

# TIMOR INFORMATION SERVICE

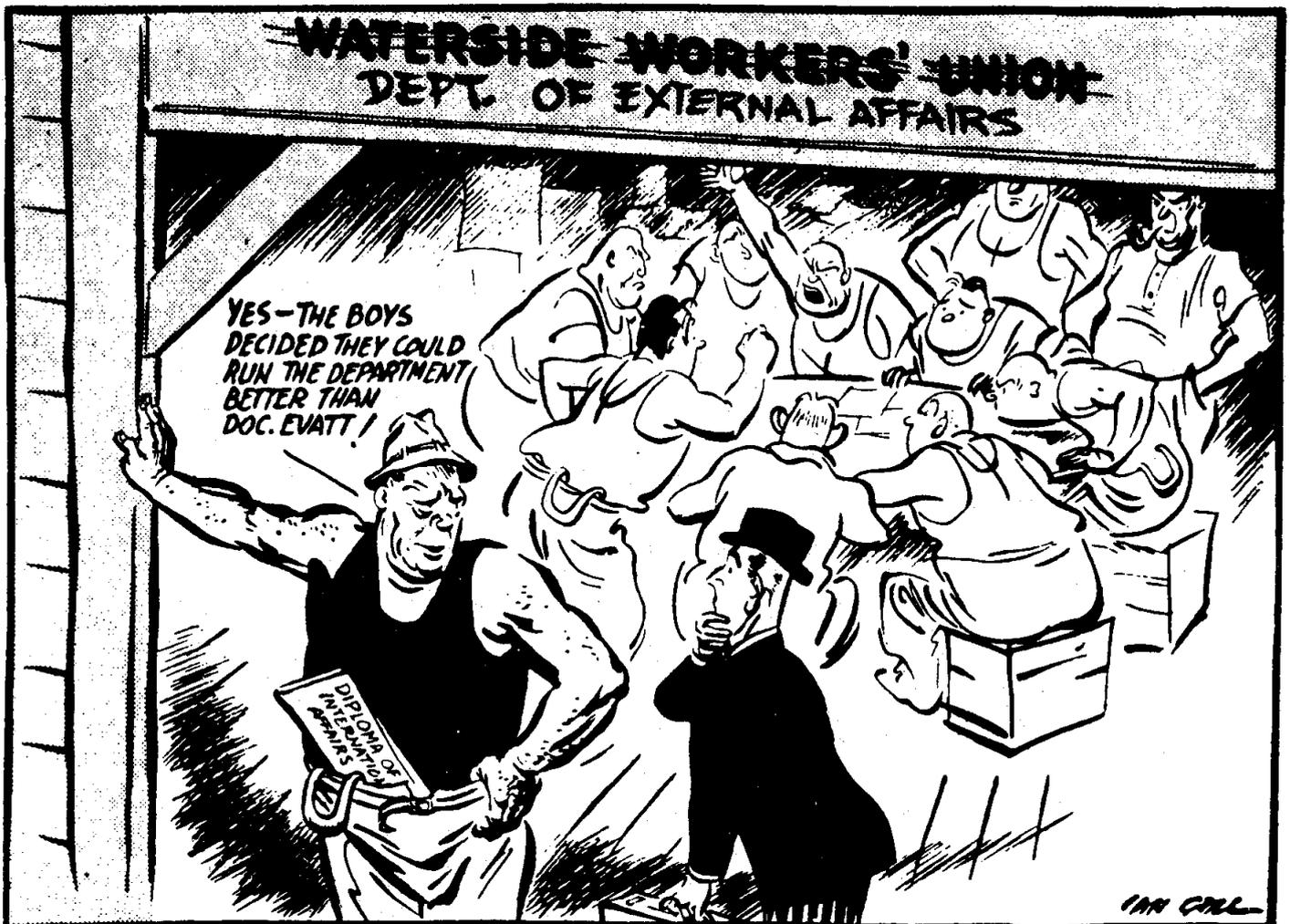
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*Courier Mail, 27 September 1945*

Australian unionists were ridiculed by cartoonists for their early solidarity with the Indonesian independence movement in 1945. The continuing cover-up of Jakarta's crimes in East Timor by Foreign Affairs suggests that it is time for ordinary Australians to again have more say on how we conduct our relations with Indonesia.

