



Australia's role under the microscope of the World Court

On January 31, the International Court of Justice began its analysis of the dossier presented by the government of Portugal against the Australian government's illegal takeover of the national resources of East Timor in the Timor Sea. Under the Timor Gap Treaty signed by Australia and Indonesia, the Timorese people were totally stripped of any rights to have a say or to enjoy any proceeds of the East Timor sea boundary as it was taken over completely by Australia and Indonesia.



Canberra Times

The ICJ decision to start this case is a very difficult one as it will have to discriminate between the political and legal dimensions of the matter. This difficulty arises because the Timor Gap Treaty can not exist without the illegal and barbaric occupation of East Timor by Indonesia being declared "legal". The Australian Government has declared publicly de jure recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor and, together with the Indonesian military regime, stripped the Timorese

of their national resources. And, with tax payers money, the government of Australia is trying to use every legal technicality available to them to defend their rights to buy stolen goods.

Since day one of the ICJ hearings, the Australian government embarked on a mega-campaign to defuse negative public opinion by focussing on colonial Portugal, instead of the substance of the issue which is the rights of the people of East Timor to own re-

sources which are rightfully theirs. The pages of newspapers including opinion columns have been infested with Portuguese colonial

(cont. on pg.2)

In this issue...

1. Timor Gap Treaty
2. Prof Noam Chomsky in Australia
3. Editorial - Australia's hypocrisy
4. My trip to Timor

**EAST TIMOR:
TO RESIST IS TO WIN**

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crimes as if the contemporary Portuguese Government must be guilty of the excesses of the colonial regime which they helped to destroy themselves.

***"Can one condemn
Evans and Keating for
the genocide of the
Australian Aborigines?"***

Can one condemn Gareth Evans and Paul Keating for the genocide of the Australian Aborigines? The answer can only be yes if they do nothing to correct the past; likewise, the current Portuguese Government can only be blamed for the neglect (if any colonial power ever put development of their colonies as a priority!) of East Timor if they now stand idle and do nothing to defend the rights of the Timorese people to self-determination and independence. But they are precisely doing that, against two powerful neighbours of East Timor - Australia and Indonesia.

The Australian government is obviously very nervous about the ICJ process. It has to deal with three main fronts: to block public opinion at home, to show the generals of Jakarta that they are doing the right thing and as best as they can, and to win the arguments of their accessory role in boycotting the decolonisation process started by the non-colonial government of Portugal after the carnation revolution of April 25, 1974.

The first concern - blocking public opinion - has been very effective. If one manages to highlight an equation whereby it appears that ICJ case is a "war" between Australia and colonial Portugal, the

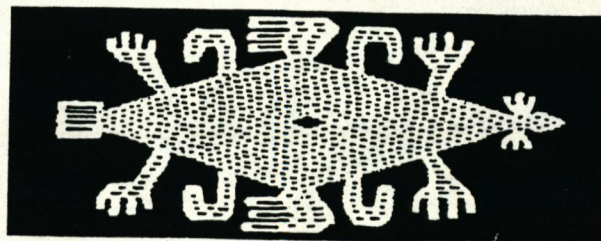
Australian middle class may not be comfortable in taking a stand against the Australian government because it seems that they are actually supporting the colonial ruler of East Timor. In its attempt to block public opinion in Australia, the substance of the matter - the rights of the people of East Timor to own its own national resources - becomes completely dissolved in the media. So far, this manipulation has been successful, but the Timor lobby can turn it around once the dust has settled.

***"the line used by
Timorese camp is the issue
of the inalienable right
of the people of East Timor
to self-determination"***

The need to convince the generals of Jakarta that Canberra is doing only the right thing has not been entirely successful, although the right strategy may have been adopted. First, Sen. Gareth Evans demanded that Government ministers refrain from making any statement on the issue of Timor Gap and ICJ. Secondly, he informed the Generals of Jakarta of his government's approach to the matter. These are good measures, but do not entirely produce the best results. One reason for this is the fact that the line used by the Timorese

camp in the ICJ (represented by the Judges paid by Portugal to argue the case for East Timor) is the issue of the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence.

