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The Indonesia Human Rights Campaign

TAPOL Bulletin No. 100

August 1990

Our one-hundredth issue

The first issue of *TAPOL Bulletin* appeared in August 1973. Seventeen years later, on our own special 'centenary', it is a good moment to reflect on what we have been doing and where we go from here.

In 1973, there were many tens of thousands of political prisoners or *tapols* (*tahanan politik*) in Indonesia. Several hundred had been given severe sentences in show-trials staged to back General Suharto's claim that he had foiled a 'communist coup attempt' in October 1965. All the others had been detained for almost a decade with no prospect of a trial, or of release. During the 1970s, pressure for the release of the *tapols* became so strong that when economic disaster blew up in Suharto's face and he needed more military aircraft to bomb the East Timorese into submission, he had no option but to free the untried prisoners, making it easier for his backers in the west to step up the supply of much needed economic aid and military equipment. Our own role was acknowledged when the regime held a press conference to discredit us and announced that the word *tapol* which we had adopted as our name, should no longer be used.

Although a campaign was launched by then editor Derek Davies, in the pages of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, to force us to close down (our main aim - to release the untried prisoners - had, after all, been achieved!), we saw no reason to stop, or even to stop calling ourselves *TAPOL*. By now, student activists were in prison, getting their own dose of 'justice' in Suharto's anti-subversion courts. The older generation of *tapols* returned home, only to discover that release did not mean freedom. To this day, they are social pariahs, the victims of a system of persecution that will dog them till their dying day, unless pressure can force the regime to rehabilitate them totally and unconditionally. Having crippled the 'extreme left' opposition, the regime turned its attention to the 'extreme right', the Muslims, of whom many hundreds are now sitting out long prison terms.

But this was not all, by a long chalk. West Papua had suffered ferociously under Indonesian military occupation since 1963, with military operations and massacres forcing people to take up arms, or flee to Papua New Guinea. East Timor had been bombed beyond recognition, the population uprooted and atrocities were the daily fare of the people. As everyone soon discovered, human rights violations were particularly violent in Indonesia's colonial territories.

During the 1980s, new problems arose in the wake of accelerated economic growth and the concentration of wealth and resources in the hands of conglomerates, many

of them run by or closely tied in with the country's First Family. Our decision in 1986 to expose the damaging social and environmental impact of transmigrating millions of poor peasants from Java to the outer reaches of the Republic was only the start of a widening focus on land rights abuses and other atrocities associated with 'development', not only among tribal peoples but also in the Javanese heartland.

Today, the apparatus of repression is unchanged though *Kopkamtib* has given way to *Bakorstanas*. But in the Indonesia of the 1990s, that is only part of the problem. The victims of today's abuses suffer at the hands not only of the military and army-backed government officials; there are the multinationals, the projects funded by the World Bank and Indonesia's own tycoons despoiling forests and spewing out effluent, while government pays lip-service to environmental protection.

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RI and China restore ties

China and Indonesia will restore diplomatic relations this month, ending a 23-year rift between East Asia's two most populous nations. To seal the new relations Prime Minister Li Peng will visit Jakarta this month, while President Suharto wants to pay a visit to Beijing in November, after attending the coronation of the new emperor of Japan.

The restoration follows prolonged negotiations following a meeting between China's Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and President Suharto in Tokyo in February 1989. From then on it was just a matter of solving outstanding difficulties to pave the way for the resumption of the relations.

Brief history

Ties between the two countries were first seriously discussed in 1954 when negotiations were held about dual-nationality for Chinese living in Indonesia who still retained their Chinese citizenship. In 1955 a treaty on this complex matter was signed in Bandung. Then at the 1955 Afro-Asia conference, Indonesia and China joined ranks for the first time to develop a third bloc which much later emerged as the Non-Aligned Movement. Jakarta-Beijing relations became very close particularly during the Guided Democracy of President Sukarno from 1959-1965. Sukarno visited China three times, while Chinese leaders like Zhou Enlai and Liu Shaoqi paid several visits to Jakarta. But implementation of the dual-nationality concept did not proceed well. In particular the racist PP10 government decree in 1960, preventing Chinese from trading below district level led to protests from the Chinese government. Tens of thousands of petty Chinese traders and shop-keepers lost their livelihood, causing major social upheavals. In foreign affairs, China was one of the few to support Sukarno's move to quit the UN.

The killing of the six generals on 1 October 1965 drastically transformed the relations. Soon after the generals blamed the PKI for the murders, alleging it was part of a coup attempt, China was accused of supporting the PKI. Mobs attacked Chinese government premises in Jakarta; the Chinese consulate was ransacked, followed by an attack on the Xinhua office which later served for many years as a camp for political prisoners. On 15 April 1966, a right-wing mob attacked the Chinese Embassy compound, whereupon the relationship plunged to zero. Both sides expelled personnel and in October 1967, diplomatic ties were severed.

Outstanding issues

The many Chinese nationals living in Indonesia as unwanted aliens could still disrupt relations. The Indonesian government says there are 300,000 ethnic Chinese who previously held Chinese passports and need to be taken care of, and who have been given special ID cards. It is still unclear whether they are entitled to apply for Indonesian citizenship. After the Tien An Mien massacre, it is unlikely that many of these will be willing to go to China.

The other murky issue was Beijing's support for the many PKI refugees in China. For many years, President made it a condition that unless China withdrew its support for the



The grounds of the former Chinese embassy, now derelict and used as a parking lot.

PKI, relations would not be resumed. But now this problem has been resolved as hundreds of PKI refugees have left China, leaving only a few sick and elderly people. Since the Tokyo meeting in February 1989, the Chinese government has insisted that it has no more links with the PKI and has promised not to interfere in internal Indonesian affairs. Although the Indonesian government has always insisted that China played a role in the so-called 'coup attempt' of 1965, no evidence has ever been produced. Ali Alatas has in turn promised not to isolate China in the international community. As an earnest of that pledge, Indonesia has supported China at the UN against condemnation for the Tien An Mien massacre.

The other issue is Indonesia's debt to China. Indonesia agreed on 3 July to repay US\$84 million.

The rapprochement has been coordinated personally by President Suharto and his office. In the army, many officers still see China as a communist threat and regard the restoration of relations as bad news. By contrast, Vietnam has never been seen as a threat by the armed forces. It was no coincidence that, while Ali Alatas was busy mending fences in Beijing, armed forces leaders were hosting General Vo Nguyen Giap on a visit to Jakarta. The generals may have intended this as a sign of their disapproval of Suharto's rapprochement with China. ★

Revelations in CIA's hidden history

In May many US papers published a syndicated report by Kathy Kadane about the involvement of US embassy personnel in Jakarta in the 1965/1966 massacres in Indonesia. Ms Kadane's investigations have added another piece to the jigsaw of what happened in Indonesia in 1965. The Kadane story which was taken up in the Indonesian, Dutch, Australian and UK media, has given a new impetus for an examination of the role of the leading actors in the 1965 coup and massacre. It should also lead to official inquiries by the US Administration and Congress.

Kathy Kadane's report was first published on 19 May in a South Carolina paper, the *Spartanburg Herald Journal*. Next day, it made the front pages of the *San Francisco Examiner*, the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, the *Miami Herald*, the *Raleigh News and Observer*, *Boston Globe* and the *Chicago Tribune* while the *Washington Post*, *North Jersey Herald News* and *The Seattle Times* ran shorter versions.

Ms Kadane, a stringer for the Washington-based *States News Service* (SNS), started working on her report in the early eighties when, as an investigator for the deputy chief counsel to the Watergate committee, she came across the death list story. While studying at the Columbia School of Journalism, she compiled a 700-page chronology of the massacre. Apart from small grants from the Fund for Investigative Journalism and Essential Information, Ms Kadane has financed the research herself. For the sake of truth, democracy, humanity and justice, this breakthrough may mean that, after nearly a quarter of a century, a proper account can at last be given.

Robert Martens, the key figure?

A key figure in Ms Kadane's story is Robert Martens, who was on the staff of the political section of the US embassy

at the time. He told her he had been compiling a list of national, regional and local functionaries of the PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party, for two years. The lists were given to the Indonesian army through an intermediary, at a time when the embassy was well aware that the army was killing communist suspects in large numbers. "It really was a big help to the army. They probably killed a lot of people and I probably have a lot of blood on my hands", Martens is quoted as saying.

His Indonesian counterpart was Tirta Kentjana Adhyatman, an aide of Adam Malik, then minister of trade under Sukarno. Like Martens, Adhyatman was collecting PKI names for his boss and has confirmed his connection with Martens in several interviews. They exchanged information and checked their lists with each other. Adam Malik passed on the lists to the KOSTRAD headquarters of Major-General Suharto. But Adhyatman claims 'it is not true to say that I received lists of names from Bob (Martens). He had his list and I had mine'. [*Jawa Pos*, 28 May 1990].

Senior army officers in Indonesian military intelligence at the time were quick to respond to the Kadane report. Lt. General (ret'd) Sutopo Yuwono was not surprised to read about Martens' list of PKI members. "In those days, in 1965,



Protest against CIA involvement in 1965 killings, in front of US consulate, Amsterdam.

[Photo: *Berita Tanpa Sensor*]

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exchange of information was quite common with everybody, with foreign powers – like embassies – and between ourselves" [Editor, 2 June 1990]. Sutopo Yuwono was head of *BAKIN*, Indonesia's military intelligence, in the early seventies. But one of his deputies, Major-General (ret'd) Nichlany put it differently: "They (the US embassy) didn't do anything at all. They didn't provide us with any data at all! On the contrary, the Americans were quite amazed that Indonesia was able to wipe out the largest communist party in Asia after China. All the data about the intelligence operation to destroy (the PKI) was in our hands." Nichlany was quite specific about who was in charge. "I know precisely that it was Pak Harto of KOSTRAD who carried out the obliteration of the PKI." [Jawa Pos, 26 May 1990]. Admiral (ret'd) Sudomo echoed this, insisting that Indonesian intelligence knew it all. "It was common knowledge, and it is logical that we had sufficient information about the communist party and Communist members" [Indonesia Times, 25 May 1990].

Marshall Green, the US ambassador at the time, had a rather different account. "I know we had a lot more information (about the PKI) than the Indonesians themselves", he told Kadane. Martens kept a pool of all the data about PKI personnel from different parts of the embassy, including the CIA station. But the very idea that the army needed help from a foreign power for its own drive against the PKI has raised the nationalistic hackles of many officers who want to take all the credit for the killings. While Kadane makes it clear that the US embassy contributed substantially to the destruction of the PKI, most Indonesian army officers, whether retired or still on active duty, resent this. Only Sutopo Yuwono, never close to the core of officers around Suharto, admits that information was being passed to the army from various embassies.

There is no suggestion that Martens was on the CIA payroll. The CIA station at the US embassy in 1965 was in the hands of Hugh Tovar and Joseph Lazarsky, chief and deputy chief of the station. Hugh Tovar who served in Jakarta from 1958 till 1966, a critical period when Sukarno was turning increasingly against the West, is not mentioned in Kadane's report. As the archetypal CIA agent, Tovar has been involved in past controversies about the CIA role in 1965. He always denies everything and would no doubt give false testimony under oath. As in the recent Irangate scandal, such people see lying as essential to any covert operation, a patriotic duty. The more talkative Lazarsky told Kathy Kadane: "We were getting a good account in Jakarta of who was being picked up... They (the army) didn't have enough goon squads to zap them all, and some individuals were valuable for interrogation. The infrastructure was zapped almost immediately. We knew what they were doing. We knew they would keep a few and save them for the kangaroo courts, but Suharto and his advisers said, if you keep them alive, you have to feed them". By the end of January 1966, Lazarsky said, the checked-off names – monitored in Jakarta and at the CIA intelligence directorate in Washington – were so numerous that it was clear the PKI leadership had been destroyed.

Soon after the Kadane story appeared, Martens and

Lazarsky started to denounce it. Tirta Kentjana Adhyatman even denied having been interviewed by her. Ms Kadane, who according to *Village Voice*, has produced a report of Pulitzer quality, has all the interviews on tape and could put the last nail in the coffins of these people.

When were lists exchanged?

Ms Kadane's article does not say when Martens and Adhyatman had their frequent rendezvous, only that it happened over "a number of months". The exact time is crucial in assessing whether the US embassy and the CIA were directly involved in planning the overthrow of Sukarno and the obliteration of the PKI or whether the CIA was 'merely' involved in the massacre of at least 500,000 alleged communists. Lazarsky gives the impression that the 'shooting list' was only used during the massacre i.e. after 1 October 1965. Checked-off names meant that these PKI leaders had been killed or captured. Former CIA Director William Colby, who was CIA Far East Division Chief, told Kadane, "We came to the conclusion that with the sort of Draconian way it was carried out, it really set them" – the communists – "back for years". After the killing of the six generals on the morning of 1 October 1965, the PKI was immediately blamed and the persecution started.



Former President Sukarno and US Ambassador Green

While there is enough evidence of CIA involvement in the PKI bloodbath through direct support to Major-General Suharto, the KOSTRAD HQ and the red berets, evidence about whether the CIA had a relationship with Suharto prior to the killings of the six generals is still inconclusive. Some pieces in the jigsaw are still missing, most of the evidence now available point to Suharto as the main actor both in the 30 September events and the massacre.

The CIA study

It is generally asserted that the CIA Directorate of Intelligence has produced only one study about 1965, *Indonesia-1965: The Coup That Backfired*, written in 1968. This study, recommended by people like Hugh Tovar as a balanced and thorough analysis, was declassified in the seventies and released through the Document Expediting Project of the Library of Congress. Needless to say, it contains no hint of CIA involvement in the 1965 affair. In the past few years, CIA watchers, experts on US foreign policy and Indonesianists have raised doubts about this document. In 1975 a former Canadian diplomat, Peter Dale

Scott, published an account of US involvement in 1965 and argued that US policy-makers knew in advance about the planning of a military takeover, facilitated it, took credit for it when it occurred and even publicly exhorted the military to displace Sukarno in quasi-official US publications. ['Exporting Military-Economic Development: America and the Overthrow of Sukarno, 1965-1967' in *Ten Years Military Terror in Indonesia*, Spokesman Books, 1975]. He argued that the US preparations for a military takeover in Indonesia were too large and too public to be confined to only one agency, the CIA. A whole range of institutions – the US army, the oil industry, Ford Foundation, the Council of Foreign Relations, in short, the very cream of the US political and intellectual establishment were part of it. He cogently describes the overt activities but produced no conclusive evidence about CIA tentacles in the 1965 affair.

