



Indonesia failed to boycott Timor Talks

In March, the main news on East Timor was the All-Inclusive Intra-Timorese Dialogue, a formula adopted by the Governments of Portugal, Indonesia and the office of United Nations Secretary-General in their last ministerial meeting held in Geneva under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr Boutros-Ghali.

The meeting which was held on January 9, ended with an eight-point statement including the sixth round of talks foreshadowed for 19 May 1995, in New York. However, because Jakarta has been trying to boycott the All-Inclusive Intra-Timorese Dialogue, Portugal recently stated that there is no need to attend the sixth round of talks before the Intra-Timorese dialogue is actually held. Both, Portugal and Indonesia, had adopted strategic stands on the matter.

The refusal of the Portuguese Government to attend the sixth round of talks appears to be consistent with its attempt to reinforce the perception that all Portugal wants is to represent the fundamental interests of the people of East Timor. It does not intend to play a parallel game.

Indonesia, on the other hand, adopted the strategy of using every available means to derail the issue of East Timor from the United Nations forum. It tends to believe that one way to do that is to constantly argue for the UN to distance itself from the Intra-Timorese dialogue. Indonesia argues that all UN has to do is to provide airfares and other logistics for the meeting, and the participants from East Timor can only take part with full consent given by the Indonesian Government. It goes without saying that if the UN accepts these pre-requisites, the participants from East Timor will have no choice but to be a mere mirror of the Indonesian integration policy.

A careful look into how Jakarta has been acting in the last few months, suggests that the strategy of Indonesia to boycott the intra-Timorese dialogue encompassed three aspects to try to boycott the dialogue all together, to project the image that the Timorese can not understand each other, but simultaneously to also project the image that Jakarta sides with the UN.

The first manoeuvre consisted of trying to create an

environment where Jakarta can argue that the Timorese can not understand each other. To project this image, thousands of Timorese were forcibly brought from the mountains of East Timor into the capital, Dili, to fake a protest against the so-called United Nations interference in the "happy" integration of East Timor into Indonesia. To reinforce this image, Indonesian generals stated publicly that they will not tolerate "irresponsible persons trying to create situations to influence and attract the attention of the international community" on the eve of the expected intra-Timorese dialogue. Major-General Adang Ruchiatna said to his troops in Dili that they have to be alert and that "the security authorities in East Timor will act firmly against those who are

cont. on pg 2

In this issue...

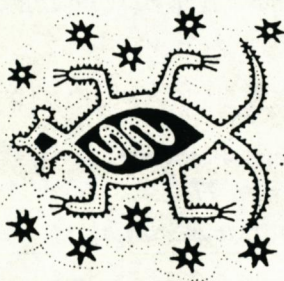
- 1. Indon failed to boycott talks*
- 2. East Timorese woman speak out*
- 3. Intra-Timorese dialogue: solution or setback*
- 4. My trip to Timor - pt 3*
- 5. Meeting in Portugal*

create unrest" (The Australian, 29/3/95).

This hard line approach is to be disguised with PR tricks to project the illusion that Indonesian Government is supporting the UN. A statement, contradicting all its recent practice was, indeed, made by a PR man of the Foreign Ministry after failing to force the UN to rescind its responsibility to organise the meeting. Irawan Abidin stated that "Indonesia will continue to support the talks ..." and that "there has never been any plan by the Indonesian Government to boycott the talks". (The Age, 24.3.95)

The last attempt is to argue for "pro-Indonesian Timorese" to dominate the group of Timorese who will come from East Timor to attend the meeting. This seemed to have gain some concession from the United Nations, at least, to the extent where UN have agreed to postpone the meeting from 23rd of April to sometime in June. The reason being that Indonesia does not consider all the 13 Timorese from East Timor invited by the UN as pro-Indonesians, even though, many of them have been seen as supporters of Indonesia. This is a strong sign that Indonesian generals do not trust the Timorese regardless of their past political views. ■

(Editorial page 4)



East Timorese woman speaks out for justice

by Caroline Xia for the ACTivist



Bella Galhos

Back home in East Timor, Isabel Galhos, 22, was the darling of the Indonesian military regime illegally occupying her country. Called "a bright girl with a bright future," the star propagandist for the brutal occupation was so trusted by Indonesian authorities that they selected her for the Canada World Youth exchange program. Last November, a month after arriving in Nelson, B.C., she defected, and is now touring Canada to denounce the regime that she once publicly championed and covertly undermined.