Senator Gareth Evans could not avoid this issue so he made an unprecedented statement (again for public consumption only) that Australia has always supported the rights of self-determination for the people of East Timor. It is a matter of semantics but it can be seen as a positive step forward. To distinguish fact from fiction, one must be aware that the notion of self-determination indoctrinated here by Sen. Evans is the Australian way: that you can exterminate the people to the extent where there is no longer a need to kill anymore (unless international public opinion gets in the way), and then try to project strategies to prove that you are actually defending the rights of those survived from the people you have killed. The case of East Timor is clear: the Australian government's official position is never to deny the Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, but Indonesia is not supposed to kill the Timorese so blatantly as to provoke international condemnation, and the Timorese are not supposed to have a say on their national resources (only Australia must have this right, including taking away the national resources of the Timorese).



Prof Noam Chomsky record audience in eight days tour of Australia



Mandy King

Sydney Town Hall

For eight days, Professor Noam Chomsky worked in Australia focussing on the issue of East Timor. He addressed two public meetings - Sydney Town Hall and Melbourne Town Hall - where he argued for East Timor within the topic of *'The Great Powers and Human Rights: the case of East Timor'*. Both talks were packed out. He was welcomed by the Timorese community with a rich cultural performance. Professor Chomsky also addressed the National Press Club to a full house audience. His talk - *"East Timor and National Interest"* - was nationally televised by the ABC.

Reflecting his wide range of interests and expertise, Prof Chomsky also lectured for the UNSW, Macquarie University, Deakin university/Melbourne, and at the Anarchists' *Visions of Freedom* conference in Sydney.

In his capacity as a writer and philosopher, Prof Chomsky ad-

**EAST TIMOR:
TO RESIST IS TO WIN**

ressed the Writers Centre on the issue of writers and intellectuals responsibility; and as a scientist and educator, he addressed the Australian Museum Society's prestigious "Super Science Series" in Sydney, reaching an audience of up to one thousand people. This address will also be aired on the Science Show program on ABC, by Robyn Williams.

Prof Chomsky also gave an interview to the New Zealand popular TV channel, TV3 which enabled him to reach thousands of people in New Zealand.

Media coverage was excellent. To put it into perspective, perhaps the remarks made by the manager of the National Press Club when he introduced Prof Noam

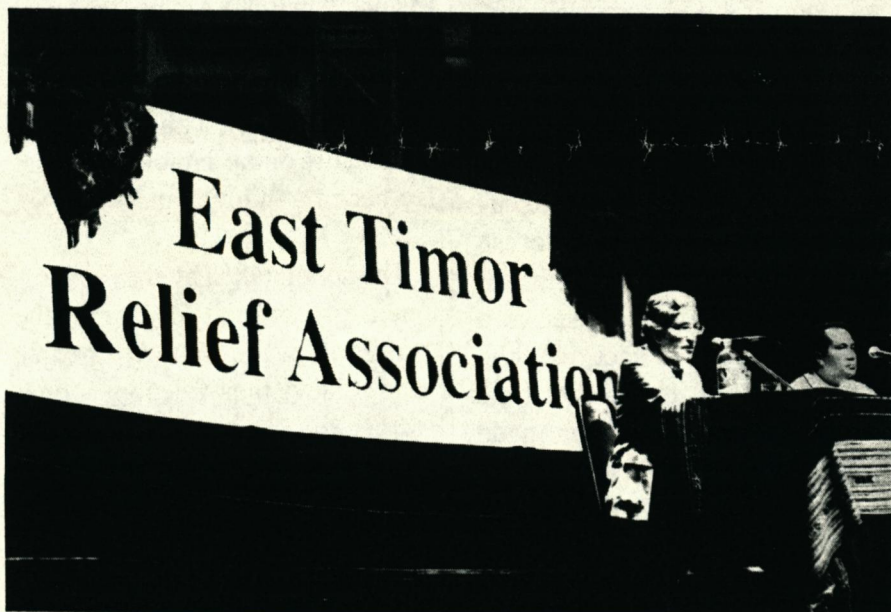
Chomsky to the audience summarises it all. He said:

"in a month where visitors to Australia has included the Pope and Bill Gates, he (Prof Chomsky) probably had more publicity than the two combined"

Within the space of eight days, Prof Chomsky addressed a record 16,000 people, without counting the audience he reached through the ABC live telecast of the NPC event, the TV3/NZ and others, plus the print media coverage which started before he actually arrived in Australia.

