



'Our morale is unshakeable' East Timor resistance leader interviewed

After 15 years without any physical contact with outsiders, Shanana Gusmao, who has fought with the armed resistance since 1975 and who took over the leadership in 1979, after almost all the leaders had fallen, met and gave an interview to an Australian, Robert Domm. Domm undertook this very hazardous assignment on behalf of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

This historic meeting has brought to the outside world a new and inspiring insight into the present state of the armed resistance in East Timor, the inflexible will of Shanana, commander of the resistance army, *Falintil*, and the superb organising capability of the East Timorese resistance in the bush and in the Indonesian-occupied towns and villages.

Along with the documents brought out by Robert Domm was a letter from Shanana to the Australian Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, urging his government to change its position on East Timor and support the independence struggle. He called on Canberra to contribute towards finding a solution in East Timor in line with the principles it has adopted towards other regional conflicts such as Cambodia.

We publish in this issue extracts from Robert Domm's interview (page 9) along with extracts from the *ABC's* Mark Aarons' moving account of how Domm reached the Falintil leader's mountain camp, after passing through Indonesian troop positions undetected (page 15). These important documents are soon to be published in full in Australia. ★

Slaughter in Aceh

After more than a year of widespread disturbances in Aceh, North Sumatra, where a movement demanding independence has been met with a high level of military activity, involving the armed forces' special troops, Kopassus, there is disturbing evidence of massacres, atrocities and arrests on a huge scale. The situation is so bad that a vigorous campaign is clearly needed to press for international human rights organisations to be given access to the area in order to carry out an independent inquiry.

There are many mass graves in Aceh, North Sumatra, and people there frequently discover decomposing, unidentified human corpses, according to a human rights lawyer who visited Aceh in early November. The lawyer (believed to be from the Legal Aid Institute, LBH) said the local people think the many deaths are the result of operations by troops to crush a rebellion in Aceh known officially as the GPK or security disruptors movement, the term by which the *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or *GAM*, as the Free Aceh Movement is known in Indonesia.

Bodies have been found in plantations and along rivers in the north-east of Aceh, the centre of *GAM* activities.

In one incident, villagers working on a river bank found

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eight bodies tied together, weighted down and drowned.

It has got to the point where villagers say they are fed up with having to bury bodies they fish out of the rivers. "It happens pretty well every day," the lawyer said.

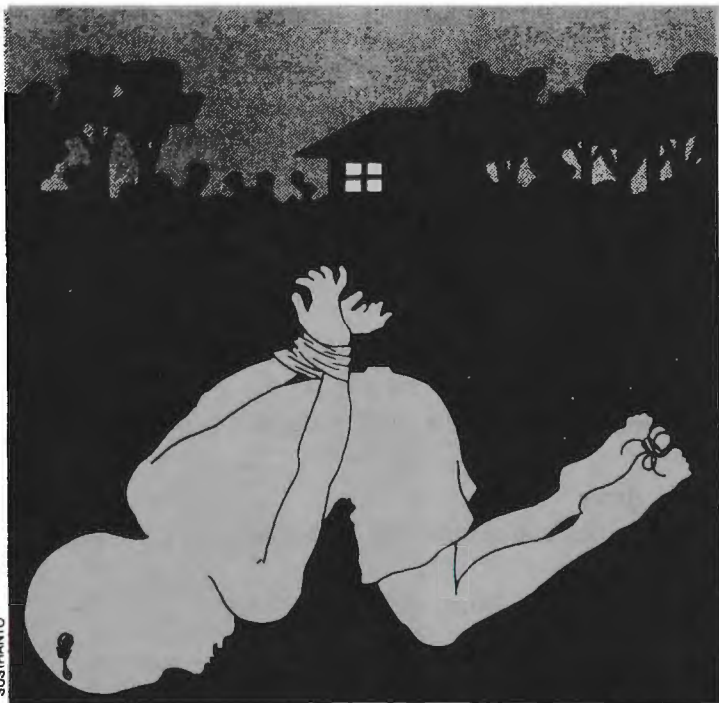
According to Reuter's Elizabeth Pisani in Jakarta, a western human rights observer in the Indonesian capital had reliable reports of the discovery of a mass grave in Alue Mira, Aceh in June this year.

"Nearby villagers couldn't eat because of a foul smell. When they went to investigate, they found an open pit with 200 bodies in it, some of them completely decomposed."

While armed forces spokesperson Brig.Gen. Nurhadi Purwosaputro denied that Indonesian troops were responsible, claiming that the army and the police had themselves taken many casualties, Reuter quoted political analysts as saying that the steady stream of murders is part of a classic pattern of Indonesian military behaviour. "It's the normal thing. After a military operation, there is an intelligence operation to terrify the locals." [Reuter, 8 November 1990]

Corpses everywhere

A Jakarta weekly had two weeks earlier filed a very disturbing report about the discovery of unidentified corpses, many with bullet wounds in the head. Bodies were found along the side of the Sumatra highway in Seumadam Village, Kejuruan Muda sub-district on 12, 15 and 16 September under some rubber trees. The body found on 16 September had been wrapped in a sack. Nearly two weeks later, villagers in Perapen, Pangkalasusu sub-district found a half-decomposed body.