Galhos is making it her mission to expose the atrocities of the military occupation that has virtually turned her country into a mass graveyard. In 20 years, the Indonesian army has killed 200,000 East Timorese, one third of the entire population, reduced vast numbers to dreadful poverty, and taken over the Timorese economy. The bloodsoaked Indonesian adventure, undertaken with the complicity of many countries, including Canada, has left no Timorese untouched.

Bella told me she was only two when Indonesian soldiers first entered her home. Her brothers, six and four years old, were crying from hunger and fear. Soldiers came in, complaining of the noise, and immediately killed them in front of her mother. Her aunt, who was living with them and had just given birth a week earlier, was raped to death, and in her final moments, witnessed the soldiers butchering her husband and two children.

Timorese women are a special focus for Indonesian policy-makers. The Indonesian government assiduously plies a soft-core genocidal program, otherwise known as family planning for the Timorese, whose numbers have already been decimated by napalm bombing, mass executions, and sadistic murder. Every six months, says Bella, the military goes to all the high schools, seeking out the young girls for compulsory birth control. "They came, and closed the door, and just injected us. We didn't know, we don't have the right to ask. We don't have children anymore." After visiting the schools, the military still goes around to individual villages and houses to inject the women they find. "They don't know who we are, so they just inject us again. Some women get injected three times."

Bella says that 80% of East Timorese women have been subjected to compulsory family planning. Back in 1985, the Indonesian government had already published a five-year birth control plan for 95,000 East Timorese women. In view of the

Timorese experiences, the 1989 award of a United Nations population control award to Indonesian President Suharto can be seen only as the most gruesome irony.

Together with his methodical elimination of the East Timorese by violence and birth control, Suharto has also moved at least 150,000 Indonesians into Timorese territory.

Since the 1991 Dili Massacre — when the army opened fire on an unnamed

crowd, killing 271 and wounding 382 — the Indonesian government has come up with a novel strategy of repression, control, and exploitation. Every East Timorese family must now officially adopt two Indonesian soldiers as live-in members.

"They come any time," Bella says, "use anything they want, eat and drink everything, and never pay anything, everything's free. They really like to be adopted by a family that has a daughter. So besides eating, drinking, everything for free, they can also have sex without any responsibility. Me, my mom sent me to the nuns whenever the military comes, which is almost every day. They come anytime, ten o'clock, twelve o'clock at night. They wake everybody up and say they're hungry, so we have to cook for them at that time. We are not free in East Timor, not even in our own house."

Timorese daily life is a nightmare of forced deception, where every Timorese must be seen

as endorsing his or her own oppression. While in East Timor, Bella excelled at the dangerous game of political masquerade. She extolled the Indonesian occupation on radio and in print, volunteered in the Indonesian army, and, at the same time, helped the extensive underground grassroots resistance movement by channelling supplies to East Timorese guerillas. Her elaborate pretence convinced the Indonesian authori-

"...Back in 1985, the Indonesian government had already published a five-year birth control plan for 95,000 East Timorese women..."

ties, who selected her as the only East Timorese among 21 Indonesian representatives in Canada World Youth.

Before leaving Indonesia, the participants were ordered to stay silent on matters of human rights abuse. "My family had to sign a statement saying that if I say something wrong about East Timor, then my family will have to take responsibility," says Bella. She has phoned her family repeatedly since her defection, but no one picks up the receiver. All the neighbours are now apparently shunning her family, for fear of falling under political suspicion.

Bella is asking Canadians to support East Timorese independence and to oppose Canada's extensive ties with the Indonesian government.

Source: "The Activist", newspaper of the ACT for Disarmament coalition, Toronto, Canada, April 1995



Brief Activity Report

Following the campaign launched by ETRA with the support of some solidarity groups, a number of activities had taken place. Odete Goncalves, a Timorese activist from Melbourne, attended a conference titled *Towards Beijing: Women, Environment and Development in the Asia and Pacific Regions*. The conference was organised by the Victorian University of Technology. Odete spoke to the conference participants about the situation in East Timor and lobby for Timorese women's participation in Beijing.

Abel Guterres and Odete Goncalves took part in a CAA (Community Aid Abroad) group meeting held in Mount Waverley. The meeting was specially held to focus on East Timor and to find practical ways to support the struggle of East Timor.

