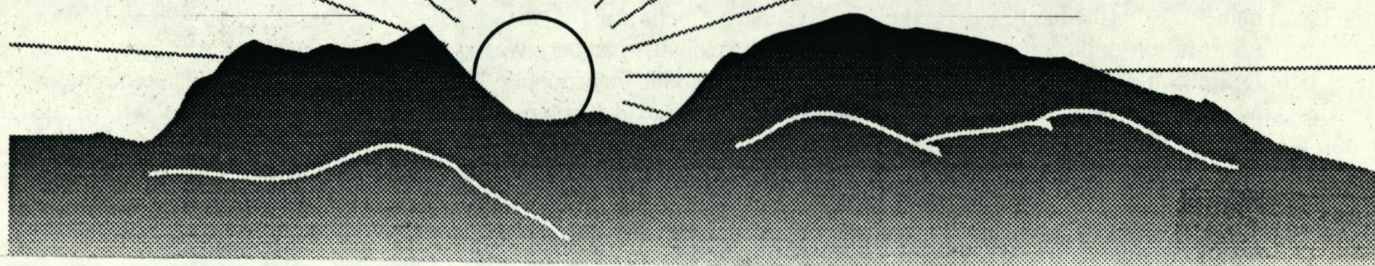


MATEBIAN NEWS



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The current international developments on East Timor, solidarity and the international NGOs

For Xanana Gusmao, Ramos-Horta and CNRT, if the broad-based autonomy becomes a reality in 1999, the historical challenge will be to deliver real justice, peace and prosperity for the people of East Timor. AGIO PEREIRA looks into the current and future developments.

Recently, the main concern has been the 'offer' of special status from President Habibie and the 15th Ministerial tripartite talk held in New York between the governments of Indonesia and Portugal under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the UN. Because this time there was in principle agreement to start formal discussions about the so-called broad-based autonomy for East Timor during the 16th Ministerial tripartite talks in December this year, much has been



Xanana, the President of CNRT, receiving flowers from a child. The mammoth task he faces now is how to deliver justice, peace and prosperity for his people.

Photo: SMH, 27.06.98

said and written about the prospects of a solution either an autonomy or another form of self-government. The common feeling is that a solution is going to be found before the year 2000. Attached to this question of special status/transitional autonomy is the question of a referendum for East Timor so that through an act of self-determination the international community can ascertain the true wishes of the people. On one hand, the youth movement in East Timor is calling for a

referendum; on another, the leadership of CNRT is pondering the pros and cons of a transitional autonomy as a face-saving device for Indonesia to disengage itself from East Timor. "What is the likely scenario" is the six-million-dollar question many people are contemplating. This overview is written as a small contribution to the understanding of the current developments. Both CNRT and Indonesian government appeared to have suddenly found themselves in a catch-22 situation.

For CNRT, accepting a transitional autonomy can amount to alienating the youth movement. This newly invigorating youth movement unequivocally sponsors immediate referendum so that independence can become a reality sooner rather than later. Being sponsors of the thesis of transitional autonomy for many years, Xanana Gusmao and Ramos-Horta now face the dilemma of having to convince the people about the elements of certainty enshrined in this strategy. Ramos-Horta, rightly so, believes that the President of CNRT, Xanana Gusmao, is the only person that can convince the people of East Timor on the lines that a transitional autonomy is the way to go. Hence, he has been calling for the release of Xanana Gusmao and also appealed for the Australian Government to do so.

The Foreign Minister of Australia, Alexander Downer understood this call and surprised everyone when he recently called upon the Government of Indonesia to release Xanana Gusmao.

Favourable conjuncture

Everyone agrees that the current conjuncture is obviously favourable to East Timor. Indonesia has fallen from an influential economic tiger to a humiliating beggar status in the world. Indonesia has lost its capacity to take initiatives and offensive actions against East Timor. Therefore, although East Timor also has suffered as a direct consequence of this Indonesian crisis, from a diplomatic and political perspective the current conjuncture is clearly beneficial for the people of East Timor and the solidarity work.

From the standpoint of East Timor, one can say that East Timor has lost so much in the past, due to the war. East Timor has always been on the periphery in the context of the Indonesian economy, and the Indonesian economy has hit the

bottom and it will stay there for the next two years, at least. East Timor has gained enormous credibility during the disastrous crisis in Indonesia and the way we, the Timorese, have behaved (ie. in a peaceful and not exploitative manner). We appealed to the World Bank for economic recovery in Indonesia instead of entering into a frenetic attack against the regime when it hit the bottom of its economic crisis.

How to move on from here?

Special status is just a delaying tactical move for Indonesia but, regardless, it is the notions of 'sovereignty' and 'internationally recognised broad-based autonomy' that become the critical points.

In the recent New York meeting between Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the UN, it was agreed to discuss the concept of 'broad-based autonomy', so that in December 1998 they can produce a draft proposal to see what could be (NOT should be) meant by this concept. Notion of (i) international autonomy and (ii) whose sovereignty should this be under are the critical issues.

For Indonesia, this is a delaying tactical move. It aims at delaying recognising the fact that East Timor is inevitably going to be independent. So this discussion about 'broad-based' autonomy is a face-saving device for Indonesia because the Indonesian Government is now under a transitional period which is to last until March next year. In one year time, Indonesia will be in a better position to recognise this reality.

We must look at this first concession of 'broad-based internationally recognised autonomy'. Let's, for instance, consider this notion of autonomy in its current dimensions. By December, Indonesia may agree to freeze a decision of the status of the territory in the near future. Lets say that we, then, are going to work with Indonesia as a 'de facto' power on the ground. The Indonesian flag may still be there, creating an ambiguous situation for the time being. But the UN and Portugal will also be there. One crucial reality is that, economically, Indonesia can not afford to cope with keeping East Timor at this moment.

So lets say that the Timorese are going to agree with the so-called broad-based autonomy. What needs to be done by the Timorese?

In the last New York tripartite talk under the auspices of the United Nations, the Indonesian Minister Ali Alatas stressed to the UN that he agrees that CNRT could also campaign in East Timor from next year and he also agreed that during the forthcoming All Inclusive Intra-Timorese Dialogue, the participants can now talk about political issues including self-determination. In other words, no restriction as imposed in the past.

Regarding the AII-TD in October, if it is to occur at all, this time it becomes an open forum debate. Jose Ramos-Horta holds the opinion that if the composition is the same, there should not be any more AII-TD. However, he sees this from the point of view of the so-called 'pro-Indonesian' participants which included the group of Abilio Araújo and Abilio Osório Soares and others from Timor that have no clear representation within the Timorese political communities. Ramos-Horta argues, and correctly so, that in the current conjuncture, those puppets of the Suharto's regime should be discharged from future AII-TD because they lack any credibility at all. He said that accepting their continued participation would make this forum (AII-TD) a complete mockery.

One alternative Ramos-Horta discussed with us is the broadening of the range of participants and not necessarily curtailing the participation of these puppets. This would be seen as a compromise which may render some advantage in terms of neutralising the puppets themselves. The fact that the AII-TD now can discuss all political issues means this could become a very positive forum. In this context, increasing the range of participants and maintaining the political profile of AII-TD as not necessarily being a 'national forum' per se, could render it unnecessary to demand the participation of the president of CNRT, Xanana Gusmao, or the vice-president Jose Ramos-Horta, for that matter. The forum could become a more constructive vehicle to discuss the nitty-gritty of government and development in East Timor during the transitional period and, therefore, become a useful vehicle for consensus before independence.

Under the current correlation of forces, what would be the best strategy for East Timor?

