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'Reconciliation' talks in Britain

Timor Link has learnt that secret talks took place near Cambridge, England, on 15 December between groups of Timorese against and in favour of integration with Indonesia.

The meeting, apparently sponsored by the Indonesian embassy in London, was the first attempt at the 'reconciliation' initiative jointly advocated by Indonesia's ambassador for Timorese affairs, Francisco Lopez da Cruz, and the Lisbon-based former Fretilin leader Abilio Araujo (*Timor Link* No. 27, page 5).

Araujo, whose support for the initiative was a factor in his recent expulsion from Fretilin, believes that it will eventually lead to the participation of East Timorese in talks being held between Indonesia and Portugal under UN auspices. Other Timorese are far from convinced. Jose Ramos Horta, the special representative of the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM), João Carrascalao, leader of the UDT, and Mari Alkatiri, the leader of Fretilin, condemned the initiative as an Indonesian government tactic to try to move negotiations out of the international framework of the UN, and as an attempt to split Timorese opinion abroad.

Reconciliation at all cost?

The talks were to have been held in Brussels, then in Madrid, but on both occasions were cancelled, reportedly for logistical reasons. Araujo told Radio Netherlands on 15 October 1993 that negotiations without an agenda were needed to improve the human rights situation in East Timor and to build up trust between Timorese inside and outside the territory in such a way as to protect the safety and national identity of the East Timorese people. Araujo would appear not to wish to address fundamental questions such as the right to self-determination for fear of obstructing reconciliation.

Araujo has acknowledged the risk that he



Bishop Belo: 'I cannot affirm or reject the talks. I have to wait for developments at the UN.'

Summary

This issue of *Timor Link* reports on more correspondence from political prisoners in East Timor and Indonesia, including a letter from imprisoned resistance leader, Xanana Gusmão, and also an extract from guerrilla leader, Konis Santana. We look at Indonesian attempts to bring groups of pro and anti-integration East Timorese together for 'conciliation' talks, and discuss, in articles on arms sales and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, the likelihood that the economic interests of the powerful will continue to dictate foreign policy in relation to Indonesia and East Timor. We report on the November 1993 visit of Bishop Belo to Australia, and the tour by two East Timorese Refugees to Britain.

may be manipulated by the Indonesian government, and has said repeatedly that he will never betray East Timor. Quoted by in an interview with Australian journalist Jill Jolliffe on 13 December, he claimed: 'We are very clear in our minds about what we want, which is to create a good climate of understanding. We want dialogue and reconciliation and we cannot continue living with illusions.' He sees the so-called London talks as the first in a series of meetings which would be held more regularly than the ministerial meetings under UN auspices.

The Indonesian embassy in London denied all knowledge of the talks right up to the last minute, and the press had extreme difficulty in obtaining information. It seems the talks were first announced in Macao, via the Lusa news agency, by a pro-independence participant, Fr Francisco Fernandes, who said the talks 'may prove fruitful in finding a solution'.

Only two journalists were allowed to attend the talks, and they were forbidden to reveal the location. Araujo was interviewed by one of the journalists whilst surrounded by Indonesian intelligence officers and security officials and a video cameraman.

Rui Araujo, the only Portuguese journalist who attended, filmed Araujo's opening address for Portuguese Television, in which he stated that anyone who did not support the talks would be left out of a solution to the question of East Timor. The agenda of the talks apparently addressed two general introductory issues: development and justice.

In a somewhat defensive interview with the BBC World Service, Araujo spoke of his hope that more Timorese would join the process. When the interviewer expressed doubt at what could be achieved, Araujo stressed modest objectives such as a 'better life' and 'development', saying that 'our main concern here is the life, the physical and spiritual life, of our people'.

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Asked by the interviewer whether his expulsion from Fretilin had precipitated his key participation in the talks, Araujo replied: 'First of all I must say that I was not expelled. I am president and this is still so. But for this meeting I came in my personal capacity. Because I want these talks to be Timorese talks, non-party talks. We come here as old friends, as brothers, to meet each other. And I would like to say again that these talks are an initiative taken by me some months ago and I don't understand why people continue to say that it is something that is bad.'

Abilio Araujo claimed throughout that the talks were fully supported by Bishop Carlos Belo, who administers the diocese of Dili on behalf of the Vatican. However, contacted by telephone the morning the talks began, the bishop apparently knew nothing about them. Informed that Araujo had issued a statement asserting that the bishop guaranteed and supported the talks, Belo replied: 'I cannot affirm or reject them and I cannot say whether or not I support them. I have to wait for developments at the UN.' He stated that he had not been contacted either

by the Indonesian government or Araujo. Asked for his reaction to the meeting, he said: 'If Portugal and Indonesia are discussing the issue, under UN auspices, why do other people have to interfere in the middle of the process?'

The final statement from the talks has yet to be made public. It is not clear that it will. The fact that the meeting took place with such solid support from the Indonesian embassy in London is nonetheless a clear indication that Indonesia is keen to push initiatives aimed at a 'quick solution' to the East Timor problem. ■

A period of great changes

Below is an extract from an appeal by Konis Santana, a leading member of the Timorese resistance (CNRM), to President Mario Soares of Portugal.

The Timorese resistance has always demonstrated its willingness to make political compromises, to make important concessions. We are aware that no law in the world is unlimited. That is to say that, like any city, it has its own laws limited by the constitution of the country. Thus also the laws of our people end where the laws of Indonesia begin.