Still to come: Channel 7, "The Times" program focussing on the arms sale, an ABC "Asia Focus" focussing on the Timor Gap and Indonesian occupation of East

(cont. on pg.5)



Mandy King

EDITORIAL

Australia's hypocrisy revealed by attack on Portugal

The recent reports seen in The Australian newspaper about the current dispute in the International Court of Justice focus on the Portuguese colonial record, rather than recognising the fact that the Portuguese Government is pioneering an issue of fundamental universal value embraced by most peoples in the world. The defence of the national resources of a defenceless country against two greedy neighbours - Australia and Indonesia - is, after all, what the Portuguese Government is trying to achieve.

In the opening comments, counsel for Portugal made it clear that his Government does not and will not intend to take anything from the Timorese. That statement was made by Portuguese Foreign Ministers on several occasions in order to honour their own initiatives within the United Nations towards the defence of the inalienable right to self-determination and independence of the Timorese people.

The latest remark by the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, saying that his government always defended the self-determination of the Timorese people was classified, rightly so, by the Portuguese counsel as a false statement. In fact, over the last 20 years, it is the first time such a statement has been made publicly by a Foreign Minister of Australia, and within the context of a debate which looks precisely into the issue of self-determination.

One often heard Sen. Evans speaking on the need to respect the culture of the Timorese and the need to reduce Indonesian troops in East Timor. But those statements were always made within the context of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, which Sen. Evans unequivocally recognises.

Even after the last ALP National Conference in Hobart where a consensus resolution was passed demanding the encouragement of an internationally acceptable solution for East Timor, Sen. Evans came out publicly to assure the Indonesian generals that that resolution did not mean withdrawal of the de jure recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor.

The line adopted by the current Australian Government is consistent with all the past governments of Australia in ignoring the fundamental rights of the people of East Timor. They chose to use the word "reality" to argue for their complicity with Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor, ignoring the reality of the Timorese refusal to become Indonesian.

The action taken by the Government of Portugal to shorten the suffering of the Timorese people and achieve their freedom sooner rather than later, deserves to be supported by all Australians.

Furthermore, the condemnation of the Portuguese colonial record in the present context of this challenge is hypocritical. The current

Portuguese Government and Parliament defeated the colonial regime and established democracy in Portugal after the Carnation Revolution of April 25, 1974.

This parliament and most of the existing political forces fought against the fascist regimes of Caetano and Salazar and put an end to the fascist colonial rule.

As for the record on decolonisation of Portugal, one can not be over simplistic in criticising Portugal. In Africa, out of five former colonies, only Angola and Mozambique were subjected to many years of civil war.

These wars, however, were instigated primarily by two main factors: in the case of Mozambique, by the Apartheid regime of South Africa which paid huge amounts of money to extreme right wing mercenaries, and armed RENAMO, the right wing party fighting against FRELIMO, to destroy the regime established in Mozambique by Samora Machel of FRELIMO. One must recognise the role of FRELIMO in supporting the ANC unconditionally during the fight against apartheid.

As soon as the apartheid regime was destroyed, the chance for peace between FRELIMO and RENAMO flourished, and a new era began in Mozambique.

In the case of Angola, the civil war was instigated by right wing forces of the USA, in an attempt to establish a right wing regime in

Around Australia in-brief

Prof Noam Chomsky

January was a busy month. Prof Noam Chomsky's visit occupied the attention of most activists who, in many ways, were involved in supporting and taken advantage of this rare focus on East Timor to sell East Timor literature and sign in new members to strengthen the organisational base of solidarity.

ACFFET

AETA in NSW, AFFET/Darwin, Friends of ET/WA, CIET/SA, ET Hobart Committee and others joined forces to create a new organisation which they have decided to baptise as the Australian Coalition for a Free East Timor. ACFET may turn out to be the replacement of ACET (Australian Coalition for East Timor).

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During Prof Chomsky's tour, in Sydney and Canberra, some AETA/NSW members have worked very hard to sell books and other relevant East Timor literature to a wide range of people. They also signed in many new members. Jeff Lee and Steven Langford are the ET Workers of the Month!"

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Wallaby '95

In Darwin, NT, as the ET activists celebrate the achievements of their recovery from cyclone Tracy twenty years ago, they are also gearing up to face Kangaroo '95. AFFET (Australian for a Free East Timor) as the ET supporters in Darwin are known, believes that the (Indonesian military intelligence project for the takeover of East Timor) must not be allowed to be part of K95. Since this cannot be stopped, AFFET, with the involvement of ACFET, is preparing the W95 (Wallaby '95) operation which mainly consists of an international conference to be held in Darwin under the theme of "INDONESIA & REGIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION". A Conference Organising C'ttee has been set up.