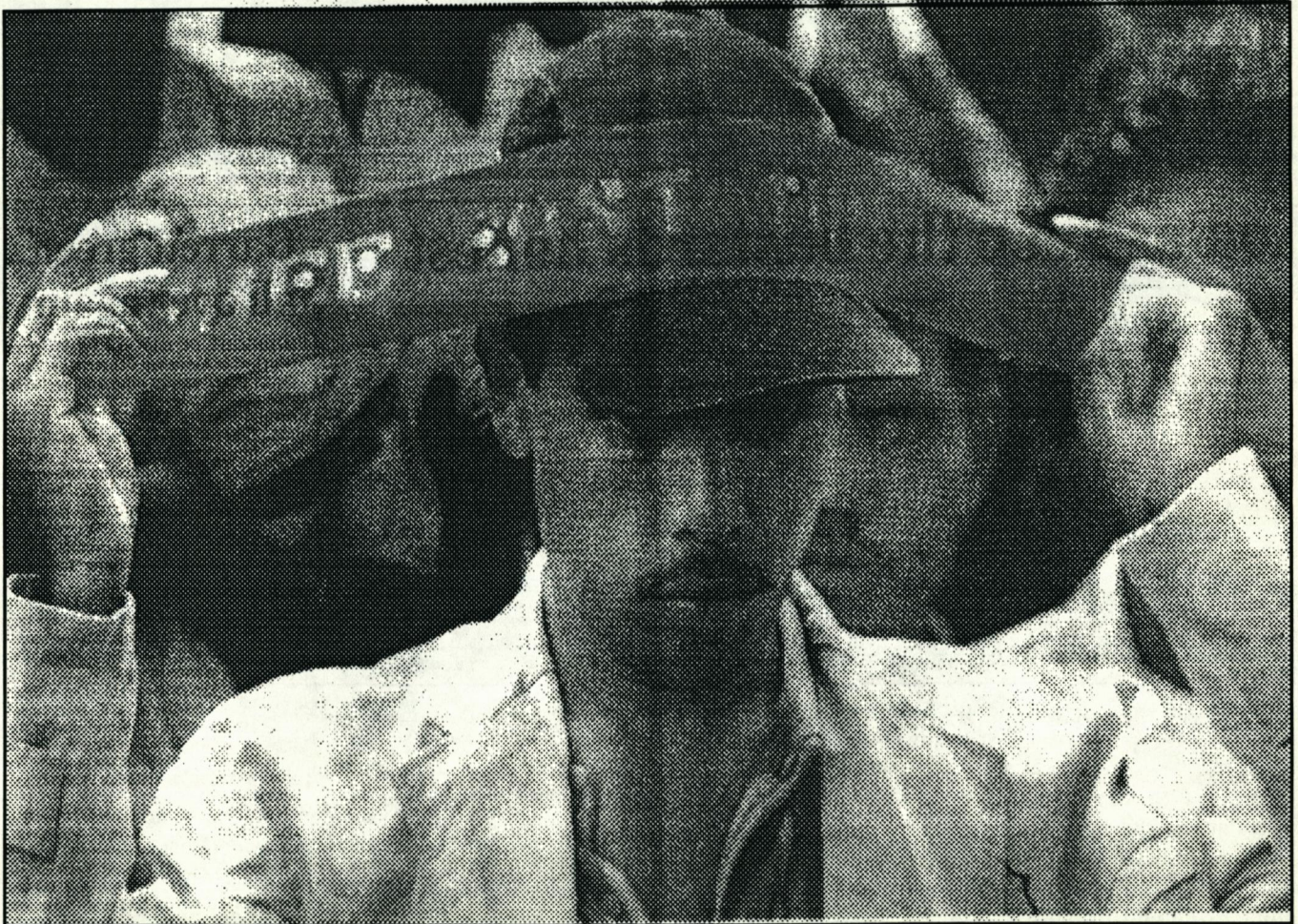
Firstly, the Timorese must build a very strong CNRT in East Timor, nurture the idea of a National Political Commission with two-thirds inside the country. A strong initiative took place in Peniche to respond to a vacuum in a transitional phase. This vacuum is the non-existence of a political national consensual organisation to do the work in a transitional

The idea of Indonesia not relinquishing its demands of 27th province (East Timor) becomes so indefensible that Indonesia may simply sit down with the Timorese, with the UN and Portugal and work out a transitional government (instead of transitional autonomy) for East Timor. This would lead to the direct election of a Legislative Assembly with a head of government to provide the right conditions for the adoption of a Constitution for the Republic of East Timor, based on the Magna Carta approved in

ity movement, for Indonesia and Portugal and for the United Nations.

Secondly, the Timorese and solidarity friends - as appealed to by Jose Ramos-Horta - ought to work together in the best possible ways to produce a solid and realistic set of strategies for short, medium and long term development in East Timor. Technical teams ought to enter East Timor now to assess, in loco, the real needs on the ground.

Photo: "The Australian", p.6, June 12, 1998



CNRT, namely Xanana Gusmao and Ramos-Horta, will have to explain to the younger generation why a transitional autonomy can be a viable step.

period. The core principle must be a politically all-encompassing approach to Government in East Timor.

It is highly possible that East Timor will never need to go through a referendum. Although a referendum is, no doubt, currently the best strategy to demand the rights of self-determination for East Timor, from a universal point of view, the reality on the ground, in Indonesia and East Timor itself, may prove to be more mature in the next six months.

Peniche by the Timorese National Convention on 25th of April this year, and a sovereign state can be declared and recognised by the United Nations within two to three years. The fact that East Timor has been a Non Self-Governing Territory registered in the UN Decolonisation Committee since 1960 and the UN General Assembly has declared in 1990 that the decade of the 1990's is the Decade of eradication of Colonialism, by the year 2000 East Timor becoming an independent state would be quite an achievement for the Timorese people and the solidar-

In his recent meeting with the Australian solidarity groups in NSW, Jose Ramos-Horta made an emphatic appeal to the Australian supporters "to (i) continue the campaign for Australia to support a referendum in East Timor, and (ii) to continue to support and demand the release of Xanana Gusmao. Beyond that, apart from the political agenda, those of you who are working in the NGOs areas, either in the developmental area or humanitarian area, I would like to appeal to you to start looking into the post-inde-

pendence in East Timor or looking into the transition in East Timor, to help rebuild the infrastructures in East Timor. East Timor is one of the most thoroughly destroyed countries in the world. I have visited in the last 23 three years, up to 100 (one hundred countries). I have been to some of the most devastated countries in the world, including Bosnia. Not too

Regarding the prospects of entrance of NGOs into East Timor, the Vice-President of CNRT, Ramos-Horta said:

"I believe that in the next few months, Indonesia is going to relax access to the territory to NGOs. One thing I have insisted in the last few months, in my discussions at the UN in New York, with the World Bank, with the European

sonnel into East Timor, to work with the Timorese people, to train them and not to rely on Indonesian personnel. That is what we would like to see you (the solidarity) doing in the near future."

On the question of relations with Australia in the future, he aired the following view: "(...) in spite of what I



Street kids in Dili, East Timor

"Poverty binds E Timor to invaders" was the title of the article on "The Australian", page 11, June 17, 1998. The above photo was part of that article.

many countries have been as destroyed as East Timor, in every aspect. The post-independence is not going to be only building roads and bridges, building schools, health clinics. Repairing the environment, healing the wounds, the trauma of those tortured, raped, people outrooted from their ancestral lands where they lived for centuries, trauma of families torn apart from their country, in exile. This is going to be a monumental task for whoever is going to govern the country. Working with ETRA (East Timor Relief Association), with Mary McKillop Institute (of East Timorese Studies), Christians in Solidarity with East Timor, other NGOs such as Community Aid Abroad, ACFOA, do whatever you can to start thinking about what you can bring into East Timor in the near future."