See our critique of the Foreign Affairs Department submission to the Senate inquiry on East Timor - page 6 of this issue.

## NEWS FROM EAST TIMOR

Despite the steady flow of reports of new economic development in East Timor, food shortages are still a feature of life there.

According to East Timor Church estimates in late May, food aid is still much in demand and the food situation is described as "getting more critical". 50,000 people in areas of Laga, Baguia, Quelicai, Venilale and Fatimaca needed food aid immediately. (This is supported by East Timor's acting governor, Lopez da Cruz, who told journalist Kenneth Whiting that there had been poor harvests in this region, making food shortages a certainty - see Chronology item - July 13). Another 30,000 people in the Viqueque-Ossu area also faced food shortages. Overall, the Church estimated some 125,000 in the eastern regions of the territory are experiencing food shortages. The Church report implies that these people are not adequately covered by Red Cross food stocks.

### MILITARY OPERATIONS CONTINUE

Letters received by East Timorese in Australia tell of continuing Indonesian military operations - particularly in the eastern region. 'Fence of legs' tactics, which caused so much disruption in East Timor in 1981, are being used - but on a much smaller scale. (East Timorese civilians are forced to march ahead of Indonesian troops to flush out members of the resistance.)

A Church source in May indicated that areas of Lautem have been closed off for military purposes. A July letter from East Timor mentioned Indonesian casualties being flown in to Dili each day. Another Church source told of two Indonesian platoons being killed in one incident in the Baguia area. This same source reported that one resistance leader, Xanana, was alive and active. (It had been thought Xanana was killed during the Indonesian offensive last year.)

### TRANSMIGRATION BEGINS

In what amounts to Jakarta's final act of colonisation, Indonesians are beginning to be settled on East Timorese farm lands. Under the official transmigration scheme, some 600 Javanese will go to Bobonaro district near the West Timor border in October, according to Agence France Presse (27th July). So far, no details on how the land was acquired are available.

*(These notes were drawn from an East Timor Church document, June 1982 and conversations with East Timorese in Australia.)*

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## FRETILIN REPRESENTATIVE DENIED ENTRY TO AUSTRALIA

The Fraser government has refused to grant an entry visa to Fretilin representative Jose Ramos-Horta. Horta was coming to Australia to give evidence to the Senate inquiry on East Timor.

Jose Ramos-Horta applied for a visa in New York on August 2, after receiving notification from the Senate Inquiry Committee of its willingness to take verbal evidence from him. Horta had indicated to the Committee that he intended to offer the inquiry "further information about the current situation in East Timor and to propose a concrete program of action to be adopted by any Australian government with a view to achieving a just and lasting solution to the problem of East Timor". (Letter, 13 March 1982)

As of August 26, Horta had not received any official notification of the visa refusal (personal communication). While the government had only made its decision public on August 25, following questions in the Senate, it is believed the decision to exclude Horta was made within a week of his application date.

Horta is well known in Australia for championing the rights of his people. He is Fretilin's representative at the United Nations and is formally recognised as such by the U.N. Fretilin was named in the 1981 U.N. resolution as the liberation movement of East Timor. He has however applied to enter Australia and speak as a private citizen because in late 1977 the Australian government refused him a visa on the grounds that he repre-

mented a government not recognised by Australia.

Immigration Minister Hodges said Horta was denied entry in line with "long-standing government policy on Fretilin leaders". This still leaves unsaid the real reason for his exclusion: the consistent policy of preventing East Timorese expressing their views. This policy began with the seizure of radios in Darwin in January 1976.