Some CIA watchers believe that the declassified CIA study was a sanitised version of a more lengthy CIA report on Indonesia. Ex CIA-agent Ralph McGehee has stated on several occasions that such a report does exist.

From 1973 through early 1977 I was the CIA's East Asia division representative to the International Communist Branch (ICB). My duties included custodianship of studies prepared by the ICB that examined communist strengths and weaknesses and described CIA operations against various communist parties. Its study about the agency's operation in Indonesia in 1965 was so heinously fascinating that I read it many times. It boastfully outlined how a simple covert operation had been decisive in destroying the PKI [Harper's Magazine, December 1984].

This suggests that the covert operation described by McGehee was not confined to compiling a 'shooting list'.

A recent study of US foreign policy reveals that US documents for the three months preceding 30 September are still withheld from public scrutiny. Gabriel Kolko argues: 'Given the detailed materials available before and after July-September 1965, one can only assume that the release of these papers would embarrass the US government.' [*Confronting the Third World, US Foreign Policy 1945-1980*, Gabriel Kolko, Pantheon Books, 1989]. The cable traffic between US ambassador Marshall Green and Secretary of State Dean Rusk provides damaging proof of US complicity. Kolko reveals that on 28 October 1965, Marshall Green cabled Secretary of State Dean Rusk that, despite President Sukarno's efforts to stop the slaughter, the "cleanup" of the PKI would go on. The Secretary of State replied the next day that this 'campaign against PKI' must continue, because 'the military are the only force capable of creating order in Indonesia.' A few weeks later, Indonesian generals approached the United States for equipment 'to arm Moslem and nationalist youths for use in Central Java against the PKI.' Washington responded by supplying covert aid, dispatched as "medicines".

Kolko summarises the massacre as follows:

The "final solution" to the Communist problem in Indonesia was certainly one of the most barbaric acts of inhumanity in a century that has seen a

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great deal of it; it surely ranks as a war crime of the same type as those the Nazis perpetrated. No single American action in the period after 1945 was as bloodthirsty as its role in Indonesia, for it tried to initiate the massacre, and it did everything in its power to encourage Suharto, including equipping his killers, to see that the physical liquidation of the PKI was carried through to its culmination.

Hugh Tovar vehemently denies the existence of the fuller CIA report mentioned by Ralph McGehee. It is the word of one man against another. Tovar embodies the spirit of an intelligence officer, while McGehee turned against the CIA after realising the murder, horrors, cheating and lying perpetrated by the CIA in Vietnam. There is every reason to believe McGehee. As a former agent, Ralph McGehee still has to seek approval for everything he writes from the CIA's Publications Review Board. An article he wrote in 1981 about the successful CIA operation to overthrow the Sukarno government was spattered with deletions.



Killings in Central Java in 1965

What now?

The Kadane article has provided a new opportunity to draw attention to US involvement in the 1965 massacre in Indonesia. The first official reaction came from the spokesperson for the White House, Margaret Tutweiler, who denied US complicity and asserted that it was not US policy to hand over such lists. If such things did occur, she said, it could have been done by individual members of the embassy, without the consent of the higher ranking functionaries at the embassy. Robert Martens wrote to the

Washington Post, using the same language; he admitted passing PKI names, but said, 'I and I alone decided to pass those 'lists' to the non communist forces. I neither sought nor was given permission to do so by Ambassador Marshall Green or any other embassy official.' [*Washington Post*, 2 June 1990].

Pressure has been growing in Washington for the appropriate congressional committee to investigate the US role, on the basis of Ms Kadane's revelations. In a statement issued on 21 June, Asia Watch called on the Bush administration to 'conduct its own investigation into the American role with a view toward fully disclosing the extent of embassy and CIA involvement before and after the coup took place. All government documents relating to these events should be declassified. And the Bush administration should cooperate fully with any Congressional hearings that may be held to examine the role of the US in Indonesia in

1965-66 and the lasting impact on the human rights situation there.'

According to the *New York Times* [12 July], the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee is planning to carry out such an investigation. Reporting this, the paper published a lengthy article based in part on transcripts of Ms Kadane's interviews. The general thrust of this report appears to be aimed at undermining the credibility of her account; indeed, this newspaper has been criticised for failing to carry the Kadane story when it was first released. It is likely that intense lobbying is under way in Washington to make sure that the truth about 1965 is kept hidden, with the Indonesian embassy certain to be actively involved. A thorough investigation would not only unearth more evidence about the US role; it would also serve to focus on the massacres and the crime against humanity perpetrated by Suharto and his subordinates. ★

LAND DISPUTES

Kedung Ombo villagers sue Governor

Fifty-four people from Kedungpring, Nglanji village in Kemusu sub-district, are suing the Central Java government for Rp 2 billion in compensation for land, buildings and crops lost to the World Bank-funded Kedung Ombo dam. They say the Central Java authorities violated regulations by taking land belonging to them without prior agreement. They want land near the dam and priority rights to fishing and opportunities in tourism arising from the dam, before well-heeled speculators move in. The villagers are represented by a team of lawyers from the Legal Aid Institute (LBH).

Objectivity?

Governor Ismail said the villagers were perfectly within their rights to bring the matter to court – a normal thing in a state based on the rule of law – and declared himself ready to face his accusers. He does have strong reason to be confident: the government has never lost a court case yet. In a bid for more objectivity, the lawyers representing the villagers pointed to the amount of attention focused on the Kedung Ombo case, both from within Indonesia and from abroad. An appeal for fair play was also submitted by members of the Foundation for the Defence of Human Rights (LPHAM) at the first session at court in Semarang on July 5. To this the chief judge responded that such appeals were unnecessary, since even-handed justice is carried out anyway, in a state based on Pancasila and the rule of law. If such 'even-handed' justice has allowed the government to win each time until now, the outcome of the Kedungpring villagers' suit must already be decided.

District and subdistrict heads accused

Objective or not, lawsuits will soon be plaguing the Central Java government as hundreds more villagers are said to be preparing their cases. One already in the pipeline is a suit to be filed by 22 villagers from Kedung Ombo, assisted by the LBH, against the Boyolali district head, Lt. Col. Hasbi, and Kemusu subdistrict head, Daryatmo. The plaintiffs are demanding Rp 1 billion compensation and the rehabilitation

of their good name, after their identity cards were stamped with 'ET' (ex-tapol). Hasbi and the Kedung Ombo project leader are accused of intimidation. Hasbi expressed astonishment that a case was being prepared against him, saying that all problems with the dam in Boyolali had been resolved.

Intimidation

In April, hundreds of villagers from Sragen protested outside the Department of Home Affairs in Jakarta for just compensation. [see *TAPOL Bulletin* 99] The following month ten protestors returned to Jakarta to report on the intimidation and interrogation the participants were subjected to on their return home. They also told members of the House of Representatives how a teacher, Sutono, employed by Muhammadiyah, the Muslim social and welfare organisation, had been suspended for taking part in the protest. The head of Sragen Muhammadiyah said the teacher's involvement in motivating the masses and in the Jakarta protest were clearly unsuitable for a Muhammadiyah teacher. He denied the suspension of Sutono had any link to a reprimand from the Sragen district head over Sutono's behaviour. Students from Yogyakarta Muhammadiyah University who oppose the suspension, appealed to the central leadership of Muhammadiyah to reverse the decision. Muhammadiyah should guarantee freedom of opinion, written or spoken, of its members, they said. ★

Tensions mounting in Aceh

In July, armed forces commander General Try Sutrisno celebrated Idul Adha (Muslim Day of Sacrifice) in Aceh. It is customary for the commander to spend festive days in trouble-spots; spending Christmas in East Timor is part of the tradition. General Sutrisno visited Aceh with the Police Chief, General Mochammad Sanusi, and North Sumatra's military commander, Major-General H.R. Pramono. Growing tensions in the last two months are clearly the background to the general's trip to Aceh.

General Try Sutrisno urged the people of Aceh to support national unity. Speaking in Lhokseumawe, the capital of North Aceh district, where the upheavals are concentrated, General Sutrisno said any effort to split national unity and sabotage development would be punished by God (sic). Indonesian press reports confirm that the general's visit was aimed at calming things down after a series of attacks and incidents between the army and members of *GAM* (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, the Free Aceh Movement). The army avoids the term *GAM* and refers to it as *GPK* (*Gerakan Pengacau Keamanan*, Security Disturbance Movement). After six months of mounting tension and clashes between the army and *GAM*, the atmosphere has now reached boiling point.

Conflict escalates

The revival of the Acehnese nationalist movement has come as no surprise [see *TAPOL Bulletin*, Nos 94 and 99]. A combination of factors has given the movement new impetus after several years of 'hibernation'. Non-governmental sources report lately that Teuku Hasan di Tiro, the Acehnese leader in exile, has organised military training for dozens of platoons of Acehnese youngsters in Libya; many of these recruits are now back in Aceh, waging a guerilla war against the Indonesian military.

Earlier this year, armed units started using hit-and-run tactics, attacking isolated military and police posts. There have been many casualties and each time, the armed units have got away with a stock of weapons including semi-automatic M16s and crates of ammunition. As many as 200 modern weapons were seized from the Indonesian armed forces during this period.

Some attacks have been graphically described in the press. On 28 May, troops were performing civic duties (*ABRI masuk desa*, ABRI into the village) in Kuta Makmur, North Aceh. A minibus stopped, 9 persons dressed in white stepped out and started firing at the troops, using brand-new M16 rifles. Three people were killed on the spot, including an innocent by-stander. The rebels left, taking the weapons of the army unit. Later, the same group attacked the local *Koramil*, (military district command) also in Kuta Makmur. The army retaliated and at least two battalions were flown in from Java. The local people have been the victims of the army's presence. In several districts, people are afraid to leave their homes at night. The entire eastern highway from Medan to Banda Aceh has become a chain of checkpoints. People are constantly being house-searched, body-searched and ordered to show their identity cards.

GAM units have meanwhile escalated their actions and attacked several checkpoints. It was clear that a real war was going on. Indonesian soldiers began to feel uneasy at

the frequent ambushes and their high casualties so thought up the tactic of shedding their uniforms and wearing T-shirts and sarongs. At the same time, house searches and patrols along the highway continued. In April and May, several nasty incidents occurred. Innocent civilians travelling by motorbike or car were halted by armed men dressed in sarongs. Confused by the situation, local residents became panicky and decided not to stop when summoned, only to be killed by the soldiers. Now, the troops have been ordered to wear uniform again and check-point posts are clearly identified as *Bakorstanasda*. This security command was set up in September 1988 to replace the notorious *Kopkamtib*, the Command for Security and Order. The new body is not supposed to engage in operational duties except in an emergency. By using this designation for army posts, Aceh has evidently reached a state of crisis.



LNG plant in Arun, Aceh

On 4 June an ABRI unit attacked a house in Langsa, allegedly a rebel headquarters. After an exchange of fire and victims on both sides, the army entered the house. Two days later, in a show of force, Indonesian troops paraded along the streets with the corpse of a rebel, heading towards the dead man's family home in the village in Binta. On the way, the parade was ambushed and three soldiers were killed. In retaliation, on 18 June, soldiers are reported to have killed six rebels.

Another dimension of the conflict is the threatened position of thousands of Javanese transmigrants. On two successive days, buses carrying Javanese transmigrants as passengers were ambushed. Fourteen casualties were reported, apparently in retaliation for the behaviour of Indonesian

soldiers in the villages. The victims were all employed on state plantations in North Aceh. Conflicts between the transmigrants and local people have become more frequent. On 31 May, a clash occurred between the inhabitants of Rambonglup, a new transmigration site in East Aceh, and the local people. The Acehnese threatened to burn down the new village and the newcomers had to ask the army for protection. Many transmigrants are now abandoning the sites and fleeing to Medan despite calls from the local military commander to stay put. The transmigrants say they fled after leaflets were spread, telling them to leave Aceh by 6 July. [*Kompas*, 9 July] An estimate of fifty people, military and civilians, have been killed in the last few weeks and there are no indications that the conflict will cease.



General Try Sutrisno in Aceh, surrounded by security guards.

Economic boom creates social disparity

Other factors have also provoked conflict between the local population and the Indonesian authorities. In the last ten years, the eastern and northern part of Aceh have been at the centre of an industrial boom. The discovery of the Arun natural gas field in 1971 has changed the social complexion of the eastern coast of Aceh. A huge LNG (liquefied natural gas) complex in Lhokseumawe plus linked industries has transformed the population pattern. Industrialisation has attracted many outsiders with most jobs in hi-tech plants like Arun reserved for qualified engineers and managers from elsewhere. The new professionals live in fenced-off compounds, with their own shops, schools, hospitals and golf-links. The Arun plant, known by the initials PTA, has earned the nickname, '*pantang terima orang Aceh*' or 'never employ Acehnese'. [*The Indonesia Times*, 19 December 1989]

The Arun LNG plant is not the only industry. In the last few years, many other industrial plants have emerged along the north-east coast. They include PT Kertas Kraft Aceh, part owned by the Suharto family with an output of 165 thousand tons of cement-bags a year. The Kraft factory, one of whose major share-holders is Bob Hasan, a Chinese entrepreneur closely linked to Suharto, is widely resented locally; in May, an attempt was made to burn it down but the press was warned not to report the incident. Other new installations include PT Aceh Asean Fertilizer and another

giant fertiliser plant, Pabrik Pupuk Iskandar Muda. Only the latter plant has agreed to employ unqualified local people. There are many pockets of armed rebellion in the three north-eastern districts. The three districts: Pidie, Aceh Utara and Aceh Timur are precisely the places where the new industries have been established.

These developments have led to a sharp contrast between the north-east and conditions in the western part of Aceh, less affected by industrialisation. In the east, the population density at 105/km² is five times that in the west. The eastern part is also traditionally the agricultural centre of Aceh. In the transmigration boom of the eighties many Javanese transmigrants were settled there, some of them employed in state-run coconut plantations.