"Flying Nightmares"

The Catholic Social Justice Council/Sydney also was active in attempting to stop the distribution of a video game called "Flying Nightmares". It was reported on the Sunday Herald (Jan 22, 1995) that "FN" is about bombing a Timorese village. Due to its offensive nature, a range of individuals and organisations issued statements condemning this

video and asked the government and the distributor to stop "Flying Nightmares" in Australia. This campaign resulted with the SECA company recollecting the videos distributed.

Ninjas

Amnesty International/Australia issued a series of statements pertaining to the current situation in East Timor. It condemned the 'ninja' tactics used by the Indonesian military intelligence in East Timor to arrest and kill people. According to an urgent action communique issued by AI on February 13, the 'ninja' gangs were reported to have attacked houses, intimidated residents and to have abducted 29 people.

AI also stated its lack of confidence in the commission apparently set up by the military to investigate these crimes. AI argued that a genuinely independent commission should be set up in order to deal with the root of the problems outlined by the Special Rapporteur Bacre's report published in November 1994.

(cont on pg 2)

Your contribution is welcome. Please write or fax to us brief reports of your activities!

Military exercises

Still on the issue of killings in East Timor, the New Zealand/Aotearoa, the Labour Opposition leader, Helen Clark, issued a statement urging the NZ Government to put an end to joint military exercises and training with Indonesia because she said, human rights abuses by the Indonesian military "make it a highly unsuitable partner" (Daily Telegraph Mirror, Feb 13, '95).

Timor Gap Protest

Timor Gap Treaty was the reason for a protest organised by AETA/NSW, on Friday, February 10, in front of the Attorney General's office, Sydney. The protest was well organised and attended by about 40 people. Petitions were distributed and signed.

Media coverage

Media coverage on East Timor has been steady, although since the World Court began its hearings in The Hague, the reports seen in the Australian printing media showed a tendency to focus on the Portuguese colonial rule rather than the issue of self-determination of East Timor. A "bomb" was dropped by Foreign Minister Gareth Evans saying that his government always supported self-determination of the Timorese. Such statement was immediately tagged by the Portuguese counsel in the The Hague as a false statement. Mr Jose Ramos-Horta of CNRM, in an interview given to the Indian Pacific radio said that in twenty years this is the first time he heard such a statement from a Foreign Minister of Australia.

UK Minister meets JRH

On another front, Mr Jose Ramos-Horta met with Alastair Goodlad, UK Minister for State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London. Such high level meeting between a Timorese national leader and a Minister of UK was the first time in twenty years. Mr Ramos-Horta said afterwards that "the Minister stated quite clearly that Her Majesty's Government does not recognise the Indonesian annexation of East Timor and fully and formally supports the UN Secretary-General's efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement to the illegal occupation of East Timor. Mr Goodlad assured me that HMG has formally raised the human rights situation in East Timor with the Indonesian Government.", Mr Ramos-Horta said. ■

"Focus on East Timor '95"

Focus on East Timor '95 is the theme for a six-month campaign launched by ETRA with the support of the solidarity. This campaign selects four topics - *arms sale, revoke the Timor Gap Treaty, revoke the de jure recognition and release of Xanana Gusmao* - to be addressed in the public meetings, protests, petitions, and talks given to schools, unions, universities and lobby groups.

The aim of the campaign is to contribute with some

selected actions for better focus on East Timor in Australia, without excluding the usual routine.

To emphasise the topics selected for this particular campaign, ETRA is encouraging students and activists to present essays and papers on these selected topics. Prizes will be given to the best presentations.

In August, a two-day seminar will be held in Melbourne, in the weekend of 12-13. The venue will be the

Teachers Federation building in the heart of the city of Melbourne. ETRA is currently running the petition for the Hon. Speaker of the House and the Federal Parliament. This petition will be handed over to the above authorities sometime in August.

You can help by organising public meetings, seminars, small discussion groups, etc. and invite the Timorese activists to speak.

We will count with you!!!