Union, is for greater access to the International agencies into East Timor. Recently, the Secretary-General (Kofi Annan) confirmed to me that yes, he has already ordered an interagency discussion in New York between the various agencies to coordinate humanitarian and development assistance for East Timor. I believe the UNDP and UNICEF are preparing surveying missions there. Weeks ago, I met with Emma Bonino, the European Commissioner for humanitarian affairs, in Brussels, and she has assured me that she was going to send an urgent assessment mission to East Timor. The World Bank, a few days ago, I received a message in Lisbon, from the World Bank asking us to submit specific proposals for them to consider in supporting directly the (developmental) work in East Timor. So there is a lot of interest now. To each of them I ask them to send their staff/per-

have said regarding your Foreign Minister [Alexander Downer], one thing is certain: we are conscious of one thing. That's me, Xanana and all my other colleagues in the Timorese movement, we are conscious of our geography. Regardless of all the nasty things being done to us by successive Australian Governments, in the future, it will be in the best interest of East Timor, it will be, in fact, a strategic imperative, that we develop the closest possible relationship with Australia and New Zealand, as the best way to balance also our future relations with other country like Indonesia, Malaysia and so on. I believe that in the future, (not economically) but for East Timor to survive, to have an independent policy, it will have to develop a strong relationship with Australia and New Zealand, to counter, to balance out, the potential influence, bad or good, from other countries."

... if the transitional-only broad-based autonomy becomes a reality⁵ in 1999, the biggest challenge for CNRT, Xanana Gusmao and Ramos-Horta will be to deliver real justice, peace and prosperity for the people of East Timor! Otherwise, towards the end of the five-year transitional period, Indonesian Government may see that the mood of the people towards independence is no longer so convincing as it is today. If so, the prospect of a democratic Indonesia gaining something out of a referendum in the end of the transitional phase may look more promising than what it is today.

Practical approach

ETRA will soon implement some of these strategies in East Timor and wish to work with experts in the field of sustainable development to make sure that resources are used in an appropriate manner. This Timorese NGO is working with key Timorese academics and regional

solidarity groups to implement key projects and it is searching for funding to do this in the best and most efficient ways possible. As a consequence of the two-day "strategies for sustainable development for East Timor workshop" held in Sydney between the 15th and 16th of August, Ramos-Horta and Xanana Gusmao proposed broader meetings. The first to be held in Lisbon between 21-23 of October and the second meeting will be a two-days workshop at the end of December this year. CNRT and ETRA are expected to work on this seminar of Timorese experts and friends in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region to contribute to the work of promoting relevant strategies on sustainable development for East Timor.

This is a critical stage for East Timor and all the technical cadres of East Timor will be mobilised to attend this workshop. It is a huge investment for the future of East Timor. Any feedback will be welcome.

By December, when the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia and Portugal meet again under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, new developments may take place, new

manoeuvres from the Indonesian camp may appear, but what matters to the Timorese and the solidarity movement, is to continue to work tirelessly as in the last 23 years.

If the transitional-only broad-based autonomy becomes a reality in 1999, the biggest challenge for CNRT, Xanana Gusmao and Ramos-Horta will be to deliver real justice, peace and prosperity for the people of East Timor! Otherwise, towards the end of the five-year transitional period, Indonesian Government may see that the mood of the people towards independence is no longer so convincing as it is today. If so, the prospect of a democratic Indonesia gaining something out of a referendum in the end of the transitional phase may look more promising than what it is today.

The Indonesian delaying tactics can be killed, but only with real improvements on the ground - in East Timor - and through the enhancement of the structures of CNRT, including its own *modus operandi*. This is the only response to the historical challenge the Timorese resistance is facing in the next three to five years, if the broad-based autonomy becomes a reality in 1999: to deliver real justice, peace and prosperity for the people of East Timor!

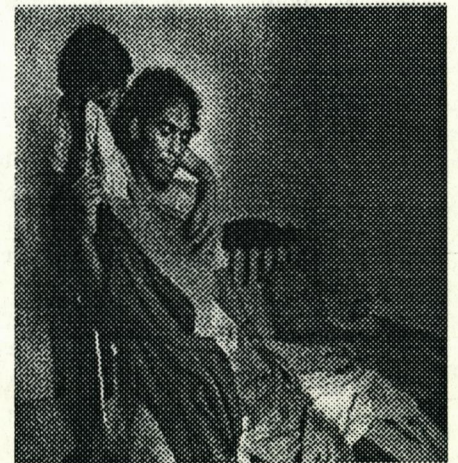
Takahiro Tsutsumoto: my visit to East Timor

Many Japanese supporters benefit from direct visit to East Timor on a regular basis. Mr Takahiro Tsutsumoto, an engineer and active supporter of the Timorese people's struggle, visited East Timor recently for the second time. Jean Inglis, a long time and tireless supporter of East Timor in Japan, interviewed her colleague, Takahiro Tsutsumoto for Matebian News. What follows is the article she wrote from the interview.

With two other adults and my thirteen-year-old son I visited East Timor for the first time last August. One purpose of the trip was to deliver scholarship funds raised by a grassroots group in Hiroshima to a Catholic high school in Venilale, S.M.K.K.St. M. Mozzarella, that provides specialised training in sewing and other practical arts to girls. The

Both teachers and students that we talked to in the eastern sector told us that "soldiers continue to kill people; that hasn't changed since Habibie took over."

scholarship support was started by a doctor from Hiroshima who has visited Venilale every summer for the past few years to provide assistance to the sisters who run a clinic near the school. I was told that patients came to the clinic all the way from Baucau, even though there is a hospital in Baucau, because they highly evaluated the care given by the sisters. I saw that the sisters are making good use of an X-ray machine which a Japanese technician brought and trained them to use. I also visited an agricultural school in Fuloro in the eastern part of the island where another doctor from Japan is likewise providing similar support to a Catholic-run clinic. She had also been there in February, when the surrounding hills were brown from lack of



Ermelinda Soares comforts cousin Orlandino, who holds the blood-soaked clothes of his dead cousin Herman Soares. Photo & caption: "The Australian, June 6, 1998"

rain. Now however everything was green. We had hired a car to take us to Venilale and Fuloro from Dili. I was relieved to see water in the rivers we passed and in the paddy fields, as I was concerned about the earlier food shortages. Now the situation looks promising.

We happened to meet in Dili a Japanese who had visited areas south and south west of Dili to check on the water buffaloes his grassroots group had donated to agricultural projects there. He too told us that all of the paddy fields he had seen were doing well.

These are just impressions, however, as we did not make any systematic enquiries about the food situation.

Atmosphere of tension

I was interested in finding out if there had been any change since Habibie took over in the human rights situation. A farmer I talked to in Venilale said that things had not improved. I myself felt tension when I was in the area. We had seen fully armed soldiers walking along the road between Baucau and Venilale. We also saw troops, fully armed, being transported in Baucau. In Lospalos, where there is a military base, there were troops in the town. Wherever we were, when people saw us taking pictures they seemed to get nervous, even though we weren't taking their pictures. It seemed they were afraid something was going to happen. Of course these places were in the mountainous areas, maybe that was why. Both teachers and students that we talked to in the eastern sector told us that "soldiers continue to kill people: that hasn't changed since Habibie took over."

Fear in Dili?

However, the impression in Dili was a bit different. I chanced to be on the same flight to Dili as a young Timorese I had met in Japan and we arranged to get together in Dili. He responded to my caution about possible danger to him from talking to a foreigner by saying that because of the reforms taking place he didn't have to worry as before. He was in fact questioned by agents after he went to meet me at the Turismo Hotel, but told them he talked to me in order to keep up his Japanese.

At the Turismo Hotel I was introduced to Jose Antonio Belo, who had been released on June 21 after a long detention, by an Indonesian human rights activist. Jose has to report to the police several times a week and acted nervous, frequently looking around. Indeed there are undercover agents at the hotel. But in spite of that you see foreigners interview-

ing Timorese right in the hotel restaurant.

"I heard in Dili was that troops in uniforms may be leaving, but troops in plain clothes are coming in."

