



EAST TIMOR REPORT

No. 8 SEPTEMBER 1984

Timorese leaders urge support for talks

The head of the Catholic Church in East Timor, Monsignor Carlos Belo, and Fretilin's representative at the United Nations, Jose Ramos Horta, have both separately urged Australia and other countries to press Indonesia to abandon its military oppression in East Timor in favour of peace negotiations with the Fretilin resistance.

At its July Conference, Australia's ruling Labor Party called on the Australian Government 'to give active support to international initiatives that have the aim of achieving a settlement of the Timor problem'.

'Countries should appeal to Indonesia to settle this by conversation with Fretilin . . .'

Mgr Belo made his appeal in a rare interview given in Jakarta in July. 'Australia and countries like the US should appeal to Indonesia to settle this by conversation with Fretilin, not by force. The military's policy is to be harsh, to crush Fretilin . . . but the problem should be solved diplomatically', he said. (*Age 31 July 1984*) Unless peace talks commence 'this awful situation will continue' because neither side is capable of outright military victory.

In another interview he claimed that Indonesia's new military operation in June against Fretilin and anyone suspected of being a Fretilin sympathiser had failed because the Fretilin guerillas had broken up into small mobile squads and the Indonesian troops could not find them. 'Indonesian troops are everywhere and the people are afraid', he said. (*Age 16 July 1984*)



Monsignor Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, 36, appointed head of the Catholic Church in East Timor by the Vatican in May 1983 after the removal of Mgr. Lopes for criticism of Indonesia.

'I am ready to be removed if that is the price of defending human rights and the rights of the Timorese', said Belo in July. (Age 16 July 1984)

In many places there were 'violations of human rights, assassinations, and cases of arrest without trial of anyone suspected of having links with Fretilin. The families of the prisoners are in a bad condition'.

The food situation in the eastern sector was 'rather bad' though in the west there were no shortages. In some parts people could not tend crops because the military forbade them to travel more than a few kilometres from their villages. Villagers were also being conscripted by the Indonesian army.

Indonesia's development program 'has not satisfied the Timorese. It has not made them feel happy. They feel it is not for them but for Indonesia', he said. 'We live under oppression. The Timorese want peace and liberty, but at present the whole of East Timor is like prison'. (ibid)

According to this *Age* interview, he believed there should be a ceasefire, withdrawal of Indonesian troops sent to East Timor since last August, a resumption of negotiations between Fretilin and Governor Mario Carrascalao, and the granting by Indonesia of 'a special status for East Timor' as the first step to peace because 'self-determination is very difficult to obtain'.

Mgr Belo told AAP that Fretilin had made 'enemies of the people. They have killed a few villagers, burned houses, threatened people. This is to provoke the Indonesians and divert troops. It also intimidates people into giving them food and help'. (*Age 31 July 1984*) Other sources in East Timor have recently confirmed killings by Fretilin but have pointed out that spying is rife and that the killings were reprisals against informers. The same sources questioned Fretilin responsibility for attacks on villages pointing out that it is inconsistent with Fretilin's general behaviour and without clear rationale. They believe the

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attacks have been staged by the Timorese Hansip working for the Indonesian army as part of an anti-Fretilin propaganda campaign.

In a key speech to the National Press Club in Canberra, on 31 May, **Jose Ramos Horta** depicted East Timor as the issue that refuses to go away and attacked Australia's record of appeasement of Jakarta as being unworthy of a leading regional power and an encouragement to the hawks amongst the Indonesian generals.

He went on to propose 'for Australia the role of an honest broker, a peace-maker. It is high time that a political solution be found for the on-going conflict in East Timor'.

'If Australia were to undertake a diplomatic initiative with a view to resolving the East Timor problem, (a) the Australian people will support such a move; (b) it will be able to rally the support of the other Melanesian countries in the South Pacific region; the People's Republic of China will certainly support Australia's initiative; Portugal would be only too anxious to have Canberra undertaking such a peace initiative; several European countries would follow suit; if not the American Administration, the US Congress would endorse Australia's initiative; (c) Australia would be operating from a position of moral and legal strength.