There is growing dissent on the decision. Organisations such as Community Aid Abroad, the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Action for World Development and the Australia East-Timor Association have called for a reversal of the decision. Federal Opposition leader Bill Hayden has called the decision "wrong" (ABC Radio News 30.8.82)

## HORTA VISA: WHAT YOU CAN DO

The Australian government's refusal to permit Horta to enter Australia is a further example of its denial of the rights of the East Timorese to speak about their own country. The action transgresses the rights of Australians to hear him & prevents a Committee of the Australian Senate taking verbal testimony from him. It is worth noting that Australia is the only country in the world to have refused Horta a visa: he is able to travel and speak freely in the United States, which has been a strong supporter of Indonesia's takeover of East Timor.

Horta's exclusion from Australia is a Foreign Affairs decision, not an immigration issue. You or your organisation can send a protest letter to Foreign Affairs Minister Tony Street. Letters to the leaders of the ALP (John Button) and the Australian Democrats (Don Chipp) in the Senate, urging that the Senate call for a reversal of the government's decision to deny Horta entry into Australia, could be effective.

## CHRONOLOGY OF RECENT EVENTS

March 18 DENMARK Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar speculated that Denmark "would have a better view" of the East Timor issue, following a briefing he had given Danish Foreign Minister Olesen. Mochtar was referring to voting on East Timor at the United Nations (Denmark abstained in 1981) and the EEC Ministerial Council, which Denmark was currently chairing. (Indonesian Newsletter 9, May 1982)

April 26 JOURNALISTS Four European newsmen arrived in Dili for a tour, accompanied by the general manager of the Indonesian newsagency, Antara. The newsmen - Bob Kroon, Apul Steenberger, Otto Sobius and Lauerent Masi - allegedly found the East Timorese looking well-fed and healthy, according to Indonesian government sources. (Their findings were absolutely at odds with those of American journalist Rod Nordland, who was in East Timor less than a month later.) (Indon. Newsletter 10, May 1982)

May 4 INDONESIAN ELECTION 306,507 East Timorese voted in the House of Representatives election, government figures claimed. All four Golkar (ruling party) candidates were elected. (See item in Anin Maka Hu'u, p.5) . The report put the total East Timorese population at 555,350. (Indon. Newsletter 11, June 1982)

May 14 SENATE INQUIRY The first session of the Senate Inquiry on East Timor, held in Sydney, heard testimony from former prime minister Gough Whitlam. (Whitlam's testimony is summarised in TIS #36 p. 3; a detailed critique is in TIS #35 p. 7) (Syd. Morn. Herald 15.5.82)

May 16 VATICAN At the end of a four-day visit to Portugal, the Pope was reported to have given an undertaking not to recognise Indonesia's takeover of East Timor. A Portuguese official announced the decision after discussions between the Pope and President Eanes. The Vatican embassy in Lisbon also received an appeal from East Timorese refugees for Papal intervention on human rights breaches in East Timor. (Age 17.5.82)

On May 25th, the Northern Territory News reported that Indonesian Foreign Min-

ister Mochtar had gone to Rome to push for Vatican mediation between Indonesia and Portugal on East Timor. (See also Melb. Advocate 24.6.82)

May 28 NORLAND American journalist Rod Nordland firmly contradicted statements from earlier pro-Indonesia visitors by finding widespread malnutrition and food shortages in East Timor. Other health problems such as malaria and tuberculosis were also very common. (See account in TIS #36 p. 2) (Age 10.6.82)

JUNE ECONOMIC AID The Australian government gave \$23.3 m worth of steel-framed bridges to Indonesia for use in 17 provinces as well as Irian Jaya and East Timor. (Indon. Newsletter 11, June 1982)

JUNE 10 IGGI The Inter-governmental Group on Indonesia approved loans worth \$ US 1,926 million for the 1982-83 financial year. \$US 57 m of the total will come as bilateral aid from countries in the 11-member Group, while aid channelled through international agencies will total \$US 1,359 m. Australia has promised \$38 m. (Antara transcript 10.6.82)

SENATE INQUIRY Representatives of the Foreign Affairs Department faced questioning before the Senate inquiry into East Timor. (See article on p.6 of this issue.) The Committee also heard from the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Jim Dunn, RAFT, the Immigration Department, and journalist Peter Rodgers during the two days of hearings in Canberra. (Age 11.6.82)