Angola because of the richness of that country. Holden Roberto, the leader of FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) has been on the pay-roll of the CIA for many years. UNITA, also supported by the CIA, and led by a Maoist leader, Jonas Savimbi, has occupied diamond mines and continues to wage a war even after a UN supervised democratic election, held due to the commitment of Portugal.

These conflicts, therefore, are not necessarily caused by any lack of commitment to decolonisation. They should not be used to obscure the massacres and looting the Indonesian government has been perpetrating in East Timor, in spite of ten resolutions from the United Nations condemning these barbaric actions.

All these facts are recent history which journalists who claim to have minimal knowledge of international politics should know. Attacking the current Portuguese for their colonial past is the same as blaming the current Australian Government for the treatment of the Australian Aborigines back in colonial times. The present political forces can only be guilty if they do nothing to overcome the negative effects inherited from past barbaric regimes.

The fact that a campaign has been waged against Portugal since the hearings started in The Hague, is a hypocritical tactic which attempts to divert the core issue now championed by Portugal in the ICJ: the inalienable right to self-determination and independence by the people of East Timor. If anything, Portugal should be

congratulated for its defence of the rights of the Timorese people to own their natural resources, and Australia, must be forced to withdraw from the Timor Gap Treaty because it is, indeed, an act of buying stolen goods!

(from pg. 3)

Timor (Fridays at 1:00 AM, ABC), and on ABC radio "Background Briefing".

Prof. Chomsky's talk in Melbourne Town Hall was filmed by Ch 31, a community TV network and it has been replayed on that channel. Community radio 3CR also taped that public talk and they have been playing this material for their audience. Due to the special interest of some journalists, ABC radio also recorded a series of talks given by Prof Chomsky which will be aired in the future and in a timeslot targeting a wider audience.

Video productions were also made by the UNSW Audio Visual Unit, ETRA (Sydney Town Hall talk), the National Press Club, the Anarchists Vision of Freedom and the Writers Centre.

No doubt, it was a hectic program. But, in every sense, it was a worthwhile one. Not only because of the calibre of Prof Noam Chomsky, but also because of the need to challenge the great powers on the issue of democracy and human rights. Prof Chomsky not only presented his arguments eloquently but also did it in a way that the average person could easily understand the issues.

To summarise the success of this eight-days campaign, we recall the words of Prof Chomsky in his last day in Australia. He said: *I'll remember this tour for sometime!*

And We All Do...



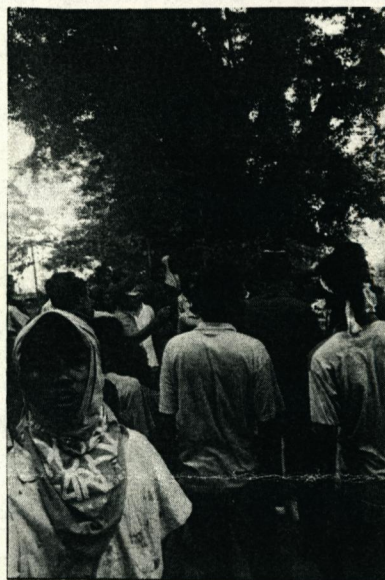
An outstanding cultural performance at the Sydney Town Hall

My trip to Timor: witnessing humanity silenced by the force of occupation

On January 9 this year I was expelled from East Timor by Indonesian authorities with three other western tourists, after we witnessed a peaceful pro-independence demonstration outside the University of Timor Timur, Dili. We saw the beginnings of the violent military and police reaction; hundreds of soldiers and riot police surrounded the university after the demonstration had already finished and two young men were beaten severely in front of us, until the authorities decided they didn't want outside witnesses and removed us against our will.

This reaction typified the use of fear and silence as the daily weapons of oppression I witnessed in East Timor. Each day I was in Dili, I saw large trucks loaded with riot police routinely driving around the streets. This was over the Christmas period - there was no particular unrest, it was systematic intimidation. Armed soldiers did drill exercises in the streets of Dili, I assume for similar purposes.

Throughout the countryside the military presence was conspicuous and large; checkpoints blocked transport all over the country. Each time a bus I was on pulled up at these, local passengers were clearly afraid and I was disgusted at the way soldiers, in groups, singled out young women for extra questioning and attention. Troop movement in the east seemed busy; I saw night patrols returning to villages in the early morning and truckloads of soldiers on the roads



Baucau - 31/1/95

Terry Russell

were a constant sight. In Lospalos and smaller villages in the east armed soldiers patrolled the streets seemingly as a matter of routine.