However one night when I tried to have a conversation with another Japanese in the hotel restaurant, two men with transceivers and rifles sat down next to us. It was pretty intimidating and we left.

I had hoped to meet the parents of two activists who are now living abroad. to give them photos of their sons. They don't live in Dili however, and I was told that they would likely get in trouble if I visited them. Again I felt that outside Dili, there has been little improvement in the situation.

Striking contrast

The strongest impression on this, my first visit, was the simple friendliness of people everywhere and the stark contrast with the groups of armed troops moving around. You couldn't but wonder: what purpose does this oppressive presence serve?

The people really want to see all of those troops out of there. But although there has been news reports about troop withdrawals, what I heard in Dili was that troops in uniforms may be leaving, but troops in plain clothes are coming in. ■

Matebian News Various Reports

The Road to Cipinang: Xanana

- Jamsheed Marker's visit to East Timor and Indonesia
- European Union Ambassadors' Report
- Transmigrants Flee
- * Bishop Belo's Meeting with President Habibie
- US Senate Motion 237

Quotes from leaders about the referendum:

Xanana: "There will be not true solution without a referendum"

Jose Ramos Horta: "Lets talk about genuine autonomy as part of a genuine transitional arrangement and who knows, in five years from now or three and we go to a referendum, it could be that the majority of people might want to join Indonesia in the end . . . But this will have to be a decision made by the people of East Timor in a referendum." - to ABC Radio 6 August.

Bishop Belo: "In the last few months and weeks, there has been a growing tendency to reject the autonomy offered by the Indonesian government . . . the people want

aised as Belo, Habibie talk

From Page 1
Belo said that after this meeting he will be a new start for the people of East Timor. He said he had presented the content with a list of wishes to improve the situation the ground and the Habibie replied that he "supports in full".

The extraordinary optimistic meeting comes only a month after the resignation of President Soeharto, who is accused of corruption and the 22 year old conflict, a road to a new province in an hour.

"Little by little they [the people] will be educated," Belo said. "Political prisoners also will be released." He said President Habibie is ready to help "the people East Timor live in dignity." Bishop Belo emphasized in the talks did not focus on a formal solution for East Timor, which was invaded by Indonesian troops in 1975, as a former Portuguese colonial permanent war in the process dismantling its empire.

"We need to work together to improve the situation of the ground," he said. He Habibie announced last

weekend that the Indonesian Government was willing to grant East Timor "special status", reduce troop numbers and release the East Timorese resistance leader Xanana Gusmao, in exchange for international recognition of East Timor's integration into Indonesia.

However, the demands by Bishop Belo appear to be outside the political process and without conditions.

"It is better for us to talk about concrete measures for the people. We didn't talk about the referendum issue," he said.

"A new start" . . . Bishop Belo meets President Habibie at the Presidential Palace in Jakarta yesterday.

Asked about the release of Xanana, he said: "Well, he is not the only man in East Timor. Why don't you ask about the other prisoners?"

However, he has previously stated that Xanana must be released as part of any peace settlement.

He said the situation in East Timor had not "totally changed" since Soeharto.

"But we hope with the new President we will talk about human rights. He [Dr Habibie] has the political will to improve the internal situation."




Photo: SMH,
25.6.98, p.10

a referendum . . . and I go along with the people choose."

The Road to Cipinang: Xanana's Presidential Office Behind Prison Walls

July was a busy month for Xanana Gusmao, and probably a rather confusing one for the guards at Cipinang Prison, Jakarta. Foreign Ministers, UN Representatives, Ambassadors, Catholic Bishops, international media - all beat a path to Xanana's door. And a birthday party with Fifty East Timorese guests to top it off. While President Habibie and Ali Alatas attempt to ease the increasing international pressure with policy made on the run, Xanana is the one everybody wants to talk to.

July began with the European Union Troika of ambassadors calling on Xanana after their 3-day trip to East Timor. In their official report tabled on 23 July they stated flatly "Xanana Gusmao should be released."

Later, world media brought film footage of the historic meeting between Bishop Belo and Xanana, the two men beaming

and hugging each other. The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for East Timor, Mr. Jamsheed Marker was also present at this meeting.

ward finding a solution to the problem of East Timor."

In a series of unprecedented media interviews and reports Xanana spoke widely of his ideas for the transition toward peace and democracy in East Timor.

SNUB FOR JAKARTA E Timorese leaders reject status offer

By LOUISE WILLIAMS
Times Correspondent
in Jakarta

and JERRY SHANT
in Dili

A new offer from Indonesia to grant East Timor special status and release the jailed resistance leader Xanana Gusmao would provide only a transitional solution, East Timorese leaders warned yesterday.

Indonesia's President B.J. Habibie told Australian correspondents at the weekend that he would grant the unwanted province special status, arrange Xanana's immediate release, reduce the presence of Indonesian troops and offer guerrilla fighters amnesty, all in exchange for United Nations recognition of Indonesian rule of the territory.

This is the first concrete compromise offer from Jakarta since the Indonesian invasion of the former Portuguese colony in 1975, sparking a conflict which locals say has cost 200,000 lives.

But independence groups warned of more trouble ahead if this was Jakarta's final offer.

The secretary of the Dili diocese in the predominantly Catholic province, Father Domingos Moura, said: "It sounds good. It is a real concern for which we've already waited too long."

However, he warned that special status could only serve as a transitional mechanism.

"If that is the final status for East Timor there will be much more bloodshed and troubles," Father Moura said after celebrating Mass at the home of the head of the Catholic Church in



Xanana Gusmao . . . immediate release from prison.

East Timor, the Most Rev. Carlos Belo.

Students groups, who have staged a series of demonstrations in Dili calling for an internationally supervised referendum on East Timor's future, angrily rejected the offer as a ploy for Dr. Habibie to win international legitimacy.

A student leader, Antonio Bende, said: "It is not Habibie's right to give us special status. It is the right of the East Timorese to have self-determination through a referendum."

The Catholic Church and East Timorese independence groups are calling for an internationally supervised referendum to offer the people a choice between integration into Indonesia, the formation of an independent nation or federation with Portugal.

The East Timorese are unlikely to accept the Habibie proposal as a final offer because their status in the UN is their strongest bargaining counter.

Xanana's sister, Mrs. Amalia, said the offer to release her brother was a step to end the debate on the territory's future and urged the UN not to exclude the province without first reaching an agreement with East Timor.

However, analysts believe the offer reflects potential for movement on the East Timor issue following the resignation of President Soeharto last month.

Already, Indonesian troops have pulled back in their barracks and are allowing demonstrations in the province, which could have provoked widespread arson and a military crackdown under the Soeharto regime.

Diplomatic sources said it was possible a solution would be worked out in which East Timor would remain within Indonesia with Jakarta responsible for external defence and the East Timorese in control of internal administration.

Portugal has rejected the Habibie proposal. A government spokesman said that if Indonesia wanted to move towards democracy, the East Timorese must have the right to choose their own future. An international supervised referendum on integration and direct negotiation between the UN and the East Timorese were "indispensable".

In Dili, Governor Abilio Ayres Gomes Soares has sought approval to hold discussions on Dr. Habibie's offer of autonomy. The official Antara news agency reported him as saying East Timor needed to discuss the proposal further.

PAGE 14: Editorial.

"There will no true solution without a referendum. And we will never be more realistic than now. Our struggle has been going on for 23 difficult years . . . We are willing to forget the past wounds - the past 23 years of war - in order to have a better relationship with the Indonesian people, and let the past be considered as a mistake in history"

And this highlights the irony of Xanana remaining behind prison walls. President Habibie and his Foreign Minister Ali Alatas say they will release Xanana, but only within a bargaining process that attempts to deny the international nature of the legal right to self determination.