Ten days later, the same working team took part in a birthday party with a difference: it was dedicated to East Timor. It was the birthday of Nicky Simpson (23), Alison Dempster (17) and Kylie Martens (18). Nicky Simpson took this initiative after learning about East Timor through a friend. They are part of the youth group from ST. Alfred Anglican Church in Blackburn, North Victoria. There were about 20 people at the party. ETRA's promotional video was shown, following by questions and comments. They are now organising other speaking events at their local Church and schools as part of

cont on pg 5

All-Inclusive Intra-Timorese Dialogue - either a solution or a major setback

In the last meeting between the governments of Indonesia and Portugal to find a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution for East Timor, a decision was made to encourage talks between the so-called "factions" of East Timorese to enhance the chances of finding that a solution. As in every diplomatic move, often the belligerent parties interpret the product of their negotiations in opposite ways. In the case of the "all-inclusive intra-Timorese talk" to be held in June this year, the term "facilitated" was used to describe the United Nations role in the event.

For Indonesia, the aggressor and occupying force of East Timor which all these formulas hope to disarm, the notion "facilitated" by the UN should be seen purely from a financial point of view. That is, the UN would simply pay the airfares to allow the Timorese participants to reach the meeting place. For the Timorese, those who have everything to gain if the UN has a direct involvement at all levels, "facilitated" means organising, inviting and preparing the necessary logistics for the Timorese to be able to speak their own minds. The ideal way is to turn this meeting into a forum where the Timorese can state that "yes, integration is not the way, but how can we find another solution now?"; and the rest of the meeting precisely deals with finding this solution.

For most of the Timorese who are expected to arrive from inside East Timor, there is a paramount problem: if they are to take part in the meeting and to speak their own minds, they are highly likely to disagree with Indonesian generals. This will put them in a volatile situation because their safety will be at risk when they return to East Timor. If they join this meeting but are pressured into speaking merely as Indonesian puppets, they will dishonour their own intellectual and political integrity. This may project them as persona non grata for those Timorese in East Timor who have become used to seeing many of them as capable of surviving the Indonesian oppression via the means of intellectual flexibility.

Especially for these Timorese who are to depart East Timor to attend this important meeting, the direct involvement of the United Nations at every level is paramount for that would help their capacity to contribute in an objective way to finding a solution for East Timor. Otherwise, their return to East Timor will be welcome by the murderous "ninja" units which aim at killing the opponents of the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. In the group of Timorese expected to participate in this meeting, there will also be some women. Among these women from East Timor, it is hoped that, at least, one or two will be speaking their own minds. These women, in particular, will be in a very dangerous situa-

tion if the United Nations is not capable of protecting them after the meeting.

The Indonesian Government has been manipulating the situation to turn this meeting into a useless event for the Timorese people. The reason being that Jakarta, in fact, does not believe that many Timorese will support integration if it is to be decided on a free will basis. According to well informed sources, Jakarta had stated uneasiness with the group of 13 (thirteen) Timorese from East Timor already invited by the UN to take part in this forthcoming talk. Jakarta argues that, from East Timor, the UN should invite only those appointed by the Indonesian Government. A compromise appeared to have been reached since three more people are to be added to the group from East Timor. However, these three people may require Jakarta's approval; they will be under Jakarta's microscope and have to fit the tag "integrationist". Whether this will be the outcome, remains to be seen.

The United Nations should be applauded for not giving in to the manipulations of Jakarta to feed the eagerness of the Indonesian generals for raw power and control of the destiny of a people that has clearly shown - in already two decades - that they really do not want integration. It is now up to the international community to find a diplomatic formula which accommodates the selfishness of the

DIÁLOGO INTRA-TIMORENSE SOLUÇÃO OU REVÊS

No último encontro entre os governos da Indonésia e Portugal para encontrar uma solução justa, compreensiva e internacionalmente aceitável para Timor Leste, uma solução foi tomada para encorajar diálogos entre as chamadas "facções" timorenses com o fim de aumentar as chances de encontrar esta solução. Como em todas as movimentações diplomáticas, as partes beligerantes interpretam o produto das suas negociações em direcções opostas. No caso do "diálogo entre todos os timorenses" a ter lugar em Junho deste ano, o termo "facilitado" foi utilizado para descrever o papel das Nações Unidas no evento.

Para a Indonésia, o agressor e força ocupante de Timor Leste, a quem todas estas fórmulas são destinadas com o fim de desarmá-la, a noção "facilitado" pelas Nações Unidas foi puramente vista sob o ponto de vista financeiro. Isto é, as Nações Unidas simplesmente pagariam as passagens aéreas para permitir aos participantes timorenses chegarem ao local da reunião. Para os timorenses, os que têm tudo a ganhar, se as Nações Unidas tiverem um envolvimento directo a todos os níveis, "facilitado" significa organizar, convidar e preparar a logística necessária para que os timorenses possam apresentar as suas próprias opiniões. O ideal seria transformar este encontro num fórum onde os timorenses possam declarar que "sim, a integração não é o caminho certo, mas como podemos encontrar agora outra solução?"; e o resto da reunião iria debruçar-se no encontro desta solução.