Reactions in Jakarta

The Jakarta authorities seem unable to handle the explosive situation in Aceh. In May, armed forces commander General Try Sutrisno warned the press for its reporting about Aceh, which he classified as 'subversive'. But armed forces information officer, Brigadier-General Nurhadi, took a different tack, asking the press to help the authorities by reporting developments in Aceh 'in a positive light'. Two months later, the press is indeed reporting the situation almost daily, apparently without getting into trouble. Although the Libya connection is fairly obvious, armed forces spokesperson Brig. General Nurhadi insists that the 'gangs' are criminal and that Libya has nothing to do with them. He recognises that acknowledging a Libya connection would give credibility to the 'gangs' whereas he argues that they are 'obscure'. The newly appointed commander of North Sumatra (which includes Aceh), Maj. General H.R.Pramono has also branded the rebels as *gerombolan* (wild gangs). Calling them a *gerakan* would mean they are a well-organised movement. Both generals refuse to acknowledge that GAM has political motives, describing them as bandits. Yet even reports in the Indonesian press indicate that the armed units are targetting their activities against army posts. Indonesian press reports refer to them always as '*kriminal murni*' (purely criminal) but by reading between the lines, it is not difficult to understand what is really happening.

The names of some rebel leaders have surfaced, in particular an ex-soldier, Surya Darma or Robert, who joined the army in 1982; he defected and was dismissed in 1986. So far the army has not been able to track him down. But in July another rebel leader, Yusuf A.B., was reportedly killed while resisting arrest, in a military raid in North Aceh. The Indonesian army needs this kind of success to compensate for the many casualties sustained in the past few weeks, for fear that demoralisation might spread among the troops and have a 'domino effect' in the other regions.

On 9 July General Sutrisno told parliament of successful army raids against the GPK. From April till June, 50 people were arrested, and weapons and documents were confiscated. He described security conditions in Aceh as satisfactory claiming that the army had localised and isolated the armed groups. Two days later, however, the governor of the province announced after a meeting with President Suharto that more troops would be sent to Aceh. There was a need, he said, for a greater armed forces presence to mix with the population and strengthen their resilience against the 'trouble-makers'. Although General Sutrisno had claimed

that calm had been restored, the governor named districts in north and east Aceh where things were far from calm. [Kompas, 12 July]

The ganja connection

Another angle widely covered is *ganja*, or marihuana. Ganja is a traditional herb that has been used for generations in Aceh. Since the seventies the ganja trade has grown, following the hippie trail of young tourists to Kuta Beach and Pattaya Beach. Anti-drug operations were mounted by the police in 1988 and 1989, confiscating 80 tonnes of top-quality marihuana. The authorities claim that local dissatisfaction originates in part from the fact that many ganja fields were destroyed. The Acehnese insist that the ganja trade is in the hands of non-Acehnese backed by the army.

Their grievance against Jakarta goes much deeper. Aceh and its four million people have always had a troubled relationship with Jakarta. Although Aceh is called a 'special region', the Acehnese know that special status means nothing. The huge profits from the Arun gas fields, exported to Japan and Taiwan, all flow to Jakarta. The new governor, Ibrahim Hasan, Acehnese himself, managed to increase the Aceh budget fourfold in 1990, to combat the impression that Jakarta takes and never gives.

The old Indonesian slogan, 'from Sabang to Merauke' has taken on a new meaning. It is in those regions, along with East Timor, that rebellion now threatens rule from Jakarta. ★



CENSORSHIP

A thousand books 'unsuitable for schools'

Nearly a thousand books have been classified as being unsuitable for use in schools. The new regulation issued in July by the Department of Education and Culture sent shockwaves through the publishing world and in bookshops throughout the country. Seventy-nine publishing houses are affected by the decree.

Although the regulation falls short of banning the books, it is seen as a blatant attempt to censor books available to the general public and to teachers and pupils alike, at primary and secondary schools. Bookshops are strongly influenced in their purchasing by the schools market and are unlikely to stock anything that school-children and teachers have been told not to buy.

The list of 'unsuitable books' includes many titles by well-known Indonesian academics as well as a recently-published book, *Sewindu Dekat Bung Karno* (Eight Years in the Company of Bung Karno) by Bambang Widjarnarko which depicts the late President Sukarno in a sympathetic light and insists that he knew nothing about the plan to kidnap and murder General Yani and other senior army officers in October 1965. Widjarnarko, a naval officer, was

personal aide to Sukarno during the years before and after Suharto seized power in 1965. The book has become a best-seller and has been re-printed several times.

The other titles mentioned widely in the press (given here only in English) include *Creative Dimensions of Philosophy* by Professor Conny R. Semiawan (who was responsible for the translation into Indonesian of a book on sex education for small children which was banned in 1988), *Challenges in the World of Education* by Pastor Dr. BS Mardiatmadja, *Modern Indonesian Poetry* by Ajip Rosadi, *Dukun Siladri* a Balinese people's tale by Karkono Kamajaya and *An Architect discusses Indonesian Architecture* by Ir. Eko Budihardjo.

When some academics responded in amazement to this new-style book-burning, saying that their books were not even intended for use in schools, a spokesperson for the Department said that 'unsuitability' also applies to books on the book-shelves in schools, intended only for teachers. The criteria in compiling the list, he said, include 'contents, language and security'. [Tempo 14 July 1990] ★

Freeport in hot water over Indonesia

Freeport Indonesia, the copper mining company which has been plundering the wealth of West Papua for almost two decades, is in the middle of a row with students at the University of Texas at Austin over a \$1 million study agreement between the company and the university's department of geological sciences. Freeport is undertaking a US \$500 million programme to double copper production and triple gold production over the next few years, and is negotiating a new contract with the Indonesian government which will increase the company's concession area by a staggering 25,000 square kilometres. Going on Freeport's past record with the local landowners, this expansion spells disaster for the indigenous people whose land lies in the area.

The US \$1 million deal between Freeport Indonesia, 85.4% subsidiary of US-based Freeport McMoRan Copper, and the University of Texas (UT), is a 10-year geological survey project funded by the company and conducted by staff and students from UT and the Bandung Institute of Technology, in West Java, as well as Freeport personnel. The project will first look at Freeport's Gunung Bijih contract site and then spread along the mountain range. It is likely that this expanded area will coincide with the new 25,000 sq km exploration area, which in turn is believed to include the earthquake-torn traditional land of the Hupla people. The Hupla are currently being subjected to a government programme of coercive resettlement to a site in a lower-lying area to the north of their mountainous homeland, ostensibly 'for their own safety' [see *TAPOL Bulletin* No 98, April 1990].



Hupla man [Photo: Owen Jelpke]

Freeport Indonesia has donated US \$25,000 to the earthquake relief fund, but it is not clear whether the money was used together with government relief funds, as a tool to coerce the Hupla into resettlement. It would be the height of irony if Freeport, whose activities at Gunung Bijih lead to the disastrous resettlement of the Amungme people, were

found to be directly involved in the similarly coercive resettlement of the Hupla – especially if this apparently humanitarian act concealed an interest in the area's mineral wealth. TAPOL has received no reply to a letter addressed to Freeport McMoRan, urging the company to ascertain that its donation was not put toward the resettlement scheme.

TAPOL has also written an open letter to the President, staff and students of UT, urging them to suspend the agreement with Freeport until the ethical implications of their institution's involvement in the project have been fully considered. The letter pointed out that Freeport has been a bastion of support for the Suharto regime helping to confirm Indonesia's presence as the colonial power in West Papua. It mentioned the past and potential future environmental impact of the mine – Freeport McMoRan is number one water polluter in the US – and suggested that

"Staff and students at the University should consider whether they wish to actively condone the continued violation of the rights of the Amungme people and the violation of more land rights of indigenous people which will follow the expansion".

A group of graduate students at the UT have written their own letter to the University authorities. They are calling for the University to withdraw from the Freeport project, and to recognise West Papua as an independent state.

West Papua's minerals on offer

West Papua, along with Maluku, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara and East Timor, is included in the region defined by the Indonesian government as Eastern Indonesia, current focus of Jakarta's 'development' efforts. The large-scale exploitation lined up for the region has as its centrepiece the capital intensive minerals industry for which it needs to attract foreign investment. The mineral wealth of the region, sweetened by tax and other incentives, is now being offered to the world's mining elite. Excepting oil and gas exploitation, Freeport is still the only mining company at production stage in the territory. But this may soon change. Ingold, member of Canada-based Inco mining group, is exploring for gold in the Oksibil area near the border with Papua New Guinea. If a mine is developed, the inevitable encroachment on lands belonging to the local Ngalum tribe would seriously disrupt their land-based way of life. Just across the border in PNG, the Ok Tedi gold mining project which is dumping tailings on the Fly River and poisoning

the local peoples' fish, serves as a grim foretaste of what could be in store for Oksibil.

In the Bird's Head region of West Papua six companies – one UK joint venture and five Australian joint-ventures – are exploring for gold in an area totalling over two million hectares. According to official data, there are 27 other minerals available in West Papua, including coal deposits in Bintuni subdistrict, and chromium, bismuth, copper, marble, mica, nickel and uranium in Manokwari district. The many oil companies in the region include US-based Conoco whose destruction of local resources in Kalimati village, Bintuni district, lead to violent reprisals by local people. Conoco also has exploration concessions in the central highland region which overlaps with the Lorentz National Park. According to a report in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, [November 30, 1989], the company is exploring "potentially vast" onshore oil reserves near Tiom, west of the Baliem Valley.

West Papua's wealth has been exploited by outsiders for outsiders ever since it was discovered. The profits alone from the gold produced at Freeport's mine – on which it pays no taxes – were enough to enable the company to ride out a slump in copper prices in the seventies. And gold is supposedly a mere by-product of the copper. Now the

company is the largest corporate tax payer in Indonesia with current net annual profits estimated at about US \$100 million. Moreover, Freeport need no longer be bothered by rebel attacks about which vice president Craig Saporito said "we have no concerns at all" [*World Bank Watch* January 15, 1990]. This may be connected to the fact that the Freeport project is being partly insured against political risk by the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), an institution associated to the World Bank.

One exploitative, pollutive, multinational mining project is already one too many for West Papua. If investors take up Jakarta's offer to open new mines, the violation of land rights, the destruction of the environment and the oppression of the people of West Papua will intensify. ★

More information requested

TAPOL is trying to build up a store of information on mining in West Papua and its impact. Please contact us if you can contribute information.

POLITICS

Bultek, the name of the game

*The issue of succession continues to dominate Indonesian politics. The issue often assumes different forms. The latest is now known as **Bultek**, or *kebulatan tekad* (unanimous resolve). Although it may sound very innocent, the **Bultek** controversy has become quite explosive. Radical shifts in the political scene in Jakarta can largely be explained at present by the tussle over **Bultek***

The term *Bultek* is not a new invention. The concept was initiated in the seventies by 'master schemer' General Ali Murtopo to secure Suharto's victory in the general elections. It is used in Indonesian politics as a device to engineer public opinion; the more scientific term is *rekayasa* (social engineering). An issue can be created by rallying support, with groups making statements and pledges of support. In Indonesia's formal political institutions, almost everything is socially engineered. Golkar rallies, mass meetings and pledges are devised by the authorities and instructions sent out. Since the death of Ali Murtopo and the decline of his CSIS think-tank, the term *Bultek* has fallen into disuse. But in April, a group of 21 men, all of them top-ranking religious figures known as *ulama* (religious scholars), issued a *bultek* which exploded on Jakarta like a bombshell.

The group of 21

The *bultek* was signed on 30 September 1989 for release just prior to the next presidential elections in 1993. It endorsed Suharto for another term, his sixth. It was intended to have a snowball effect; following its announce-



General Alamsyah meeting the ulamas.

ment, another two *bultek* came out, one by artists and one by more than 100 *ulama* in East Java. The initial group of

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21 had been recruited by General Alamsyah, a man with a very colourful career. Originally from South Sumatra, he was involved in the 1950s PRRI regional rebellion, but withdrew at the last moment. He was transferred to Jakarta, where he became acquainted with Colonel Suharto, the future president. After 1965, Alamsyah became part of the infamous *SPRI*, better known as Suharto's kitchen cabinet. After some grave mistakes, Suharto sent him off to become ambassador in the Netherlands but called him back to become Minister for Religious Affairs in 1978, the first time a non-*ulama*, and a general to boot, had held this post. After one term, Alamsyah moved up to become Coordinating-Minister for People's Welfare. He is fond of the limelight and perhaps hopes that by doing Suharto a great favour he will be rewarded with the position of Vice-President. The present holder is General Sudharmono, much disliked by the generals at ABRI headquarters. Alamsyah's move fits in with changing political patterns. The president is gradually losing his grip over army generals and his other pillar, the GOLKAR, is also showing greater independence from the executive. The only political force left are the Muslims, who since the birth of the Indonesian republic, have taken a back seat in political affairs. In the last two years, prospects have never been so bright for the Muslim political establishment with Muslim intellectuals focusing attention on economic and political issues. The notion of Muslim backwardness is fading, with Muslims occupying many senior posts in the administration, among university lecturers and NGO activists.

Suharto is anticipated these developments by accommodating these Muslim aspirations. The acceptance of the Religious Courts Bill in 1989 was the first indication of Suharto's shift in the power game. The bill, opposed by Christians, was pushed through parliament by the government, recognising Islamic law in matters like marriage and divorce, inheritance and gifts. Suharto's current flirtation with Muslims has forced the generals to cast wary eyes.

The 'group of 21' includes leaders of *MUI*, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, the Muslim Scholars Council and other organisations like *NU*, *MDI*, *Muhammadiyah*, *Jamyatul Muslimin*, *Dewan Masjid* and others. The *MUI* is the highest Muslim religious authority with a lot of political clout. The reaction of other Muslim leaders was negative. PPP chairman, Buya Ismael Metareum and NU Chairman, Abdurrachman Wahid, refused to become involved in the *bultek* political game.

The anti-Bultek forces

The 'statement of the 21' caused quite some turmoil. Golkar leaders like General Wahono and Rachmat Witular expressed disapproval saying that Golkar had no intention to engineer statements like this. Similar statements came from the two other political parties, PPP and PDI. An Indonesian president is not directly elected by the people, but is appointed by the *MPR*, the People's Congress. Many *bultek* opponents argue that the presidential candidacy is a matter for the *MPR* and should not become a political issue. Everybody knows this is all just shadow-play. Many want Suharto to step down and attempts to prolong his rule as advocated by *bultek* champions, will be met with hostility.

