders. The Timorese people's representatives are ready to dialogue. The Church in East Timor has already shown that it is in a position to contribute to this dialogue [...]

We have prepared a peace plan which not only conforms to resolution 37/30 and other relevant resolutions [of the U.N.], but also takes account of current Timorese political developments.

A seasoned observer of the East Timor scene said that the Indonesian authorities should learn from the recent events. This is not the older generation who fought in 1975, he said, but the Indonesian-educated youngsters who are turning against them. Force will not end this war, he said, what it needed is a total change in approach towards the Timorese people.

Juliet Rix, BBC World Service,
1 December 1989

Peace Plan

1. Conversations

[a] The conversations sponsored by the United Nations' Secretary General take place on the following assumptions:

- The Indonesian occupation is illegal;
- The right of Timor's people to an authentic act of self-determination is inalienable;
- It is urgently necessary to re-establish international law by assuring a Portuguese presence.

[b] The following matters need to be discussed with the involvement of representatives of Timor's people:

- Portuguese guarantees undertaken to ensure regional stability;
- East Timor's compromises offered out of respect for the interests of neighbouring countries, and her assistance in maintaining regional peace and stability;
- Agreement in principle about how the sea bed wealth of Timor should be shared out.

2. Establishing a Peacekeeping Force

Establishment of a "peacekeeping force" or "multinational force" or even [if that should be too expensive for the United Nations] a "UN Commission" should clarify and set up feasible arrangements to achieve:

1. Armed Forces

First phase: Withdrawal of the Indonesian armed forces within a period of three to six months, and the departure of Indonesian civilians within a time to be fixed. Second phase: Simultaneous disarmament of the local forces armed by the occupant and the guerrillas of Falintil; the latter remain in the bush until this time. Third phase: Re-organisation of the army under Portugal's responsibility as the decolonising power.

2. Formation of a transitional administration, headed by the Portuguese High Commissioner, for a period of no more than 5 years.

During this period, Portugal and East Timor will determine a date for general elections and for the return of sovereignty to Timor's people.

3. During the transition period, and under Portugal's responsibility, aid agreements will be signed with Indonesia, Australia, the European Community and other countries, in order to promote the rapid and harmonious development of East Timor's resources.

4. A Government of National Unity shall be established for a period of between 5 and 15 years, by Portugal and representatives of East Timor.

Timor's Armed Forces;

5. The size and armament of the Army that will be formed under Portugal's responsibility will be determined by the needs of regional stability [without rejecting the idea, in the future, of dissolving the Armed Forces in order to enable East Timor to assume the status of a neutral and peaceful country as a contribution to world peace];
6. The people of East Timor will not allow East Timorese territory to be used for acts that threaten the peace and stability of neighbouring states, especially Indonesia, and will help to break up any attempt to do so;
7. We will work to re-establish relations of all kinds with other countries, provided these do not put at risk regional stability;
8. We will increase our efforts to ensure that Fretilin, a party to which we no longer belong, modifies its political objectives in order to bring these into line with the true needs and interests of East Timor;
9. We will never give up on dialogue to resolve differences with any other country, particularly with neighbouring countries.

We have always shown our complete readiness to dialogue, and have even made concessions in advance when we believe these are among obligations that the region requires. It is now for Indonesia to admit that inflexibility is not the best position to adopt [...]

Peace for East Timor can only be achieved following a responsible and realistic change in the current position of the Government in Jakarta. [...] ■

Conditions of Dialogue

It is by frank and serious dialogue that one can secure the compromises necessary to safeguard the interests of one and all. The people of East Timor know they too have obligations to the region in which they live. They will not fail to make their contribution to harmony, co-operation and good understanding with all their neighbours. As a member of the National Council of the Timorese Resistance — the leadership of Timor's people — and as Commander of Falintil, we reaffirm our readiness to contribute to a legal and peaceful process of transition in East Timor, and state that:

1. We propose a general amnesty to all those who have faithfully collaborated with the occupant, whether or not they have contributed directly or indirectly to the constant violations of human rights;
2. All those who have served the Indonesian occupation shall have the same opportunities and rights as

other citizens of East Timor;

3. No-one shall be stripped of possessions that have been obtained during the years of Indonesian occupation [except where goods have been expropriated from their legitimate owners];
4. Local people armed by the occupant shall be re-integrated into East

Signed:

Leadership of the Resistance
Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao,
Commander of Falintil
Headquarters of the CNRM
in East Timor, October 5 1989
[Translated from the French by
Timor Link.]



Fretilin guerrillas, August 1988.

East Timor: A Test for the Churches

Peter Philp is Managing Director of *The Advocate*, newspaper of the Catholic diocese of Melbourne, Australia. He travelled to East Timor for the Pope's visit. This is an edited version of the article he wrote following his visit.

[...] The Pope's stopover in East Timor allowed the people of this troubled land a brief respite from solitary confinement. And many Timorese used this brief occasion, despite the tremendous risk, to express their suffering and despair about the future.

Those prepared to be interviewed had diverse opinions. It would be dishonest to claim that everybody spoke with one accord.

However, there was a clear message from the ordinary Timorese that since the 1975 invasion they had lived under oppression and that oppression continued today.

Many were determined to continue the struggle against Indonesian colonisation, while others admitted that there had been too much bloodshed for too little result and they were prepared now to accept the status quo.

Also there were Timorese who had been prepared to compromise their principles during the long captive years. Their collaboration had won them privilege and as a result they were not interested in either independence or referendum.

"There is no change"

Nobody denies that the Indonesian invasion brought with it unforgivable brutality. But those who today accept integration with Indonesia claim that the suffering and abuse of human rights is all in the past.

During my short stay in East Timor the wide circle of people with whom I spoke rejected that claim. The most vocal was the Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Carlos Belo.

"Yes they are still the same. There is no change. On account of that, I wrote the letter to the United Nations. People are arrested. They suffer physical, moral and psychological abuse. Here the human being is not important," said Mgr Belo.

Catholic bishops are frequently criticised for their silence and caution. So when a prelate makes a public stand against state authorities, the situation is generally very grave.

Mgr Belo's concern about the continuous repression in East Timor was demonstrated in June of this year

when he wrote to military commanders, the Governor of East Timor, the Pro-Nuncio in Jakarta and the Indonesian Bishops' Conference threatening to cancel the Pope's visit to East Timor.

"We are writing to protest as members of the Catholic Church in East Timor regarding the dirty campaign against the bishop, priests and the Catholic Church conducted by elements of the armed forces in Baucau and Viqueque. If this month this dirty campaign continues, we will ask the Pope to cancel his visit to East Timor next October," said Bp Belo.

During my visit with Mgr Belo, he left no doubt in my mind that both his priests and laity were targets of abuse and that he was prepared to defend his people and would never be silenced. "They have criticised us on the media. In Dili there have been menacing calls: kill the bishop; hurt the bishop," continued Mgr Belo.

I asked him if he sometimes felt like Bishop Romero [who was assassinated in his church in El Salvador for defending the rights of his people]. "I admire Bishop Romero. I try to be near my people. If it is necessary to die for the people, I am prepared to give my life for them."

Two concerns forced the bishop to write that letter to the United Nations Secretary General. One was the ongoing killing, jailing and suffering of his people and, two, the fear that the Timorese culture would be lost.

"Step by step we will lose our historical and cultural identity. It is important to reveal that kind of integration," the bishop reminded me.

While in Dili, a Catholic priest confirmed to me that 27 Timorese had been killed by the military and many had disappeared since May of 1989.

A male nurse told me that, following the release of Bishop Belo's letter to the UN, 82 people had been rounded up by security men. "They were tortured with electric shocks and were struck in the stomach. This was reported to the bishop. They are not disillusioned because they suffered. They are still happy that the bishop sent the letter," claimed the nurse.

