MATEBIAN NEWS

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East Timor - The Pebble in Evans' shoes

Downgrade the military presence - says Gareth Evans

July was undoubtedly a month of intensive publicity on East Timor. The visit of the UN Special Rapporteur, the screening of John Pilger's Death of a Nation on channel 9, the actions taken by the Indonesian agents against sectors of the Timorese clergy which culminated with the protest organised by the students in the university of Dili with all its consequences, brought East Timor into the mainstream media in Australia.

The screening of "Death of a Nation" had a very positive impact even though it was late at night. Thousands of people reacted to the facts disclosed in the documentary and they are disgust with the way their governments have been handling the matter. The challenge for the Timorese in Australia and the solidarity is how to maximise the impact of this positive reaction and transform it into a real lobbying power to help find a successful solution for East Timor. One way is to increase the number of petitions around Australia to demand that Canberra changes its official stand on East Timor. The letter written to "The Age" by the Deputy Leader of the Victorian Opposition (The Age, July 28, Letters to the Editor), Mr Demetri Dollis, outlined the general rationale for such a change. One also needs to take into account the general changes in the Indonesian politics and the direction the international politics is taking. All these changes do favour a real solution for East Timor which, if common sense is to prevail, will encourage Canberra not to put all its eggs in one basket!

Such a need may have been perceived by the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans when he appealed for Indonesia to downgrade its military forces in East Timor and urged Indonesia to dialogue with the Timorese including the resistance. Gareth Evans also criticised the Indonesian government on the matter of interference with the governments

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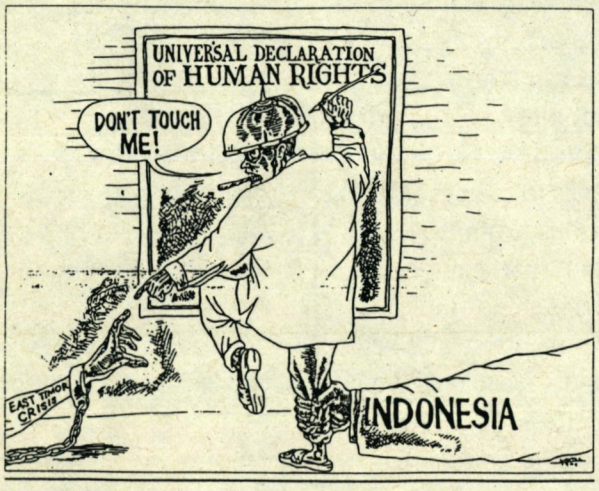
of Philippines and Thailand in an attempt to boycott the conferences in Manila and Bangkok about East Timor. In a move which surprised many observers, Senator Gareth Evans publicly attacked Indonesia on these issues and he argued in favour of these conferences by saying that "such talks could help resolve the vexing issue which continues to cast a shadow over Indonesia's international standing". (see editorial, page 4)

The reason why these strong remarks were echoed by Senator Gareth Evans can be found in this year's developments on the issue of East Timor. One was the impact which the conference in Manila, the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor (APCET) had in the politics of this region, specially on the question of East Timor. In spite of the powerful lobbying using all the possible pressure over the government of Philippines, Jakarta could not stop the conference; if anything, it helped to highlight the question of East Timor beyond all expectations. One of the resolutions passed by the conference was to continue to promote the issue of East Timor in the region specially within the ASEAN nations. The decision taken by the NGOs responsible for the human rights conference in Bangkok to include a one day conference on East Timor in their program can be seen in that context. If the reaction displayed by Jakarta can be an indication, the one-day conference was enough to create a dilemma between Jakarta and Bangkok.

"Senator Gareth Evans saw the need to make strong statements"

Facing with this situation Senator Gareth Evans saw the need to make strong statements. The aim was twofold: one, was to send a clear message to Indonesia that if an international conference on the issue of East Timor is to take place in Australia, Jakarta can not expect Canberra to tow the line and boycott the conference; the second reason was to send a clear message to the NGOs involved in the human rights campaigns in the region that they can count on Canberra as an ally on the issue of universality of human rights as enshrined in the UN Charter and its respective Covenants. By doing so, and by participating in the ASEAN conference, Gareth Evans was catering for both camps.



The impact of conferences on East Timor in this region will always be positive because the more dialogue exists, the more Jakarta will find itself in a very difficult position to justify its illegal occupation of East Timor. And, gradually, Canberra may feel comfortable to change its stand from one of main source of moral support to the crimes committed by Jakarta in East Timor to one of main interlocutor on the question of a real solution for East Timor. But, for that to happen, more courage to make changes are needed.

The practices of the indonesian agents in East Timor fuelled the interest even further. Since the desecration of the communion hosts in the church of Remexio, the outrage shown by the Timorese against the indifference of the Indonesian authorities over the growing political tension in East Timor has become increasingly widespread and public.