After the UN-sponsored Portugal-Indonesia talks on 4-5 August, Jose Ramos Horta expressed the frustration of the East Timorese people when he noted that if Xanana is so important to the peace process that a string of world leaders travel to Cipinang Prison to meet with him, how can it be that the Indonesian regime can keep him behind bars?

Texts of these various interviews with Xanana are published on ETRA's website.

Jamsheed Marker's 6-Day trip to Indonesia and East Timor

After his trip to Portugal in late June, the UN Special Representative for East Timor Mr. Jamsheed Marker travelled to Jakarta on 15 July.

Marker met for more than an hour with Xanana in Cipinang Prison, and described this meeting as "a very useful meeting, and I go back very much encouraged by

my discussions with Xanana. ... "

Marker met with President Habibie on 18 July, after which he said "I am very optimistic that a solution can be found. ... all the parties are eager for a solution and for the United Nations to play a significant role." He also met with the head of Indonesia's military General Wiranto, but made no comment to media after this meeting.

Marker was under pressure by the Indonesian leadership to cancel his planned trip into East Timor, but insisted that East Timor could not be closed to the UN in this way and travelled secretly into Baucau. He met with clergy including Bishop Belo and Bishop Basilio do Nascimento, student leaders, former FALINTIL freedom fighters and Indonesian-appointed officials. There were no rallies or violence by Indonesian "security" officials: "This is a miracle" said Bishop Belo, who had been wary of the visit and the scope for violence from these forces if students rallied.

Marker said at a press conference after his trip into East Timor: "I think there's an air of uncertainty, an air of high expectations and a desire for a settlement through dialogue. And it's very important that we don't disappoint them (the people) in any of these expectations."

Marker left Indonesia saying he would ask the Indonesian foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, to flesh out the new proposals on East Timor at the August 4-5 UN-sponsored Portugal-Indonesia talks in New York: "Hopefully, at the end of that we will arrive at certain decisions for taking constructive measures towards reaching a just and amicable solution to the problem of East Timor", he told a press conference.

Detailed reports on ETRA's website.

European Union Ambassadors' Report after East Timor Trip Released

The official report from the troika of European Ambassadors who visited East Timor and Indonesia in late June, early July was tabled at the European Parliament on 23 July.

In the report the ambassadors highlighted the need for the East Timorese themselves to be involved in the dialogue over their

future.

"The people of East Timor themselves need to be able to contribute to the dialogue concerning their future. At present they have no way of doing so apart from on the streets. ... It is our impression that there will be no lasting solution in East Timor without a firm commitment to some form of direct consultation ... of the will of the people there ..."

The Ambassadors also said directly: "Xanana Gusmao should also be released."

The Ambassadors called short their trip into East Timor in late June after Indonesian security forces killed at least one man in Baucau during a peaceful demonstration calling for the right to self-determination to be exercised.

UK Minister of State Derek Fatchett, who has himself recently visited Xanana in prison, commended the report, saying "The report underlines the urgency of finding a solution to the problem of East Timor."

Full text of the Report on the ETRA website, with further analysis.

Transmigrants Flee

Tens of thousands of Indonesian transmigrants are reported to have fled East Timor in early-mid July, following the huge popular uprising throughout June calling for self-determination and democracy.

The transmigrants brought into East Timor and given control over much of the business sector and public service under the policies of the Suharto regime, have enjoyed a protected and privileged position in East Timor until now.

Press reports said that 20,000 people had fled East Timor in the first week of July; ABC Radio reported that 50,000 had left by mid-July. A diplomatic source said: "Our contacts say the fleeing is definitely taking place, and involves everyone who is non-East Timorese."

Bishop Belo's Meeting with President Habibie, Jakarta, late June

Bishop Belo met with Indonesian Presi-

dent Habibie in late June in another extraordinary event. Bishop Belo held a press conference when he returned to East Timor.

The Nobel Peace Co-Laureate said the talks had focussed on improving the daily life of East Timorese rather than the territory's political status: "we spoke of everyday matters. We did not touch on the problem of the referendum or autonomy."

"We ask (Indonesia) to guarantee ... freedom of opinion and expressing thoughts, even though they are political in nature.

"We ask (Indonesia) to decrease the number of battle and territorial troops.

"The release of political prisoners some time ago should be followed up by giving clemency and amnesty to all political prisoners in East Timor and outside." In an interview with Portuguese Renascena Radio on 25 June, after the meeting, Bishop Belo affirmed his view that: "the problem of East Timor remains an international problem, therefore the solution must be sought through international forums. We appeal that this solution be found through a tripartite dialogue; Portugal, Indonesia under UN auspices."

Bishop Belo said President Habibie agreed to most of his proposals. The proof of this pudding will be in the eating!

Please see picture on page 6.

Further reports on the ETRA website.

US Senate Supports Self Determination - Motion 237, 10 July 1998

The US Senate passed the historic motion 237 on 10 July calling on the Indonesian Government to enact political reforms and protect human rights, and urging the US to work actively to support self-determination in East Timor.

The Motion urges the Clinton administration "to work actively, through the United Nations and United States allies, to carry out the directives of existing United Nations resolutions on East Timor and to support an internationally supervised referendum on self-determination."

The motion was introduced by Senator Russ Feingold (Wisconsin) and co-spon-

sored by Sen. Jack Reed (Rhode Island). Known as the Feingold Motion, the Senator said after it was passed: "The US must press for a free and fair referendum under the auspices of the UN to allow the Timorese to determine their own fate and their relationship to Indonesia."

When he introduced the Motion on 22 May, after the fall of Suharto, Senator Feingold said: "The East Timorese people deserve the support of people of conscience all over the world, and the United States should use its world leadership position on their behalf. The United States should begin immediately to encourage the process of self-determination ..."

Congratulations to the superb work of the ETAN/US team (East Timor Action Network, the peak US solidarity organisation) in their lobbying. ETAN's John Miller said after the Motion was passed: "The resolution sends a strong message to Indonesia's President Habibie that his proposals on East Timor fall far short of East Timorese demands and simple justice. The US must firmly back the East Timorese right to vote on their political status in a UN-supervised referendum."

We might add that the Motion further highlights the isolation of the Australian Government, and the ALP, in their continued repudiation of the United Nations position on East Timor.

The full text of Motion 237 is on the ETRA website.

Prize

The prize will be a

- Medal
- Certificate
- And symbolic financial support and will be presented to the winner at the annual end-of-year ETRA dinner.

The certificate will include a message from Xanana Gusmao and/or Jose Ramos-Horta and respective signatures.

Nominations

To be nominated for the prize, candidates must be proposed and seconded by individuals or organisations. Each nomination must be accompanied by a report outlining the nominee's contribution to East Timor solidarity work, addressing the

Denis Freney Memorial East Timor Solidarity Award Inaugural Award 1998

The Denis Freney Memorial Award will annually recognise the outstanding commitment and work of an activist anywhere in the world, working in solidarity for East Timor

Denis Freney (1936-1995) was one of the most significant Australian in the history of the East Timor solidarity movement. He worked tirelessly for this cause between 1974 to the late 1980s.

When it became apparent that Suharto's dictatorship was going to invade East Timor, Denis established the Campaign for an Independent East Timor in Australia.

He wrote the book *East Timor Freedom Caught Between the Powers*, arranged for delegations to visit East Timor and for East Timorese Representatives to visit Australia, Fiji and New Zealand in late 1974.

Later, after Roger East established the East Timor News Agency which published *East Timor News*, Denis Freney continued this work in Australia. For many years, the East Timor News Agency operated a newspaper from Sydney to supply information to the Australian solidarity. It was the major source of news from East Timor in the early years of the Indonesian occupation.

In addition, Denis wrote many articles about East Timor in *Tribune*, a prominent left wing paper.

He also coordinated a coalition of East Timorese solidarity groups in Australia and organised a number of East Timor national Activists' Conferences which were held in Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Adelaide. Denis died in 1995 after a long battle against cancer.