'The most realistic solution for the Timorese problem can be found in the peace initiative unveiled at the European Parliament and the UN by the CNRM special representative, Jose Ramos Horta in 1992. We believe that this peace proposal... is the most realistic because it contains all the elements which would guarantee on the one hand the exercise of the right to self-determination of our people, and on the other, respect for the interests of the occupant. It is therefore the proposal which could solve everything.

'We, in the interior of East Timor, support this peace plan wholeheartedly and feel that Portugal also could make it its own... We are aware that in a conflict, when the conditions are not all favourable, one party will not agree to enter into dialogue, and in our case, Indonesia continues to be inflexible because the means by which we might achieve greater international pressure on her continue to elude us. We are well aware of this.

'Nobody more than we Timorese desires to bring to the swiftest end possible the continuing martyrdom of our people. It is for this reason that we have shown ourselves willing to enter into dialogue and, above all, to make concessions. But if the Indonesian government continues to be intransigent in its rejection of dialogue with the resistance, we will have no other choice but to continue our fight with greater political determination - this is the will of our people. We are sure that continuing to resist will create the conditions which are at present lacking, in order to step up international pressure on Indonesia to demonstrate increased flexibility...

'Over the last 18 years we have always shown patience, and hoped, without abandoning the struggle, with ever more determination. And we believe that one day it will be possible to bring the much desired and hoped for peace to East Timor. The world today is in a period of great changes. Much has changed and will continue to do so. The history of humanity has taught us that the world cannot but change, and it is in that fact that the great hopes of our people can be found.' ■

HUMAN RIGHTS

Prison conditions in East Timor

A letter describing the prison conditions of a group of East Timorese political prisoners has reached activists outside the territory. Written in September, it gives details of the cruel and inhuman conditions in which political prisoners were kept by the Indonesian military in the wake of the November 1991 Santa Cruz massacre. The names of the letter's writers have been withheld for security reasons.

Part of the letter gives details of Saturnino da Costa Belo, who was removed as a 'witness' from Xanana Gusmão's trial after he shouted pro-independence slogans in court (*Timor Link* No. 25, page 2). We quote an extract below:

Peace Prize for East Timorese

The 1993 Professor Thorolf Rafto Human Rights Prize was awarded in Bergen, Norway, to Jose Ramos Horta, special representative of the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM), on 4 November 1993, on behalf of the East Timorese people.

Accepting the prize, Horta paid tribute to the courage and forbearance of his compatriots back home who 'face persecution, imprisonment, torture and death'.

'[Saturnino] was a prisoner in Dili who was then transferred to Baucau, where he was judged. He was held for a year in Baucau, before he was transferred to be with the other political prisoners involved in the events that took place on 12 November 1991. During his stay in Baucau he was severely beaten in prison while awaiting trial. He was confined to his cell at this time, was kept away from daylight and was not permitted contact with his family. During the trial and in prison he was often denied food over a number of days on account of his statements condemning Indonesia's occupation of East Timor. His household was constantly harassed by the security forces who stole anything of value, such as a radio, kitchen knives, wardrobes, floor coverings, swords used in traditional ceremonies, money worth 100,000 rupiahs, and other household goods which were sent to the court and used as evidence to support flimsy accusations against their owner.

'Alfonso Mareal, the accused's 60-year-old father residing in Samatari, Baucau, was detained and interrogated for a week until released on condition that he reported three times a day to the army intelligence command post in Baucau.

'Furthermore, one of his brothers, Custodio de Jesus, a 19-year-old student, has found himself under arrest in Dili since 4 October 1992.

'Another brother, Alcino Belo, 25, was barbarously assassinated by security forces in response to the assault by nationalist freedom fighters in Baucau on 4 October 1992. After being wounded, he was heavily interrogated by the intelligence forces with the aim of obtaining information related to clandestine organisations in Baucau. As he remained silent, categorically denying any knowledge of the clandestine movement, he was cruelly tortured and then crucified on a cross in imitation of the Christ at Calvary, where he gave up his last breath. This act took place behind the military hospital in Baucau in Kaibada town on 6 October 1992 at night.

'While the trial of the national leader Xanana Gusmão was proceeding, the said prisoner [Saturnino] was taken to trial to testify. He was severely beaten during interrogation by the military police, owing to his appeal before the court for the Indonesian government to respect human rights in East Timor, thus giving hope to East Timor's people. He was threatened with a pistol muzzle which was shoved into his ear-

hole and he was placed in pitch black cell. Indonesian government agents explained away his testimony as having been made by a mentally ill man, when in reality he was not in the slightest bit sick. This can all be explained by his consistent policy of refusing to excuse himself before the judge and never declaring himself guilty.

'The political prisoners imprisoned for their connection with the November massacre had their homes ransacked by the security forces during the pre-trial period. Noteworthy cases include Gregorio da Cunha Saldanha, whose home was attacked and from which documents were taken including a land deed, various books in Portuguese, family photographs and other things.