But strangely enough, the succession debate is being kept alive by the president himself. So far he has not given any signal that he wants another term, but nor has he given any sign that he will step down in 1993. It was his famous remark in his autobiography, that he would be too old for the job in 1993, that instigated whole succession controversy. So far, Suharto has channelled his views through Admiral Sudomo, the Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs who has said that Suharto does not want to be president for life and will leave it to the *MPR*. The cunning president has never publicly displayed any eagerness to hang on to the top executive position, which makes things more difficult for those who are against a sixth term for Suharto. They can't accuse Suharto of being power crazy, yet so far no candidates have emerged or have dared to express an interest in standing for president.



President Suharto with young officers: how far can he trust them?

What about ABRI?

In contemporary Indonesian politics, the views of Suharto and the armed forces are still the ones that count. Political watchers have been eagerly waiting signs from top ABRI generals regarding *bultek*. In the end it came, like a volley of shots, from three generals in a row. General Murdani, Minister of Defence, came first, stating that the public should be wary of *kebulatan tekad*. He cautioned *MPR* factions against being wrongly influenced by statements and called for *bultek* statements to be withdrawn.

Stronger remarks came from Lieut. General Harsudiono Hartas, the present ABRI chief-of-staff for social and political affairs. Seen as spokesperson for the new generation of officers, the influence of General Hartas is far-reaching. Speaking to a gathering of city mayors and district chiefs, he lambasted *bultek* moves for being contrary to the *Pancasila* political system. He told the political weekly *Editor*, that *bultek* moves do not encourage democratic thinking; on the contrary, they create pressure groups.

He therefore opposed 'extra-parliamentary' activities and said the presidential elections should be left to the members of the next MPR. As a member of the general staff, he will automatically be a member of the MPR. Going even one step further, Hartas claimed that ABRI already has a candidate to replace Suharto, should he decide to stand down. Three months prior to the 1993 MPR session, the ABRI leadership would have discussions with the president to discuss possible changes. Back in 1988, much to the dismay of the generals, Suharto gave the vice-presidency to Sudharmono. Hartas and a large part of the officer corps are giving clear signals to Suharto. Their message is: we will support you if you deliver, ie. give ABRI a reasonable share in power and wealth; if not we have our own candidate. Political games like *bultek* will not be tolerated.

General Try Sutrisno went one step further and said that

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bultek statements are against the 1945 constitution, creating polarisation. Sutrisno was speaking to a DPR commission; his strong language towards 'the group of 21' was seen as a serious warning. General Try has always been regarded as Suharto's lapdog and served as his personal aide in the 1970s. His engineering background has alienated him from the other generals, most of whom are graduates of AMN, the military academy. His appointment as commander-in-chief was Suharto's doing and for some time the other generals at HQ regarded him with distrust. This statement has brought him back into the lap of mother ABRI. Could he be the candidate General Hartas was talking about? And even acceptable for Suharto? ★

ECONOMICS

IGGI, business as usual

The 33rd conference of the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia in The Hague in June produced no surprises. The Indonesian government was praised for its economic performance, its sound macro economic management and measures to deregulate the economy. Expectations fuelled by IGGI chairman, Jan Pronk, that human rights would be raised, came to naught. There was no trace of aid being linked to human rights. The IGGI is, as ever, interested only in aid, finances and macro economic matters. Issues like human rights are relegated to the corridors.

Dutch Development Aid Minister, Jan Pronk, had promised, during his visit to Indonesia in April, that a joint initiative would be taken on human rights. The pledge was challenged by Foreign Minister, Hans van den Broek, whose voice eventually prevailed in the Dutch cabinet. It was simply left to Pronk to say, at the time of the IGGI meeting, that human rights was a matter for individual countries to raise.



Indonesian refugees demonstrating in Amsterdam at the time of Pronk's departure for Jakarta.

The figures

IGGI assistance will this year reach US \$4.5 billion in comparison with US\$ 4.3 billion last year. Special assistance will amount to US\$ 1.2 billion, part of which is included in the above total. Indonesia's fear that IGGI aid would be slashed proved to be groundless. Western aid to Eastern Europe did not affect the IGGI; as Chairman Pronk said: "The economic climate in Indonesia at present is far more favourable than in Eastern Europe" [*Tempo*, 23 June]

Special assistance, widely discussed in the last few months, fell from US\$ 1.8 billion last year to US\$ 1.28 billion. This is used to support the annual budget and to provide rupiah financing for many development projects. As in previous few years, Japan and the IBRD (World Bank) are the major donors. Japan pledged US\$ 1,310 million, including US\$ 500 million special aid and another US\$ 200 million outside the IGGI. The IBRD will provide US\$ 1,550 million, including US\$ 250 million special assistance. Another major donor is the Asian Development Bank with US\$ 900 million, including US\$ 250 million special assistance. Other bilateral assistance has fallen and Italy and Finland have dropped out altogether.

In his opening speech, Pronk praised the Suharto government for overcoming the difficult years of recession during the eighties. The sharp increase in non-oil exports will free Indonesia from its past dependence on oil revenues. Lower oil prices have acted as an incentive to do better. Non-oil exports now account for two-thirds of total exports, as

against a mere 20 per cent during the recession years.

The World Bank and IMF reports both speak of Indonesia's buoyant performance in 1989, reflected in a 7.3 per cent real growth of GDP. The financial agencies want Indonesia to continue current policies which include a balanced budget, an increase in domestic savings and investment, and incentives to the private sector. Priority should be given to creating jobs, sound environmental management and sustained agricultural production.

The poverty discussion

But this jubilant mood did not prevail throughout. Pronk's traditional focus on supporting the poorest in society became the title of his opening speech: 'The right not to be poor is the most basic human right'. Discussion about poverty is a never-ending story. A recent World Bank document 'Indonesia, Poverty Assessment and Strategy Report', states that the Indonesian government has brought down the percentage of people below the poverty line from 60 per cent in 1970 to 17 per cent in 1987. Pronk called the figures 'too flattering' because huge numbers are just above the poverty line. Critics of the World Bank go further, claiming that the gap between rich and poor has never been as wide as now. One criticism comes from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). For two decades, the world has relied on one source of comparative statistics to judge Third World countries - the World Bank's *World Development Report*. The UNDP has now issued its own report, using social indicators which are ignored by the World Bank. The UNDP has produced a measurement called the **Human Development Index** which challenges World Bank data.

The UNDP report, drafted by a team led by Mahbub ul Haq, a former Pakistani Minister of Finance, is not confined to economic indicators but is based on a quality of life indicator which includes two major factors: life expectancy and adult literacy. Instead of using unrealistic, nominal exchange rates, the UNDP has produced a purchasing power parity model which estimates spending power by comparing the costs of the same goods in various countries. In this Human Development Report, Indonesia rates rather poorly, with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.591, below El Salvador (HDI 0.651), Sri Lanka (HDI 0.789) or Mongolia (HDI 0.737). Indonesian technocrats should not

be so smug about pats on the back from the World Bank.

Still, the World Bank remains loyal to its own dollar poverty indicator in its latest World Development Report, published in July 1990. The Bank does take a more critical look at the impact of its strategies on the poorest in many Third World countries, referring to the eighties as the 'lost decade' for poor nations, and acknowledging that market forces 'have failed the poorest in the poorest countries.' However, Indonesia, along with Malaysia and Thailand, is held up as a beacon of successful poverty reduction to guide other countries. In countries such as Indonesia, where a two-pronged strategy of labour-intensive growth and provision of basic health facilities has been pursued, claimed World Bank chief economist Stanley Fischer, introducing the report, "...income-earning opportunities have been created for the poor and...the poor have been able to respond and have participated fully in the benefits of economic growth...". [*The Independent* 16 July, 1990]

This contrasts with the less positive UNDP assessment and conflicts directly with the evidence of how the poor are further marginalised by the development process in Indonesia, presented by the Indonesian NGO Infight.

'In the margins'

TAPOL, along with the Dutch Indonesia Committee, INDOC and the Movement for Basic Human Rights in Indonesia, sent a petition, to the IGGI chairman, in advance of this year's meeting. It supported the representations made to him by *Infight*, and listed a number of other concerns. [See *TAPOL Bulletin* No 99, June 1990]

In reply to the petition which TAPOL also sent to the British Foreign Secretary, Foreign Office Minister, Tim Sainsbury said:

We know from our own discussions both with EC member states and the Indonesians that the Indonesians are aware of the strength of international opinion on the need to respect human rights. We shall continue to watch developments closely and to make representations to the Indonesian authorities as circumstances demand. You will wish to know that our delegate at the IGGI made representations to the Indonesians in the margins of the meeting. (Minister of State) Lord Brabazon has recently visited Indonesia during which he also took the opportunity to remind the Indonesian Foreign Minister of the lively concern in this country about the protection of human rights and about East Timor. ★

Continued from page 1

But now, there is another crucial difference. The network of human rights organisations inside Indonesia has changed beyond recognition. NGOs exposing individual human rights - imprisonment, torture, disappearances, unfair trials, executions - have built coalitions with NGOs campaigning for land rights and environmental protection and with student activists who organise solidarity for people being driven from their land. *This inevitably makes our workload greater; more activism at home means more solidarity actions abroad.*

But what about the Suharto regime, born out of the 1965-66 massacres which left so many hundreds of thousands of people dead? That massacre, the most heinous atrocity of them all, is now, at last, after a quarter of a century, coming under international scrutiny, following exposures about the US role. For 25 years, Indonesia has had at its helm a man, surrounded by accomplices, guilty of one of the worst crimes against humanity in the twentieth century. If we, in our second 'century', can help bring these criminals to justice, it will have been a fight well worth while. ★

Border clashes

There have been fresh incursions by Indonesian troops from West Papua into Papua New Guinea, allegedly in pursuit of members of the Papua Freedom Organisation (OPM). One report from Port Moresby, PNG on June 26, said a large number of Indonesian troops, estimated to be up to battalion strength, crossed the border near Yapsei, a remote government post on the headwaters of the Sepik River, about 130 km south of Jayapura. The June 26 incursion followed an incident a few days before, when a number of Indonesian troops crossed the border in pursuit of OPM guerrillas who had attacked an outpost in Batum. *Far Eastern Economic Review* [July 5, 1990] quotes a report which suggests the OPM kidnapped two Indonesian soldiers, thus prompting the troops to cross the border in force the second time. Sources in Jakarta said there had been rumours of a sizeable operation against the OPM in June, mounted with the support of paratroops in the vicinity of Yapsei. One group of about two hundred West Papuan refugees and another of seven hundred are reported to have fled across the border as a result of the clashes.

Right of Pursuit

PNG troops were rushed to the border following the incursion by Indonesian troops, and a company was said to be on standby in case the situation deteriorated further. There was no official comment from the PNG government who preferred, perhaps, to avoid setting back friendly relations with Indonesia. There is no agreement between the two countries giving Indonesia right of pursuit into PNG. However, since no official protests have been made by Port Moresby over this and other incidents in recent times, there may well be an unofficial understanding allowing Indonesia to pursue OPM into PNG.

PNG's Indonesia-friendly policy is evident in one of the few mentions of the incident in the Indonesian press. *Jakarta Post* [4 July, 1990] quotes PNG Foreign Minister Michael Somare as telling OPM members to "cause trouble in your own country, not in ours". In what is described as

his most strongly-worded statement to date, Somare said: "I have also given the undertaking that if they cause trouble to PNG, they should be sent back to where they belong."

Asylum-seekers on trial

Four West Papuans who also failed to gain PNG sympathy are reported to be on trial in Jayapura. The four, plus one woman and two children, entered the PNG consulate in Jayapura last December in an attempt to seek political asylum, following an Indonesian government crackdown on a planned pro-independence demonstration. After days of apparent indecision, the seven were handed over to the Indonesian police. [See *TAPOL Bulletin* No 98, April 1990]

The demonstration took place on the anniversary of the 1988 declaration of independence by Dr Thomas Wainggai. Dr Wainggai, his wife and many other participants were arrested. Dr Wainggai and his Japanese-born wife, jailed for twenty and eight years respectively, were 'Prisoners of Conscience' of the week in the London-based newspaper *The Independent* [May 28, 1990]. ★

US Ambassador's opinion on West Papua

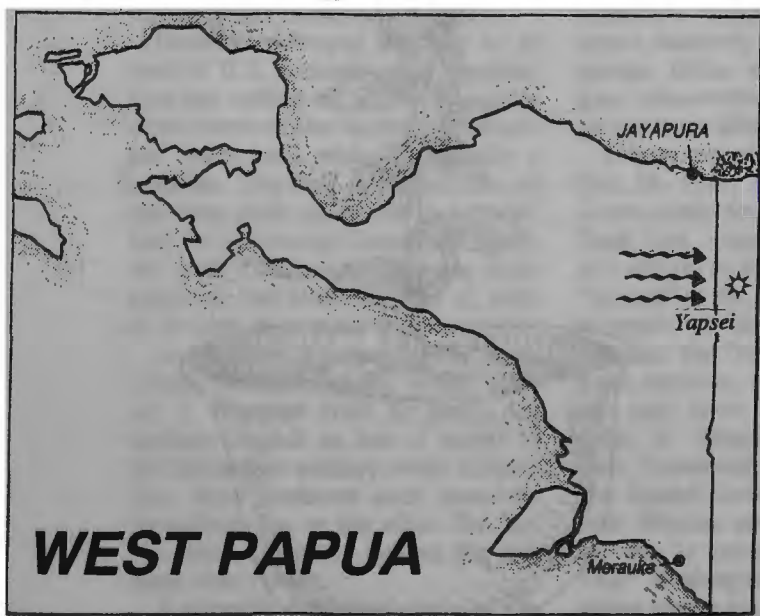
In a response to a question about West Papua from the Committee on Foreign relations, 12 May 1989, the then new US Ambassador to Indonesia, John Monjo said that the "people in that part of the world, some of whom are virtually stone-age people... might do better" from living with Javanese and Balinese transmigrants who are "fairly advanced in their farming techniques". He appeared to be quite ignorant of the complex and highly problematic history of transmigrants taking over the land of traditional owners. [*West Papua Update*, June 1990]

Stop press

A senior leader of the OPM, the Free Papua Movement, has been deported to Indonesia by the Papua New Guinea government. Mecky Salosa was taken under custody by plane from Port Moresby to Vanimo, driven by a police van to the border and handed over to Indonesian officials. Denouncing the move, OPM spokesperson in Port Moresby, Martianus Kambu, has expressed fears for Salosa's life.