Prize...Nominations...Award Criteria...Judges

Award Criteria.

All nominations must be sent to ETRA, PO Box 1102, Parramatta NSW 2124, by 20 October 1998.

Award Criteria

The Award aims to acknowledge the outstanding work of individual activists, rather than organisations or institutions. The criteria for the Denis Freney Memorial Award are one or more of the following:

- Long term commitment and dedication to East Timor solidarity work
- Significant work on a special project promoting awareness of the East Timorese struggle for independence
- Significant contribution to national and international understanding of

Activists Awards



Denis Freney sharing a moment of reflection about East Timor with members of the Timorese community in Sydney

the situation in East Timor

- Provision of humanitarian aid to people in need within East Timor
- Significant assistance to East Timorese refugees in Australia or other parts of the world (eg organisation of sanctuary for those facing deportation)
- Relative availability of institutional and personal resources
- Nominees may be any nationality, and live in any country in the world.

Judges

The ETRA Board will each year appoint an independent panel of judges to decide the Award. The panel will include one member of the ETRA Board.

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Awards

The East Timor Relief Association is pleased to announce the inauguration of the annual Michele Turner Writing Awards. These awards aim to encourage and foster creative and documentary writing related to East Timor, and to honour and commemorate Michele Turner and her life's literary work.

Michele Turner, a great friend of the East Timorese people, spent ten years of tireless work assisting them to tell their and their country's stories. She included many of them in her powerful book *"Telling: East Timor, Personal Testimonies 1942-1992"* (University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 1992). In her earlier best-selling work, *"Stuck: unemployed people talk to Michele Turner"* (Penguin, Melbourne, 1986), Michele gave voice to people often silenced. Her work is characterised by her deep respect for human dignity in the face of appalling situations.

Over recent years publications about East Timor have increased considerably, but there remain so many stories untold, voices unheard. With the inspiration of Michele Turner's work, ETRA seeks to foster not only these voices but also those of storytellers, poets and documenters.

They may be voices and stories of direct experience inside East Timor, or those which shed light on some of the ways East Timor has come to affect people throughout the world. They might tell of world leaders and great historical events, or take us into the daily lives of so called ordinary people: it could be a cook book, a children's book, a biography or a novel, or anything else you can think of!

You might be an experienced and published writer, or a first-timer. Your work might, or might not, have been published. We especially want to encourage young people and unpublished writers to share their voice, and we may be able to assist when it comes to publication.

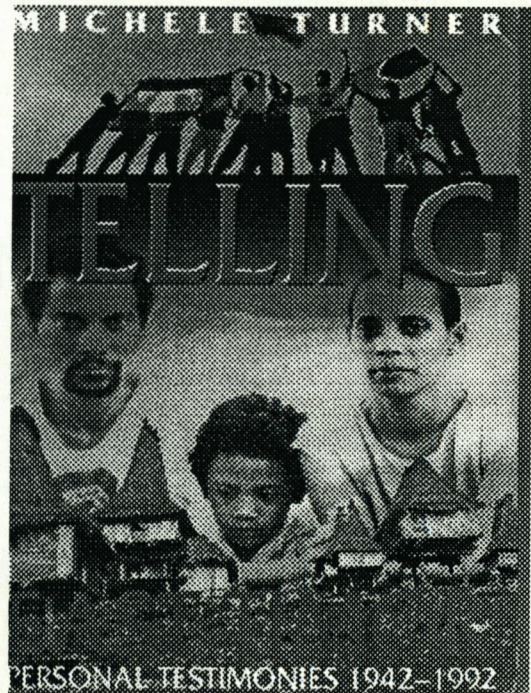
Judge

Judging will be by a panel appointed by the ETRA Board. The panel will have the right, with the Board's approval, to co-opt extra judges where expertise is necessary in a given language. The judges' decision will be final.

The Michele Turner Writing Awards



Michele Turner(1952-1995)



This is a lively history, recounted by those who saw that history unfold. It is a tale told simply but with the vividness of direct involvement.

Justice Michael Kirby

Entries

Entries may be hand-written (neatly please!), typed or word-processed, on one side of the paper only, and are to be submitted in triplicate (3 copies).

4. An entry form is not necessary, but entries should be accompanied by an attached piece of paper with the author's name, address and contact details.

5. If the entrants wish their work to be returned they must provide a stamped, addressed envelope.

6. Although copyright will remain with the authors, ETRA will reserve the right to publish winning entries (or excerpts from these), with full acknowledgment of the authors, in its newsletter Matebian News and/or in its other publications (printed and/or electronic).

7. Entrants may be of any nationality

8. The judging panel may decide not to award a prize in any or all of the categories if they do not consider entries to be of a suitable standard. Similarly, they will have the discretion to award special prizes.

Categories

As guidance we have established 4 categories for the first year of the Michele Turner Writing Awards, and awards will be made for these in both Youth (18 years and under) and open groups:

1. Poetry- poem: any style, any length
2. Fiction - short story
3. Fiction - novel, novella, or collection of short stories
- Length: open
4. Non-fiction - essay, article, interview, or collection of these, or documentary history or other form of non-fiction

Prizes

These are yet to be announced. They may be monetary or perhaps be a gift or voucher. They will certainly be about acknowledging the value of your work, and will carry with them the prospect of assistance with publication.

Entry Date

Entries are accepted world-wide.

All entries must be received by ETRA on or before October 20 1998. Posted entries must be post-marked on or before that date. Winners will be announced during ETRA's annual gathering.

Conditions

1. Entries may be in any language. We especially encourage entries in Timorese languages.

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Ceu Brites* - talking decolonisation of East Timor, West Papua and other important Pacific issues in the Fourth NGO Parallel Forum

Ceu Brites attended the Fourth NGO Parallel Forum in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, between August 14 - 17 last. This meeting took place to coincide with the meeting of the Heads of Government of South Pacific Forum.



The meeting looked into issues of self-determination including East Timor, Bougainville and West Papua. The issues of Kanaky, Tahiti, Hawaii and other indigenous peoples rights to self-determination. Environment, social issues connected to globalisation and fisheries were also part of the discussions.

The final Communique tackled the fact that this year's South Pacific Forum meeting of Pacific Heads of Government focussed mainly on economic issues and criticised the fact that the South Pacific Forum's Economic Action Plan "is based on a narrow economic customary land tenure or the traditional 'subsistence' economy for Pacific peoples".

The Communique - apart from other issues - also called upon the South Pacific Forum to "develop a regional strategy to effectively oppose all aspects of the nuclear cycle in our region".

On the question of decolonisation, the Fourth NGO Parallel Forum called upon the South Pacific Heads of Government meeting to include West Papua on its agenda, "with a view to re-examining decolonisation as well as human rights and environmental issues. With current changes in Indonesia, action by Pacific Governments on East Timor and West Papua has become urgent".

Cont' p.13

East Timor: hope for a solution justified and independence may by-pass a referendum

A solution for East Timor can only be one which fully respects the right to self-determination and independence of the people of East Timor. The best way to show this respect is to hold a referendum whereby the Timorese are allowed to choose their own future.

Such a referendum would provide the three key options envisaged by the United Nations - independence, free association or integration. For East Timor, if the option of integration is not needed, the only remaining solution is independence. As with Namibia, East Timor is highly likely to obey the same laws of Realpolitik and become an independent state before the year 2000.

To get there, however, East Timor will need to go through a 'transitional' period. In his recent visit to Dili, the capital of East Timor, when confronted with questions about the meaning of 'transitional autonomy' or 'autonomy' as envisaged by the UN, Professor Francesco Vandreli answered that the autonomy now on the table is 'simply an autonomy' and that's the end of it.

What Professor Vandreli meant was that the autonomy to be granted from 1999 will be one without any qualification. This is coherent with the statement of the Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan, after the last tripartite meeting in New York. Kofi

Annan made it clear that the parties (ie. Portugal and Indonesia) agreed to discuss the notion of an autonomy for East Timor 'without compromising their position of principle'.