JUNE 14-21 WAIN Journalist Barry Wain concluded that Indonesian promises of 'development' in East Timor had not been enough to win popular support for the imposed administration. (See fuller summary in TIS #36 p.2-3) (Asian Wall St Journal, June 14, 16 & 21, 1982)

June 17 DEFENCE CO-OPERATION Indonesia took delivery of an attack class patrol boat given under the Australia-Indonesia Defence Co-operation Scheme. The patrol boat, formerly HMAS Barricade, is the third provided under the scheme. (AAP report 17.6.82)

June 26 UNITED NATIONS A suggestion that Britain 'trade votes' on East Timor in return for Portuguese support on the Falklands was rejected. Foreign Secretary Pym said there would be a 'sympathetic' British response to any new Portuguese initiative on East Timor, but the UK's position of abstaining on the East Timor resolution at the UN could not be altered in return for Portuguese support on the Falklands. (Canberra Times 28.6.82)

June 29 SENATE INQUIRY The Australia-East Timor Association told the Senate inquiry Australia should recognise the bitter opposition of East Timorese towards Indonesian rule and should censure Indonesia over its invasion. During the three-day Melbourne hearings, the Senate Committee also heard evidence from Monash University Politics lecturer Dr Herb Feith, Timorese community worker Joao Goncalves, several members of the Timorese community, former Community Aid Abroad chairman David Scott, Richard Tanter and John Waddingham of TIS. (Age 30.6.82)

July 1 WOOLCOTT The diplomat who was Australian ambassador in Indonesia during the critical early years of the East Timor invasion was appointed Australian ambassador to the United Nations. Richard Woolcott was expected to take up his New York appointment before the UN General Assembly began in September. (DFA release 1.7.82)

July 9 ICRC Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar announced a further 6-month extension of the ICRC's activities in East Timor. The Red Cross programme was due to end on June 30th. Mochtar said the ICRC had also agreed to help repatriate Portuguese nationals still inside East Timor. (New Straits Times 10.7.82)

July 13 FAMINE A "shaky" food supply and regular food shortages were apparent to British journalist Kenneth Whiting in a six-day visit to East Timor. Whiting was told by acting Governor, Lopez da Cruz, that villages east of Dili - including Laga and Laleia - had had poor harvests and faced food shortages, while villages such as Maliana and Suai had surplus food which they were trying to sell to the government.

(Continued on page 6.....)

# ANIN MAKAKA HU'U

'Whispers in the wind'



## VOTING WITH THEIR FEET ?

The first credibility problem Jakarta faced on the general election results in East Timor in May this year was that the number of votes cast exceeded the actual number of registered voters by some 3,587. The subsequent claim that this excess arose from Indonesian voters registered elsewhere in Indonesia is only plausible if one accepts there was a 100% voter turnout in East Timor. That doesn't happen even in Australia where, unlike Indonesia, voting is compulsory.

If everyone eligible did vote, then that, and the claim that the government's Golkar party received 9% of the vote suggests strong coercion or just plain manipulation. Recent stories from East Timor suggest both have occurred.

One account says that East Timorese voted by placing the vote card in one of three boxes placed behind a screen. The boxes for the "opposition" parties (PDI & PPI) were placed either side of the Golkar box. But the screen did not afford much privacy because it did not reach the ground. Armed soldiers stood outside and watched voters' feet: anyone who didn't stop at the Golkar box was questioned.

Another claim is that in many villages, people were obliged to conduct a practice vote. Of course, said the informant, everyone put their card in the Golkar box. It was the trial vote boxes which were counted in the election, said our informant.

## RED CROSS DISOWNS WHITLAM

It seems that Gough Whitlam's trip to East Timor in March this year has become an embarrassment to International Red Cross (ICRC). Whitlam's denigration of the head of the Dili church, Mgr Lopes, and his rosy description of conditions in East Timor are well known. He travelled around the territory in an ICRC helicopter,

has inferred his findings are supported by ICRC, and claimed he was in East Timor "entirely under the auspices of ICRC".