The deportation follows a statement by PNG Foreign Minister, Michael Somare that West Papuan 'trouble-makers' would be handed over to Indonesia. However Mr Somare has not protested at recent Indonesian troop incursions into PNG. Somare was to meet Indonesian Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, the week after Salosa's deportation to discuss the border situation. The deportation can be seen as a sign of 'good will' from Port Moresby.

TAPOL has strongly condemned the deportation in a letter to Michael Somare and said the PNG government must be held responsible for the consequences. [*The Age*, 23/7/90]



Fighting for the forests

The debate over forests heated up at the latest International Tropical Timber Organisation meeting in May. Gathered at the Bali Beach Hotel, were the World's timber trade elite, from consumer and producer nations who promised to limit the timber trade to timber from sustainable sources only, by the year 2000. Indonesian and international NGOs who travelled to Bali in order to lobby against the well-documented excesses of the logging companies over the world, are deeply sceptical that this can be achieved. Especially when Indonesian Forestry Minister Hasjrul Harahap claims that logging in Indonesia is already sustainable – the rate of deforestation in Indonesia has now reached at least one million hectares a year. The timber elite enjoyed tight security courtesy of the Indonesian military and police, who suppressed a demonstration by environmentalists in the hotel lobby. Inside, timber Indonesia's timber tycoon par excellence, 'Bob' Hasan, was claiming that Indonesia's forests were being exploited 'for the people's welfare'. This thread-bare justification has always been wheeled out on public occasions to counter foreign critics, while within Indonesia, Harahap himself openly admits that the timber trade is in the grip of an increasingly small number of conglomerates and that many do not abide by the forestry regulations. Now the government faces a direct challenge from within its ranks, as one outspoken government official in Aceh says he will resign if Jakarta hands out any more logging concessions in Southeast Aceh.

South Aceh Bupati threatens to resign

In mid-June, South Aceh district head Sayed Mudhahar Ahmad took the unprecedented step of threatening to resign from his post if the government permitted logging company PT Dina Maju to extend its forest concession by 100,000 hectares. He believes, as do many residents of South Aceh district, that the company's activities have already lead to increased flooding in the area, saying "I cannot imagine what the future of the local people will be if all the forests of South and West Aceh are completely destroyed by concession holders". [Jakarta Post June 25, 1990]

Ahmad's stand, which came after previous attempts with his seniors in the government apparatus had failed, has won the support of the provincial Muslim scholars [ulamas] council, who urged the government to take stern measures against reckless loggers. Minister of Home Affairs General Rudini, academics from Gadjah Mada University, members of the House of Representatives, and forestry NGO SKEPHI have all backed the statement. Lined up against the outspoken official are provincial government officials and the timber lobby. Neither group has been shown in a good light by the Bupati's statement. The deputy governor of Aceh was happy to let Ahmad resign, while making it known he thought the matter was rather trivial. Hedging his bets, Minister of Population and Environment Emil Salim warned against taking sides before it was discovered whether the new concession lay in a production forest or in a protected forest area. [To flood victims this technicality can hardly be relevant.]

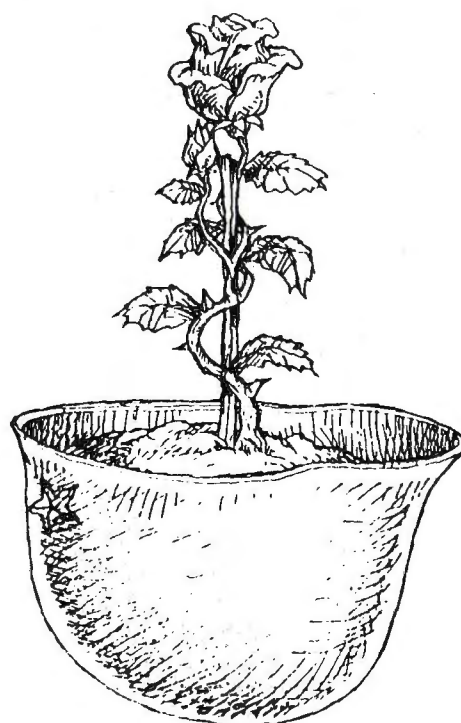
According to government data, there are now 10 concession-holders logging in about 600,000 hectares of forest concessions in South and West Aceh. Around 60% of the forest resources have already been exploited. Flooding in the two districts has swept away people, their homes and their belongings. Ahmad's move has certainly landed the government and Forestry Minister Hasjrul Harahap, who is responsible for withdrawing licences, in a sticky situation. There have been frequent attacks from outside on the

excesses of Indonesia's logging companies, but this is a challenge from inside which might not so easily be ignored.

Timber tycoons and NGOs at ITTO

Pomp and ostentatious displays of wealth were the order of the day at May's International Tropical Timber meeting in Bali. Delegates from the world's tropical-timber producing and consuming nations, who preside over the destruction of tropical forests and the impoverishment of forest-dwellers all over the globe, were flown in a specially chartered jet from Bali to Jakarta to be received by President Suharto and to hear his opening speech. After a lavish banquet, they were jetted back again to Bali.

Appropriately, it was during the speech of Bob Hasan, Indonesia's most powerful timber tycoon, that Indonesian students and activists decided to stage their demonstration



against the destruction of Indonesia's forests by logging companies. No sooner had they unfurled their banners in the hotel lobby however, than they were surrounded by plain clothes police and the protest was put to an end. Indonesia, as ITTO host, was clearly trying to limit as far as possible anything which contradicted information contained in the various glossy brochures issued by the forestry ministry. These told how Indonesia's forests are sustainably exploited for the welfare of the people. If outright protest was suppressed, there was at least one outlet for an alternative view: press releases and newsletters issued by Indonesian and international NGOs. In one press release representatives of NGOs including Japan Tropical Action Network, Survival International, SKEPHI, World Rainforest Movement, Rainforest Action Network, Rainforest Information Centre and Friends of the Earth, called for a moratorium on the logging of primary forests, while condemning the ITTO for its failure to address the impact of commercial logging on the lives of millions of people who live in or around tropical forests. The three forestry projects approved by the ITTO for Indonesia were criticized by NGOs, and the UN-sponsored Tropical Forest Action Plan for Indonesia was rejected as rigid and dogmatic.

Indonesian companies to take Scott's place?

Ever since US-based Scott Paper company withdrew from the planned pulp plant/eucalyptus plantation project on

tribal land in Merauke, West Papua, the abandoned joint venture partner PT Astra, has been looking for a replacement. There have been rumours on the one hand, that Japanese, Taiwanese and Korean companies are preparing to fill Scott's shoes, and on the other, that Scott is still involved in the project. Indeed the Malaysia-based World Rainforest Movement recently challenged Scott to explain the continued involvement of Scott's Barry Kotek, director of the Astra-Scott joint venture and other evidence which contradicts the company's announcement of withdrawal in October 1989.

The latest "strong rumour", reported in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* [June 28] is that two Indonesian conglomerates will be joining the project. They are the Sinar Mas Group, which already has substantial experience of the pulp and paper industry through one of its companies, PT Indah Kiat - Indonesia's largest producer of pulp and paper - and PT Barito Pacific, Indonesia's biggest plywood producer. Indah Kiat, which is part-owned by two Taiwanese companies, and PT Astra, Indonesia's second largest conglomerate, have both floated shares on the Jakarta stock exchange, Indah Kiat's being the biggest ever initial public share offering in Jakarta. PT Barito's share offering later this year is expected to eclipse PT Indah Kiat. At US \$654 million, the project abandoned by Scott will not be easy to finance, however: it would have been Indonesia's largest foreign investment outside the oil and gas sector to date. ★

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reprinted from the Washington Post, June 13, 1990

President Suharto's Rise to Power

The May 21 States New Service report that appeared in The Post belatedly drew attention to the role U.S. officials played in the massacres that accompanied President Suharto's rise to power in Indonesia in 1965.

However outraged one may be to read of U.S. Embassy staff supplying lists and ticking off names as reports were received that named individuals had been dealt with, it is hardly a surprise. The U.S. administration of the time made no secret of its relief that the Indonesian Communist Party, and with it numerous left-wing organizations, had been disposed of, even at the cost of so many lives.

In his June 2 letter to The Post, former Foreign Service officer Robert J. Martens tried to justify his decision to pass on lists of names to the Indonesian military, while alleging that other embassy staff members were blameless in the affair. But Mr. Martens's efforts to protect the embassy won't wash.

A recently published study of the cable traffic between the U.S. Embas-

sy in Jakarta and the State Department during October of 1965 (Gabriel Kolko, "Confronting the Third World: U.S. Foreign Policy 1945-1980") provides far more convincing proof of the embassy's complicity than Mr. Martens's relatively piffing list of 5,000 people. (After all, according to the most conservative estimate, 250,000 people were killed.)

It is on record, for instance, that on Oct. 28, 1965, Ambassador Marshall Green cabled Secretary of State Dean Rusk that, despite President Sukarno's efforts to stop the slaughter, the "cleanup" of the PKI would go on. The secretary of State replied the next day that this "campaign against PKI" must continue, because "the military are only force capable of creating order in Indonesia." A few weeks later, Indonesian generals approached the United States for equipment "to arm Moslem and nationalist youths for use in central Java against the PKI." Washington responded by supplying covert aid, dispatched as "medicines."

The States New Service article was important in that it raised in a public forum the U.S. role in the tragedy that befell Indonesia in 1965. It also made plain that the massacres in Indonesia were part of a deliberate policy initiated and implemented on the instructions of Maj. Gen. (now President) Suharto. Once the world begins to comprehend the enormity of that crime, maybe President Suharto will at last be called to account.

Certainly, those of us who have worked for years to expose the true nature of the Jakarta regime would like to see U.S. officials called to account. But they are now retired, while Mr. Suharto is still president of Indonesia. It is far more important that he not be allowed, like Joseph Stalin, to pass into history before the extent of his crimes is acknowledged.

CARMEL BUDIARDJO

Organizing Secretary,
The Indonesian Human Rights Campaign
Thornton Heath, United Kingdom

New subversion trial in Yogyakarta

Bonar Tigor Naipospos, a student of social and political sciences at Yogyakarta's Gadjah Mada University, is on trial for subversion, more than a year after he was arrested. His trial follows the convictions of Bambang Subomo and Bambang Isti Nugroho, who are serving seven and eight year sentences on similar charges.

Bonar's trial is already turning into a major political event. Many hundreds of people are attending the hearings, with crowds overflowing into the road outside. Seven experienced lawyers, four from the Bar Association (*Ikadin*), two from Legal Aid Institutes in Jakarta and Yogyakarta, and one from the Institute for the Defence of Human Rights (*LPHAM*), have joined his defence team. Hundreds of people, mainly students, attended the first sessions to hear the indictment and to cheer Bonar along as he read out his hard-hitting demurrer (*eksepsi*).

Bonar was arrested in June 1989 and was held in detention for a year before charges were made in court. He is accused of transgressions against the state ideology, Pancasila, by advocating Marxism-Leninism, of exerting influence on Bambang Isti Nugroho, coordinator of the Palagan Social Studies Discussion Group, of lending him books entitled *Ditengah Pergolakan* (In the Midst of Upheaval) and *Ringkasan Sejarah Perjuangan Marxisme dan Komunisme* (A Brief History of the Struggle of Marxism and Communism) and of encouraging groups of people to sell books by the author, Pramoedya Ananta Toer. He is also accused of engaging in activities likely to provoke hostility and unrest in the community. These are the 'crimes' for which Bonar is facing charges under the draconian anti-subversion law which provides for sentences of great severity, including the death penalty.

At the trial, the accused asked for facilities to continue to work on his masters thesis. An earlier challenge from his lawyers calling for his detention to be declared illegal, was rejected by the court.

In the service of idiots

In his opening defence statement (*eksepsi*), Bonar accused the public prosecutor of acting blindly at the bidding of his superiors and of failing to understand the contents of the indictment which he had just read out. When Bonar asked the public prosecutor to summarise the indictment after reading it out because he – the defendant – was unclear about many points, the prosecutor was unable to do so. It was reminiscent of Kafka's *The Trial*; the victim could get no-one to tell him why he had been arrested right up to the end.

Bonar said he had never possessed copies of the two books he was said to have lent to Bambang Isti Nugroho, and in any case, neither book had ever been banned by the authorities. The author of one of the books was a frequent contributor to *Kompas*; why had he not been charged? The two articles mentioned in the indictment, one about the middle classes and one about students preparing themselves for the elections, had been published in journals several years ago yet no action had been taken against the journals. If giving people copies of books by Pramoedya was tantamount to 'disseminating Marxism-Leninism', why

hadn't the writer and his publishers been charged? He compared the prosecutor to a cheating school-boy who copies answers to questions from an older boy (his superior) in front, without having the slightest idea what it all means. 'The prosecutor is to be congratulated for his creativity in producing an indictment that only the mentally sick, idiots or his superiors can understand.'

Bonar was accused of spreading 'hostility, unrest and disruption among the people' in 1986 and 1987 by means of discussions on campus and his work with the legal aid group, KSBH. Yet Yogyakarta had remained calm, while the Defence Minister and the chief of Bakin said many times that there were no security disturbances. How could the public prosecutor today, three years later, allege that disturbances had occurred? 'Surely the prosecutor, not me, should now be on trial, because many students are very disturbed to hear that discussions on campus can be regarded as subversive.'

Many quite absurd things had happened, said Bonar, since he was arrested. When troops of the Jakarta military command arrested him – without a warrant – he was told they needed some explanations, 'yet from 9 am till 4 pm the next day I was interrogated non-stop, without once being told why I had been arrested'. The second absurdity was that he had been told he would testify in the trials of the two Bambang which were then under way, yet he was never called to testify. Third, he was said to have been detained by the public prosecutor yet for the first six weeks, he was 'interviewed', as they say, by Korem 0734 military command and Bakorstanasda officers. 'Does this mean that Korem has moved into the public prosecutor's office?'