'The homes and relatives of Juvencio de Jesus Martins and Filomena da Silva Ferreira were terrorised by threats of prosecution, as was mentioned by the judge during the course of their trial. At the time of the Non-Aligned Movement conference in Jakarta in November 1992, young nationalists were captured and taken to the prisons for political prisoners that existed in Dili at the time, for having put themselves in the vanguard of a peaceful demonstration in Dili. The march was to protest against the arbitrary arrests and abuses illegally carried out by the Indonesian government in East Timor. After this march some of them were taken to the same prison where the prisoners responsible for writing this letter were staying. By listening to the [their] screams of pain under torture, we formed an idea of the sort of treatment they were subjected to. We know that later they were held in a cell block whose conditions were much worse than any others in the prison, in total darkness without water and in tiny cells. We learnt the following about conditions in that part of the prison and the other prisoners' time there:

- They could only eat twice a day and the portions were minimal.
- They were locked in their cells for long periods without the possibility of seeing daylight.
- Their families remained in a state of panic and distress and they were not given accurate information on the locations of their imprisoned relatives when they tried to find out from the authorities.
- After some weeks in that place of detention, the prisoners, and in particular those listed below, were taken from their cells at the dead of night by the military and 'disappeared'. Despite their families' insistent demands for more information, the authorities still refuse to provide any clarification on their whereabouts. Marcos Madini, 36; Gaspar Julino, 30, from Culu-Hun, captured in Cupao; Arnaldo, 41, from Ailok Iaran; Arnaldo, 29, from Vilar Verde; Goveia, 25, from Matadouro.

'Long live liberty, peace and justice in East Timor!' ■



EAST TIMOR: Time for change

Timor, area 7,400 square miles, is one of the easternmost islands of the Indonesian archipelago and lies 300 miles north of Australia, its nearest neighbour. The western part of the island, formerly a Dutch colony, belongs to Indonesia, whereas East Timor was for more than 400 years a Portuguese colony.

In 1974 Portugal decolonised East Timor, whose newly formed political parties began discussing options for the future – federation with Portugal, independence, or integration with Indonesia. The Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) initially favoured the first option but then joined a coalition with the nationalist liberation movement, Fretilin, to demand independence. A small third party, Apodeti, was used as a vehicle for Indonesian propaganda in favour of integration.

On 11 August 1975 the UDT staged a coup to pre-empt Indonesian threats to intervene if Fretilin came to power. In the ensuing civil war, 1,500 people lost their lives. By September 1975, however, Fretilin was in control of virtually all of Portuguese Timor, following the defection of Timorese colonial troops to the liberation movement's side.

Indonesia, like the United States, was worried by the proximity of an independent state with radical policies and continued to threaten East Timor, despite previous assurances that Jakarta would respect the right of the East Timorese to independence. In September 1975 Indonesia closed West Timor to journalists and on 7 December it launched a full-scale invasion of East Timor with the knowledge of the United States and the encouragement of Australia. East Timor was proclaimed the '27th province' of Indonesia.

The invasion and annexation of East Timor has been brutal: up to 200,000 people, a third of the population, have died as a result of Indonesian rule. But the majority of Timorese have not accepted subjugation: Indonesia has been unable to eliminate the desire of the East Timorese for self-determination

and an armed resistance movement still remains in the hills.

Although the invasion has been condemned by successive UN resolutions, the international community has done little or nothing to implement them, given the major economic and geopolitical interests of the United States, Japan and particularly Australia in the region. Indonesia's crucial strategic location and regional status – it has the world's fifth largest population, and large reserves of oil and other natural resources – have all encouraged the world to downplay East Timor's agony.

In recent years, however, several events have combined to break East Timor's isolation and bring its continued occupation to international attention. In 1989 the Pope visited the territory and in 1991 the planned visit of a parliamentary delegation from Portugal, still considered the administering authority of East Timor by the UN, created huge expectations of change. To great disappointment in East Timor, the delegation was forced in October 1991 to call off its visit.

On 12 November 1991 Indonesian troops shot and killed up to 300 East Timorese civilians during a funeral procession held at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, the East Timorese capital, for a victim of repression. Witnessed by foreign journalists, the Santa Cruz massacre provided indisputable evidence of Indonesian atrocities.

The Santa Cruz massacre has forced governments around the world to criticise Indonesia's brutality, injecting new impetus into diplomatic efforts to bring about a solution to East Timor's suffering. Since 1983 the UN Secretary-General has been entrusted with the achievement of a settlement to the dispute; and with the post-Cold War era providing a new international climate for negotiations, Indonesia faces increased pressure to reach a solution with Portugal and the East Timorese under the auspices of the UN.

Xanana appeals to ICJ

In a revealing letter to the International Commission of Jurists, dated 4 January, Xanana Gusmão recounts his experiences while on trial in Dili, and confirms that Mr Sudjono, his lawyer, was imposed on him by the Indonesian authorities. According to the letter, Sudjono admitted to Xanana that full details of all their sessions together had to be reported back to Indonesian military intelligence. He further attempted to manipulate Xanana's defence, failing to comply with plans he agreed with Xanana.

Xanana Gusmão also confirms that the clemency plea, which resulted in his life sentence being commuted to 20 years' imprisonment, was also the result of Sudjono's manipu-

lations. Xanana's difficulties were compounded by his inability to speak Indonesian and Sudjono's failure to ensure that he was provided with translation facilities. Xanana had repeatedly stated his political position and rejected the trial he was forced to undergo. Against his client's wishes, Sudjono presented a clemency plea on Xanana's behalf. Xanana then broke with Sudjono.

Xanana appeals to the ICJ and to 'all international organisations linked to international law, to initiate actions of protest, and a campaign for the annulment of the previous trial proceedings. As a foreigner, a Timorese citizen in my own conscience, and Portuguese citizen in the eyes of international law, I request the intervention of a Portuguese lawyer, in order to facilitate communication, to be assisted by lawyers from the Progressive Lawyers Group [based in Jakarta].' ■

Human Rights by governments such as China and Indonesia.