ICRC has now tried to distance itself from Whitlam. In a letter to Fretilin representative at the United Nations, Jose Ramos-Horta, ICRC said Whitlam did not go to East Timor under ICRC auspices. "It was ... with the agreement of the Indonesian authorities only, that Mr Whitlam went to East Timor", the letter said.

(ICRC letter dated 26 July 1982)

## BULLY BOYS ?

In 1979, three Australians interrupted an Indonesian cultural event at Monash University in Melbourne by calling for independence for East Timor. The three were very efficiently grabbed, punched, searched and then removed from the hall. Enquiries within the Indonesian community in Melbourne revealed that a group of Indonesian men were being trained to do this job.

East Timor supporters who demonstrated against the opening of an Indonesian consulate in Melbourne on August 17 this year noticed a group of 20 young men standing inside the entrance of the building. Only when the demonstrators learned that all the guests had arrived did it become clear that these men were probably a reception committee of a particular kind.

## MAN WITH A JOB

Career diplomat and former Australian ambassador to Jakarta Richard Woolcott will become head of the Australian mission at the United Nations. Woolcott is well known for his defence of Indonesia's takeover of East Timor.

We are sure he will be ably assisted by Australian officers at the U.N. such as Dr Kenneth Chan, in opposing resolutions which defend Timorese self-determination.

(...Chronology continued from page 4)

Whiting said the Apostolic Administrator, Mgr da Costa Lopes, had been warned his fellow church workers would suffer if he spoke to reporters. "Our view of things differs from the government which forbids us from telling the truth," Lopez told Whiting. (Northern Territory News 13.7.82)

July 26 PORTUGAL's President Eanes recommended to the government a major diplomatic effort to increase support for East Timor at the UN. Eanes proposed the formation of a combined campaign front comprising Portuguese-speaking countries to lead the campaign, and diplomatic pressure on countries which at present abstain or vote against East Timor. Target countries include Arab states, who would be asked to return Portuguese support for the Palestinian Liberation Organisation with a pro-Timor vote. The government later accepted a compromise proposal for action, the details of which were not revealed. (Age 27.7.82 and 6.8.82)

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## DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS: WHAT DOES IT KNOW ABOUT EAST TIMOR ?

Australian policy on East Timor since September 1974 has not been concerned with defending the rights and aspirations of the East Timorese. The policy has been to preserve Canberra-Jakarta relations in the face of East Timorese aspirations and Australian public opinion which supports the East Timorese. Canberra has sought to implement this policy through a mixture of covert support for, and acquiescence in, Jakarta's moves against East Timor, along with a continuing programme of misinformation about conditions in the territory. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) submission to the Senate inquiry on East Timor in June offered an opportunity to see this policy in action. (1)

Each day in Canberra, the Department of Foreign Affairs compiles a collection of foreign news items from Australian newspapers of the day and circulates this to relevant government departments. On June 10 1982, a major article headed "Famine signs clear in East Timor" appeared in the Melbourne Age. American journalist Rod Nordland, after spending 11 days in East Timor, reported widespread malnutrition and the threat of famine as well as recording Indonesian attempts to obscure this fact. This article was not included in the DFA collection of June 10, though other items from that day's Age were. The exclusion of the Nordland article epitomised the DFA's presentation before the Senate inquiry on that same day.

### WRITTEN SUBMISSION SELECTIVE AND MISLEADING

Writing in the Asian Wall Street Journal (14 June 1982), Australian Barry Wain cited Indonesian sources as admitting they had been advised by allies that the best way to avoid continuing international criticism was to establish a solid development programme in East Timor. This likely scenario is reflected in the opening passages of the DFA's written submission to the Senate inquiry.

A two-page 'background' describes a pre-invasion East Timor as a poor, underdeveloped territory with high illiteracy rates, "primitive techniques" of "slash-and-burn" agriculture, endemic health problems and so on. East Timorese life was disrupted by the 1975 civil war and "subsequent military intervention by Indonesia".