Many documents that were seized and were unrelated to the trial, including his correspondence with the Basic Human Rights Committee, had not been returned. It was part of today's 'normality' that this trial would be unfair. 'By allowing a demurrer to be presented, the accused is led to believe that the rule of law functions ... creating the impression that the trial is being run in accordance with the correct procedures.' Yet behind this all, the judges and prosecutor already know how it will end, well in advance, because the sentence is the supreme legitimation for law enforcement agencies.'

'Sullyng our good name'

Bonar's statement clearly hit a bull's-eye. The prosecutor was furious and accused him of wrongful use of his right to speak in court. He had sullied the court's good name and had tried to influence public opinion into believe there was no freedom in Indonesia. The accused was also attacked for spreading the idea that the present proceedings were nothing more than a 'show trial'.

Fretilin flags fly in Dili

Schoolboys and girls at schools in Camer and Becora in the capital, Dili raised the Fretilin flag and sang the Fretilin hymn, *Foho Ramelau*, on 17 July, the day which is supposed to be celebrated as 'integration day', when Suharto signed the bill fourteen years ago annexing East Timor, seven months after the all-out invasion. As far as we know, this is the first time flags have been raised in Dili as an act of defiance against the forces of occupation. The schoolchildren also shouted *Viva Fretilin* and other slogans calling for the Portuguese parliamentary mission to come to East Timor.

Troops and police soon arrived on the scene and ordered the schoolchildren to pull the flags down, but refused to do so, saying they would remain aloft until sundown. Dozens of youngsters were then rounded up and taken away. Following intervention by the International Red Cross, all those detained except three were released.

Waiting for the Portuguese

Negotiations between Portugal and Indonesia for a parliamentary mission to visit East Timor have been going on for years. After agreement was thought to have been reached that the mission would go in August or September this year, the Indonesians have now raised new problems, further delaying the visit. Talks between the two sides which were to have taken place in New York in July have now been postponed until September. This means that the visit cannot take place this year as the rainy season starts in October.

But news from East Timor suggests that the population is very eager for the mission to come. The political atmosphere is charged with expectancy, far more so than when the Pope was due to come. While Timorese would certainly use all possible means to impress upon the Portuguese the need for speedy action in favour of self-determination, the Indonesians have been planning counter moves, ie. anti-Portuguese rallies. The postponement of the mission proves that Jakarta cannot risk having a large team of Portuguese parliamentarians plus a sizable foreign press corps travelling far and wide.

The *Kapan Pulang* campaign

A campaign being waged during the past few months, aimed at pestering all Indonesian intruders, military or civilian, is the *kapan pulang*? ('When are you going home?') campaign. Initiated by the underground student movement, the idea has spread like wildfire, with many youngsters eager to take part. Kids as young as 6 years old are involved as well as youngsters up to their late teens. This is the same age-group as those participating in the Palestinian *intifada*.

No skills or weapons are needed to join in. Groups of youngsters roam in places where many Indonesians congregate, at the airport, in public offices, near garrisons or in the harbour, and innocently ask: *Kapan Pulang, Pak?* or *Kapan Pulang, Bu?* It is not difficult to imagine the

answers they get. Indonesians there for a short stay may take it as a polite inquiry, but transmigrants or civil servants sent there for a longer period will recognise the hostility. The replies could be anything from "Huh? I've just arrived!" to "*Kurang ajar!*" (Cheeky brat!) Marching soldiers or police doing their morning calisthenics are also being challenged even though their replies are likely to be a slap in the face.

Intimidation squads

The Indonesian authorities have not yet found an answer to this campaign. No adults are involved and the movement is decentralised and spontaneous, with no leaders or organisers. Army intelligence has tried to disarm the youngsters by organising their own youth into street-gangs. Whenever Indonesians meet a group of East Timorese youngsters (whether involved in the *Kapan Pulang* campaign or not) insults and provocations begin to fly. In May and June, street fights between juveniles increased enormously. Thuggish-looking groups of young Moluccans and West Timorese started appearing in the streets of Dili.

The air of hostility has recently intensified, with the East Timorese now resorting to more violence. Military vehicles, civilian cars and motorbikes owned by Indonesians are the primary targets; car-owners who leave their vehicle unattended are likely to find the tyres slashed or the body dented. Armoured cars and personnel carriers are also frequent targets.

Street fighting is now widespread and usually takes place late in the evenings. People in the capital are afraid to go out at night, for fear of encountering organised Timorese gangs or Indonesian street thugs. ★



East Timorese youth preparing demo. [Photo: Fretilin]

Xanana's wife and son speak out

In an interview with TAPOL in Melbourne in July, Amelia Baptista Gusmao, the wife of Kai Rala Ximenes Gusmao, commander of the resistance army, Falintil, and Eugenio Paulo Baptista Gusmao (Nito), their 19-year old son, spoke about their 15-year ordeal in Dili. Amelia, Nito and his 15-year old sister, Zenilda Emilia (Zeni), left Dili on 20 May this year and reached Melbourne three days later.

[Amelia sometimes referred to her husband by his nom-de-guerre, Xanana, but mostly she called him Jose; his full name is Jose Alejandro Gusmao. They first met when she enrolled at secondary school in Dili in 1965. They married in 1969.

Could you speak about Jose's background and schooling?

He was born in Laleia village, a short distance from Manatuto. He went to a mission school in the village, then to the seminary in Dare, but he was not planning to become a pastor. From Dare he continued his education in Dili, which is where we met. He is a lovely person, very strong-willed; he gives a lot of consideration to things and sticks to his opinion, once he has made up his mind. He likes reading and was always fond of writing; he used to write poetry in Tetum or Portuguese. Unfortunately, I have none of his writings. After we were married, he continued with his education at night-school while working as a civil servant during the day. As the second oldest in a family of nine sons and daughters, he had to leave school and take a job with the Portuguese administration. Later he left the civil service and we were thinking of emigrating to Darwin. In fact, in 1975 he went to Darwin for six months to look into the prospects for moving. When he returned to Dili, he took any jobs that were available. He wanted East Timor to be independent and joined the ASDT (which later became Fretilin) when it was set up in



Amelia Gusmao with her two children.

1974. The other day, we celebrated his 44th birthday on 20 June. We all went to church.

To church? Is he still a Catholic?

Yes. A pastor once told me not to believe people who say that Xanana has become a communist. He has often asked the church to send pastors into the bush to baptise the children and perform other sacraments but the military authorities won't allow it. He wants to help people practise their religious beliefs in the bush.

Nito, what do you remember about your father?

I was only four years old when he left us on 30 November 1975, so I can't remember very much. I remember that every day when he came home from work, he would take me out for a walk and buy me an ice-cream. At the time he was working on a construction site as a labourer. They were building a hotel in Dili but the building has never been completed.

What do you remember about his political activities during those days?

[Amelia] He never talked about politics at home. In fact he isn't a very talkative person at all. I myself never joined the organisation. Sometimes he would be out till late at night in a meeting, so I'd go after him and ask him to come home.

Were you there when Fretilin proclaimed independence on 28 November 1975?

Yes, it was outside the Governor's office. They pulled down the Portuguese flag and unfurled the flag of East Timor. I felt very sad indeed and started crying. I had got so used to seeing the Portuguese flag flying that I felt very sad to see it pulled down. At home later that day, he consoled me. 'I understand your feelings because your father is Portuguese. Don't worry. Everything will be alright. Our country must be free.' Someone else might have got angry with me for reacting like this but he understood how I felt.

When did he leave home?

Two days after the proclamation, he left for Maubara in Liquisa district, saying he would be away for a week, but he never returned. He went to Maubara to take photos of what was happening because Indonesian troops were there. By this time, he was public relations officer on the Fretilin central committee. I was expecting him home the day before the invasion but he never came. Instead other people came – the Indonesian troops.

Nito, do you remember anything about the invasion on 7 December?

Yes, I remember it very vividly. It all started very early in the morning. My sister and I were asleep and mother woke us up saying a war had started and we must leave quickly. I looked out of the window and saw hundreds of paratroopers falling out of the sky. There was a lot of shooting going on, a terrible din. For the first time in my life, I felt terrified. We rushed out of the house to Motael Church nearby, the three of us with our maid. She had grabbed a few things. My mother carried Zeni who was only a year old and I ran along beside her.

We saw many terrible things at the church. People were running in all directions, but there were Indonesian soldiers everywhere. To the left, I remember seeing someone being shot down and killed by the troops. To the right, I saw someone being arrested and beaten up. I stood looking out of the window and saw many things. At the side of the church, I saw a soldier chasing a Timorese and shooting at him. Then someone grabbed me and said, 'Don't stand there by the window! You could be hit by a stray bullet.'

[Amelia] Later in the day, soldiers came to the church and ordered us all to come out. They divided us into two groups, the men on one side and the women and children on the other. The pastor stood in the middle with two Indonesians. Then the Indonesians asked the pastor to say who were Fretilin. The pastor said he didn't know. 'I know them all as Catholics which is why they rushed here. 'If you want to know who are Fretilin, ask them yourselves.'

Behind the men, soldiers were lying on the ground with their rifles at the ready. The soldiers in the middle started giving orders to shoot. All the women and children were terrified; we were weeping and screaming. They didn't actually shoot anyone there at the church, but they took many of the men away and shot them dead at the harbour. Many others were taken to Taci Tolu and shot dead there. The ones taken from the church were all men but there were also some women shot dead at the harbour, including the wife of Nicolau Lobato. Many people who didn't manage to reach the church were taken to the harbour and shot.

Didn't the pastor try to protect the people in the church?

Yes, but there was little he could do. When the soldiers took the men away, they said they needed their help.

We stayed at the church for several days; many of us took shelter there. But the pastor needed the church because Christmas was getting close so we moved to a house near the church. We stayed there for a couple of weeks but the army told us to clear out so we moved yet again, to another house which had been a police office under the Portuguese. After a while, some of these officials returned from Atambua, so we were told to move again. I had no idea where to go. I didn't have a home, my family wasn't there. My mother and father and all my brothers and sisters had gone to Portugal for a holiday a few months earlier and had not returned because of the upheavals.

Couldn't you go back to your own home?

No, Indonesian troops were living there. Most people's homes were taken over. We had no belongings except what we took

with us when we fled. We didn't get our home back for three years. When the troops took it from us, they did it without producing any documents, but when we tried to get it back, we had to produce all kinds of documents to prove that it was ours, even documents from Portugal.

When did they start interrogating you?

I used to be harassed a lot in the first few years but things started to get really bad in 1979 when Jose took over as leader of the resistance, after Nicolau Lobato was shot dead in December 1978. They started summoning me almost every day. They always came for me after 9 pm and held me till 6 the next morning even though I had two small children. I would always take the children with me. They were very cruel indeed, shouting at us all the time. Sometimes we would be taken to an army office, sometimes to an officer's home.



Carmel Budiardjo from TAPOL with Nito Gusmao.

Almost every time, they tried to persuade me to write to Xanana or to go into the bush with them to call on him to surrender. I refused and told them he had gone into the bush of his own free will. If he wanted to come down, we'd all be happy, but if he didn't there was nothing I could do. This happened over and over again. Sometimes they said I should think of the children. When they grew up, they could continue their schooling in Jakarta. I told them I didn't want the children to go to school anywhere else as there were schools in Dili. The nights I had to spend with the intel were frightful. Sometimes, when they pestered me with questions, they would hold a pistol to my head.

Each time a new district military commander (*dandim*) took over, the whole family – the three of us and all of Jose's brothers and sisters and his parents – were summoned to meet the new man. We'd have to go at 6 am.

On these occasions, he would point to a big map of the world on the wall and say, mockingly: 'See, Portugal is very far away but Indonesia is very close. Don't imagine that the Portuguese can ever come back. East Timor will remain with Indonesia for ever.'

You were older by this time, Nito, so I suppose you can remember this.

Yes, I remember it very clearer. Our teachers at school also spoke like this. Although they were talking to the whole class, it was actually directed at me, to intimidate me, hoping that I would go home and tell mother.

In all schools in East Timor, there is always an intel agent, even in primary schools. They don't wear uniform and work as teachers. It's easy to spot them. In all the villages, there's a *babinsa* (a non-commissioned officer) besides the village head. People are so poor that the soldiers entice them to spy on their neighbours by promising them money or rice in exchange for information. Sometimes these people are orphans, young people who lost their parents in the war.

[Amelia] I was very frightened of these late night visits. They upset me very much and I was often ill. I used to ask people what I should do. I was a mother with two small children but these men were making me lose a lot of sleep every night; why did they come to fetch me late at night? An Indonesian advised me one day not to open the door when they came. I tried this; when they banged on the door, I didn't open up. But they kept on knocking and started throwing things at the door to break it down. There was nothing we could do; we were completely at their mercy.

Did you go to an Indonesian school, Nito?

Yes, I would have much preferred a Portuguese school, but things were very difficult for us as it was; I went to an Indonesian school so as not to make things worse for my mother.

Amelia, were you always interrogated in Dili?

Every time except once, when I was taken to Baucau. When they came to the house, they said my husband would be in Baucau so I had to go there. I would be away for three days. I got very upset. I wanted to take clothes but they said that if I needed anything, they would fetch them. I was very scared because at this time – it was in 1981 – many people were disappearing. Leopoldo Joaquim had disappeared and so had Correta. When I left home that time, I really thought it was the end for me.

They took me to a house in Dili. I asked the officer to let me go and spend the night with my children. He refused, saying

I had to leave very early in the morning for Baucau. It was such a strange encounter. This officer never once looked me in the face; he always looked sideways when he spoke to me. I had to sleep in a small room with a terrible stench. I couldn't sleep a wink. The next morning, they took me by helicopter to Baucau but kept me there only for a few hours.

I was taken to an officer who got angry with the soldiers who had taken me there. He said that because I was a civil servant, they should have got permission first. He wanted me to go into the bush with them and tell Xanana to surrender. They said they were trying to make contact with him by radio. In fact, I heard them doing this in the next room, but they failed.

Then an officer came and told me to write Xanana a letter, so I sat down and wrote one page but that wasn't enough. How could a wife only write one page to her husband, he said. I wrote another page but this still wasn't enough. They wouldn't let me stop until I had written four pages. Then they took me back by helicopter to Dili.

Did you ever receive any letters from Xanana?