Chinese premier Jiang Zemin certainly made this amply clear in his private meeting with Mr Clinton at the summit – the first between the Chinese and US leaders since Tiananmen Square in 1989. The US administration has been threatening to withdraw China's most favoured nation trading status if its human rights record does not improve.

The APEC meeting made little progress in the way of public commitments and statements, beyond urging the EU to fall into line over the Gatt world trade negotiations and to respect the deadline of 15 December for final agreement.

On 1 November the US administration had been urged, in a *New York Times* editorial supporting the Feingold Amendment (*Timor Link* 27, p.1), to continue to 'condition the sale and transfer of US arms to Indonesia on an improvement in human rights conditions in East Timor'. Furthermore, Clinton had been specifically urged to raise the question of East Timor with President Suharto in a letter signed by 37 US senators and 101 representatives. It remains to be seen how much more pressure Clinton can exert. The next APEC meeting is after all to be hosted by President Suharto in Jakarta.

A recent State Department briefing restated the administration's intention to use IMET (International Military Education and Training, cut off to Indonesia for 1993) 'to train civilians in the control of the military and to bring about democratic instruments that have a greater degree of control over military operations... that would certainly be the intention of some of the IMET programs that would be used in Indonesia.' John Shattuck, US assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, stated on 8 December that 'the US does not subordinate human rights to any basic issue of trade or economics.' However, the fact that he referred to the North American Free Trade Agreement recently concluded between the United States, Canada and Mexico as having been possible precisely because 'the human rights and democracy situation in Mexico is improving' does not inspire confidence in such a claim.

However, the US Senate Committee on Appropriations complained of inconsistency. While noting on 14 September that the administration had not requested IMET funding for Indonesia for fiscal year 1994, it expressed its concern that the administration nevertheless aimed a) 'to license millions of dollars in commercial and foreign military sales' to the regime and b) 'to allow Indonesia to purchase professional military education courses through the FMS program'. Professor Noam Chomsky, addressing the *Covert Action Quarterly* anniversary on 10 December, paid ironic tribute to what he described as the Clinton administration's 'refined sensibility... in its human rights position...'

The admission of Chile next year to the APEC grouping, supported energetically by Indonesia, will add, in the words of an Indonesian official,

INTERNATIONAL ROUND-UP

UNITED STATES-ASIA

APEC overtures

On 14-20 November the United States was host to the annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the economic forum composed of the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean), China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. The meeting culminated in a two-day summit attended by 12 heads of government from the region alongside a number of key economic officials from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

The fact that the meeting took place in the United States was, from President Clinton's point of view, an indication of the priority his administration accords to relations with the Asia Pacific region. US trade with the region is now 50 per cent higher than with the European Union. Clinton administration policy documents and briefings have underlined its view of the region as the 'most promising and dynamic area for American foreign policy' (Winston Lord newsbriefing, Washington DC, 31 August 1993). They have emphasised that it is the area with the fastest growing economies, developing democracy, and, in the role of trading partner, the route to the renewal of the US economy, job creation and export promotion.

President Clinton told the APEC summit: 'Imagine an Asian Pacific region in which robust and open economic competition is a source of jobs and opportunity without becoming a source of hostility and instability... Imagine this region in which newly emerging economic freedoms are matched by greater individual freedoms, political freedoms and human rights.'

Many Asian leaders approached the meeting with considerably more ambivalence, wary of what some have rejected as unwelcome US meddling in the internal affairs of states – roundly condemned at the Vienna UN Conference on



Peace campaigner Hugh Dowson protests outside Rolls Royce's factory in Filton, Bristol, at the sale of engines to BAe for Indonesia-bound Hawks

BRITAIN

Arms sales

The *Financial Times* of 7 December reported that Indonesia's air force had been given the go-ahead by the Indonesian government to discuss a further purchase of 16 Hawk aircraft from British Aerospace, and that Britain's chief of air staff, Sir Michael Graydon, had visited Jakarta the previous week. Indonesia apparently intends to buy around 100 new warplanes over the next 25 years.

'another developing economy to APEC', balancing the members which are developed and newly industrialised nations. But the leg-up could come at a price. A less publicised result of Chilean membership could be an end to Chilean support for the cause of East Timor in UN human rights fora.

INDONESIA

Mario Carrascalao, former governor of East Timor, was appointed Indonesia's ambassador to Romania last October. He told journalists that his appointment revealed government endorsement of his work and role in the past. 'It is out of the question for a traitor to be appointed ambassador.' He vowed to tell the Romanian people about East Timor, and never to remain silent regarding the people's interests.

PORTUGAL

The seven East Timorese who asked for political asylum in Jakarta at the Swedish and Finnish embassies last June (*Timor Link* 27, p.4) have been allowed by the Indonesian authorities to leave Indonesia. They arrived in Lisbon at the end of 1993. In press conferences, they recounted their experiences of persecution in the wake of the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre in which three of them had been wounded. The Portuguese foreign minister promised student grants so that they could pursue their studies. He welcomed their release as a 'positive' sign, whereas some commentators, noting the forthcoming session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, dismissed the action as an effort by Indonesia to improve its image.

EUROPE/ACP

On 8 October European parliamentarians and delegates of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of countries adopted a resolution on the final day of the ACP-EC joint assembly in Brussels, urging an international arms embargo and diplomatic pressure on Indonesia 'until clear signals are given that the Indonesian government is prepared to create conditions allowing the people of East Timor to exercise their right to self-determination and independence'.