I arrived in Baucau a day and a half after reported killings by soldiers of people demonstrating for independence. The two central blocks of the town, apart from the old Mercado building, were burnt to the ground - all shops were closed and the streets were full of armed soldiers and local people

clustered in silent groups. Small groups of soldiers patrolled residential areas of town, and appeared to be searching. Eight truckloads of soldiers arrived from the east as reinforcements; I would estimate 300-400 armed soldiers were on the streets. While in Baucau I went into the church in the centre of town - in a hall inside the church compound I was shown where those shot had taken refuge - blood ran down the walls where two people had been hiding in the ceiling, and there were two other large pools of dried blood in the hall. A small pile of jeans and runners were in the corner. I was told that soldiers had entered the church compound and taken the four away alive, but that they had not been seen again. These are the people reported as "at least three killed".

It was clear the local people could not talk freely with me. Usually it was young people who took the risk and this was done secretly. On a number of occasions people said they had seen me days earlier and wanted to talk with me, but

(cont. on pg. 7)



Dili 2/1/95 - Indonesian troops on way to Baucau

Terry Russell

that it hadn't been safe at that time. They were nervous and invariably expressed fear of spies. I met young people still in hiding after the Santa Cruz massacre, and others who showed me scars and described their torture by Indonesian soldiers after Santa Cruz.

In the east I was told that food was a great problem for many people, exacerbated by their restricted access to traditional farming lands. Villages had been relocated to wooden and tin huts on the roadsides away from these lands, and I was told military approval was required before they could farm their lands. I was also told that primary health care in these areas was a major problem, and one not addressed by the Indonesian development policies at all.

A priest talked to me about the difficulties of bringing up children in the country's many orphanages. Limited material resources were a problem, but I was told also of the concern for the emotional and psychological health of children who had been traumatised by violence to their families.

The role of the church is remarkable as a human and spiritual refuge for the people; to see congregations gathered, to hear them singing and praying out loud was to see an island of shared humanity daily oppressed by the enforced silence of occupation.

Travelling throughout East Timor it was clear to me that the people of East Timor continue their resistance of Indonesian occupation. The Indonesian military and security forces, and the transmigrant population for that matter, clearly

have not integrated into the community of East Timor but rather exist outside it as instruments of its oppression. The bitterness towards them is palpable, and the East Timorese people's sense of human dignity, which means freedom, alive in the generation of young people who have known nothing but Indonesian rule.

As a footnote it is significant to note what the presence of foreigners in East Timor means to the people there. Sometimes I was told explicitly, others by a gesture or sometimes, in difficult situations, by a look. One night I talked with one young man for several hours, he said: "It is rare for us to talk with foreign people like this, it lifts my heart up - I feel like we are not alone." At other times, in the burnt-out centre of Baucau, I felt my presence was welcomed as eyes from the outside world, the people knowing that at least there is a witness. Especially for the young people I sensed that my presence signalled that their cause is not forgotten, and in moments of shared humanity there was hope and strength. To break the sense of silence and its isolation is fundamental to freedom, and by visiting East Timor people can take a small step in helping this. ■

In-brief

Birthday fundraising : a creative way to support East Timor

In his eightieth birthday, Tom Spencer, a strong East Timor supporter from Melbourne, did not want any present; he asked his friends to donate money for ETRA's work for East Timor.

This very creative way resulted in a donation of \$155.05 to ETRA. Thanks to all friends who took part in such a creative way to help the people of East Timor. We wish Tom all the best in the future.

•••••

Launch of ETRA branch in Melbourne

On the November 26 last year, ETRA's branch in Melbourne was officially launched. More than one hundred and fifty guests were invited to attend this important event. Bishop Deakin and Janet Hunt (International Women's Development Agency) were among the guests speakers.

ETRA's branch in Melbourne develops awareness among the general public, schools and universities, churches and unions and liaise with local NGOs to combine forces towards more effective ways to tackle the issue of East Timor in Victoria.



Items for sale.....

t-shirts

(front)

**FREE XANANA
FREE EAST
TIMOR**

(back)

**Noam Chomsky
challenges the Great Powers
on East Timor
Australian Tour
January 1995**

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Public lecture Video available

Noam Chomsky

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