Never. But I do know that he once sent me a letter which I was never allowed to see. It was in 1981. The letter had been intercepted by the army. I think they found it in the possession of someone who had been arrested. I shudder to think what happened to him. The letter had been folded up so that I could see only one line. They asked me to identify his hand-writing, which I did. I asked them for a photocopy but they refused. That was the only letter I saw from him in fifteen years. Then they let me read that one line. It read: 'Please don't teach our children to hate me.' I have no idea what else he wrote; maybe he was telling me he had decided to continue the struggle. Who knows?

Do you remember your Mother being taken away to Baucau, Nito?

Yes, I do. It so happens I wasn't at home that evening but staying with friends.

[Amelia] The next morning, he went to the beach for a swim and on the way he passed by the house where I was being held. I knew he would pass that way so I stood by the window to watch for him. I asked the soldiers to allow me to call him over.

[Nito] I was very surprised to hear Mother calling me. I didn't know she had been taken away. She called me over and told me father was coming down from the mountains and she had to go to Baucau but she also said she didn't think she would ever return because so many people were dying at the time. She told me to be good and look after my sister.

The soldiers are very sadistic. It's part of their normal behaviour. They seem to be trying to get their own back on the Timorese. Perhaps, back home, they behave differently but when they join the army and have to go to Timor, it's the Timorese who have to suffer.

How long did they go on summoning you?

Right up to the time we left. But the worst time was from 1979 till 1984 or 1985. It happened very frequently, always late at night and we had to stay there till morning. They were always very rough and extremely rude. Sometimes, an officer would ask how we were and mother would say that it was bad for us always to be summoned late at night. After complaining, they started summoning us during the day for a time. Otherwise, these night-time calls would have gone on for ever.

Was your home being watched?

[Nito] Yes, especially when foreign guests came to Dili. Once a cousin of my father's came to Dili and visited us at home. Later someone told us that the Indonesians had taken a video of the visit in our home, through the window. A house nearby was occupied by intel from Koopskam (the special operational command for East Timor). There are Koopskam offices all over the place, as well as in Farol, the district where we were living. Later they showed us shots from the video. Many houses in Farol are now inhabited by Indonesians. The Indonesians always say that the Portuguese left nothing behind, yet in Farol there are many good houses built by the Portuguese which are now occupied by Indonesians.

Our home had been occupied by Indonesian troops. They turned the kitchen into a bedroom and the toilet and bathroom had been turned into a kitchen. They had the toilet and bathroom behind the house.

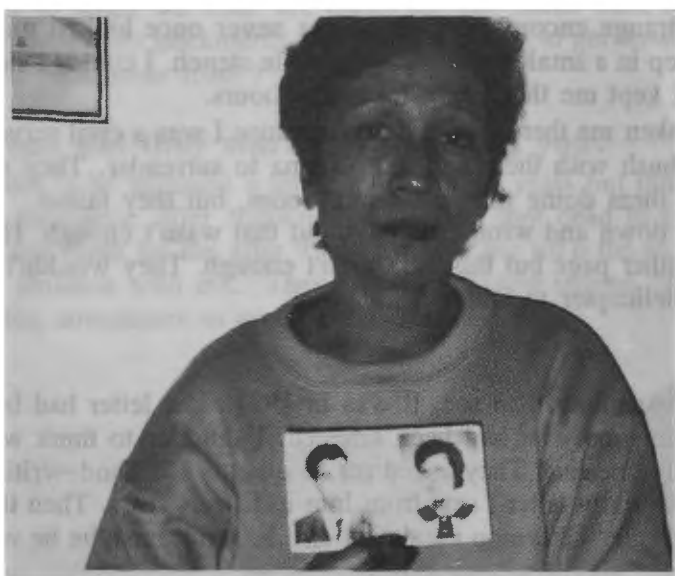
[Amelia] Sometimes Indonesians would come to the house, saying that they wanted to check up on the electricity. They'd pretend they didn't know I was Xanana's wife. Then they would sit there, looking at me, saying, 'So this is Xanana's wife.' Some came in uniform but the soldiers who came at night were never in uniform, or if they wore uniform, they had no insignia or mark of identification.

When the demonstration took place during Ambassador Monjo's visit, did you take part, Nito?

No, because we were preparing to leave for Australia and we didn't want to spoil things. Even if this hadn't been the case, I wouldn't have taken part because I was being watched very closely, much more so than anyone else. They knew all my moves. But after the demonstration, they summoned mother and me and started asking me whether I had taken part. They showed me photos and asked whether I knew the people. I said I didn't know anyone. Someone had said I had taken part but the intel people knew very well that this wasn't true.

Were special measures taken against you when foreign visitors came?

We were always told to stay at home, under virtual house arrest. When there were guests staying at the hotel, we were not allowed to go there. But it's the same with anyone who has influence in the community or have been detained in the past. Before the Pope came, all these people were rounded up and detained. The same thing happened again when the US ambassador came to East Timor. Afterwards, they're allowed to go home. This happened when Suharto came in 1988 and soon after, when a minister – I forget who – came. For us, the opening up of East Timor meant more restrictions than ever because



Amelia Gusmao showing photos of Xanana and herself before their marriage.

Yes, he warned parents that if any demonstrations took place again when foreign visitors came, the demonstrators would be shot without warning. We also heard that 'mysterious killers' (*Petrus*) would be brought to Dili to take action against young people. We heard about troops called *merpati putih*. What I understand is that they are people trained in self-defence. All the commandos, troops belonging to *Kopassus*, are now called *merpati putih*.

Do you know anything about preparations for the visit of the Portuguese parliamentarians?

[Nito] The army has stepped up operations against the resistance in the bush. I'm quite sure too that all the people who've ever been arrested for taking part in demonstrations are being closely watched and that when the mission comes, they will be rounded up. I've heard that young people in Dili are wearing black, as a sign of mourning. Now some of the soldiers are also wearing black and are wearing wigs, so they're taken for Timorese. Not long before we left, a Timorese on guard duty was shot dead. He was sitting at the guard-post when a vehicle drove up and six men got out. They started to beat him up so he put up a fight, and they shot him dead. This happened in a village called Audian. Things like that are happening all the time. Sometimes, a soldier is attacked and beaten up by a group of people wearing black, with their faces covered. Small groups of soldiers patrol the streets in armoured vehicles throughout the night. If they come across a young Timorese riding a bike or a motor-cycle, he runs the risk of suffering a terrible fate. It's very dangerous for us to do anything against the army. If we try to take revenge for killings we hear about in Dili or elsewhere, they strike back very hard indeed.

How easy was it for you to leave East Timor?

[Amelia] It wasn't easy at all. The Indonesians put all kinds of obstacles in our way. After many difficulties, we were given visas to come to Australia under the family reunion programme as my parents and all my brothers and sisters live in Australia. Our visa was issued on 9 September last year and was valid for six months, up to 24 April but we couldn't get permission to leave. We were very worried, as you can imagine. When the visa expired and we still couldn't leave, I really thought we would never leave. It was so difficult to get a permit to go. Eventually when it came, the visa had already expired. I refused to leave because I was afraid we would not be allowed into Australia. It was only after someone from the Red Cross went to Jakarta to make inquiries, that we got confirmation that we would be allowed in. On 19 May, we were told to leave the next day. We went to Jakarta on 20 May and left for Australia three days later, with Australian travel documents.

Why the delay?

They kept saying that we had to wait until Xanana came down from the bush. Then we could all leave together. I told them he hadn't come down for fifteen years so why should he come down now.

So even when you were preparing to leave, they kept on summoning you?

Yes, they kept postponing our departure, saying he would be down soon. They used to say to Nito: 'You're strong and healthy. Why don't you join the Indonesian army?' They said I had a job and a good salary, so why not stay. 'If you don't like it in East Timor, you can go to another province.' The whole thing made me ill. Right up to the end, they never stopped pestering me.

[Amelia has been emotionally distraught ever since she arrived in Melbourne. Even though she was keen to tell her story, she often broke down. The second time we met, Nito joined us, making it much easier for her to cope. Amelia is now under medical supervision. Zeni is starting school soon. As the interview came to an end, the postman came with a letter for Nito, saying that he could start a special English-language course for immigrants. He was absolutely thrilled].

whenever visitors came, we weren't allowed to go anywhere.

When visitors come, army vehicles are painted over, the numberplates are changed from army to civilian numberplates. Once, when someone very senior from Australia came – perhaps it was the Northern Territories premier – all the army trucks were hidden away and soldiers were moved out to Taci Tolu or Areia Branca. At times like this, Timorese are not allowed to go to these places because many weapons are hidden there. Another trick is to hide their weapons in sacks. All of sudden, there are lots of men carrying sacks on their backs. The kids come up and ask the soldiers, 'What's in the sack?' but they are shooed away and told to mind their own business.

When the soldiers returned from operations in the bush, they behave very badly indeed. They abuse the Timorese for the things they have confronted in the bush. Can you imagine! They accuse us of taking the law into our own hands which is exactly what they do themselves!

Did you hear about Murdani's speech in Dili last February?

Gadjah Mada report on East Timor

In our last issue, we summarised parts of a report on East Timor by a team of social scientists from Gadjah Mada University. Now that we have the whole document, we can complete our summary.

Losing the younger generation

Indonesia's drive to win over the younger generation has been a flop, as reports elsewhere in this issue show. The Gadjah Mada research reinforces that impression. School children are apathetic and see no connection between what they learn in school and their later prospects in life. The low level of education in the villages is the result partly of poor social and economic conditions and an inadequate diet which makes many children too weak to concentrate at school. But many parents need their children to help them and are unwilling to let them go to school. In one school, the researchers discovered, there were never more than half the children at school. A fine imposed on parents did not help matters; the parents did not mind paying the fine to keep their kids at home. [p. 81]

There is much evidence recently of rejectionism among youngsters in the towns, including those still at school and those who have finished school and can't find jobs. [p.82-83] Many teenagers are quite fearless of the army. The researchers speak of a recent incident when some youngsters were arrested and

naturally did not escape "being taught a lesson" by the army – their heads were immersed in water, and they were beaten and kicked with army boots. But this did not curb their spirits. They regard such physical torture as a lesser evil than imprisonment of the spirit by the system.

Pressure on school-children by the military means that they are being imprisoned in spirit with little space to move and constantly restrained and watched. When these pressures accumulate, it is hardly surprising for them to use 'rejectionist forms' as a way of asserting their presence.... and giving rise to tensions. This can be taken as a barometer of the degree of social unrest in East Timor. [p. 84]

The shift towards the church

Discussing religious life, the researchers say East Timorese live today in two worlds, with one foot in the church and the other foot in their native beliefs (*uma lulik*). In 1980, Catholics accounted for 17 per cent of the population, with almost everyone else adhering to native beliefs. Today, however, 80 per cent of the population are Catholics, with the remainder being Protestants, Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists (the majority of these being outsiders). The dramatic shift towards Catholicism is a consequence of the government's attitude towards native beliefs and of a widespread fear of being branded as communists. [p. 57]

Only five religions are officially recognised by the Indonesian government; everything else is classified under the heading 'beliefs'. There is no place for people who do not adhere to one of the official religions. In school, all children must study one of the five religions; this must also be specified on a person's identity card. No-one dares not to mention one of the religions for fear of being branded as having no religion. This is automatically taken as meaning

that you are an atheist, whilst atheism in Indonesia is equivalent to communism. The removal of Fretilin from the public arena in East Timor has also driven many people into the embrace of the church, for it is only here that they feel safe. [p. 57]

The village economy

In Portuguese times, the structure of East Timorese society was shaped like a pyramid, with a tiny layer of Portuguese officials at the top, a slightly larger layer of Chinese in control of the economy, and underneath, more than 98 per cent of impoverished, poorly-educated and powerless people. Today, along with the disappearance of the Portuguese bureaucrats, the layer of Timorese Chinese has also gone, only to be replaced by Chinese and other businessmen from Indonesia. This has brought its own problems, and history has repeated itself.

The government ('the centre') felt that it had a debt of gratitude towards PT Dhenok [sic] Hatimas Incorporated because it financed the war of integration. The huge concessions granted to this company has given it a monopoly over the economy and commerce in East Timor. As was the case with the Portuguese government, the East Timor regional government almost always accepts the views of the trader. [p. 92]

This analysis is remarkable for several reasons: the researchers here and elsewhere describe many Indonesian policies as being a continuation of policies under the Portuguese. But they also distinguish between 'the civil war' and the 'war of integration', a term that is absent from all official Indonesian accounts.



Indonesian troops building a road in East Timor. [Tempo January 13, 1990]

Denok's monopsonistic position in the coffee trade is described at some length. Although in some districts, coffee is integral to people's livelihood, the stranglehold of the company makes it impossible for producers to earn enough

to raise living standards. The researchers frequently mention the sharp decline in buffaloes, cattle and horses, yet coffee-growers cannot earn enough to replace the animals they lost during 'the upheavals'. Huge fees are paid into the various cooperatives in the trading chain; these payments are seen as 'institutionalised tribute'. Government officials are powerless to solve the problem, while coffee-growers regard cooperatives as a cover for private interests. The coffee price is fixed by manipulating a gubernatorial decree (*SK Gubernur*). When world prices fall, the fixed price goes down, but when the reverse happens, the price does not rise, the pretext being that it takes time before the decree can be changed. All this gives people the sense that they are again being colonised. With people frustrated by a sense of powerless, the church is crucial to the lives of the people.