Para a maioria dos timorenses que se espera poderem vir de Timor Leste, existe um problema enorme: para que eles possam tomar parte na reunião e apresentar as suas próprias ideias, há uma grande possibilidade de eles discordarem com os generais indonésios. Isto iria colocá-los numa situação volátil porque a sua segurança física estará em risco quando regressarem a Timor Leste. Se participarem neste

encontro mas forem pressionados a falar somente como fantoches indonésios, eles iriam desonrar a sua própria integridade intelectual e política. Isto poderá projectá-los como "pessoas não gratas" para aqueles timorenses em Timor Leste que se acostumaram a vê-los como capazes de sobreviver às pressões indonésias através da flexibilidade intelectual.

No grupo de timorenses que se espera participar neste encontro, haverá também mulheres.

É especialmente para estes timorenses que deixarão Timor Leste para participar neste encontro importante, que o envolvimento das Nações Unidas a todos os níveis se reveste de extrema importância, para que possam contribuir de uma maneira objectiva e encontrar uma solução para Timor Leste. Senão, no seu regresso a Timor Leste serão recebidos pelas unidades "ninja" que visam matar os opositores da ocupação indonésia em Timor Leste. No grupo de timorenses que se espera participar neste encontro, haverá também mulheres. De entre estas mulheres que virão de Timor Leste, espera-se que, pelo menos uma ou duas, expressem as suas próprias opiniões. Estas mulheres particularmente, estarão numa situação muito perigosa se as Nações Unidas não forem capazes de protegê-las depois da reunião.

O Governo Indonésio tem estado a manipular a situação para transformar este encontro num evento sem importância para os timorenses. A razão é porque Jakarta, de facto, não acredita que muitos timorenses irão apoiar a integração se as decisões forem tomadas na base da livre vontade. De acordo com fontes bem informadas, Jakarta declarou não estar à vontade com o grupo dos 13 (treze) timorenses em Timor

Leste que já foram convidados pelas Nações Unidas para tomarem parte neste diálogo que está próximo. Jakarta argumenta que, de Timor Leste, as Nações Unidas só deveriam convidar aqueles apontados pelo Governo Indonésio. Aparentemente um compromisso foi alcançado pois mais três pessoas irão ser incluídas no grupo "de dentro de Timor Leste" e espera-se que estas três pessoas sejam sancionadas pela Indonésia porque, sob o microscópio de Jakarta, eles têm o rótulo de integracionistas. Se é isto que irá acontecer ou não, ainda está para se ver.

***Apesar de tudo, o Povo Timorense
está disposto a encontrar a Paz e a
Liberdade a todos os custos.***

As Nações Unidas deveriam ser aplaudidas por não terem vergado às manipulações de Jakarta para alimentar a ganância dos generais indonésios por um poder em bruto e controle do destino de um Povo que demonstrou claramente - já em duas décadas - que realmente não quer a integração. Agora está nas mãos da Comunidade Internacional encontrar uma fórmula diplomática que possa acomodar o egoísmo dos generais indonésios, mas sem fazerem do Povo de Timor Leste a vítima desse egoísmo.

Por parte dos timorenses, muito terreno político foi oferecido à Indonésia com o fim de encontrar a Paz e a Liberdade. Para começar, este encontro não irá discutir a questão política central - a auto-determinação. As forças políticas timorenses já condenaram esta pré-condição como uma traição à própria Carta das Nações Unidas que a aponta como o último guardião do direito à auto-determinação dos Povos oprimidos. Os timorenses também não estão preparados para aceitar a fórmula do diálogo intra-timorense se fôr para projectar a sua Resistência como uma "guerra civil" aos olhos da Comunidade Internacional. O argumento é que a situação em Timor Leste é o produto de um acto de invasão e ocupação ilegal de uma nação pequena por vizinho poderoso - a analogia da invasão do Kuwait pelo Iraque é perfeita. Apesar de tudo, o Povo Timorense está disposto a encontrar a Paz e a Liberdade a todos os custos. Eles expressaram a sua crítica contra as Nações Unidas por aceitarem a fórmula que

inclui a não discussão da auto-determinação, mas também estão dispostos a participar se as Nações Unidas forem os organizadores e patrocinadores deste evento. Se este encontro tiver lugar como se espera, podera ser um acontecimento histórico para os timorenses. Será a primeira vez que os timorenses juntarão forças para terem um debate franco sobre qual o melhor caminho para a sua Liberdade. O passado não deverá ser esquecido; a "Cimeira de Macau" em 1975, organizada pela então Comissão de Descolonização Portuguesa deve ser lembrada; as atitudes radicais tanto da noção do puro-patriotismo como a da ala da direita dos que pensam serem os únicos detentores da razão, serão os ingredientes que a Indonésia deseja fazer renascer neste encontro.