"a clear sign of desperation shown by the Indonesian military"

These events are a clear sign of desperation shown by the Indonesian military in their failure to subjugate the people of East Timor. Only recently, the head of the Indonesian army occupying East Timor, colonel Lumingtang, stated that Indonesia will need two more generations of Timorese before they can conquer the hearts and minds of Timorese people. Such statement was a rare show of official recognition of failure in the strategy of occupation.

cont. on page 3

It is this frustration which makes the troops and other agents of occupation turn against nuns and priests, nurses and public servants. The Indonesian authorities know too well that the vectors of the Timorese resistance are those connected to the Catholic Church, not solely because of the Church whilst an institution, but above all, because the Catholic Church of East Timor is primarily run by Timorese priests, and nuns.

When the population of East Timor was forced by Indonesian law to officially declare adherence to one of the official religions accepted by Jakarta, the people of East Timor chose to declare themselves catholics. On top of these problems, there is also the fact that since the infamous massacre of Sta. Cruz in 1991, the reliable information which was channelled to the United Nations convinced the world that the killings in East Timor have been widespread and that the Indonesian military must be held responsible for that. And most of the information appear to have come from the members of the church who, in their day-to-day life, mix and work with the people of East Timor. Hence, the growing odium. ■

Matebian News is a publication of East Timor Information & Documentation Centre/ CNRM
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Letter from East Timor

"Everyone bears the brunt of intimidation, repression"

By Shirley Shackleton

With the news that the Defence Minister, Robert Ray, has announced in Jakarta that Australia will take over where the United States leaves off with the training of the Indonesian Military, come charges by Amnesty International that Indonesian authorities faked evidence on the Santa Cruz Massacre on November 12, 1991, in East Timor.

Amnesty also documents systematic murder, torture, sexual abuse and illegal detention by the Indonesian military.

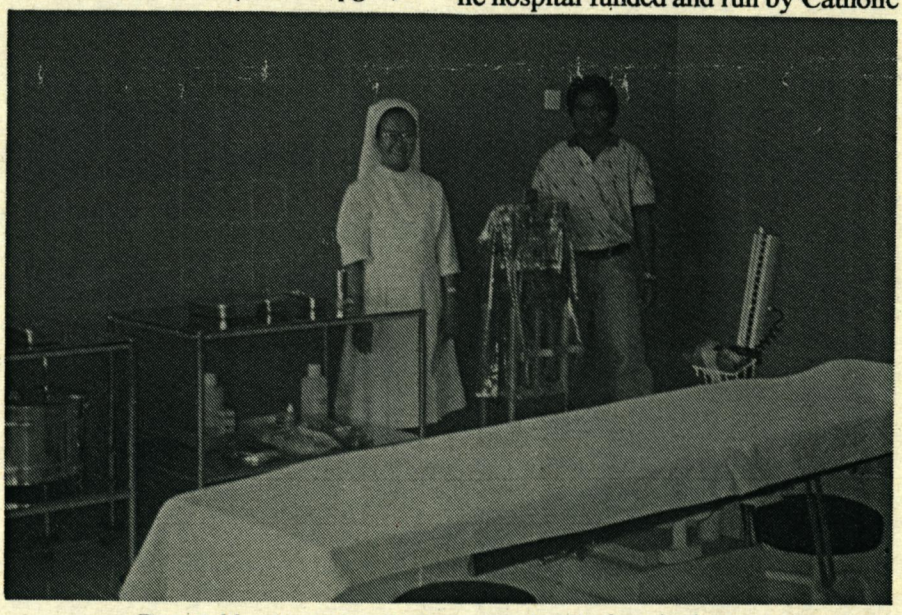
I have just received one of the saddest letters I ever hope to read. It came from an impeccable source, but because of the danger to the writer I will reproduce it with pseudonyms:

...at Balibo we could not find the tree you planted in memory of your husband and his colleagues. One of our companions was extremely nervous about being there, he has shocking scars on his neck and arms from a previous military detention and we did not want to cause him further anxiety. I have the name of an eye-witness to the killings at Balibo and I pass this on to you in case you want to make contact.

(cont. on pg. 6)

Travel permits are still necessary if one wants to move around within East Timor and one has to register with the police if one wants to stay overnight outside Dili. This present problems for one's hosts as they are taken in for interrogation after one has left their premises.

Without exception , every Timorese bears the brunt of intimidation and repression. Poverty, malnutrition, malaria and tuberculosis are widespread. All of which are so preventable! A new Catholic hospital funded and run by Catholic



Donated by Australian Embassy but hardly functioning

Editorial

Senator Gareth Evans must show more commitment

The last week of July was marked with a well publicised call made by the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, for Indonesia to downgrade its military presence in East Timor and to negotiate with the East Timorese, including independence activists. During his trip to Bangkok to take part in the ASEAN meeting, Senator Gareth Evans also criticised Indonesia's attempt to stifle recent conferences on East Timor in Philippines and Thailand, arguing that such talks could help resolve the vexing issue which continues to cast a shadow over Indonesia's international standing. (The Canberra Times, July 25, 1994).