'Australia should undertake a diplomatic initiative with the utmost urgency and determination. The Fretilin leaders are willing to sit down with the Indonesian leaders. We all should go to the table of negotiations without pre-conditions, without a fixed agenda. The first objective to be achieved as a matter of urgency would be a complete cease-fire. This cease-fire should enable a speedy and massive program of relief assistance and rehabilitation programs; the cease-fire should be observed and guaranteed by United Nations observers. A cease-fire will create a climate of relaxation and mutual trust that would facilitate further negotiations to take place as to a comprehensive process of peaceful settlement of the current conflict.

'We are not suggesting that it is going to be easy. We do not know of any diplomatic undertaking that has produced quick results. The Namibian question has been on the United Nations agenda since World War II. The Palestinian problem is as old as the State of Israel. The Iran-Iraq conflict is dragging on in spite of strenuous efforts by the

United Nations Secretary General, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Islamic Conference, to bring an end to that war.

'The East Timor problem is a problem created by a small group of generals in Jakarta. President Suharto is known to have opposed a military adventure in 1975.

'The Indonesian people do not support the war in East Timor. The Government tries hard to hide its military adventure from the Indonesian people. Unlike the Confrontasi Malaya in the early 60s and the West Irian campaign, East Timor has not become, has not been made, a nationalistic *cause celebre*. It is therefore, relatively easy for any government in Jakarta to extricate itself from the East Timor mess without great loss of face.

The alternative to a peace effort by Australia is the continuation of a conflict that has reached the dimensions of genocide. The conflict now boiling in West New Guinea and in PNG itself is a warning to those who advocate appeasement against assertiveness, diplomatic inaction against bold peace initiatives.'

123 US Congress reps. urge settlement of Timor conflict

A bi-partisan group of 123 members of the US Congress urged Secretary of State, George Schultz to seek 'an equitable settlement of the conflict in East Timor' during his visit to Indonesia in July, the first by a US Secretary of State since the 1975 invasion.

Dated 6 July 1984 their letter to Schultz reads:

'We are distressed over the continuing tragedy in East Timor, the largely Roman Catholic territory which was invaded by Indonesia in 1975. Since that time, by most credible accounts, more than 100,000 East Timorese have perished from the combined effects of the Indonesian occupation.

'Recent reports indicate that the death and suffering in the former Portuguese colony are continuing. We believe that it is of critical importance that the plight of the people of East Timor be accorded serious attention in the meetings that you will conduct with the Indonesian leadership on the occasion of your visit to Indonesia, the first by an American Secretary of State since the 1975 invasion.

'We are keenly aware of the importance of Indonesia and the need to maintain good relations between our two countries. Nevertheless, we cannot overlook the situation in East Timor where, as in Afghanistan, a people are living under a military regime imposed by force, in violation of international law.'

After outlining the situation in East Timor as reported by Mgr Belo, the letter continues:

'Additional details are virtually impossible to obtain, for the Indonesian military continues to seal off East Timor from contact with independent journalists and international church and human rights groups. It has been a source of frustration to many international observers over the years that it has been so hard to get the facts about East Timor.

'The overall picture that emerges is very disconcerting. Progress toward unrestricted, normalized access to East Timor has been negligible. Congressional concern in this regard prompted the House to adopt an East Timor amendment to H.R. 5119, the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1984. This amendment, now Section 914 of the foreign aid authorization bill, expresses the sense of Congress that the President should take all appropriate measures to encourage the Indonesians to allow increased access to East Timor by international relief agencies, international journalists, and international human rights organizations.



Jose Ramos Horta, 35, Fretilin's representative at the United Nations since 1976: 'We are proposing for Australia the role of an honest broker, a peace-maker. It is high time that a political solution be found for the on-going conflict in East Timor', Horta said in Canberra in June.

The ALP's new East Timor policy

The following is the new policy on East Timor adopted by the Australian Labor Party at its National Conference, Canberra, 9-13 July 1984.

The ALP expresses its continuing concern at the situation in East Timor, particularly its officially stated objection to the fact that the former Portuguese colony was incorporated without the East Timorese people having been given an adequate opportunity to express their own wishes through an internationally supervised act of self-determination.