While it is undeniable that there were many problems in East Timor before 1975, the DFA's description fails to point out that the subsistence economy was sufficient to prevent severe food shortages. That is not the case today. The submission omits any mention of increased development activities by the Portuguese government in the latter years of colonial rule as well as ignoring East Timorese plans for the territory which were cut short by Indonesian intervention.

Short of describing the Indonesian government as latter-day saviours, the Department's

submission then tells us that Jakarta has established a comprehensive structure of government down to village level; many East Timorese are in the administration; Indonesian administrators and experts have been brought into the province. Jakarta's budget figures are reproduced and East Timor is, we are told, receiving more on a per capita basis than any other Indonesian province. Official statistics on expanding health, education and housing facilities are cited.

All of these allegedly new developments are uncritically reported. They are summed up in the reported impressions of Australian ambassador Rawdon Dalrymple who visited East Timor in December 1981: "...although the developmental problems in the province are enormous, the Indonesian government is committed to the formidable task of developing the province."

#### CLAIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FENDED OFF

But what has been the cost of this alleged new order? The answer to that question is not found in the DFA submission. Claims of indiscriminate killing, brutality, torture, detention without trial, are "for the most part generalised and the Department is not able to prove or disprove them". The submission 'notes' however that the Indonesian government informed the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that "it was doing its best to prevent excesses in the province"!

The DFA submission on disappearances and detainees in East Timor is absurdly limited. East Timorese frequently tell of people being picked up on the street or from their homes at night by Indonesian security personnel and never being seen again. This is particularly common for East Timorese who have been involved in armed resistance. The DFA confines its account of this issue to a list of 23 people compiled by Amnesty International in 1980, as if to infer only this number of people are known to have disappeared. No credence is given to the fact of disappearances though the DFA does note Jakarta's lack of response to inquiries from a United Nations body concerned with the issue.

Describing reports of the number of East Timorese under detention as being "widely divergent", the DFA confirmed that over 3,000 East Timorese were being held on the island of Atauro north of Dili but described them as being "temporarily displaced". Drawing on published International Red Cross statements, the DFA also reported 95 prisoners in Comarca jail in Dili and inferred that these are the only detainees in East Timor. (ICRC is known to be attempting to gain access to other detention centres.)

#### DEATH TOLL AND ITS CAUSES

The Department concedes that a lot of people died but equally attributes this to the civil war and the invasion as well as the 1978/79 famine. Not surprisingly, the DFA fails to report that the number of deaths due to the civil war was about 3,000 - a tiny proportion of the likely number of deaths overall. It also avoids mentioning that the famine was a direct result of Indonesian military campaigns between late 1977 and mid-1979. The often claimed death toll of 100,000 "seems exaggerated" says the DFA, but it offers no explanation or serious discussion of the figures. (See TIS no. 28 for our discussion on this. We concluded that the death toll could be at least 100,000 and could be as high as 200,000.)

The disastrous relocation of the bulk of the population into strategic centres by the Indonesian army between late 1977 and mid-1979 is described as a resettlement scheme to facilitate "provision of relief and rehabilitation services". That this relocation was largely responsible for the 1978-80 famine and still impedes self-sufficiency in food is not mentioned.

The written submission is a selective and misleading, if not outright dishonest document. The performance of DFA representatives giving verbal testimony before the Senate committee did little to dispel this judgment.

#### EVASIVE VERBAL TESTIMONY

The Department's testimony began with a statement by Gerald Nutter on the food situation. Based on Indonesian government statements, international agency reports and

the findings of unnamed visitors to East Timor, the Department's conclusion was that there was no famine or imminent famine; there were recent crop failures but these were due to climatic factors and rodents (no mention was made of the known impact of large Indonesian military operations in 1981 on crop planting); there are sufficient food stocks (see our "News from East Timor on p.2) . The Department seemed confident in this appraisal, yet was to prove remarkably ignorant on a range of other matters.