O único caminho é a Unidade. Mas Unidade entre quem? Este é um assunto crítico. Se o encontro abraçar todas as forças do espectro político timorense sem olhar aos seus respectivos alinhamentos, a Unidade não pode ser um conceito exclusivo. Deveria ser uma realidade que envolva os pontos de vista dos que estão em Timor Leste assim como dos na diáspora. Os participantes devem demonstrar uma capacidade para estenderem a mão uns aos outros. Devem quebrar as barreiras implantadas pelos generais indonésios em vinte anos de ocupação.

***Se este objectivo fôr conseguido,
mesmo parcialmente, pode-se dizer que
a Resistência Timorense conquistou
uma grande vitória histórica.***

As Nações Unidas já declararam que todas as pessoas convidadas, tomarão parte como indivíduos e não representando um grupo ou agenda. Tão difícil como aparenta ser, vale a pena tentar, porque desta maneira o forum pode ser aberto à criatividade e praticidade. Isto é afinal de contas, o que as Nações Unidas têm usado como a essência da sua força para contra-atacar a estratégia da Indonésia de boicotar este encontro: encontrar soluções práticas. Se este objectivo fôr conseguido, mesmo parcialmente, pode-se dizer que a Resistência Timorense conquistou uma grande vitória histórica. Se não, um maior recuo é certo!

Media releases continue to flow from Darwin, NT. The focus of the activities has been the celebrations of WWII. AFFET in Darwin is organising some WWII Timorese veterans to give interviews and participate in some stage of this year's ANZAC celebrations.

RSL offices in the states of NT, NSW and VIC have been contacted by East Timor supporters to obtain some recognition for the important role of the Timorese in WWII. So, be alert for developments in this camp. *Matebian News* will summarise all the developments in next year's issue.

In NSW, Andrew McNorton, (currently based in Darwin) working with AETA and ETRA had managed to successfully get some invitation for some WWII Timorese to take part in this year's official ceremony to be held in Sydney. It is expected that eight Timorese (some widows of and some living veterans) will take part. In Melbourne and Darwin, similar participation is expected.

It is hoped that with this initial recognition, RSL can become more aware and supportive of the East Timor issue, but much work will have to be done by solidarity

in order to achieve some visible result on this matter.

AFFET/Darwin wrote a letter to the President of RSL Darwin Sub-Branch recalling that in WWII, Australia dropped (in Timor) leaflets saying "Your friends will not forget you" to the Timorese who had helped the Australian commandos, recalling also that the returned Commandos of the 2/2nds and 2/4ths acknowledge that without the help of the Timorese they could not even have survived.

In their letter, AFFET criticised RSL for not responding nationally to the plight of East Timor, specially bearing in mind the work of Michell Turner who spent 10 years producing her "pivotal book TELLING.

Another issue of interest was the statement of the Shadow Foreign Minister Alexander Downer regarding the foreign affairs policy on human rights. In his speech (read by a representative) given to a seminar in Adelaide, Mr Downer argued that there is a need for "consistency" in the Australian foreign affairs policy, with special mention to Indonesia and East Timor.

Mr Downer's statement was attacked by Greg Sheridan of *The Australian* as naive and unrealistic. It

was also subsequently played down by the Leader of Opposition, Mr John Howard and his National Party colleague Tom Fischer. According to AFFET/Darwin, "human rights supporters would support the political party which most clearly will implement a sound and consistent human rights policy in the region, one which allows Australia to have some self respect in the region".

CIET/SA took part in the seminar where Mr Downer delivered his controversial statement. David Barreto, Information Officer of CIET/SA, also spoke in that seminar.

The monthly vigil in front of the Indonesian consulate in Adelaide continues as usual.

The Indonesian Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, was also big news in Australia due to the award he is expected to receive this year. He was awarded the Order of Australia for what his "brother" Sen. Gareth Evans called his "significant" contribution to relations between Australia and Indonesia. Needless to say that Gareth Evans certainly had in his mind the Timor Gap Treaty which he signed with Alatas.

Reaction in the media was registered from ETRA in Sydney and Canberra through the Canberra-based lawyer, Mr Bernard Collaery. Mr Collaery said that the award does not reflect the Australian public sentiment. It is not a constructive decision by Senator Evans.. (Canberra Times, 30.3.95, p.8/9).