He said the Catholic church was the only organisation defending the people's rights. The day before the Pontiff's arrival, the nurse had said to me, "We want the Pope to recognise our freedom and independence".

I had met this man at the rear of a church late one night. He had been

"The question of East Timor is still on the international forum. Fretilin still exists here. We must contribute our ideas for a solution to this question. I have given mine but in the end they were not accepted. Okay. We hope that those who do not accept them will suggest another way so that...the question can be resolved as quickly as possible."

Bishop Belo, in the *Editor*,
October 14 1989

under surveillance and feared that he and his wife would be detained. He admitted that if he could get out of East Timor he would. But he was not allowed to leave.

"Better we die than stay with this. When they have this land firmly in their hands, they will exterminate my generation," he said.

On another occasion a priest told me that there were attempts to have the bishop renege on his call for a referendum and that sources in the military had told him that there had been suggestions that Bishop Belo and his vicar general should be imprisoned and foreign priests expelled. The priest said there were also rumours that there would be pressure on the Vatican to recall Mgr Belo and then divide East Timor into two dioceses as part of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference.

Division

Very quickly you learn that the Catholic Church in East Timor is badly scarred by division. You can run the chalk line down between those who are Timorese and Portuguese and those who are Indonesian. In one religious house, the division was so acute that a priest said to me that it was unsafe to speak so he arranged to meet me one evening in a different locality.

He claimed he was being followed by security agents and that some of the priests in his own community were spies for the Indonesian military.

However, Jesuit Father Marcus Wanandi, a Chinese Indonesian from Sumatra, believes there has been a decrease in human rights abuses and that they never came exclusively from the military side.

"There is still a bitter struggle between Timor's family clans. There is a strong bond between those families. But if they quarrel with each other they tend to hold grudges for a long time. Many problems involve these clans."

Speaking about human rights abuses, Fr Wanandi suggested that the

Church does not investigate claims involving these abuses. "They just believe what people tell them. Sometimes, you believe what you like to hear, not the reality of what is happening." And the jesuit does not believe that the Timorese are ready for a referendum to determine their future because of widespread illiteracy and the people's lack of understanding of the situation. "How could they think about national and international issues? They would have no idea what to say or do. They leave these decisions to their government representatives. And it was those representatives who went to Jakarta to complain about Bishop Belo's letter."

Fr Wanandi said that some of the problems of East Timor stem from a lack of understanding of javanese culture. He said that the Javanese hold their culture in high esteem and that is the way they came to East Timor. They just wanted to change people's mentality. The Jesuit claimed that if the Church was seeking genuine dialogue, it must learn something about this culture. "You can't start talking to him

until you are his friend. You can't talk to him if you are opposed to him."

A man who spent some time in the hills fighting with Fretilin, and who is now a prominent catholic layman, maintains that life in East Timor has improved since 1980. He admitted that what was important to him now was quality of life and not continued bloodshed.

But the veteran Italian missionary, Salesian priest Eligio Locatelli, summed up the situation this way: "It is a tragedy. They are losing their culture. But nothing can stop this process. Fact is fact, reality is reality. They have to accept it. We try to defend the people's right. We are not always successful," said Fr Locatelli. [...]

The Catholic Church's Responsibility

Two important issues that must be kept alive in the immediate future are Bishop Belo's call for a referendum and the continued physical and psychological warfare waged by the Indonesian military against those Timorese courageous enough to speak

out in defence of their rights, culture and survival.

Mgr Carlos Belo's letter to the UN Secretary General was a very significant step forward for East Timor. Shamefully, the potential impact of a referendum has been ignored... while the Indonesian authorities and sections of the Indonesian church and the Vatican have moved swiftly to discredit this initiative.

After 400 years of being locked in a colonial cage, who can dispute the rights of the Timorese to decide their future?