A more careful look at this situation shows that the Indonesian position on its so-called 27th province is in fact fundamentally compromised. If Portugal maintains in its own Constitution that the Timorese people have the right to self-determination and independence, and the UN maintains in the agenda of its Decolonisation Committee the Non Self-Governing Territory status of East Timor, the achievement of a broad-based autonomy for East Timor will in itself mean Indonesia has given in on its demand that East Timor is its 27th province.

This is good news for the Timorese. Having ABRI out of East Timor; Portugal allowed into East Timor to directly contribute to the development of the territory in its capacity of Administrative Power; having international NGOs operating in East Timor without the usual restrictions imposed upon them by Indonesia; having the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) formally operating in East Timor and all the Timorese activists inside and outside able to communicate in a more peaceful environment - all this will enable the Timorese to enhance their chances of building

the necessary infrastructures toward an independent state.

The challenge for the Timorese and specially for CNRT and its leadership is to deliver the goods for the people of East Timor. In 23 years, they have delivered an astonishing victory in a war as disproportionate as the biblical David versus Goliath struggle. It is far to say that with their feet solidly on the homeland, in a peaceful environment, the Timorese will build the necessary infrastructures to sustain an independent state.

This success is vital. The ability to develop these infrastructures and social conditions will determine whether at the end of the "transitional period" a referendum needs to be held. Indonesia will only accept a referendum if it thinks it stands a chance of holding onto East Timor. Otherwise, East Timor will become an independent state without even having to go through a referendum. This is the other way self-determination may be achieved by the East Timorese people. This is not a problem for the international community. After all, new nation-states in the General Assembly of the UN have emerged without having to choose independence through a referendum, because the right of peoples to self-determination and independence is an inalienable right.

James Dunn

Source: 'Sunday AGE',
9 August '98

"Someday our Australian friends will come back, as the guerrillas promised in the war", said the Timorese woman, after a traumatic interview 22 years ago. She had just recounted how Indonesian Special Forces had burst into a room above the shops where there were some 30 refugees, most of them of Chinese origin. "They ordered the men to one side and the women to the other and then kept shooting until all the men were dead. The women screamed and wept but it made no difference.... For us it seemed like the end of the world."

At the time the Fraser government was unmoved by my subsequent report, which became an early UN document on atrocities in Timor. Australians can never atone for our shameful complicity in what turned out to be one of the most tragic outcomes of the entire post-War decolonisation process, but at last we have an opportunity to help a new generation of Timorese to disengage themselves from the neo-colonial structure subsequently imposed on them by the Suharto regime.

The outcome of last week's meeting in New York between Indonesian and Portuguese foreign ministers should be regarded as such an opportunity. It presents an opportunity not only for the Timorese, but for the concerned international community to right a terrible wrong inflicted on a people, whose only fault was that they were weak, remote and insignificant in the mainstream of international relations.

The outcome of the UN meeting suggests a wavering of Jakarta's resolve to maintain its sovereignty over the territory, giving rise to a new optimism among Timorese leaders. Instead of ending inconclusively, as previously happened, this time it was agreed to take the negotiations further, later in the year, more or less without preconditions. Habibie's autonomy proposal will be on the table, but the Timorese will also have an opportunity to present their own views.

The basic positions of Indonesia and Portugal are of course still quite far apart. Under Habibie's proposal Indonesian sovereignty is not negotiable. The Portuguese position, on the other hand (and also that of the UN) is that self-determination must be a key element in any settlement. The Timorese themselves must be consulted, and their wishes respected. At this point a referendum is the preferred method of consultation, with the outcome likely to be secession from Indonesia. This is the bottom-line right we cannot ignore, the right of a people who have been annexed and brutalised to secede from their oppressors, even if the latter have promised to mend their ways.

The Habibie proposal appears to be less about reform than the response of a government vulnerable to domestic and international pressures, not to speak of the lingering resentment of the Timorese themselves. Nevertheless the new government has yet to admit any responsibility for the terrible crimes of the past, the illegal and unprovoked invasion, and the subsequent slaughter of tens of thousands of people.

Jakarta's strategy so far, it seems, has been to sideline a serious diplomatic problem, while keeping concessions to the victims to a minimum. Thus most of its concessions, such as the withdrawal of 1,000 of its 12,000 strong Timor force, amount to little, representing a change of tactics rather than a change of heart (in the last year of their rule the Portuguese had only 200 troops in Timor).

Mr Downer has made much of Habibie's change of direction, even to the extent of claiming some credit for the shift. In reality the Howard Government was the Suharto regime's closest Western ally, and gave little encouragement to Indonesia's struggling democracy movements. Habibie has been responding to pressures mainly from elsewhere, especially the European Union and the United States. Mr Downer's comments this week suggest that our traditional bias still motivates government policy. From his generous promotion of Habibie's dubious

autonomy offer, and his negative response to the Timorese request for a referendum, it would seem that the Howard Government is joining with Indonesia yet again in denying the Timorese their right to self-determination, simply because it cannot face the possible emergence of an independent East Timor. How can Mr Downer support

the outrageous continued detention of Xanana, virtually at ransom? And his remark that a referendum would be divisive borders on the nonsensical.

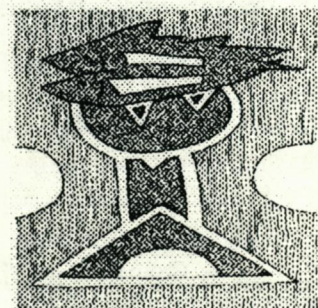
While Jakarta and Canberra are at one in opposing real self determination for the East Timorese Australia has disqualified itself from playing an independent role in the resolution of a terrible injustice, for which this country has some responsibility. ■

from page 11, "Ceus Brites..."

Furthermore, the NGO Parallel Forum urged the South Pacific Heads of Government meeting to "actively support United Nations and European Union initiatives for East Timorese self-determination, including release of all political prisoners, withdrawal of Indonesian military forces and support for direct East Timorese participation in negotiations on the future of the country".

Several very important documents pertaining to this meeting are available from ETRA's office in Parramatta. Telephone (61-2) 98915861, Fax: (61-2) 98912876. E-mail: etra@pactok.net

*Ceus Brites is also a Board Member of NFIP (Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific) and also a Board Member of ETRA.



Australia & East Timor

Australian Federal Election - Timor a Test of Principles

Analysis by Kieran Dwyer

East Timor made it on to the election platform last week, as Foreign Minister and his Labor Shadow Laurie Brereton scratched about for some belated moral high ground. After 23 years of suffering under military occupation condoned by successive Australian government's of both persuasions, it seems ironic that they now seek political points on who has the best Timor policy.

In an election campaign dominated by the issue to Tax, there seems little room for issues such as human rights and the principles behind our international relations. But it is a measure of the perseverance of the people of East Timor, and the connection to this struggle felt by Australian people despite their governments' actions, that Timor can emerge as a test of the respective would-be government's foreign policies.

The Liberal-National Party Coalition has changed little in terms of policy on East Timor since it came to power. Indeed could be said not to have a coherent policy on East Timor at all. It likes to suggest this is because it's approach is a quiet, diplomatic approach designed not to grab headlines but to achieve results. The people of East Timor have had quite enough of this behind-closed-doors horse trading by Australian governments with the Indonesian government.

While Foreign Minister Downer clearly has been positioning his

Party to be able to jump the international bandwagon at the last minute, he has totally lacked the moral fibre or courage to show leadership on East Timor.

The ALP attempted to reinvent its longstanding approach to East Timor at its annual conference at Hobart in January this year. Lead by Laurie Brereton - "dragged" we are advised by senior ALP staff - the party came up with a new policy.