Such remarks were received in Australia as a step forward and a positive symptom for changes in Australian government traditional kowtowing position towards Indonesia, particularly coming from a man whose stand on East Timor has been, at its best, insensitive. He has said in the past that the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia is indefensible but he also said that no clause exists in international law to impede Australia's recognition of the Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor; he said that integration of East Timor into Indonesia is irreversible and that independence for East Timor is history. However, after the infamous massacre of Santa Cruz (Nov.'91), he appealed for dialogue between Timorese and Indonesia to reach reconciliation but called the massacre simply an aberration, and he declared the findings of the report presented by the so-called Djaelani (independent) Commission which "investigated" the massacre of Sta. Cruz as "credible", even though the report has never been published apart from some data stating that 50 people were killed (but only 19 bodies found) and 90 disappeared (but no personal data were given).

These and other remarks made in the past have been a source of moral support for the Indonesian generals to continue to occupy East Timor in defiance of the ten resolutions passed by the UN, eight of which were passed by the General Assembly and two by the Security Council. A number of resolutions calling for the respect of human rights in East Timor were also passed by the UN Sub-Commission and Commission on Human Rights, but Indonesia (and Australia) had chosen to completely ignore them. Senator Gareth Evans continuously gave all the necessary support for Jakarta to derail international criticism; such support went as far as Paul Keating asking President Clinton of USA to be soft on Indonesia on the issue of Human Rights, when President Clinton increasingly exerted pressure on Jakarta to respect human rights in East Timor.

The signing of the Timor Gap Treaty hooked Australia further into the illegal occupation of East Timor by Indonesia because the pre-requisite for the signing of the treaty was the de jure recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor. The area of the Timor Gap Treaty happens to lie within the 200 nautical miles which East Timor is entitled to have under the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea). It is in the light of all these acts of connivance that the Australian media and the public in general saw the most recent remarks made by Senator Gareth Evans on East Timor as a possible turn around in the traditional policy. But, is that so?

For the Timorese, there is a strong scepticism because remarks of this kind were made in the past without consequent actions to reinforce them; on the contrary, deteriorating situation of human rights abuses in East Timor have been registered without complaint from Canberra. It is also a source of danger for the Timor camp in Australia because the remarks may simply be aimed at accommodating the growing domestic concerns over the way consecutive Australian governments have been handling the issue. When these concerns are discharged, everything returns to normal. Senator Gareth Evans may also have a personal interest since it was reported that he may want to move to the Lower House soon; if it is true, he will need as many votes he can master.

Therefore, for his concern on East Timor to be credible, he will also need to master clearer moves. And this is not easy because of the mess already created since Whitlam government and perpetuated by the most recent Hawke and Keating labour governments, in spite of a new climate in the International sphere which is conducive to solving conflicts under the jurisdiction of the international law.

Leste no seu pro-grama, pode ser visto dentro deste contexto. Se a reacção mostrada por Jakarta pode ser uma indicação, a Conferência de um dia foi suficiente para criar um dilema entre Jakarta e Bangkok.

Deparando-se com esta situação o Senador Gareth Evans viu a necessidade de fazer fortes declarações. O objectivo era duplo: um, era a de mandar uma mensagem clara à Indonésia que se uma Conferência Internacional sobre a questão de Timor Leste tiver lugar na Austrália, Jakarta não deve esperar que Canberra boicote a Conferência; a segunda razão foi a de enviar uma mensagem clara as Organizações Não-Governamentais envolvidas nas companhas de Direitos Humanos na Região que elas podem contar com Canberra como um aliado na questão da universalidade dos Direitos Humanos como previstos na Carta das Nações Unidas e seus respectivos assinantes. Fazendo isso e participando na Conferência da ASEAN, Gareth Evans estava a servir os dois campos.

quanto mais diálogo existir, mais difícil será para Jakarta justificar a ocupação ilegal de Timor Leste.

O impacto das Conferências sobre Timor Leste nesta Região seár sempre positivo porque quanto mais diálogo existir, mais dificil será para Jakarta justificar a ocupação ilegal de Ti-mor Leste. E, gradualmente, Canberra poderá sentir-se confortável para mudar a sua posição de uma das mais importantes fontes de apoio moral aos crimes cometidos por Jakarta em Timor Leste para um dos mais importantes in-terlocutores à procura de uma solução real para Timor Leste. Mas para que isso aconteça, terá que haver mais coragem para fazer mudanças.

As práticas dos agentes indonésios em Timor Leste acendem ainda mais a questão. Desde o sacrilégio cometido às hóstias na Igreja de Remexio, o ultrage mostrado pelos Timorenses contra a indiferença das autoridades indonésias sobre a crescente tensão política em Timor Leste tornou-se público e espalhou-se por todo o lado.