Therefore to allow more debate and understanding about the current situation in East Timor and to appreciate why the church is prepared to risk so much in pursuit of a referendum, [we] need to hear the story from the one person who has wide support among the ordinary Timorese people: Bishop Carlos Belo.

Let us hope that the Catholic church, which internationally has championed the cause of those who are oppressed and downtrodden, will not let this opportunity drift by. ■



International Round-Up

European Community

On November 30 1989, the governments of the European Community issued a statement of their common position on East Timor during the U.N. General Assembly. It reads:

"The Twelve remain concerned by the news about human rights' violations in East Timor. They note that the territory has been opened up to some degree to the outside world since January 1989, which is in line with the concerns they have expressed because of the lack of definite progress in the territory. They hope that this opening signifies that Non-Governmental Organisations, including human rights organisations, may soon be granted permission to visit. Their hope once again is that the reported abuses may be brought to an end."

Belgium

There are signs that the EC is more concerned about the situation in East Timor than for some time. Oxfam Belgique, for example, received from the Belgian Foreign Minister a reply that suggests some at least of the European governments are pressing Indonesia harder.

Oxfam Belgique had written to ask

the government to take up the cases of Timorese arrested after demonstrating at the Papal Mass. Mark Eyskens, the Foreign Minister, replied:

"The Ambassadors of the Twelve posted in Jakarta questioned the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Mr Alatas. The latter told them that no demonstrators are now detained and that he had personally intervened with the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Mr. Try Sutrisno, to ask him to react with deliberation and constraint."

"I can assure you that we will not fail to stress to the Indonesian authorities the importance that Belgium attaches to respect for human rights in East Timor."

United Kingdom

Privately the British Government shares the concern of its Community partners; but its correspondence omits to reveal this. In letters to Members of Parliament, the Minister responsible for the area, Lord Brabazon, expresses the government's positions in a way that can only be excused by his recent appointment to the job.

In an emollient letter to the MP David Amess on November 23 1989, he said that "killings *may* have taken place

in the past" [our italics, Ed.], that "the human rights situation in East Timor has generally improved in recent years", that "a number of observers ... have confirmed that the situation should no longer give rise to serious concern", that "it is an exaggeration to say that daily lives are controlled by occupying forces" — phrases all calculated to reduce the weight of other remarks in the letter that were in line with the European Community's statement of November 30.

In contrast, if the Labour Party leader is to be believed, the Labour Party will take a much firmer position on East Timor than in the past. Writing on November 9, Neil Kinnock declared:

"We support the right of self-determination for the people of East Timor and call for the implementation of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 of 1960. We do this in the knowledge that Resolution 1514 declared its policy quite clearly on the subject of decolonisation: all peoples have the right to self-determination: by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status; and the subjugation of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation, constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights; is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation..."

"We deplore the abuse of human rights in East Timor and will continue to call for an end of such abuse and the release of all political prisoners."

Bishop Soma thanks Asian Church

In a remarkable and so far almost unique expression of solidarity in Asia, members of the Asian church — from its leaders downwards — have supported Bishop Belo's letter to the U.N. in February 1989, after an appeal was launched by the Catholic Justice & Peace Commission in Japan. The silence of Asia concerning East Timor has been one of the most unhappy features of the issue: here is the clearest sign to date that sympathy for Timor's people and respect for its church have been growing, and that the dedicated work of church people and solidarity groups in Asia is having its effect.

Bishop Soma's appeal is the successor of a signature campaign among church people in 1985 [ETL 3, October 1985] and a conference on East Timor that was held in Manila in November 1987 [ETL 12/13, April 1988].