The ALP indicates grave concern at reports of renewed fighting in East Timor and about the threats to human life and safety there, and calls on the Indonesian government to give free access to humanitarian relief teams, to international organisations such as Red Cross, Amnesty and the Commission of Jurists, and to allow an independent international mission to enter the territory to make an independent and impartial report on conditions.

Accordingly, the ALP calls on the Australian Government to give active support to international initiatives, that have the aim of achieving a settlement of the Timor problem. Specifically, the Government should support the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to bring about a solution.

The ALP recognises the vital importance of developing a closer, more understanding, realistic and productive relationship between Australia and Indonesia, based on a more sensitive and better appreciation of the shared aspirations, as well as the historical, political and cultural differences between the two countries.

The ALP expresses its concern at the state of the relationship between Australia and Indonesia, which it acknowledges is not in a condition appropriate to two neighbouring states, with many shared interests and international commitments of fundamental importance to regional security and social and economic progress.

The ALP calls for the broadening of cultural, political and economic ties between the two countries, and for the opening of the widest possible dialogue between appropriate interest groups in the Australian and Indonesian communities on questions on which there are differences, as well as on shared concerns in relation to regional and global issues.

The ALP supports the aim of advancing Indonesia's overall social economic development as rapidly as possible, in particular the urgent need to improve the living conditions of the general population.



East Timorese demonstrate in support of self-determination outside the ALP National Conference venue in Canberra, 9 July, 1984.

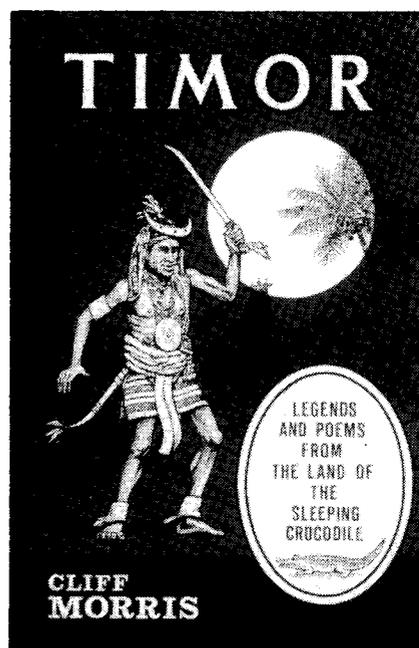
'To help implement the concern expressed by the House in Section 914, we respectfully request that you raise these issues with the Indonesian Government during your visit to Jakarta. In particular, we would urge you to request that the International Red Cross be allowed increased access to East Timor. We are mindful of the disastrous famine and suffering that occurred between 1978 and 1980 when such international agencies at least were permitted limited visitations. We also would request that you raise the issue of the church's right to exist in East Timor free of persecution and harassment.

'Finally, we would note that Section 914 calls upon the Administration to work with our concerned allies and the appropriate international organisations "to develop policies to end the ongoing human suffering in East Timor". We hope that you will take advantage of your trip to Indonesia to begin a dialogue with the Indonesians on constructive initiatives that could lead to an equitable settlement of the conflict in East Timor. Positive developments on the humanitarian issues we have raised could improve the prospects for a resolution of the causes of the human misery East Timor has experienced for nearly nine years. We urge you to make East Timor an important part of your agenda with the Government of Indonesia.'

In a move considered 'uncharacteristic for an administration that has taken a *subtle* approach to human rights' (*Newsweek*, 30 July 1984), Schultz reportedly delivered the letter to Indonesia's Foreign Minister Mochtar. Mochtar dismissed it saying it contradicted the findings of other observers.

The letter was drafted by Tony Hall (D-Ohio), 1728 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, USA.

New release



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Pope voices concern over Timor

Pope John Paul II used the occasion of accepting the credentials of Indonesia's new Ambassador to the Holy See in July to admonish the Indonesian Government on East Timor.