Estes acontecimentos são um sinal claro do de-sespero mostrado pelos militares indonésios na sua falta de sucesso para subjugar o Povo de Timor Leste. Recentemente, o líder do exército indonésio em Timor Leste, Coronel Luming-tang, declarou que a Indonésia irá precisar de mais duas gerações de Timorenses para poder conquistar os corações e o querer do Povo de Timor Leste. Uma declaração como esta é uma rara mostragem do reconhecimento oficial do seu falhanço na estratégia da ocupação.

a Igreja Católica de Timor Leste é dirigida por Padres e Madres Timorenses.

É esta frustração que faz as tropas e outros agentes de ocupação virar-se contra Madres, Padres, Irmãs e funcionários públicos. As autoridades Indonésias sabem muito bem que os vectores da Resistência Timorense são os que estão ligados à Igreja Católica, não somente a Igreja como Instituição, mas acima de tudo, porque a Igreja Católica de Timor Leste é dirigida por Padres e Madres Timorenses.

Quando a população de Timor Leste foi forçada pela lei indonésia a declarar aderência a uma das religiões oficiais aceites por Jakarta, o Povo de Timor Leste escolheu declarar-se católico. Em cima destes problemas, está também o facto de que desde o massacre de Santa Cruz em 1991, as informações credíveis que foram enviadas as Nações Unidas convenceu o Mun-do sobre as matanças em Timor Leste e coloca os militares indonésios numa situação de que terão de prestar contas mais tarde. E a maioria das informações parecem ter vindo de mem-bros da Igreja que na sua vida diária misturam--se e trabalham com o Povo de Timor Leste. Esta é a razão do crescente sentimento de ódio contra a Igreja Timorense por parte dos Indonésios.

"Timor Leste: uma pedra no sapato de Evans"

O mês de julho foi sem dúvida alguma um mês em que Timor Leste foi muito falado a nível internacional. A visita do "Special Raporteur" das Nações Unidas, a mostragem do filme "Morte de uma Nação" de John Pilger, as acções dos agentes indonésios perpectradas contra sectores do clero Timorense que culminaram com o protesto organizado pelos estudantes da Universidade de Dili apesar das suas consequências, colocaram Timor Leste nos Orgãos de Informação mais importantes da Austrália.

A mostragem do filme "Morte de uma Nação" teve um impacto positivo

A mostragem do filme "Morte de uma Nação" teve um impacto muito positivo apesar da hora tardia na programação televisiva (11 horas p.m.). Milhares de pessoas reagiram aos factos mostrados no documentario e estão revoltados pela maneira como os seus governos têm tratado a questão de Timor Leste.

O desafio para todos os Timorenses na Austrália assim como para a Solidariedade é o de como maximizar o impacto desta reacção positiva e transformar isso num poderoso trabalho de pressão internacional para ajudar a encontrar uma solução para Timor Leste. Uma resposta seria aumentar o número de petições em toda a Austrália para exigir que Canberra altere a sua posição sobre Timor Leste. A carta escrita ao Jornal "The Age" pelo vice-Presidente da Oposição de Victória (The Age, 28 de Julho de 1994, cartas ao Editor), Sr. Demetri Dollis, descreveu em linhas gerais um racional para essa mudança. Deve-se também ter em consideração as mudanças gerais que têm tido lugar na Política Indonésia e a direcção que a Política Internacional está a tomar. Todas estas mudanças favorecem uma solução real para Timor Leste que, se o senso comum prevalecer, irá encorajar Canberra a não jogar as suas cartas todas de uma só vez!

Esta necessidade talvez tenha sido pressentida pelo Ministro dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Senador Gareth Evans quando apelou à Indonésia para reduzir as suas forças militares em Timor Leste e incitou a Indonésia ao diálogo com os Timorenses incluindo a Resistência. Gareth Evans também criticou o Governo Indonésio na questão da interferência com os Governos das Filipinas e Tailândia numa tentativa de boicotar as Conferências de Manila e Bangkok sobre Timor Leste. Num acto que surpreendeu muitos observadores, o Senador Gareth Evans atacou publicamente a Indonésia sobre essas questões e argumentou a favor dessas Conferências dizendo que "esses encontros podem ajudar a resolver esta questão incomoda que continua a lançar uma sobra sobre a posição internacional da Indonésia". (ver editorial, pág. 4)

Senador Gareth Evans incitou a Indonesia aodiálogo com os Timorenses incluindo a Resistência.