Some forthcoming events:

- the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr Boutros-Ghali will be in Australia from April 26. He will speak in Sydney and Melbourne. His visit is part of the celebrations of all nations; in Sydney, Darling Harbour and Fairfield Showgrounds will be two main sites for these celebrations. Timorese groups will take part in some of the events;

- a "national day of action" will be held for East Timor on May 13. It is an initiative of Resistance/DSP/AKSI groups; you can obtain more information via Green Left or ring them on tel. (02) 690 1230;

- Melbourne will host a two-day seminar on East Timor. This seminar is organised by ETRA and also sponsored by the National Teachers Federation; those who are interested in attending this seminar, contact ETRA's national office in Sydney. The first day will consist of Timorese speakers, specially from the youth and women to trace

the pros and cons of their role in the struggle and the issue of Timorese nationalism and growing up in Australia. The theme of day one is expected to be "let the Timorese speak". Full program of this seminar will be issued soon. MN will keep you informed. □

Latest on ANZAC day celebrations include an interview given to Sunday Territorian (Darwin) by Veronica Maia and Toni Maia, two Timorese who played an active role in WWII, now living in Darwin. This year, they will take part in the ANZAC celebrations.

'Sunday Territorian' wrote the following passage: *Toni, 70, worked for Australian soldiers as guide in the jungle. He was just 16 when a shoot out left him with bullet wounds - one in each hip and another in his left shoulder. "The Australians were telling us to lay down, but we couldn't understand them because we did not speak the language." "We just stood there and got shot." "I thought I would die from the bullets but I was treated with a Timorese potion that saved me". Only eight of the thirty guides lived.*

Veronica, 67, remembers how Japanese soldiers came to her village in Suai and raped the women and reeked their houses. "(...)One day, a whole battalion of Japanese arrived in the village," My grandfather knew they were coming and hid the Australians in the jungle.

"But they came into the house

and started to interrogate my uncle. There was a Portuguese official in the vilalage also and they took him, his wife and two little daughters into the jungle.

"They brought back the wife and daughters...and the head of the father."

"They thought my uncle knew much more and they beat him up for two weeks.

"His body was blue but did not die".

"Then one night a soldier got a sword and cut him from shoulder to hip.

"Other soldiers took hold of either side and pulled him apart.

"They left the pieces scattered everywhere."

(source: Sunday Territorian, April 23, 1995; Title: "Timor 'mates' helped diggers"). □

Solidarity contacts:

AFFET/NT, c/o Robert Wesley-Smith, PO Box 2155, Darwin-NT;
FOET/WA, c/o Christine Faithful, PO Box 693, CANNINGTON -WA 6107; .
AETA/VIC, PO Box 93, FITZROY, VIC 3065
AETA/NSW, PO Box 751, DARLINGHURST, NSW 201
CIET/SA c/o The Global Education Centre, 155 Pirie ST. ADELAIDE, SA;
ET Hobart C'ttee, c/o Jenny Herrera, 2/65 Bay Road, New Town -TASMANIA 7008;

Thank you for sending us information about your activities. We look forward to your contribution for next issue of Matebian News solidarity supplement.

indonesian generals, without leaving the people of East Timor as the victims of this selfishness.

From the Timorese side, so much political ground has been offered to Indonesia for the sake of finding peace and freedom. For a start, this meeting is not supposed to discuss the core political issue of self-determination. The Timorese political forces have already condemned this pre-condition as a betrayal of the United Nations' own charter which charges the UN as the ultimate guardian of the rights to self-determination of the oppressed peoples. The Timorese also are not ready to accept the formula of the intra-Timorese talk if it is to project their resistance as a "civil war" in the eyes of the international community. The argument being that the situation in East Timor is an act of illegal invasion and occupation of a small nation by a powerful neighbour - the analogy of the Kuwait invasion by Iraq is a perfect one. Nevertheless, the Timorese people are willing to find peace and freedom at all costs. They expressed their criticism against the UN accepting the formula which includes no discussion of self-determination, but they are willing to take part, provided that the United Nations organises and sponsors this event.

If this meeting is to take place as expected, it can be an historical event for the Timorese. It will be the first time that the Timorese have joined forces to have frank debate on what is the best road for their freedom. The past must not be forgotten; the "Cimeira de Macau" (Conference of Macau) in 1975, organised by the then Portu-

guese Decolonisation Committee should be remembered; the radical attitudes of both the notion of pure-patriotism and right wing self-righteousness will be the ingredients Indonesia wish to revive for this meeting.