On November 24, the Bishop wrote "to the Priests, Sisters, Faithful and Members of Organisations" to thank them for standing behind his initiative to support Bishop Belo's call for a referendum in his letter of February 6

1989 to the General Secretary of the UN. Below is an edited version of his text:

"We received your letter, which was presented to the United Nations Secretary General and to the Chairman and Delegates of the U.N. Committee of Decolonisation last August 14th. One hundred and eighteen bishops, including five Cardinals, and over one thousand priests, sisters, and faithful joined in expressing solidarity with the people of East Timor. I was able to present this witness on their behalf personally and address this Committee. It was indeed a Gospel Witness and a very timely one. Let me thank you once again.

You might find it encouraging to know that the United Nations Sub-Commission on Human Rights has re-adopted the issue of East Timor and officially took note of Bishop Belo's letter.

May Jesus, the Lord of Truth, keep us faithful to our suffering brothers and sisters of East Timor."

Paul Barbara

Paul Barbara, to whom Mr Kinnock was writing, was on hunger strike at the time, protesting against the absence of effective international concern about East Timor. His fast, started as the Pope prepared to visit East Timor, lasted forty days, during which he consumed nothing but water and salt. It drew attention to the issue in British newspapers and attracted sympathetic support from as far away as Japan.

Paul Barbara ended his fast on November 10, and *Timor Link* is glad to report that he has suffered no ill-effects. ■

Portugal's Parliamentary Visit

In the UN Secretary General's 1988 report on East Timor, dated September 14, Perez de Cuellar gave emphasis again to the proposed visit to East Timor by a delegation from the Portuguese parliament. The report is a reminder that the survival of talks between Portugal and Indonesia — still the sole diplomatic channel through which progress towards a negotiated settlement might be achieved — relies almost entirely on this one proposal. Virtually nothing else lies on the table between the two governments.

"I am confident that progress can continue to be made through the substantive talks" writes Sr de Cuellar. "While it may be regrettable that the pace of progress has not been constant, I am encouraged by the increased frequency of discussions between the two sides in recent months. These talks are being conducted in a constructive atmosphere and in a serious manner. It is my hope that the remaining matters relating to a visit to the territory by a delegation from the Portuguese Parliament will be resolved in the near future. I continue to believe that such a visit could help to create an atmosphere conducive to achieving a comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution".

Sticking points

The slowness of talks regarding the parliamentary visit was foreseen from the start [See *ETL* 11, November 1987, *ETL* 12/13, April 1988, and *ETL* 14 of July 1988] because the credibility of the negotiating positions of both

Xanana Approves

Caught up in the same political imperatives as the Portuguese and Indonesian governments, the leader of East Timor's resistance movement has also written to say that he welcomes the proposal to send a Portuguese parliamentary delegation to East Timor. Writing to the Portuguese Ambassador to the Holy See in Rome on October 5 1989, Xanana Gusmao requests him to "inform His Excellency the [Portuguese] Minister of Foreign Affairs that I wish the Portuguese governing authorities to know that we anxiously await the coming of the parliamentary delegation [...] which will have, at that time, a sovereign opportunity to learn the truth about the situation, with all the objectivity that the East Timor problem requires." [*East Timor News Monthly Memo* 28 of December 1989.]

governments is directly engaged.

The Indonesian government is committed to the view that East Timor is already integrated, that Timor's people have exercised their right to self-determination and that the issue is a domestic matter and no concern of the international community. On these grounds, Jakarta announced very early on that it would not permit Portugal to make any visit of "inquiry" to East Timor. The invitation issued by the Indonesian Parliament spoke instead of an "observation visit".

Portugal's position, on the other hand, is founded on the fact that the international community, personified by the UN, regards Portugal as the administrative authority in East Timor, still bound by an obligation to decolonise the territory. It takes the view, again supported by the UN, that the people of East Timor have not exercised their right to self-determination, and that the question is pre-eminently an international dispute in which Indonesia is the guilty party. Given its position, it is clear that the Portuguese could not allow a representative parliamentary delegation to make a purely "ocular visit" which had no pretensions to judging the situation in East Timor. Nor could a visiting parliamentary delegation representing the Administering Power make a short visit of two or three days hosted by the illegal occupant — especially when Indonesia's manipulation of such visits in the past has been all-too-well documented. [See, for example, *ETL* 12/13, April 1988.]