A razão porque estas fortes observações foram ecoadas pelo Senador Gareth Evans podem ser encontradas nos desenvolvimentos internacionais sobre a questão de Timor Leste. Um, foi o impacto que a Conferência de Manila, a Conferência da Asia/Pacífico sobre Timor Leste (APCET) teve na Política da Região, especialmente na questão de Timor Leste. Apesar do forte trabalho de "lobby" usando toda a pressão possível sobre o Governo das Filipinas, Jakarta não pôde parar a Conferência. Pelo contrário, ajudou a dar mais foco à questão de Timor Leste para além do que se esperava. Uma das Resoluções passadas pela Conferência foi a de continuar a promover a questão de Timor Leste na Região especialmente nos Países da SEAN. A decisão tomada pelas Organizações Não-Governamentais (NGO's) responsáveis pela Conferência sobre Direitos Humanos em Bangkok de incluir um dia de Conferência sobre Timor

Around Australia-in-brief

Darwin

July was one of the best month in terms of publicity for the issue of East Timor. To quote one of the longest East Timor activist, Rob Wesley-Smith, July was "a virtually unprecedented period of daily media interest". Indeed, it was not only for Darwin but also for the rest of Australia. The solidarity groups must be commended for successfully carrying this difficult task and keeping East Timor issue pretty much in the mainstream politics in Australia. With increasingly sophisticated technology and media expertise, Jakarta has been targeting the media in Australia to score points against the Timorese; but the solidarity and the Timorese working together has proven to be a very powerful voice for the people of East Timor.

In Darwin, protests and meetings were held to galvanise media attention and support for East Timor. Australians for a free East Timor (AFFET), as always, was involved in several activites including protesting in the NT Trade Expo towards the end of June, and sending people to East Timor. The protest made by the students and some staff of the University of East Timor provoked powerful reaction in Australia. In Darwin, AFFET members staged a rapid response public protest which included stopping the Indonesian Consulate staff from attending their work; this well organised protest deserved excellent media coverage to help alert the world as to what was happening. Even some people in East Timor saw the media coverage of this important event.

Another important event in Darwin was the meeting of the Electrical & Plumbing Union (EPU). Some members of the Perth-based Friends of East Timor also attended this conference. Jose Gusmao, the South East Asian Representative of CNRM (National Council of Maubere Resistance), addressed the conference and a resolution was unanimously passed in support of East Timor. Following is the text: "That the Electrical Division Council of the EPU supports the call by the Roman Catholic Primate of Australia, Cardinal Edward Clancy, for Australia to confront Indonesia over concerns about human rights in the territories under its control. His call has been endorsed by Bishop Deakin who recently returned from an 18 day visit to reverse East Timor. Council further calls on the Australian Government to reverse its endorsement of the Indonesian annexation of East Timor which was carried out by brutal military invasion in 1975 and which has been condemned a number of times by the United Nations.

Council supports the demand for a United Nations supervised referendum of East Timorese people to determine their future either as part of Indonesia or as an independent sovereign state.

This decision is to be submitted as an agenda item for endorsement to the ALP Conference in September and to the next ACTU Council Meeting. This decision is also to be given to the media." Carried unanimously on Tuesday, July 26 (1994). ***You can contact AFFET/NT, c/o Robert Wesley-Smith, PO Box 2155, Darwin NT; Ph & fax: 089 - 8232113.***

Perth

In Perth, Friends of East Timor (FOET)/WA issued a media release outlining details of human rights abuse in East Timor, including the detention of "Mateus Afonso in Taci Tolu on July 23 1994 by the Indonesian military. He was tortured in front of his family between 10AM and 1PM on the same day. Florentino Sarmento, a Timorese working as the local representative of AIDAB, received threats and harassment from the Indonesian military because of his interviews to the Australian media, and the local newspaper "Suara Timor-Timur", a reliable mouthpiece of the Indonesian Government, has had its business car burnt and staff members intimidated merely for reporting the clashes between the Indonesian security forces and East Timorese students..." This media release was issued by Christine Faithful for FOET/WA, on July 27 (1994). ***You can write to Christine Faithful, (Co-ordinator) FOET/WA, PO Box 693, CANNINGTON WA 6107.***

Melbourne

The Australian-East Timor Association (AETA/Melbourne) worked together with the East Timor Relief Association Inc. (ETRA) and Community Aid Abroad (CAA) to mobilise support through the screening of John Pilger's "Death of a Nation". On August 17, from 12:30-2PM, AETA will be part of a protest held outside the Indonesian consulate in Melbourne. This protest is aimed at using the Indonesian independence day to highlight the Indonesian illegal occupation of East Timor. AETA/Sydney also organised a fundraising evening with ETRA including the launch of a book critical of the Australian media coverage of East Timor, on July 17 last.

To contact AETA/Melbourne, write to PO Box 93, FITZROY, VIC 3065; Ph. 03 -4162960. AETA/Sydney at PO Box 751, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010; Ph. 02 - 692 0564.