He told the Ambassador, Gen. Hardiman Sastrapoespita: 'The Holy See continues to follow the situation with preoccupation and with the hope that particular consideration will be given in every circumstance to the ethnic, religious and cultural identity of the people. It is the ardent wish of the Holy See that all the rights of individuals be respected and that every effort be made to lighten the sufferings of the people by facilitating the work of relief organisations and by assuring the access of humanitarian aid to those in need'. (*New York Times*, 8 July 1984)

This is the first time the Pope has made a public criticism of the situation in East Timor. His statement follows recent expressions of concern by the Vatican appointed Administrator of the Dili diocese, Mgr Belo and the Bishops Conferences of Indonesia and Portugal.



RUI ARAUJO

Tensions between the Catholic Church and the Indonesian army are developing as the Church in Timor increases its criticisms of human rights abuses against the people.

UN Secretary-General's report

The official *Progress Report of the UN Secretary-General on the question of East Timor*, dated 25 July 1984, is, to put it mildly, a reticent document. However it does serve to confirm officially some developments reported elsewhere.

Eleven of its twenty paragraphs deal with the Secretary-General's efforts to get talks underway between Portugal and Indonesia. There have been some 26 separate meetings between the Secretary-General or the Under-Secretary-General, Rafeudin Ahmed, and the Portuguese and Indonesian Governments since the beginning of 1982 when Perez de Cuellar assumed office.

The report reveals nothing about the contents of these meetings. However it is clear that the Secretary-General regards the establishment of direct contacts between Portugal and Indonesia in July 1983 as a breakthrough. These were the 'recent developments' that led him to recommend deferral of debate on East Timor at the General Assembly last year. The report observes: 'The contacts established

between Indonesia and Portugal in July 1983 have been held in New York at regular intervals and both parties have expressed to me their willingness to continue the present process. For my part, I wish to reiterate my readiness to be of assistance to the two Governments, with a view to achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem'.

The report conspicuously makes no mention of contacts between the UN and the Timorese people. Clearly, in UN terms, Portugal as the 'administering power' holds the key to the future of East Timor.

Dr Mochtar told journalists on 27 July that Indonesia had been disappointed by past meetings with Portugal which had failed to narrow their differences. He also said Jakarta was anxious to make it clear that the contacts were not negotiations. 'As far as Indonesia is concerned, East Timor is settled', he said. (*Age*, 28 July 1984)

The remaining nine paragraphs deal exclusively with UN involvement in securing humanitarian assistance for the people of Timor, which the Secretary-General declares 'remains one of my primary concerns'. The involvement of UNICEF, UNHCR, and the ICRC are treated, with particular mention being made of UN attempts to secure the resumption of the complete range of ICRC services in East Timor.

Appeal to women

A young Timorese woman addressed the following plea to an audience of over 1000 people at a meeting in Melbourne on 1 July in support of self-determination for East Timor.

'I am very grateful to have this opportunity to express what I feel. My name is Eulalia and I am 19 years old. I came from East Timor with my mother as a refugee in 1975.

At 19 it is good to be alive and free, living in Melbourne with many opportunities ahead of me. I have plenty to eat, I have nice clothes to wear, I have had a good education, I am in good health, I am free to say what I think without fear of punishment.

Were I living in East Timor, most probably none of these things would be true for me. There my people go hungry and sick. They feel anxious and bitter and afraid. I am an exception to the general rule for Timorese. That is why I am standing here now because I want to use the privileges I have in the service of my people and their freedom.

East Timorese should not have to become refugees to be free. I should not be an exception. Every Timorese should be able to lead the life I lead. But in East Timor, not just in Australia.

My grandmother is dead. Her name was Maria de Assis. She died from hunger soon after the Indonesian invasion when she was running from Dili to Ainaro to escape the fighting. She is one of 200,000 who have died. Nearly every Timorese in Australia has a relative who has died because of this terrible war. And of those who have survived, a big number are widows and orphans.

My grandmother who died of hunger spent three years in Australia during the second world war. She and my mother, who was then a young girl, were evacuated to Newcastle in New South Wales. My grandfather was fighting with the Australian commandos against the Japanese so they sent his wife and daughter to Australia in case the Japanese took revenge on them. Timorese feel Australia owes us something now because many of my people died defending Australia at that time.

I asked my mother and the grandmother of the family with whom we now live what I should say today. They said: just say we want the Indonesians to go home and leave us alone to be East Timorese in our own way.