The joint assembly requested that the resolution be put before the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers, the European Commission, the Indonesian government and the UN Security Council.

The Indonesian government has set up a lobby to influence members of the European Parliament, and has been actively recruiting MEPs, some members of the EP-Indonesia Friendship Association, to participate in a visit to Indonesia and East Timor. A number of Portuguese MPs approached turned down the offer. ■

The primacy of economic interests

MARK CURTIS, a former research fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, describes how the economic interests of the Western powers have prevented them from adequately pressuring the Indonesian regime over human rights.

As well as providing a significant market for Western arms sales, Indonesia under Suharto has consistently offered other Western businesses the opportunity to benefit from the country's political 'stability', most notably in the exploitation of the country's vast mineral resources. This is the principal reason why the Western states have acquiesced in Suharto's brutal rule at home and in the violence in East Timor.

A few months before the invasion, a Confederation of British Industry report noted that Indonesia presented 'enormous potential for the foreign investor' and that according to the press, the country enjoyed a 'favourable political climate' and the encouragement of foreign investment by the country's authorities, though 'the [CBI] mission acknowledges that investing and operating in Indonesia is not without its problems'. RTZ, BP, British Gas and Britoil are some of the British companies who have since taken advantage of Indonesia's political 'stability' and favourable investment climate.

Aid and trade

In the mid-1980s it was also reported that Britain 'is to break with recent policy' and offer aid on 'soft loan terms' to Indonesia, at the same time that British aid to the country was the largest to any in East Asia. Britain reportedly 'finally agreed to meet a requirement laid down by President Suharto' that soft loans should be granted at low interest rates, repaid over 25 years and with a seven-year grace period. The deal was worth £130 million and made Indonesia the world's second largest recipient of British soft loans.

Currently, leading Western aid donors are continuing their economic support for the Suharto regime, with agreements to provide £2.8 billion in 1992 and £3.4 billion in 1993, whilst Britain's minister for overseas development praises the country for having a 'well deserved reputation for sound macro-economic management'. A US Department of Commerce publication similarly notes that Indonesia offers 'excellent trade and investment opportunities for US companies' under a headline reading, *Indonesia: Trade opportunities here too good to be ignored.*

The consequences of the Indonesian regime's economic priorities reflect those prevalent throughout the West's Third World domains: the lowest 20 per cent of earners

account for only 9 per cent of total household income, whilst the top 10 per cent account for over a quarter of all income. 'Indonesia's income per head', the *Economist* notes, 'is only \$550. But the richest 10 per cent of Indonesians spend about as much as the average consumer in Portugal. These conditions are maintained by repression of the political opposition, trade unions and other forces endeavouring to secure developmental change to the benefit of the impoverished.'

As well as the economic opportunities in Indonesia, East Timor offers Western business interests the prospect of substantial profits; here, Australia has led the way.

Australia's role

A year after the invasion of East Timor the *Japan Times* reported on negotiations between an Australian oil company and Indonesia on extracting the vast oil resources in the Timor sea, whose '200-mile stretch of water constitutes the only gap in the resources line agreed between Australia and Indonesia'. An Australian official commented that, with the dispute over East Timor, 'Australia's access to a potentially good oil area remains in doubt. Until the East Timor issue is out of the way and fully resolved', he commented, 'there is little we can do publicly.' Australia subsequently did its level best to ensure the issue was 'out of the way' by recognising Indonesian incorporation of the territory. Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser noted in 1976 that the invasion of East Timor 'introduced some strain in our relations' with Indonesia but 'we should look forward rather than backwards'. In December 1989, the resources issue was finally resolved with a joint agreement to exploit the Timor Sea, involving Australian, British and US companies, amongst others. A month following the Dili massacre, in December 1991, an untroubled Australian government approved with Indonesia 11 oil production contracts for exploitation of a jointly controlled area of the sea.

As a necessary corollary, Australia has continued its customary apologies for Indonesian barbarity in East Timor. In a 1991 interview Foreign Minister Gareth Evans noted the 'ongoing human rights problems that crop up from time to time in East Timor' and that 'the sovereign reality of the incorporation of East Timor is something that our country has accepted since the late 1970s... We simply can't lead ourselves to an exercise which is premised on the non-acceptance of a sovereign incorporation of East Timor into the Republic of Indonesia'. The Timor Gap Treaty was, he explained, 'an enormous economic opportunity' for both Australia and Indonesia. By November 1992 Foreign Minister Evans was speaking of 'a new high point in the relationship' with Indonesia in trade and economic matters.

A new direction?

There have been some recent signs of willingness on the part of the US administration to put pressure on Indonesia over human rights abuses in East Timor. In 1992 the US Congress

halted the US-Indonesia military training programme and in July 1993 the US blocked the transfer of four warplanes from Jordan to Indonesia. In September the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee voted for an amendment to the Foreign Appropriations Bill which asked the president to consult with Congress to determine whether improvements in the human rights situation have taken place before approving arms sales.

The significance of a halt in arms sales in putting pressure on rogue regimes was highlighted in British Foreign Office documents leaked on Chile in 1985. The documents stated that applying an arms embargo would be a 'striking political gesture on our behalf' against human rights abuses. The breaking off of diplomatic relations, meanwhile, 'would be an effective way of demonstrating our concern to the Chileans'. Britain did vote in favour of the March 1993 UN Human Rights Commission resolution critical of Indonesia's human rights record in East Timor. However, there have been no signs from the British government that a moratorium on arms sales is in the offing. Rather, further sales of Hawk aircraft are expected to follow shortly.