Labor says it supports the right of the East Timorese people to self determination, but at the same time it also says that it fully recognizes Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor. In two very carefully worded documents it's Policy Platform and the Statement "East Timor: A Key Foreign Policy Priority" released on 15 September, deliberately avoid all mention of international law and the United Nations framework for resolving the East Timor conflict.

While Laurie Brereton has made further favourable comments in recent days with regard to initiatives for East Timor, the danger of a backslide once in office is cannot be ignored.

The Greens continue to be a strong voice in support of peace and an international solution for the people of East Timor. Senator Bob Brown said in July this year: "The remarkable resistance by the East Timorese people to integration into Indonesia underscores the true

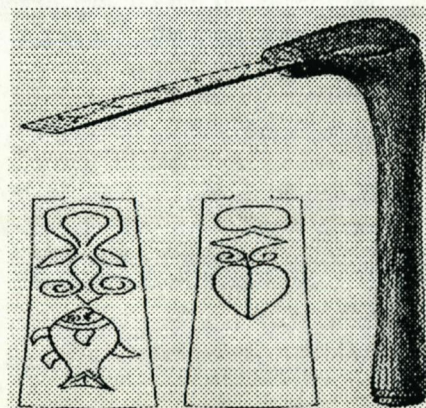
status of East Timor. It is a separate nation. Its leader must be free. Its people must be given a free vote of self determination."

The Democrats, like the Greens, have been consistent supporters of the people of East Timor. Like the Greens, this has translated over the years into very practical assistance for people working for a just solution.

Parliamentarians for East Timor are a group of Australian Parliamentarians from across party lines who support a just and international solution to the conflict in East Timor. Check out your local parliamentarian, and candidates, and ask them where they stand.

While we would not expect the issue of East Timor to be the central voting issue for many Australians - it remains a tester for the integrity and morality of Australian political parties and politicians, surely a considerable factor on polling day.

For more detailed analysis and documents see the ETRA website (follow *Australian Federal Election - Timor a Test of Principles*)



Dear vigil-keepers and friends of East Timor

I had intended writing before now to wrap up the Vigil, give an overview of the event and offer thanks and congratulations to the valiant people who took their turn in all kinds of weather (mostly very cold!). Family visits -intervened and I didn't do it. But it's never too late, I hope-

Overview:

We kept the Vigil for five weeks, and it came to a natural and appropriate conclusion on Sunday 19 July (anniversary of the annexation of East Timor as the 27th province of Indonesia) with a rally of several hundred East Timorese from Sydney. Five different groups each took responsibility for one weekday, with a sixth group covering parts of the week-ends. And there were lots of individuals @g -M who were not affiliated to any group. The groups were: the Catholic Parish of St John the Evangelist Kippax, the East Timor Liaison Group, Amnesty International, The Uniting Church, the Greens and the Canberra Program for Peace. Approximately 120 people took part. Some of these people had never been involved in an event of this kind before. They were people from different backgrounds and with different beliefs, but all united by a common sense of outrage over East Timor.

Some commentS:

- There were a few gaps in the roster, but we did our best and accepted that it couldn't be perfect.

- Communication was a problem at times, with only the 'red book', phone calls and a weekly meeting and letter to link us. I apologise for any failings eg. a meeting was called but nobody turned up with an agenda. Again we accepted that hard-pressed people can only do their best.

- Communication with the East Timorese in Sydney was inadequate. They acknowledged our effort at the rally, but I felt they hardly knew what had been involved because we had failed to inform them. Thus was a pity as part of our purpose was to show solidarity and support for them.

- Because of our wide differences in background there were different styles of

Nicky Coles
of East Timor Vigil in Canberra
Australia (Full version in Regeasttimor email, 21.9.98)



Aspect of the Vigil Tent (formally launched on 13 June last) in front of the Indonesian embassy in Canberra, Australia.

The aim: calling for freedom for East Timor.

The chant: "Free East Timor, Free Xanana". This chant was the focus of the campaign, including the Timorese (CNRT) protest against the so-called integration (17 July 1998). Photos below.

'vigil-keeping'. and some people were clearly upset by the behaviour of others at times. Under pressure and on-the-run, we didn't establish guidelines at the outset. On the whole it all went remarkably smoothly and we managed to stage a sustained non-violent protest which was certainly noticed by the Indonesians. We could not have managed without everyone.

Thanks and congratulations:

Well done! We were all marvellous in our various ways! Special thanks to the anonymous continuity people and to those who braved some extreme weather conditions.



What next?

The struggle goes on. Things are no better in East Timor-. we hear of arbitrary arrests and executions; and while some troops have been withdrawn they are being replaced *incognito*. We can't expect much media coverage until our elections are over.

There has been some thought that the Vigil could happen again from 12 November (anniversary of the Dill massacre in 1991) until 7 December (anniversary of the invasion 1975). There will at least be rallies on those dates.



This Thursday (24/9) the Australia East Timor Association (AETA), is having a benefit gig at the Dan O'Connell hotel in Carlton. (Melbourne)

The night starts at 9pm, and the cost of entry is \$6 concession, \$8 full. Playing will be Stephen Cummings, The Jaynes, Greg Arnold and The Hooligans.

Hope to see you all there.

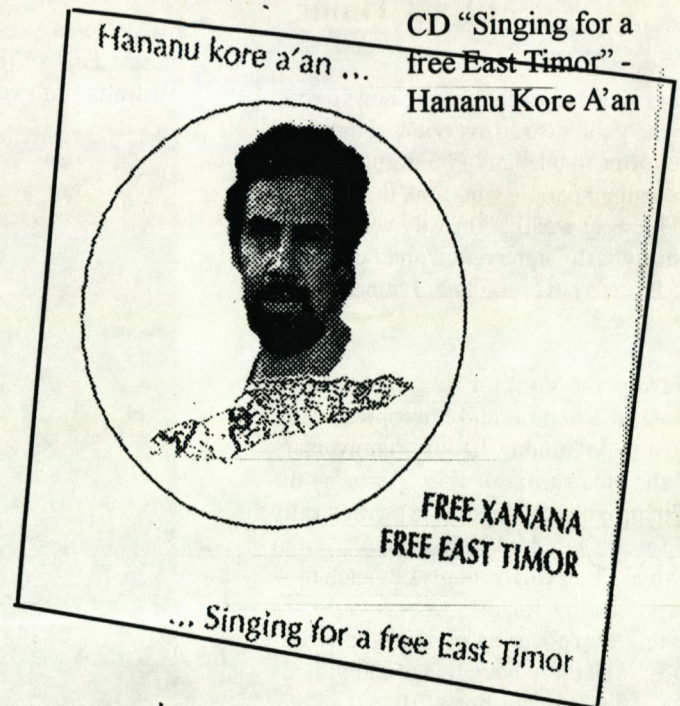
From: Iain Pople. Email:
i.pople@ugrad.unimelb.edu.au

University Students for East Timor
STOP AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
COMPLICITY IN GENOCIDE!

email: uset@earthcorp.com

WWW: <http://uset.base.org>

NEW RELEASE...



Above: the front cover of the newly released CD, designed by ETRA's workers

Left: Solange Pereira, Dolly Ribeiro, Abel Guterres and Sombo dos Santos working in ETRA's office. They are preparing the CDs for distribution.

Price: A\$10.00 only. A\$8.00 for ETRA members, Matebian News subscribers and members of associate members of 'Radio Timoroan'. Students and pensioners also are given the discount price of \$8.00. Postage extra. Please contact ETRA's office if you wish to obtain copies of this CD.



Right: this new booklet is about the statement issued by Justice Marcus Einfeld in the occasion of the weekend protest against the so-called Indonesian integration day, declared for East Timor on July 17, 1976. In a special media conference on July 17, Justice Marcus eloquently presented this statement which ETRA has transcribed and published in a booklet form, to support the work of CNRT. Not for sale but donations needed for postage. See contact details below.

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