What is perhaps most surprising is that the project has survived so long and reached the stage where a visit is still seen to be feasible — eventually. The cause is probably due more than anything else to the fact that neither government is willing to break off the UN talks. Since there is no other substantive issue to discuss, they have therefore explored this one to its limits! Huge amounts of time have been spent mulling over the terms and conditions of a visit in the search for a diplomatic formula that would reconcile the political needs of each side. ■

Solidarity Groups issue statement

Solidarity groups from different countries issued a statement on December 7 to mark the anniversary of East Timor's invasion. Demonstrations were also organised: in London, for example, members of Christian Movement for Peace stood with candles in commemoration before the Indonesian Embassy while a delegation presented the statement to a diplomat.

The statement supported the stand of Bishop Belo and called upon the United Nations Secretary General to respond positively to the Bishop's demand for a referendum. The solidarity groups condemned Australia's decision to sign mineral

agreements with Indonesia enabling both countries to prospect for oil under the seabed between Timor and Australia, and called on their own governments to support Portugal and bring pressure to bear on Indonesia to produce a just solution. ■

Japan

Japanese organisations campaigning on behalf of East Timor continue to be extremely active. Last August, Roque Rodriguez, a member of Fretilin's external delegation, was invited to tour during the massive event "People's Plan for the Twenty First Century" [PP21], which brought together activist groups from all over Japan as well as a large number of guests from the Asian

Region to celebrate their common interests and identity and explore "people's" options for the next century.

Roque Rodriguez spoke at events and meetings in Hokkaido, Kanagawa, Minamata, Fukuoka and Tokyo.

During November and early December, two refugees, Joao dos Reis and Isabel Guterres, toured Japan at the invitation of the Free East Timor Japan Campaign.

Japan played a key role in launching the hugely successful campaign among Asian churches that secured over 1,300 signatures, including the signature of 118 Asian bishops, in support of the February 6 letter of Bishop Belo, which called for a referendum in East Timor. ■

The Great Oil Rig

As discussed in a previous issue [ETL 17, May 1989] the Australian and Indonesian governments intend to exploit oil reserves under the sea bed between East Timor and the Australian coast — even though under international law Portugal remains the internationally-recognised administrative authority in the territory.

The relevant agreement, which was signed on December 11, is due to be ratified in 1990, and many NGOs and solidarity groups working on the issue of East Timor expect to campaign against Australia's decision, which means, in practise, that Australia not only recognises Indonesia's occupation of East Timor but is prepared actively to collude with Indonesia in the exploitation of East Timor's mineral and economic wealth.

Portugal's charge

The Portuguese government issued a strong statement after December 11, expressing "protest and repudiation" of the agreement and reaffirming Portugal's "determination to use all legitimate means within [its] reach to safeguard the rights of the people of East Timor."

The statement went on to say that the Indonesian-Australian agreement "constitutes a clear and flagrant violation of International Law and of the United Nations' Charter and many resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council do not recognise Indonesia's sovereignty over East Timor, illegally occupied by military force since December 1975. [...]"

"[T]he Australian Government's attitude not only violates the rights of the people of East Timor to self-determination and to dispose of their own resources, but also disrespects Portugal's legal statute in this matter."

Portugal summoned the Australian Ambassador in Lisbon and issued a strong protest, and to indicate the souring of relations between Lisbon and Canberra withdrew the Portuguese Ambassador to Australia for consultations.

It is still not clear how far Portugal is prepared to jeopardise its relations with Australia in order to defend East Timor's rights and Portugal's own diplomatic standing. The statement does not state explicitly that Portugal will lay the case before the International Court in The Hague, although the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Joao de Deus Pinheiro, is reported making such a commitment in

the *Far Eastern Economic Review* [November 9 1989].