Another area where the Indonesians have taken over where the Portuguese left off is land. In 1979 the army decreed that all land held by the Portuguese army should go to the Indonesian army and be managed by PT Salazar. Land in five of the 13 villages in Hatolia sub-district, Ermera is in the hands of this company, yet the land was seized by the Portuguese without the consent of the owners. Hence, peasants avoid working for the company, and even cut down or burn its trees. One case recorded by PT Salazar charges a man with destroying 36 coffee bushes and 5 rubber trees because he wanted to plant his own crops on land he considers to belong to him. But people are too afraid to speak their minds. Ask them something and they will reply, saying not what is really true but what they are required to say. [p. 41] ★

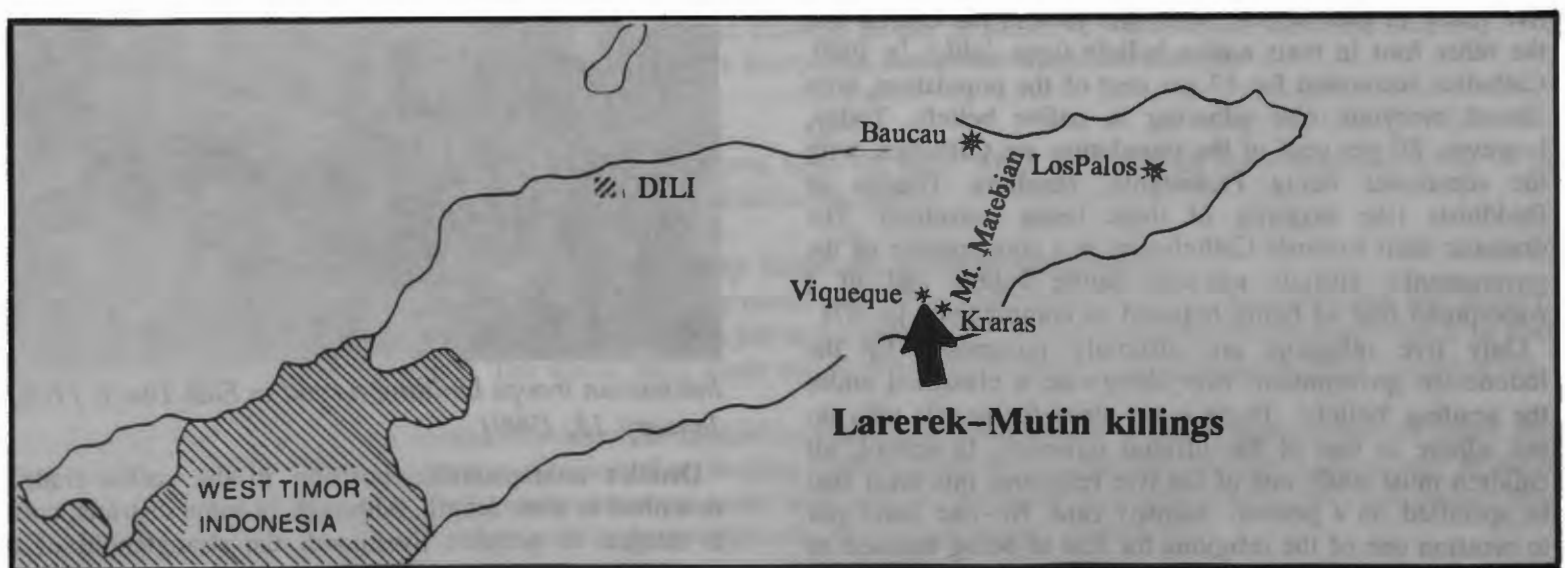
Lalerek-Mutin atrocity confirmed

Four villagers in Lalerek-Mutin, a settlement in the vicinity of Viqueque which is inhabited by people who fled from Kraras when renewed fighting broke out between the armed resistance and the Indonesian army in 1983, were severely beaten by Indonesian troops in March this year. One of the men, Candido Amaral, was executed by firing-squad when he refused to make a false confession.

The atrocity started when Indonesian commandos forced their way into the homes of two women, Teresa Amaral and Cristina Brandao, alleging that two men had been seen fleeing from their homes. The troops alleged that the two men were their husbands who joined the resistance in 1983. Although the women denied this, the troops gave chase and entered the home of a neighbour, Joaquim Sarmento, accusing him of having seen the 'intruders'. After being beaten unconscious, Sacramento made a false confession that he had indeed met Teresa's guerilla husband along with

another Fretilin fighter. The following day, another Lalerek-Mutin inhabitant, Antero de Carvalho, was taken into custody by the troops for allegedly making contact with the resistance while out collecting bamboo sap for wining-making. After a severe beating, he too falsely confessed to having met four guerillas. Meanwhile, a third man, Sebastiao do Reis, was accused of having received a rifle from the village chief who was away at the time on business. Again, heavy beating was used to make Sebastiao confess; in an attempt to stop avoid further beatings, he claimed that he had given the rifle to a fourth man, Candido Amaral and had, along with twelve other inhabitants, been supplying ammunition to the resistance.

On 28 March, the troops picked up Candido Amaral hoping to get further false confessions out of him by similar beatings. But Amaral refused to confess to anything; he also denied that the village-head had been in possession of any



weapons. Even when confronted by Sebastiao, who was now forced to become one of his interrogators, Amaral denied everything. Early the next morning, Amaral was dragged to Tua-Metan and executed by firing-squad. His body was riddled with so many shots that parts of it had disintegrated.

Confirmation

Well-documented information about this atrocity from a very reliable source reached Australia in May and the documents were handed to the Australian Department of External Affairs. On 27 June, Foreign Minister Senator Gareth Evans told Carmel Budiardjo of TAPOL, who visited the Minister together with former Australian parliamentarian, Tony Lamb, and Timor activist in Canberra, Michael Wagner, that the atrocity had been confirmed. He said a local officer had been dismissed and that compensation had been paid to Cabral Amaral's family.

However, the maltreatment of three men and the execution of a fourth man, is only part of the story sent out in May. The report explains how the inhabitants of Lalerek-Mutin came to be there in the first place. Their tragedy dates back to August 1983 when Indonesian troops staged an operation against the inhabitants of Kraras, during which many

women were abused and maltreated. Several thousand inhabitants fled the district after some of the menfolk went to join the resistance. After a month of hardship wandering in the jungle, the villagers had no option but to surrender to the forces of occupation. Some surrendered in Viqueque and some in Buikarin; many were killed when they surrendered; those killed in Buikarin were buried on the banks of the We-Tuku River. Many who surrendered in Viqueque were bound hand and foot and buried alive in Sukaer-Oan, 10 km south-west of Viqueque.

The survivors of these two massacres were forced to re-settle in Lalerek-Mutin, since when many more have died from starvation and a variety of diseases. Of the 1,553 inhabitants still living there in October 1989, 221 had been widowed (191 widows and 30 widowers). They now live under constant guard by troops of the 86th unit based in Baucau. Eight commandos and 5 Timorese para-militaries (TBOs) stay most of the time in the homes of Teresa and Cristina whose husbands have long been in the bush.

Although the army authorities deemed it wise to confirm this atrocity, the Australian government should take the matter further and seek ways of investigating the tragic seven-year history of the people of Kraras. ★

Portugal should take Timor Gap Treaty to World Court

Following the adoption by the Australian parliament of the Petroleum Zone of Cooperation Bill and consequential amendments to a number of existing laws, the only thing that can stop Australia from proceeding to implement the Timor Gap Treaty signed last December with Indonesia is a move by the Portuguese government to challenge the Treaty in the International Court of Justice.

The bills were adopted in May in the House of Representatives without opposition; not one Labour Party (ALP) parliamentarian voiced objections to the legislation. (Until 1982, the ALP supported self-determination for East Timor.) It was only in the Senate, where eight Australian Democrats have seats, plus several Independents, that the Treaty was strongly criticised and a number of Senators voted against the legislation.

Senator Macklin, leader of the Australian Democrats, said:

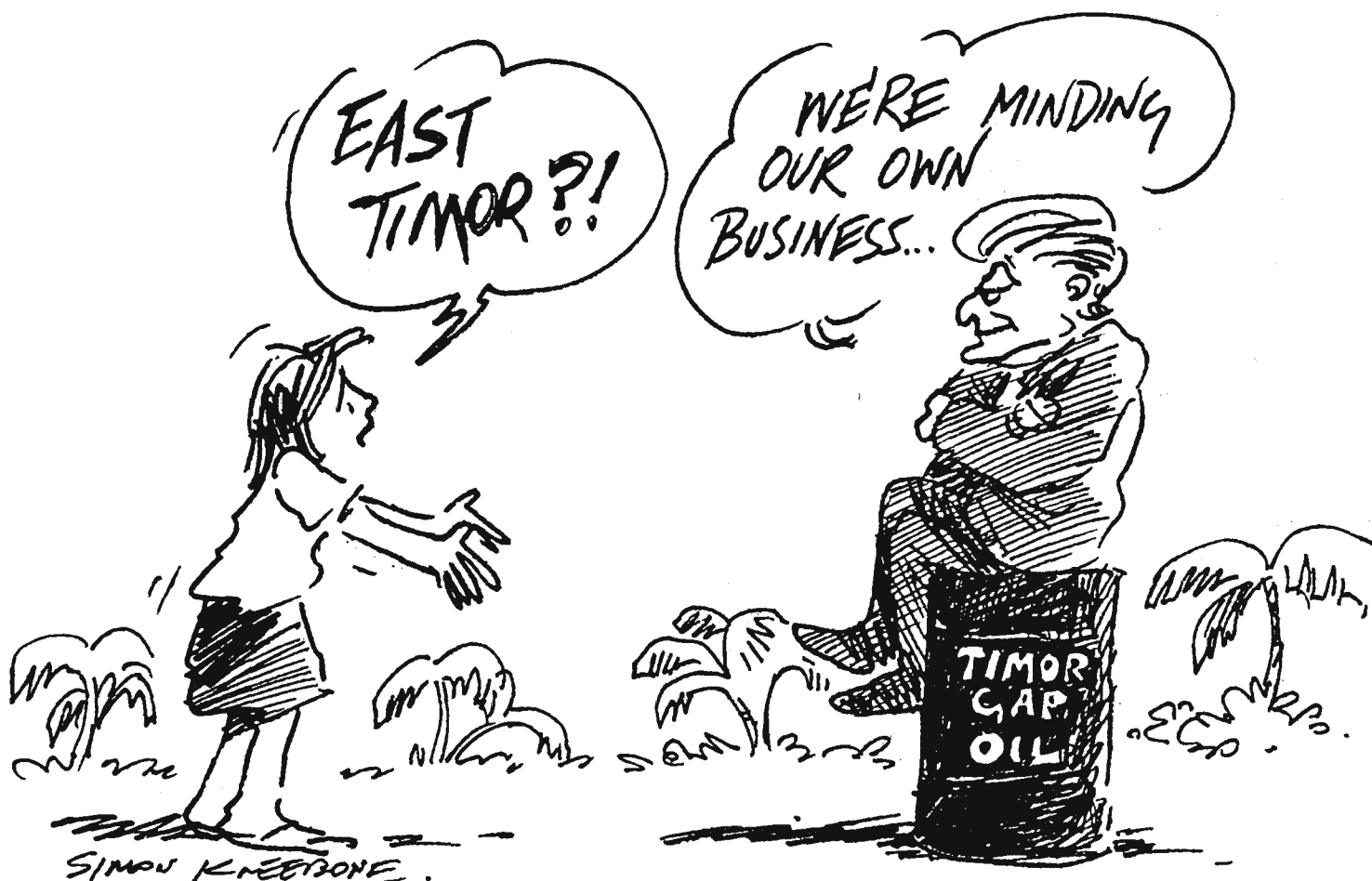
It is clear from the historical record that, in extending de jure recognition in 1979 to the Indonesian takeover, Australia was concerned primarily with opening ways for negotiation on the Timor Gap. It did this at the high point of the Timor conflict. In other words, Australia was not motivated by concern to help the East Timorese, but rather by expediting the exploration and exploitation of the vast resources of oil and gas that it knew lay beneath the Timor Gap.

Senator Macklin recalled the wide support among Australian politicians in favour of independence for the Baltic states even though the forcible seizure of those territories occurred over 50 years ago. "However, when it comes to the forcible seizure of territory 15 years ago, in our part of the world, what do we do? We sweep it under the carpet."

He was hopeful that Portugal would seek an opinion on the Treaty from the International Court of Justice. When Australia challenged French atomic testing in the Pacific, it insisted that no tests take place while the matter was in the hands of the Court. If Portugal brought the Treaty to the Court, Australia should abide by the same principle.

Senator Jo Vallentine for the Greens of Western Australia also spoke forcefully against the Treaty. She referred at some length to the opinion given by three Cambridge international jurists [see *TAPOL Bulletin*, No 99]. She too considered the implications for Australia if Portugal goes to the World Court. If the Court rules that the Treaty is illegal, "both Australia and Indonesia will have to decide whether or not to ignore the ruling. Such a decision would theoretically place Australia in a dilemma as it has been one of the few states to have voluntarily declared that it accepts the jurisdiction of this Court."

It was ironic, she went on, that we were always being told that East Timor could not be a viable independent state economically yet, considering the vast oil and gas in the



Gap, East Timor "might have the potential to be like Brunei or one of the Persian Gulf states, very small, yet independent and economically viable".

But she warned of the environmental hazards of oil drilling in the Timor Sea. Oil spills could have massive environmental impacts on marine and coastal ecosystems in northern Australia, East Timor and Indonesia, she said.

TAPOL: Portugal must act

TAPOL wrote to President Mario Soares of Portugal on 17 June calling on Portugal to make good its pledge last December "to use all legitimate means within reach to safeguard the rights of the East Timorese people".

It is a matter of regret for us that, as far as we know, your Government has not yet done anything to put these words into action. Now that the Treaty has been ratified, we feel strongly that it is incumbent upon Portugal to proceed without delay and ask the International Court of Justice to deliver an opinion on the legality of the Treaty.... (T)here is no possibility for the people of East Timor to bring the matter before an international tribunal themselves as they lack legal standing to do so. Portugal is the only country in a position to act on behalf of the East Timorese. We feel that you should do so to preserve your own rights and fulfil your duties towards East Timor.

Oil companies worried

The managing director of Australia's leading petroleum company, Broken Hill Proprietaries (BHP) has expressed reservations about the legality of the Treaty. Brian Luton said that complicated legal wrangles could delay oil exploration in the zone of cooperation. He said no money would be spent in the area until companies could be guaranteed title. 'We are talking about very big issues here. Territorial disputes are common in other parts of the world and typically, they are very, very complicated.... if anyone

feels aggrieved by whatever the rules and regulations are, they will use all legal resources available to them to protect their interests.' [The Age, 21 June 1990]

His fears would appear to relate primarily to the failure of Indonesia and Australia to resolve their dispute over the sea boundary between East Timor and Australia (the Timor Gap Treaty side-stepped that dispute) but companies can also be expected to be wary of sinking huge sums of money while the prospect of a challenge in the World Court remains. ★

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