It is nine years now and this is still our hope and it will be the hope of my children and their children. But we know

that we cannot achieve this dream on our own. We need your help, especially the help of Australian women.

I think that if Australian women were to work in solidarity with East Timorese women, it would make a big difference.

Thankyou for listening.'



ROBIN OSBORNE

Traditional village near Tutuala at the eastern tip of East Timor, 1975.

Japanese Bishops appeal to Portugal

The Japanese Catholic Council for Justice and Peace raised the issue of East Timor with the Portuguese Prime Minister, Mario Soares, on the occasion of his visit to Tokyo in June.

In a letter dated June 19, 1984 the Council wrote: 'Out of Christian concern for our suffering brothers and sisters in East Timor, we wish to plead with Your Excellency to do all in your power to carry out the mandate in your new constitution to make every effort to work for the realization of self-determination for the East Timorese who, despite annexation and invasion by Indonesia, continue to struggle for their independence and for the survival of their culture.'

In its 1983 session, the UN Human Rights Commission passed a resolution affirming the 'inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), and for all interested parties, namely Portugal, as the administering power, and the representatives of the East Timorese people, as well as Indonesia, to cooperate fully with the UN with a view to guaranteeing the free and full exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of East Timor'.

Reports continue to come in about many arrests, human rights violations, and disappearances of East Timorese. There are also reports of recurring famine.

We are indeed saddened by the plight of the East Timorese people and pray that any efforts you make on their behalf will bring the fighting in East Timor to a stop and put an end to the suffering of the people there'.

The letter was signed by the Council's President, Bishop Aloisius Soma of Nagoya and Co-Moderator, Bishop Stephen Hamao of Yokohama.

Address: 10-1 Rokubancho, Chujoda-Ku, Tokyo 102, Japan.

Australian unions support self-determination

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) has recently adopted the following new policy on East Timor:

'Congress recognises the inalienable right of the East Timorese people to self-determination and independence and condemns the Indonesian annexation of East Timor'.

The 1983 ACTU Congress empowered the ACTU Executive in consultation with State Councils to conclude its unfinished business. This policy is the outcome of that process.

The preamble to the general *International Affairs Policy*, under which East Timor is treated, reads in part: 'Congress declares that all peoples of the world have the right to self-determination . . . we pledge our support to all peoples of the world who are prepared to defend their freedom and call upon governments to abstain from military action and to make every effort to resolve conflicts by peaceful negotiation'.

Portugal to push for self-determination

President Antonio Ramalho Eanes and Prime Minister Mario Soares have formulated a new Timor policy, which underlines Portugal's willingness to assist in 'bringing about the inalienable right of the East Timorese people to self-determination'.

The major policy statement resolves differences between the President and the Government on the issue, mainly in favour of President Eanes' position.

Earlier this year the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Mr Jaime Gama, said that Portugal hoped to enter into direct negotiations with Indonesia over the future of Timor, and said there was 'no effective mechanism' to consult the Timorese population. He was urging recognition of Indonesian sovereignty in Timor in exchange for humanitarian concessions for the Timorese and the opening of a Portuguese consulate and cultural centre in Dili.

The new policy:

- stresses that solution must pass through the UN Secretary-General in terms of the 1982 resolution on Timor by which the Secretary-General should consult all interested parties towards a peaceful solution;
- stresses that Portugal remains the internationally recognised administering power in East Timor;
- notes that the armed conflict seems to be intensifying and has been the object of concern in various countries, including Australia and the US;
- notes and praises the role of various non-governmental organisations, and registers its respect for expressions of concern from Pope John Paul II, and the Indonesian and Portuguese bishops' conferences;
- reaffirms Portugal's willingness to play a role in bringing about self-determination within the principles of the UN, and emphasises the need for a solution arising from talks with all directly involved parties. (*Age*, 21 July 1984)

The ALP compromises on East Timor

In reaching its new policy on East Timor, the ALP has sought to steer a middle course between its previously strongly worded policy and one of total surrender to Jakarta. This has involved the re-definition of the issue in exclusive human rights terms without reference to the fundamental issues of self-determination and recognition. As such the policy strongly challenges Indonesia's behaviour in East Timor but not its hegemony.