PET

Nor have Australian members of the international lobbying group Parliamentarians for East Timor [PET] revealed their hand. About 47 Australian Parliamentarians have joined PET, and the majority (some 37) are in the Labour Party [ALP]. On a recent private visit to Australia, Lord Avebury — a British Liberal peer who has long followed Timorese affairs — castigated the Australian government's position. Lord Avebury promised that there would be international criticism of the oil deal.

Australian MP Tony Lamb, also a co-founder of PET, has emphasised that he opposes the treaty, but has not said that Labour members of PET will vote against ratification. Speaking to the *Canberra Times*, Tony Lamb declared: "We have 40 members of this Parliament, 36 on the government side, who are unhappy with the Government's recognition [of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor] [...] It's going to be a real problem when the treaty eventually comes before the Australian parliament to be ratified by our own domestic law. And I say trouble because the members [of PET] will have to give weighty consideration to...the attitude they take." [January 5 1990.] ■

United States

114 members of the United States Congress signed a letter in December expressing concern at violations of human rights in East Timor following the Pope's visit. It was addressed to the

"I do believe that the 1990s will be the decade of self-determination... You've seen the whole of Eastern Europe throwing off dictatorships and discovering democracy again after very many years...I personally think it is in the interests of sovereign powers [to challenge Indonesia's claim to sovereignty over East Timor]. Once you accept the right of an aggressor to maintain control of territory which has been occupied by force, you're embarked on an extremely dangerous course. That is the reason we fought the last World War..."

Lord Avebury, Co-founder of Parliamentarians for East Timor

Le Figaro

"Bom diu." My hello to the reception at the Hotel Turismo brings conversation to a halt. Silence. No sound except the whirring of the air conditioner and the cries of caged parrots. A dwarf rushes towards me and says: "No-one speaks Portuguese any more". He's trembling. They all seem terrorised, paralysed. "Listen," the dwarf whispers. "There are spies everywhere. I can't talk. I might get a bullet in the head." The forces of occupation are explicit: "Don't talk to foreigners, or expect trouble." [...]

On the way to Baucau by taxi:

"The driver was trembling. At every roadblock he cowered before the soldiers in endless exchanges... New roadblock. Three soldiers in the road. They're amusing rather than threatening. But we don't get by."

Francois Luizet, 13 October 1989

Secretary of State James Baker. We reproduce an edited text below:

We are deeply disturbed at reports of arrests in East Timor following Pope John Paul's visit there on October 12 1989. As you know, the final Mass was followed by a demonstration in which nationalists shouted slogans. [...]

We are concerned about reports that several of those arrested were tortured to extract 'confessions'. While such reports are difficult to verify, they would fall into a well-established pattern in East Timor and throughout Indonesia of mistreatment and abuse of detainees in the period immediately following arrest.

Close international monitoring can help prevent further abuse, and we urge you to ask our embassy in Jakarta to investigate events surrounding the demonstration and its aftermath. [...]

The appeal was apparently heeded, in that the United States Ambassador visited Dili in mid-January. While he was there, well over 100 people staged a demonstration outside his hotel on January 16. The Ambassador was able to speak with some of the demonstrators before they were violently dispersed by the authorities. [See back page.] ■

U.S. Ambassador in demonstration

Following requests by US Members of Congress to inquire into arrests following the Pope's visit to East Timor, in January the new US ambassador to Indonesia, John Monjo, travelled to Dili. There he was the focus of a protest demonstration in front of the Hotel Turismo, on January 17. The demonstration was witnessed and photographed by several Australian tourists, who saw the demonstrators clubbed and beaten after the Ambassador left. Many were injured and it was initially believed at least two were killed in the violence. The following report is based upon affidavits signed in Australia by two of the witnesses, John McMillan and Jennifer Groves.

Witnesses say that soon after the Ambassador checked in around midday on January 17 at the hotel Turismo, a crowd of well over 100 young people surged into and round the hotel, occupying a balcony. They were not violent or aggressive, and unfurled banners in English for "Peace", "Justice" and independence for East Timor.