#### 'WE DON'T KNOW'

The Department's answer to the first critical question of the session was to set the pattern for the hearing. Asked about the possibility that Indonesia prepared showcase areas for visitors to Timor, Nutter said he did not have information to prove or disprove that. Later that same day, journalist and former Australian diplomat in Jakarta, Peter Rodgers, told the Senate inquiry of his visit to East Timor as a DFA officer in 1977; it was, he said, "highly orchestrated and designed to show that integration was accepted by the East Timorese and they were benefitting from it".

Likewise, Nutter said the Department simply did not know how many people had died. He claimed that the 1974 Portuguese population figures were not accurate and hence they could not be compared with 1980 census figures to determine death toll. He offered no proof of his claim. He would not attempt to apportion population loss to the civil war and post-invasion periods.

On questioning, Department officers proved to have little empirical data on economic conditions in East Timor prior to the invasion, except to say there was very little development. They seemed quite sure, however, that things had improved since the Indonesian takeover. A report by the Australian ambassador claiming more health facilities in East Timor was questioned. Officers could not say from when this increase in facilities was alleged to have begun. Nutter did finally concede however that "improvements" have probably occurred only in the past year or so.

#### NEVER HEARD OF P.T. DENOK ?

Departmental officers claimed not to know who controlled the lucrative coffee industry in East Timor (articles about the army-controlled company P.T. Denok and its monopoly control of the coffee industry have regularly appeared in the Australian press since 1976). Apart from "armed dissident groups", the DFA claimed it knew of no other forms of opposition to the Indonesian takeover. (The position of the Church personnel and former pro-integrationists is well-known by almost everyone else.) The officers claimed not to know anything of East Timorese attitudes to those East Timorese who join the Indonesian administration.

The Department did not know what newspapers existed in East Timor before 1975 nor whether the Indonesian claim of a Dili-based newspaper was true. It did not know which languages were used on radio and television in East Timor and while the Department was "aware of reports" of mail censorship, it could not confirm them. Officers did not know the degree of East Timorese participation in the Portuguese administration. Officer Peter Lloyd's claim that there was practically no lower or middle-level administration before 1975 will not stand up to scrutiny.

#### DE JURE RECOGNITION

In addition to this "don't know" reflex, another consistent stream in the testimony arose from the fact that Australia has accorded *de jure* recognition of East Timor's incorporation into Indonesia. This made answers to some questions quite easy for the officers:

Question: Do East Timorese have to get permission to leave East Timor ?

Answer: Yes, but so do Indonesians in other provinces.

Question: Do East Timorese automatically become Indonesian citizens or do they have to apply ?

Answer: That is up to Indonesia.

Question: Are indigenous East Timorese political parties outlawed ?

Answer: Yes...after integration, Indonesian laws govern which political parties can operate.

This approach offered its own touches of absurdity. Asked about freedom of speech and assembly, as well as press freedoms in East Timor, Departmental officers were reduced to citing relevant Indonesian statutes and laws which allegedly lay down these rights. A question on how Australia might assist future economic development in East Timor was described as "theoretical" because Australia could only respond to requests from the Indonesian government.

Questioned on Australia's lack of response to a 1980 Portuguese initiative seeking discussion on East Timor with the United States, Japan, Australia and others, DFA officers said that the issue was "a matter between Portugal and Indonesia" !

The last question of the session also illustrated this claimed passive role for Australian diplomacy on Timor. Asked whether Australian diplomats had worked for the defeat of resolutions supporting East Timorese self-determination at the United Nations, Nutter replied with an emphatic "No". This answer should be scrutinised by the Senate Committee. There are Australian citizens who claim to have observed behind-the-scenes lobbying against East Timor resolutions by Australian officials at the U.N. To bring this closer to the present, the Senate Committee ought to consider interviewing Australian officers at the U.N. such as Dr Kenneth Chan to get a first-hand account of the role of Australian diplomacy on East Timor at the U.N. in 1982.

#### INCOMPETENT OR DEVIIOUS ?

The official record of this hearing will show how little the DFA officers told the Senate Inquiry. It may even show a little of the exasperation felt by some Committee members as they pressed the officers for answers to questions as well as suggesting an atmosphere of a rather embattled bevy of officials trying to defend the indefensible. But the record will not show the tension and uncertain faces displayed by some of the officers - one of whom spent the entire session on the edge of his seat, nervously shuffling his feet. Nor will it record the quiet sniggers or glances of incredulity exchanged between members of the press as some of the more embarrassingly transparent answers were offered.