As talks on East Timor at the UN between Portugal and Indonesia continue under the

auspices of the secretary-general, there are currently few indications, even given the US moves on arms sales noted above, that the leading Western states are willing to press Indonesia sufficiently to change policy on East Timor and prepare the territory for self-determination, in line with international law. The issue is a sacred cow in the Indonesian military establishment, which effectively governs the country. Rather, the evidence suggests that Western policy will continue to be dictated by commercial interests which – with numerous precedents – override considerations of human rights and international law. The leading Western states would prefer to profit from the socio-economic conditions offered by the Indonesian military regime, despite the fact that, in the words of Amnesty International, 'disregard for human life is an integral part of the Indonesian security forces' approach to its work' and 'in the quarter of a century since it came to power, the government of Indonesia has been responsible for a staggering range of violations of human rights'. ■

This article comprises the final two sections of Mark Curtis's paper published in 1993 entitled The West, Indonesia and East Timor.

Helping to keep the candle of freedom alight

WILL McMAHON, a member of the British Coalition for East Timor and joint national coordinator of Campaign against the Arms Trade, describes the impact of November's UK Free East Timor tour.

The Free East Timor tour was the most ambitious event organised by the Coalition since its foundation in December 1991. The two speakers who travelled the length and breadth of Britain were Jose Antonio Amorim Dias, the European representative of the National Council for Maubere Resistance, and Maria Braz, whose family fled East Timor and went to live in Portugal as part of the East Timorese community there.

Neither of the speakers will be able to return to their place of birth until the Indonesian occupation of East Timor is over. Both bore witness to the repression and resistance of the people of East Timor.

Spreading awareness

During the tour ordinary people became aware of facts which spoke for themselves. The personal account of the Indonesian occupation given by Jose brought home to audiences the

real human cost of the struggle for self-determination. Jose, who was forced to witness the torture and murder of his father and was himself tortured by the military, explained that when he and Maria spoke, they spoke for all those who are silenced by such terror. Maria spoke of, among other things, the systematic sexual and physical abuse that Timorese women suffer at the hands of the Indonesian security services, and of the forced population control programme they have to endure.

The speakers, which took a large photo-exhibition on the tour, addressed 25 meetings in England, Scotland and Wales and were given a warm welcome everywhere. As a result, over 1,000 more people now know at first hand about the East Timorese campaign for freedom.

Their visit was also an opportunity to lobby policy-makers and to encourage the media to report the situation in East Timor. In two and a half weeks Jose and Maria were interviewed by ten national and local radio stations, as well as the BBC World Service. They also had a busy itinerary of visits to MPs, MEPs, Lords, church officials, and trade unions. Representatives of all the major opposition political parties and the international committee of the Trades Union Congress had discussions with the Timorese guests. There was also a reception at the Portuguese embassy. For many this was the first time that they had heard a detailed account of the situation. All offered to take up the issue of East Timor.

Questioning British policy

As a result of this work, the government faced further questions in parliament about the sale

of Hawks to Indonesia. The Labour Party renewed correspondence with Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd about the issue.

The Foreign Office, after some persuasion, agreed to meet Jose and Maria. Foreign Office desk officer for Indonesia, Richard Sands, who met the two, was unable to give categorical assurance that British military equipment sold to Indonesia had not been used in East Timor. Neither could he agree to a proposal for a parliamentary delegation to East Timor. He also treated with disdain Jose's eyewitness account that he had sighted British-made Hawks in East Timor, which apparently did not fall under the category of cast-iron evidence. Since the Indonesian armed forces have not engaged with any foreign enemy since confrontation with Britain in the 1960s over the Malaysian Federation conflict, the British government must know what the planes being purchased are for. This perhaps explains the reticence of government officials to agree to a parliamentary delegation – no matter how formal or staged such a visit might be.

Breaking the silence on East Timor

The tour was timed to coincide with the second anniversary of the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre. On 12 November 1993 over 50 people took part in a candle-light vigil on the steps of St Martin-in-the-Fields near Trafalgar Square in London. This was followed by a social event organised together with Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT). Over 100 people heard Jose and Maria explain how important the support given to them by the people they had met had been. Jose explained that those resisting the occupation in East Timor would hear of the tour and take heart that the silence on East Timor in the UK was being broken.

All those involved in the tour felt it made a good start in organising a nationwide network to campaign for East Timorese self-determination.

The tour was, of course, part of a wider international movement to end the occupation. In the United States a decade of work by activists is now bearing fruit with a noticeable change in attitude by the Clinton administration. In Sweden the sale of military equipment was stopped in November 1993 after a wideranging public campaign and debate on the issue. Britain is probably the biggest arms supplier to Jakarta. There is clearly more to be done; as Jose commented at the end of the tour: 'Something is happening here. The problem is how to keep the candle alight.'

- The British Coalition for East Timor's new campaign pack, containing leaflets, ideas for action, a six-page background, a resources list, window sticker and more, is available from PO Box 2349, London E1 3HX (suggested donation £1).
- A documentary by John Pilger, *Death of a Nation* will be televised on ITV at 10.40pm on 22 February. The March edition of *New Internationalist* will focus on East Timor. ■

CHURCH

Bishop Belo visits Australia

Bishop Carlos Belo, the apostolic administrator, made a pastoral visit to Australia in November and December, at the invitation of the Australian bishops.