Soldiers arrived quickly, within a few minutes. Rocks and lighter objects were thrown from the balcony and thrown back by the soldiers; a few demonstrators were beaten in the beer garden and taken away; dozens of police and military gathered outside the hotel, surrounding it.

Ambassador Monjo spoke to the demonstrators for about an hour, in Indonesian, for some of the time using a megaphone. The demonstrators apparently apologised for the disturbance, outlined human rights abuses perpetrated by the Indonesian military and called for United Nations intervention in East Timor; they also said they would be persecuted or killed for taking part in the demonstration.

During this dialogue, Indonesian officials took photographs and noted down names of the demonstrators.

It is the first time that foreign diplomats are known to have observed such repression. The demonstration also confirms that Timorese activists are exploring new, imaginative — and courageous — ways of making themselves heard. Combined with other recent protests, the incident is bound to cause serious diplomatic questioning of Indonesia's claim to respect citizens' rights and to have whipped its Timor problem. ■

"As the Ambassador left the hotel at about 1.45 pm the students surged beside and behind his car in order to gain safe passage away from the hotel. They were restrained by soldiers and police. When the Ambassador's car was 50 metres away, riot police and soldiers charged into the demonstrators, beating them with batons and rifle butts. The students were, at this point, on the street immediately in front of the hotel... Some students managed to escape. The rest, I would estimate 40 in all, were clubbed and beaten into a human pile against the hotel's iron fence. Many were streaked with blood and obviously in shock. Students who scaled the fence and sought refuge amongst the five tourists and two diplomats sheltering at the entrance of the hotel were chased, kicked and beaten by soldiers.

As students in the human pile began praying and men in plain clothes dumped buckets of sand over pools of blood on the roadway, I saw one body, that of a young man, dumped onto the tray of a grey truck. A red rag was thrown over his face. Police climbing the back of the truck kicked his body out of the way. He did not respond.

As soldiers and police stood back, under the restraining command of officers who were obviously aware of the presence of foreign onlookers (I was two metres from the pile at this stage, watching over the fence) an International Red Cross worker moved in, the students disentangled themselves and straggled towards the Bishop's house two doors from the hotel. Many were crying and streaked with blood. [...]

Later, in talking to an International Red Cross worker, we learnt that one student had been shot. He sought refuge by stumbling in the back door of the Red Cross house next to the hotel. There he collapsed and died on the floor, vomiting blood and the bullet that killed him. Soldiers kicked in the door of the Red Cross house to retrieve him. The Red Cross workers...kept the bullet." [Affidavit of John McMillan, January 23, Darwin.]

The incident was witnessed by diplomats in Ambassador Monjo's entourage. A spokesman was quoted as saying that "In view of the peaceful nature of the demonstration the ambassador [had] asked that no-one be arrested or detained". ■

STOP PRESS

On January 26 Brig. Gen. Nurhardi Purwasaputra, chief spokesperson for the Indonesian Armed Forces, denied any arrests had been made during the demonstration in Dili on January 17. He said the demonstrators were "school dropouts" and denied that anyone had been injured. [UCA News No.543, 31/1/90/]

On January 29, the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, Mr Roesman, made a statement. He said the trouble had started when the "students" had attempted to block the Ambassador's car as he was leaving. They were restrained by security forces and two of the youths received several head wounds and were taken immediately to hospital.

The Red Cross has not agreed that a demonstrator died in the ICRC house, nor that anyone in the house had been shot.

According to reliable reports, US Embassy staff visited the injured in hospital, including two who had serious head wounds. *Timor Link* also understands that US Embassy officials confirm that demonstrators were beaten after the Ambassador's departure.

Though reports continue to circulate that several people are still missing after the demonstration, and that one or more deaths occurred, it is not possible at this stage to confirm that any deaths occurred. ■

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