The only way is unity. But unity between whom? This is a critical issue. If the meeting is to embrace all forces of the Timorese political spectrum regardless of their respective political alignment, unity must not be an exclusive concept. It should be a reality which encompasses the views of those in East Timor as well as those from the diaspora. The participants must demonstrate a capacity to reach each other. They must break the barriers implanted by Indonesian generals in twenty years of occupation.

The UN has declared that all the persons invited will take part as individuals and not representing a set grouping or agenda. As difficult as that may be, it is worth trying, because in this way the forum can be open for creativity and practicality. This is, after all, what the UN has used as the essence of its strength to counteract the strategy of Indonesia to boycott this meeting: to find practical solutions. If this aim is achieved, even partially, one can say that the Timorese resistance have conquered a major historical victory. If, not, a major drawback is certain! ■



(ETRA's report cont. from pg 3)

awareness campaign on East Timor.

All the events above took place during February.

In March, another Timorese activist, Salustiano Freitas, gave a talk at Green Left meeting in Melbourne. His focus was the CNRM Peace Plan and the possibility of a real solution for East Timor. Max Lane also spoke in that meeting, reporting on the APCET (Asia-Pacific Coalition for East Timor) meeting held in Bangkok.

Abel Guterres also gave a talk to the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Albury, during a mass celebrated by Fr F. Flannigan. The event was organised by ETRA's member Fae Duncomb. Fr Flannigan expressed his support for the struggle for peace in East Timor. Fae Duncomb is also planning to organise more meetings to focus on East Timor. The promotional video of ETRA and the film "Death of a Nation" will be shown in these meetings.

Matebian News/East Timor
Information & Documentation
Centre/CNRM
Supported by ETRA
Co-Ordinator: Ines Almeida
Working team: Agio Pereira,
Lola Reis, Gerald Magno, Ceu
Brites, Bernardo Reis, Neca
Brites & Mize Lemos-Magno

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

(part III)

A priest I had spoken with the week before, after hearing of shootings in Baucau, talked of the extraordinary courage of such young people who spoke out, but he warned against measuring Indonesian oppressiveness by the number of shootings or the will of the people by the size or number of such outward protests. "People live in constant fear of the military, and generally do not defy them," he said. This was clear in towns where armed soldiers patrolled the streets in packs, people staring silently, expressionlessly, through faces practised at masking feeling. The tension of active military presence existed wherever I travelled, but seemed most blatantly threatening in the east. "For ordinary people" said the priest "the first thing is to live." Survival is a daily and long term business - resistance at a daily level exists at a more basic level than demonstrations.

Isolation is the product of enforced silence. In the Church I saw people overcoming this sense of isolation and reaching out to express their common humanity. The first service I saw was a mid-week early morning service in Dili, where four hundred people gathered outside the Motael Cathedral for an outdoor mass. To see families gathered together, praying aloud and singing out in the open seemed miraculous where everywhere else I had sensed fear and silence. It was like a sense of relief washing over me, just to watch and listen to this simple and deep expression of humanity and community. I could see the

Church as a refuge not just in the negative sense, as a place of safety, but in the very necessary sense of allowing people to join together, publicly, to sing out and express their common humanity.

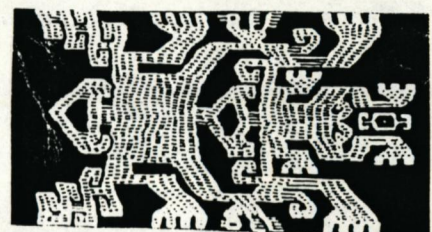


At the same church that day I was invited to attend an investiture service of the Catholic Boy Scouts, made up of boys and girls aged from about ten into their early twenties. The service was conducted by five priests and was packed by the families of the scouts. Dressed impeccably in scout uniforms, the young people stood at the front of the church throughout the two and a half hour ceremony, parents proudly took photos (one priest even whipped a camera out from behind the altar!) - it was clearly a day of great family and community pride and resembled nothing so much as a national ceremony. After the service we all went into the yard of the church, where the scouts formed a large circle for singing and dancing in a jamboree. Young boys and girls danced traditional Portuguese dances in pairs, others danced to rap mu-

sic, and we shared a delicious feast of traditional Portuguese food. I felt honoured to be welcomed at this event. When I left the ceremony it was into the dark streets of Dili and the squads of riot police who patrol those streets, and I realised it had been a very special interlude within the walls of the church.