Bishop Belo's aim was to establish relations between Dili diocese and the Australian Catholic Church, to meet with the East Timorese community in Australia, and to raise funds for a seminary in East Timor. He visited East Timorese communities in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Brisbane and Darwin, but did not meet Australian government officials.

The visit of Bishop Belo, who administers the diocese of Dili on behalf of the Vatican, coincided with the second anniversary of the Santa Cruz massacre. He celebrated mass that day at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Cardinal Clancy had criticised the position of the Australian government over human rights abuses in East Timor, and the bishop appeared to appreciate the stance taken by the cardinal. Bishop Belo noted in one interview that many Timorese had died in the Second World War protecting Australians against the Japanese. In his homily the bishop spoke of the need for reconciliation.

Quoted in *The Age* of 17 November, he said: 'The Timorese, they tell me "Bishop it is very difficult to forgive those who killed my father, my son, my husband." But above all we are Christians. I respect the dead and I pray for them and we pray that this event will not happen again. But for me it is more important to put in the hearts of the young people that we must live in hope to become a new society.'

In a radio interview given the same day, Bishop Belo was asked what were the most urgent needs of the East Timorese people. He reiterated the urgent need for peace, prospects for the young, jobs, and the cultural and spiritual development of all the people. Asked if he still stood by his letter to the UN secretary-general of 1989 calling for a referendum, he said: 'The problem is that I speak alone. Only one voice, like one voice in the desert. So now the problem is the international forum. We know also that there are conversations between ministers Alatas and Barroso [the foreign ministers of Indonesia and Portugal, respectively], so yes, we wait for the results of these conversations.'

In response to a question about the Church's efforts meet the needs of the people of East Timor, Bishop Belo said: 'First of all, we try to be with the people and to be the voice of the voiceless people; to help them in the field of justice, peace and reconciliation; and according to our possibilities, to carry out agriculture, to build schools and technical schools, preparing the new generation. In this field we also are intend-

ing to build a new seminary for the new generation, not only for priesthood, but also for lay people – politicians, speakers, chiefs of districts. We want to prepare the people in our new minor seminary... We try to read the situation and, at times, if necessary, to speak out about the human rights, disasters and peace.'

Bishop Belo also stated that he was not satisfied with the action taken by Indonesia over the Santa Cruz killings, as a result of which members of the armed forces were disciplined: 'We don't know where [the bodies of the victims] are. Many families are still waiting for the return of their boys. Another aspect is that justice is not really managed well. [For shooting down] boys, the military only got 12 or 18 months in prison.'

• Bishop Belo's visit raised A\$36,000 for a junior seminary project, **PAT WALSH** writes from Melbourne, due in large part to the efforts of the East Timorese community itself, which rallied enthusiastically to the bishop's appeal. In Melbourne, nearly A\$10,000 was raised at one event, a dinner organised and catered for by the East Timorese community and hosted by Bishop Hilton Deakin, auxiliary bishop in Melbourne. The success of Bishop Belo's visit has been a major boost to East Timorese morale in Australia. The visit was also an opportunity to introduce a new Christians in Solidarity with East Timor initiative to Bishop Belo. CISET, based at the Jesuit Social Justice Centre in Sydney and directed by Sr Kathleen O'Connor, aims to build stronger links between the Australian churches and the East Timorese Church. ■

Development for who?

In an interview with *AsiaFocus* on 24 September, BISHOP CARLOS BELO spoke of Indonesia's pressure on the Church to back pro-integration development programmes.

Asia Focus (AF): Comparing before and after Indonesian integration, has the role of the Church changed in East Timor?

Bishop Belo (BB): In the history of insurgencies in East Timor, local people have always relied on two alternatives. If they feel strong, they fight alone, but if they feel helpless, they rely on the Church to help voice their aspirations. During Portuguese colonisation, the Church served as a channel for people's aspirations and was involved in education and socio-economic programmes.

The (Portuguese) government – for certain political interests – acknowledged the Church's role in voicing people's aspirations by appointing the bishop of Dili as government advisor. Now, after integration, the Church finds itself in a dilemma. The government of Indonesia asks the Church in East Timor to be active in promoting the government development programme. It also asks the Church to maintain a neutral position in politics – not to get involved in practical politics.

However, the Church can't close its eyes to various problems faced by the faithful as the result of integration. The Church faces a

dilemma. If the faithful see the Church as too close to the government, they dub it a 'government Church.' If the Church is too vocal in voicing people's aspirations, the government immediately accuses it of getting involved in 'practical' politics.

AF: What is the basic attitude the Church brings to such a dilemma?

BB: Considering that formal political channels aren't functioning yet, the Church is prompted to overcome the dilemma by declaring it takes the side of the people without opposing the government. The Church also serves as a social control.

AF: Does the Church always succeed with its social control function?

BB: The Church's social control function will be effective only if it can change its image. The old image of 'ritual function' should be replaced with the image of a serving Church. The local Church needs to go to the people to get involved in their efforts to improve their socio-economic conditions.

AF: How does the East Timor Church get involved in development?

BB: So far, the Church has supported development programmes launched by the government in East Timor. But it should be said that the Church can't participate effectively because the government doesn't have a concrete policy that guarantees Church participation in the development programmes.

The government only says it hopes the Church can help in organising popular support of government programmes. As the Church is striving to become a serving Church that takes the side of the poor, most clerics here are quite critical about government calls to organise popular support of its programmes.

AF: What should the government do?