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Adelaide

In Adelaide, the Campaign for an Independent East Timor (CIET/SA) has been busy promoting the plight of the Timorese people. As a regular feature of CIET/SA activites, every first Friday of each month, CIET/SA organises a "protest vigil" in front of the Garuda Airlines office to highlight the plight of the Timorese people. CIET/SA also promotes letter writing, public speaking tours, lobby politicians and supports other groups in their work to promote East Timor. Recently, the long-time Chairperson of CIET/SA, Richard Gun, due to work commitments, was replaced by Andy Alcock, and the Information Officer - a position held until then by Andy Alcock - was given to David Barreto, a Timorese studying in Adelaide. Bob Hannay continues to be the Secretary. CIET/SA is in the process of becoming an incorporated body. ***To contact CIET/SA, write to CIET/SA, c/o The Global Education Ctre, 1st floor, 155 Pirie Street, Adelaide - SA; or ring (08) 272 1399 (b/h) and (08) 371 0480 (a/h).***

Townsville

In Townsville (QLD), a new group has been formed. The group which is a local ETRA's support group, organised a successful protest during the visit of Prime Minister Keating. The pro-East Timor group met PM Keating at the RAAF Base and protested against the Australian Government policy on East Timor. Another protest took place on the same day, in a restaurant where Paul Keating was having a dinner with a large group of ALP followers. The group distributed leaflets on East Timor and demanded Australian Government to change its policy on East Timor. Two TV stations and two radio stations gave good coverage to the protest and interviewed the organisers. ***Contact Mary Jones, 33 Ackirs Street, HERMIT PARK, TOWNSVILLE, QLD 4812; or Phone 077 - 241391 (a/h).***

Sydney

Another solidarity group which is quickly developing into a powerful lobbying force for East Timor is CISET (Christians in Solidarity with East Timor). With the support of several Christian organisations around Australia, CISET is devloping its own networt within the religious congregations.

Recently, two main members of CISET went to East Timor for a short visit. Sr Kathleen O'Connor and Fr Peter Hoskins spent about two weeks in East Timor where they learnt, first hand, the experinece of the people of East Timor. Back in Australia, they gave interviews to radio programs and newspapers. An extensive interview was published in "The Catholic Weekly" of July 13, 1994. They spoke about the widespread malnutrition, malaria, tuberculosis, minimal sanitation and water shortages as the main health problems. In the educational level, they pointed out that the Timorese students are forced to learn Bahasa Indonesia and their own languages are banned at school.

CISET hopes to establish a twinning program for Australian and East Timorese parishes. It suggests that apart from donating money, medicines and education materials, the Australian parishes could share growing relationships with their counterparts in East Timor. (based on "The Catholic Weekly, July 13, 1994).

Sr Kathleen traveled to Adelaide, Melbourne, Darwin, Brisbane and Canberra where she held meetings with several groups to inform them about the situation she observed in East Timor and to gather more information and co-ordinate ideas.

Contact Sr Kathleen O'Connor, Co-ordinator, CISET on ph: 02 - 356 3888 or write to PO Box 522, Kings Cross, NSW 2011.

Media coverage: as stated, the media coverage on East Timor was excellent. Major newspapers - The Age, Sydney Morning Herald, Canberra Times, The Australian and NT News - covered the issue of East Timor on a regular basis. Matebian News/East Timor Information and Documentation Centre prepared a comprehensive compilation of the printing media coverage on East Timor in July. This compilation is made up of 71 pages and it can be made available on request. Another compilation of almost all the Manila printing media coverage on APCET has also been completed by Matebian News/ETI&DC. This compilation is made up of 244 pages with plastic cover protection. It can also be made availble on request. Both compilations will be supplied provided that the production and mailing costs are met.

Other contacts: Jenny Herera, East Timor Hobart Committe, 2/65 Bay Road, New Town, TASMANIA, 7008.

This is the first issue of MN specially dedicated to the work of solidarity. It is a brief report with the sole aim at linking the activists of East Timor in terms of the monthly activites undertaken in Australia. Contributions from activists - individuals or organisations - are welcome. For this issue we want to thank Robert Wesley-Smith for taking his precious time to write a report about the activites developed in Darwin. We also thank Gil Scrine, Andy Alcock and all those who gave us their support which enabled us to produce this issue. We count with you next month!

The main obstacle for the Australian government is the *de jure recognition* of the Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor. Having done that, Canberra has lost the vital breeding space to argue in favour of the respect for the fundamental rights of the Timorese people. Senator Evans can not have it both ways: you can not say that East Timor is an internal matter for Indonesia and demand that Indonesia manage the business the way you want it! If the demand for downgrading of Indonesian troops from East Timor is expressed within the spectrum of an indonesian sovereignty, Jakarta can easily ignore it by warning Canberra "not to interfere in its internal affairs"; or, if the pressure is too harsh to take, Jakarta can simply withdraw their troops to West Timor to help calm down the Australian public; they can return their troops to suppress the Timorese whenever it becomes necessary again.