Two obvious questions arise. Does the Department of Foreign Affairs really know so little about East Timor ? If it does know so little, or if it has reasons for not publicly disclosing information available to it, why did the Department not seek an 'in camera' session with the Committee ?

The probable answer to the second question is that the Fraser government, unable to prevent the inquiry going ahead, had to find some other way of distancing itself from any critical findings by the Committee. The only clear way to do this was to place on public record its policy of support for the integration of East Timor. Not only would the government be seen by Jakarta to be 'doing the right thing', but the 'don't know' approach might serve to throw doubt on all claims about East Timor. But it also made the Department of Foreign Affairs look uninformed and incompetent or obstructionist and devious.

So does the DFA know more about East Timor than it professes ? When challenged after the session by this writer on why the Department "wasn't saying much", one officer replied: "Well, we've got to keep that aid going in". The implication was that he did know more detail, but to reveal it might incur Jakarta's displeasure.

Senator Cyril Primmer (ALP), a member of the inquiry committee, commented that he found it hard to understand why the DFA seemed unable to answer simple questions about East Timor. Later that same day, Primmer asked Peter Rodgers to comment on this. Rodgers said he didn't know why the Department couldn't answer some questions. He added that he thought as a diplomat in Jakarta he would be able to judge fairly accurately what rights of press or freedoms of assembly existed in East Timor.

There can be no doubt. The DFA does know more than it presented to the Senate inquiry. It certainly has, through intelligence services, the mechanisms to know more. Yet, conversations with officials and internal cables seen by this writer suggest that at

least some key officials aren't as informed as they could be. It is quite possible that the East Timor policy is responsible for this. Information on East Timorese claims and aspirations are not collected or not accorded any importance because they are not necessary for the implementation of the policy - support for the Indonesian takeover of East Timor.

#### "AUSTRALIA-INDONESIA RELATIONSHIP" MUST CHANGE

To what extent the DFA was originally responsible for the current East Timor policy is unclear. Herb Feith and others attribute the policy to the 'Indonesia lobby' in the DFA, other departments and in sections of academia and the media. (2) Former DFA Secretary Alan Renouf claims Gough Whitlam changed the department's policy on East Timorese self-determination when he visited President Suharto in Java in September 1974. (3) Whatever the case, the DFA presentation before the Senate inquiry on East Timor illustrated the uncomfortable impasse reached by the defenders of close, uncritical ties with Jakarta. Like the DFA, they now find themselves supporting or covering-up a major crime - Jakarta's disastrous invasion and occupation of East Timor.

Australians have to 'live next door' to Indonesians but they should not have to support Jakarta's actions against the East Timorese (not to mention Indonesians and West Papuans). The solution to this impasse must lie in the growth of links between Australians and the 'other Indonesia' - the movements of Indonesians who are looking for alternatives to the ruling group now supported by Canberra.

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#### References

- (1) The inquiry is being conducted by the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. DFA officers who appeared before the Committee were Messrs Nutter, Lloyd, Taylor, Gaylard and Fisher, along with Rosalyn McGovern from the Australian Development Assistance Bureau. A shorter version of this article can be found in *Arena* no. 61. It is based on the Department's written submission and notes of the DFA verbal testimony taken by TIS. For further commentary on the DFA submission, see "Criticisms of submission on East Timor by Department of Foreign Affairs" by Jim Dunn (Canberra: Legislative Research Service, Parliamentary Library, July 1, 1982).
- (2) See Feith's "A call to Canberra: rethink on Realpolitik" in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 30 July 1982. Associated articles in this issue of *F.E.E.R.* are classic examples of the limits of the conventional wisdom on the Australia-Indonesia (read: Canberra-Jakarta) relationship.
- (3) Alan Renouf. *The Frightened Country*. Macmillan, 1979.

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