BB: The government should find a more appropriate way to enable the Church to play a greater role in development programmes. Harmonious relations between the government and Church should be maintained. Misunderstandings between government and Church due to prejudices are based on false reports. It is regrettable that certain government officials are of the view that the Church is challenging the government to win people's sympathy through development programmes. Some officials still question the fact that people's participation in Church construction projects is higher than in other projects like road and bridge construction.

The government should also minimise the adverse effects of integration. Local people see the growing number of migrants controlling the economy as negative effects of integration. The native-migrant dichotomy develops with the widening economic gap between the two groups. In such a crucial situation the Church finds itself helpless, and develops a defensive attitude.

Pastoral on family planning

The issue of family planning has a special significance for the East Timorese Catholic Church. The Indonesian government has been accused of attempting to force artificial family planning on East Timorese families, as part of its campaign of 'slow genocide'.

Forced sterilisation, notably by the injecting of women with the drug depo-provera, has been seen by many East Timorese as another government method to annihilate their culture and lineage. The Timorese have resisted, and are resisting. But as a result, women die in childbirth at home, rather than risk going to the Indonesian-run clinics and hospitals where they fear they may be forcibly sterilised.

The Church has taken its own traditional stand on birth control. Bishop Belo issued a pastoral letter on the subject, which was read out in East Timorese churches on 28 August 1993. The first section states that the Church, while recognising that there is a demographic problem, has its own understanding and interpretation of this and quotes *Gaudium et Spes*, para 47.

The second section, on the doctrinal principles of the Church, deals with the problem of child-bearing as a factor in marital relations. It is the exclusive right of the husband and wife to decide for themselves the number of children they will have without any external compulsion. The letter lists the legitimate reasons for limiting the number of children: threats to the mother's life, disease, economic problems, educational needs, national requirements related to very limited resources. All sexual contact must remain open to the transmission of life.

Section three lists illicit methods of birth control, as set down by Pope Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae* 14 (1968), arguing that the Church's prohibits birth control because it is evil and dangerous.

Section four advises the use of natural family planning and the use of the infertile period, accepting church responsibility for teaching couples about these methods.

Section five, 'The policy of the East Timor-Dili diocese', fully supports the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* and methods of birth control to regulate the population. The diocese rejects methods of birth control and only accepts the natural method.

The last two paragraphs are of particular interest: 'It is the view of the diocesan leadership that the starting point is respect for the individual and the family. Therefore all kinds of force must be rejected. Special attention is needed to give guidance to people's innermost feelings so as to ensure that the correct norms are applied in a situation that is laden with spiritual conflict. Also, [there is a need for] guidance

regarding the meaning and role of sexuality in a person's whole development, the function of marriage and family life, as well as the role of the woman within the family and in society.

'The Catholic Church in Timor-Dili advises Christian families to use the natural method: the Catholic community should help ensure success for the norm of the happy and prosperous family through a programme of natural family planning. The Church continues to strive to convince the Government to accept and recognise this natural method as an official alternative. As stated by the State Policy Guidelines (GBHN) Chapter IV, No. 6: "Participation in family planning needs to be further intensified on the basis of awareness and voluntariness, taking account of religious values and belief in one Almighty God as well as social and moral norms."

'The Dili diocese is unhappy about deviations from state provisions being made by state officials; what they want to achieve is not small families and prosperity but targets so that they can earn bonuses and personal acknowledgement.' ■

Repression continues

We reprint below excerpts of a letter from Bishop Belo to a friend abroad, dated 14 January 1994.

Iwould like to let you know that torture continues in East Timor. On 23 December, in the parish of Ossu, County of Viqueque, the military captured several young Catholics, beat and tortured them, and forced them to declare that they participated in a subversive meeting. On 4 January, in Dili, the military were waiting for a young man named Salvador Sarmiento, who is a student at the Pastoral Institute, and when he left the classroom they stuck him in a military vehicle and took him to a place where he was kicked, beaten, tortured, until he was almost dead. Then they forced his parents, who are illiterate, to declare that they had seen their son participate in subversive meetings. With these kind of injustices, they want to force a declaration that Fr Sancho Amaral is a priest who is against Indonesia.

'We have problems with regard to three of our Salesian missionaries. The military do not want to extend the visas of Fr Locatelli (Italian), Fr Andres Calleja (Spanish) and Fr João de Deus (Portuguese), because they say that the three are helping Fretilin.

'The third problem has to do with our young people. The Indonesian authorities have taken more than 400 young East Timorese to Java with the promise of work. When they arrived there, they were distributed amongst a number of factories, contrary to the initial agreement. The young East Timorese in Jakarta suffer like slaves. Two of them have died already. Others are being persecuted and beaten. It is a great injustice and suffering. ■

NEWS FROM EAST TIMOR

Health problems rampant

A press release issued by the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM), the resistance movement's political umbrella organisation, has spoken of diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria killing up to seven people a day. A diarrhoea epidemic has also reportedly wiped out several hundred children in the Ermera area. This has been blamed on a recent typhoon which may have left water supplies contaminated. This news flies in the face of Indonesian claims to have improved health in East Timor. While hospitals and clinics have certainly been built under Indonesian rule, many East Timorese are frightened to use them because of sinister stories of poisonings and female sterilisation (see article opposite) carried out by Indonesian doctors.

The result is that health care provided by the church is oversubscribed, and in remote villages people often die of curable diseases. Such is the fear of sterilisation on the part of some women that they run the risk of dying in childbirth rather than go to the government hospitals to give birth. The basic living conditions of the majority of the population, which has poorly ventilated housing, leads to a high incidence of respiratory diseases, especially among children. ■

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