The only viable way for Canberra to convince the Timorese that it is serious in advocating their fundamental rights is to support the ongoing negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the UN which is the implementation of the resolution 37/30 adopted by the General Assembly in 1982. The demand for withdrawal (or downgrading) the Indonesian military from East Timor must be done within the context of the respect for international law whereby the wishes of the Timorese people can be protected. To expect that Jakarta can occupy East Timor and make it its national territory without the military presence is utterly against the Indonesian generals commonsense. Gareth Evans simply has to do better than that! Since he went against the "quite diplomacy" by publicly denouncing the military presence as the root of the problem, he can also publicly state his government support for the ongoing negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the UN, Dr Boutros-Ghali, and declare himself available to use the closeness to Jakarta to help reach a successful solution. The inclusion of the Timorese people in the ongoing negotiations and the exercise of their right to self-determination will be the only way to protect the human rights of the timorese.

Until this is done, Senator Evans' remarks will stay as hollow as the Indonesian government's respect for human rights in East Timor. ■

Culture

The beauty of Timorese Girl

You, Timorese girl
Your beautiful smile
Your eloquent eyes
keep a thousand tales
untold

You, Timorese girl
In your womb
lies the germ of
the still-born nation's
heroes and heroines

O, it is a pity
if I enjoy not
your beautiful smile

O, it is a pity
if I catch not
your eloquent eyes.

Abe Barreto

sisters, with state of the art equipment donated by the Australian Embassy, is hardly functioning because permission continues to be withheld for doctors, nurses and a surgeon to work there. Meanwhile, many people die for lack of access to proper care.

Other Catholic nuns try to provide health and medical services and medicines. Indonesian hospitals charge patients for medicine, along with corruption and the fact that many Indonesian doctors simply to not turn up for work, plus the fear of being injected with substances which make the females sterile, is deep mistrust. The need for medicines at the Polyclinics run by the nuns is great. They lack stethoscopes, bandages, ear torches, equipment for sutures, medicines for malaria, tuberculosis and other fevers.

Could you suggest to travellers intending to include East Timor on their itinerary that they bring a bag of medicines? The need is most urgent.

"the people continue to try to be brave in spirit and to retain our faith"

Though silenced from publicly speaking out against the violations and abuses by Indonesian military, the people continue to try to be brave in spirit and to retain our faith. Perhaps the following account of a small and unreported incident will give you an idea of the continual repression which cowers the Timorese people.

After smashing a statue of Our Lady in the village of "A", Indonesian soldiers arrested an innocent bystander and interrogated him for several hours. Withholding food and water and preventing the young man from sleep, they threatened him with death unless he publicly named a priest as the culprit. Finally, the young man gave in, whereupon the military called a public assembly, ordering people to come from miles around. The military authorities announced that they had found an eye-witness to the vandalism.

The people continue to be brave in spirit

The young man was brought out but he had found his courage in the interim and refused to speak. He was led away again and the assembly was kept waiting. After some hours the young man was brought back and ordered to name the culprit. Choking with tears he did as he was told. Then he recanted, crying out: "Sorry Father, they made me do it." The priest was arrested and spent hours with no food or water under relentless interrogation. A neighbouring priest, who had been urgently summoned by the people, overheard part of the interrogation:

"You are Doniziano..." (the priets's name has been changed to protect him).

"I am Father Doniziano."

"You are not dressed as a priest. You are only Doniziano."

"Here you are only Doniziano."

"I am a priest, here and always, I am Father Doniziano."

The charges were eventually dropped and the soldiers who had committed the desecration were not charged.

Just one story amongst many.

Other priests, have been charged with rape, carrying of weapons, subversion and so on. Accusations are frequently made against innocent people of working against the Indonesian state and many are under threat. These are delicate matters because if you publish their names (names supplied) they will be seen even more as troublemakers and though innocent of the crimes with which they are charged, they will be severely punished.

Thousands of Indonesians from other islands are being moved here: land in and around Dili is being acquired and "developments" to benefit the new Indonesian populations are being built and the indigenous inhabitants are being pushed out! Under one of these "developments" lie the remains of the victims of the Santa Cruz massacres.

When your Foreign Minister advocates a lowering of the numbers of the Indonesian military, he fails to mention that even were this miracle to occur it would only be a "change of clothes". The police who rule us are

cont. on pg. 7

ETRA INC

EAST TIMOR RELIEF ASSN. INC.

A brief activity report

July was a very busy month. One of the main activities was the compilation of news and dissemination of information to the general public in order to co-ordinate ideas and enrich the debates about East Timor. The interviews given by the bishop of East Timor, Don Carlos Ximenes Belo, created a very strong and lasting impact in the Australian media and within the authorities of the Catholic Church of Australia. This impact led to the important statements made by Cardinal Clancy criticising the Australian government's official policy on East Timor. The protest made by the students of the university of East Timor raised the interest of the issue of East Timor to a much higher level, and this is still the situation today; the statement made by the Indonesian generals regarding the banning of protests in East Timor confirms that.