Throughout the countryside it seemed the church offered a similar, and unique, refuge for the people. Sunday masses were always packed beyond the church with queues trailing outside. Along country roads families walked miles in Sunday best to be part of the congregation. To hear voices raised in prayer or song never left me in doubt of the healing power of this coming together. Priests made it clear to me the pressures they work under, and again the fine line that prevents them becoming "politically" engaged. Of course this notion of "political" is just another fiction - what could be more political than caring for orphans, educating people and nurturing them spiritually in such troubled times? The importance of the Church in nourishing the will of the people was clear and the courage of priests and nuns I met often extraordinary.

(to be continued)



**Meeting in Portugal :
end partisan representa-
tion in the diplomatic arena**

In a meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, the three main forces of the Timorese resistance abroad - CNRM, Fretilin and UDT - agreed to put an end to partisan representation of the Timorese resistance, especially in countries where representation of East Timor is critical. The three forces also reiterated their trust in the structures of the Timorese resistance inside East Timor, including Xanana Gusmao "the Commander of FALINTIL, Leader of CNRM and living symbol of the Resistance". They also agreed to work towards a "more effective participation in the CNRM of all the representative political forces abroad".

CNRM, Fretilin and UDT met in Portugal between 27 - 30 March to discuss common strategies for the diplomatic front. That meeting was a follow-up of a previous meeting which took place in Sydney where it was decided that a major meeting should follow and should also take place in Sydney this year. However, dissenting views were expressed as to the importance of a major meeting to take place in Lisbon - Portugal, instead of Sydney. Those who argued for Lisbon, Portugal, to be the stage for such a meeting succeeded.

CNRM organised ten delegates for this important event. Jose Ramos-Horta, Constancio Pinto (based in USA), Pascoela Barreto (Lisbon) Celio Gusmao (Lisbon), Luis Cardoso (Lisbon), Kuon Nhen Lay (Melbourne/Australia), Justino Guterres (Melbourne/Australia), Jose Gusmao (Darwin/Australia), Abe Barreto (Canada) and Carlos Lopes (Lisbon) were

the ten CNRM who converged in Portugal. The leaders of the two political parties - Fretilin and UDT - also arrived in Lisbon for that important event.

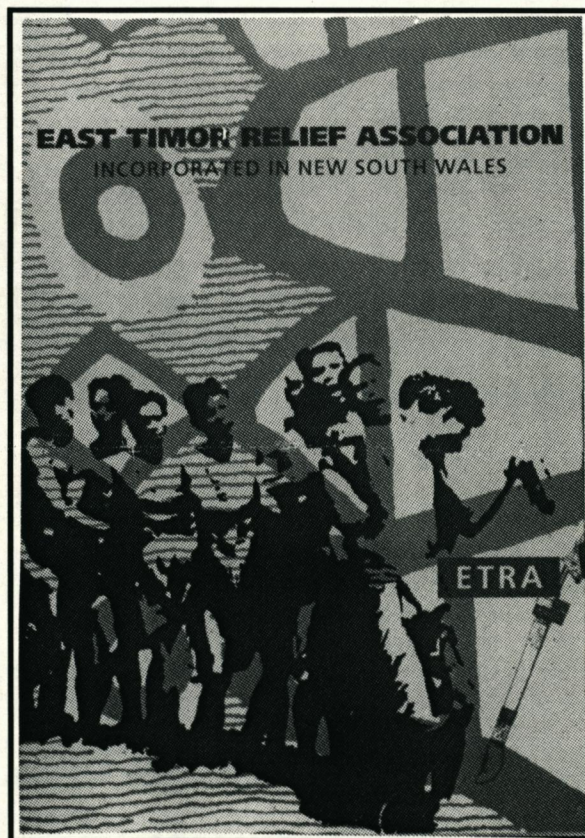
Apart from several points declared as the outcome of the meeting, the participants reiterated their trust in Xanana Gusmao as Commander of FALINTIL, Head of CNRM,

and symbol of the Resistance. The participants decided to continue with the Co-ordinating Commission for the Diplomatic Front and stated their commitment to reinforce national unity and global direction of the struggle by creating the necessary conditions for more effective participation in CNRM of all the political forces abroad.

**Support East Timor
Join ETRA!**

ph: (02) 891 5861

fax: (02) 891 2876



What's on.....

RAINBOW BUSH DANCE

7:30 PM TILL MIDNITE



with **Skewiff**
more than a Bush Band

\$12/8 conc.
Group Discounts
Children free

FRI 26 MAY
PETERSHAM
TOWN HALL
CRYSTAL ST. (NEAR PETERSHAM STATION)

Admission \$12, concession \$8, group concessions, children free
Proceeds to: People for Nuclear Disarmament
& Australian East Timor Association
Enquiries 015 662 749