Whether the Indonesian Generals will take any notice of a Party that has been prepared to compromise to such an extent will depend on whether the Party is really seen to insist, forcefully and repeatedly, on a radical improvement in the human rights situation of the East Timorese.

Within its self-imposed limits, the new policy is a positive statement. The Party rejects Jakarta's oft-repeated assertion that East Timor is 'a closed book'. It clearly feels the situation is intolerable and that a solution must be found. The Party also rejects Jakarta's other oft-repeated assertion that the matter of East Timor is settled and is purely an internal affair. It

clearly believes that the international community, including Australia and the UN, have an obligation to involve themselves in the search for a solution. Thirdly, the ALP believes that Indonesia should permit NGOs a much larger role in East Timor than has been permitted to date. And finally, it is clear that the ALP reserves the right to intervene on a matter of substantial concern like East Timor even where much importance is placed on good relations with the offending country.

Nevertheless the policy fails on two fundamental counts. First it does not seek to involve the Timorese and Fretilin in the search for a settlement. A bi-lateral settlement reached by Indonesia and Portugal, and approved by the UN, would therefore be technically consistent with the ALP platform. This would help the Indonesian cause considerably. But it is most doubtful that it would bring peace to the East Timorese people any more than a similar deal has meant peace in West Irian.

Second, the policy fails to address the issue of Indonesia's sovereignty. Bill Hayden was adamant that no reference be made to this and when asked during the debate to say whether the Hawke Government considered East Timor to be part of Indonesia, he did not reply. This omission could be interpreted as a wish to reserve judgement on the matter. But it also leaves the Hawke Government free to extend *de iure* recognition to Indonesia's incorporation, by word or by deed, without technically contravening official policy.

Ambassador's visit 'too narrow'

A last minute attempt by the Australian Government to get a positive report on East Timor for use at the ALP National Conference in July came unstuck when the Australian Ambassador, Mr Rawdon Dalrymple, conceded his visit had been 'too narrow'.

The visit was originally scheduled for 22 May, seven weeks before the ALP Conference at which a new platform on the sensitive Timor issue was to be debated. That visit was postponed 'for technical reasons', then cancelled by the military because, according to the Indonesian embassy in Canberra, Indonesia feared for the Ambassador's safety. ACFOA said at the time it believed the cancellation was due to renewed fighting in East Timor. The visit was finally permitted to go ahead in the week before the ALP Conference, which commenced on 9 July, at Mr Hayden's insistence.

The Department of Foreign Affairs issued a 3-page summary of Mr Dalrymple's 16-page report on 8 July. The summary said: 'When Mr Dalrymple protested that the visit was too narrow, he was told that the authorities were not prepared to take risks with his safety as his visit and arrival in Dili had been extensively publicised by Radio Australia'. (*Canberra Times*, 9 July 1984)

The summary is a rundown on perceptions of the situation in East Timor by Indonesian and local authorities and

contains little assessment by the delegation itself.

The delegation, comprising the Ambassador, Mr Dalrymple, and the Embassy's defence attache, Brigadier Gordon Murphy, met the Governor and visited an Australian-funded steel bridge and the detention centre on Atauro island. It also had talks with Mgr Belo on human rights but no details were given in the summary.

After mentioning the 'safety' response to the complaint about the visit being too narrow, the summary quotes authorities as saying the security situation had improved to the point where officials and others now travelled freely around East Timor by road and that it was obvious Fretilin was being 'gradually whittled away'.

Asked why there were so many Indonesian troops on the island the authorities said they were engaged in development projects and administration.

The delegation was told that within the next few weeks the program of returning people from detention on Atauro island to their places of origin, suspended last August because of increased fighting, would be resumed and hopefully completed within 12 months.

At a demonstration on Mr Dalrymple's departure, banners were displayed reading 'We are already free', and 'Don't interfere in our affairs'.

The visit was not mentioned during the ALP Conference debate.

The Conference adopted a resolution calling for 'an independent international mission to enter the territory to make an independent and impartial report on conditions'.

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