In terms of public talks, ETRA was present in the Harold Park Hotel fundraising and book launch day. As advertised in the last issue of Matebian News, the event was organised by AETA with the support of ETRA. Both events were very well attended. The book launch was enriched with the attendance of James Dunn, Ines Almeida, Greg Jones, and Jeff Lee. The "Timor Gap Cabaret" was also enriched by various artists ranging from Peter Hicks, Nicola Quilter, Jean Kitson, Jeannie Lewis and many others. Prior to this event, Agio Pereira was the guest speaker in an afternoon talk on East Timor. About one hundred and fifty people attended the event which included half an hour talk and question time.

Agio Pereira also spoke on the Radio National "Australia Talk Back"/ABC, on Friday July 29.

A major activity of ETRA was the "phone-in" set up during the screening of "Death of a Nation" in most Australian states, except Northern Territory. This activity was a hectic one. On the same night, about 4,000 people rang in to convey their support for East Timor, to criticise the official policy of the Australian government, and to ask what can they do to help. This activity was done in co-ordination with AETA (Australian East Timor Association) and CAA (Community Aid Abroad).

Abel Guterres, the President of ETRA was interviewed by the ABC Radio, in an evening Australia talk back. He was part of a panel together with Bishop Hilton Deakin and Shirley Shackleton. The program received many callers showing clearly a strong interest on the issue.

The Sydney office had an influx of visitors including journalists and students with a range of diverse interests. They not only visited to explore new ideas to develop East Timor network but also to use the resources available in the office for their essays.

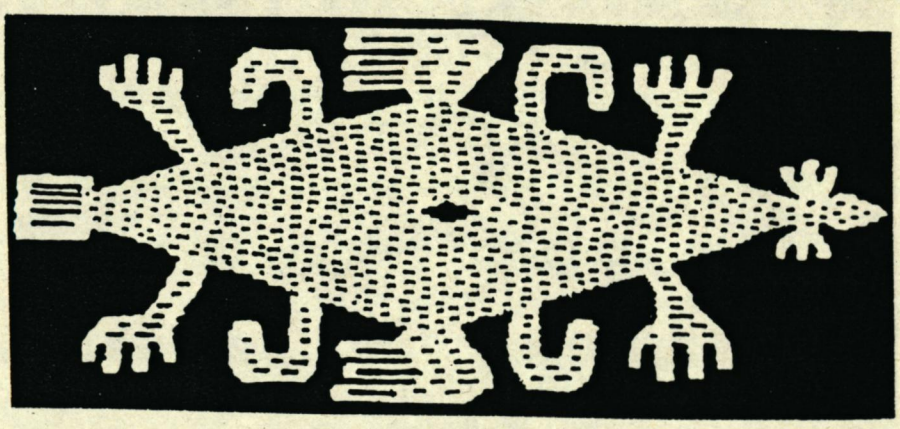
Letter from East Timor
(from pg. 6)

para-military force, trained and equipped for war. They are just as ruthless, greedy and corrupt as the military.

Dear Mrs Shackelton, the names and places I have mentioned must be protected, but I thought it would be good for you to know about these things. It gives us great heart to know of your constant advocacy for the rights of the East Timorese and the many other voices that are expressing their disgust with Australian Government acceptance of what is going on here in Australian newspapers.

Source: The Canberra Times
4 August 94

Shirley Shackleton advocates the rights of Timorese



Resources ...

A Critical View on Western Journalism and Scholarship on East Timor

by Geoffrey C. Gunn & Jefferson Lee.

Copies available from PO Box 703, Leichhardt, NSW 2040 for $25 (postage included)

EAST TIMOR

AN INDONESIAN INTELLECTUAL SPEAKS OUT

Papers and statements by GEORGE J. ADITJONDRO

A Development Dossier published by AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS AID

May 1994, 76 pages

Introduction by Herb Feith, Monash University

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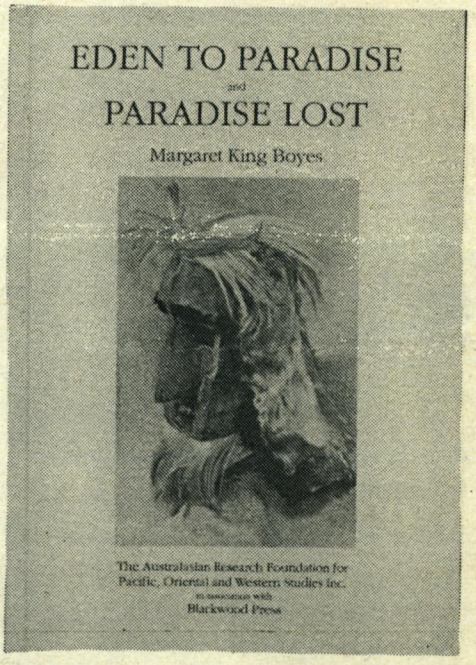

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