Tempo, 20 October 1990

On 6 October, two bodies were found in a state-owned plantation in Tanggurovo village, East Binjai sub-district.

Many of the corpses were found with their big toes tied together and hands tied behind the back with a plastic cord.

Villagers who reported these gruesome discoveries to the local police were told that no-one had been reported missing by relatives, so the bodies could not be identified. The villagers then proceeded to bury the victims without further examination. [Tempo, 20 October 1990]

Grim dossier

A dossier containing many original documents from Aceh has been circulated to a number of human rights organisations, including TAPOL, by the Information Department of the Aceh/Sumatra National Liberation Front based in Norsberg, Sweden.

One report dated 5 October 1990 said that in September there was a massacre on the 27th km of Jalan (road) Takengon where nine unidentified bodies were discovered. At Alue Guha Tjot Girek in Pase Province, seventeen bodies were found by villagers, while 27 more, already in an advanced state of decay were found in the Krueng (river) Teumieng. The victims had not been shot but drowned with heavy stones tied to their bodies. Another massacre had taken place in Seuneudon, near Kuala Simpang in Pase district where eight bodies with inflated bellies had been found. The report also identified a number of so-called 'red camps' [so named perhaps because they were set up by the red-beret commandos or *Kopassus*] where victims are held in custody and tortured.

Another report dated 20 October and sent from Malaysia by someone who had just arrived from Aceh gave an account of the massacre of 56 prisoners on 12 September. The men were all being held in Rantjong Prison, Blang Tuphat, Lhokseumawe. All were stripped naked then shot at Buket Panglima, 28km Bireuen-Takengon. Three days later, villagers found the bodies in a ravine, most of them unidentifiable.

The same report said many people being held in the jail were stripped naked and held in barbed-wire cells with their hands tied behind their backs. One form of torture was to unleash dogs on the prisoners which resulted in some being bitten to death.

Another atrocity reportedly occurred south of Paya Bakong, at the Buloh Blang Ara plantation in July. Thirty-five villagers were shot dead in the village of Buloh Blang Ara, after their homes had been burnt down; their bodies were hung on fences.

Forms of torture

Some of the reports in the dossier give lists of names of people who have been arrested and document their places of arrest. Also, details of the commonest forms of torture are given. [Most of these tortures are identical with those employed in East Timor and West Papua.] They include:

- squeezing testicles with pliers;
- holding down the victim's feet under heavy chairs on which soldiers sit, till the victim's toes are broken;
- nailing down the victim's hand as if for crucifixion;
- immersing the victim in boiling water;
- placing the victim in a pool of filthy water for hours or days at a stretch;
- stringing the victim upside down;
- using cigarettes or hot irons to inflict burns.

Loyalty pledges for released prisoners

The dossier received by TAPOL includes a number of carbon copies of release documents bearing the original signatures of the prisoners in question. The documents are not photocopies as the signatures are written in a variety of inks and the official army rubber stamp is mauve in colour.

The release documents are issued by *Kodim 0102 Satuan Tugas Siwa Putih* (Siwa Putih Task Force District Military Command 0102) and consist of a pledge to be loyal to the state and government of Indonesia, to refrain from promoting "the ideas or teachings promoted by Hasan di Tiro"

[head of the Free Aceh Movement] and to refrain from "participating actively or passively in activities of whatever form that can create disturbances to security and order, and political stability."

The set of documents relate to the release of eight persons on 25 April this year in Kota Bakti and are signed by Lieutenant-Colonel Salim Sungkar, Commander of Kodim

ACEH

0102, in his capacity as commander of the unit's Siwa Putih Task Force.

Editor's note: For background information to the disturbances in Aceh, we refer you to *TAPOL Bulletins* 94 & 96]★

WEST PAPUA

West Papuans seek asylum in French Embassy, PNG

Once again West Papuans have found themselves casualties of the world's reluctance to offend Indonesia. In October, 21 West Papuans were refused asylum by the French embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. The asylum bid was prompted by the insecure situation for refugees in the border camps and for West Papuans living in PNG, underlined by July's extradition of OPM leader Mecky Salosa and PNG's threat to treat others the same way.

On October 15, a group of twenty-one West Papuans entered the French embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, to seek political asylum. They handed in a letter explaining the political and humanitarian reasons why they no longer felt safe in PNG. The following day, PNG Foreign Minister Michael Somare said that their request was a matter for the French Government, but warned that they would be returned to their refugee camp if it was rejected. [*Agence France Presse*, October 16, 1990]

On October 17 the refugees left at the request of the embassy. Spokesman Marcel Bruzzo said the embassy was sympathetic but could not do much to help. Somare again warned that the refugees would be sent back to their camp if a third country was not found. Hopes of this were fading as the Australian National Broadcasting Commission said the refugees were preparing to return to the East Awin camp in Western Province. [Pacnews, 17 October 1990.]

Family in police custody

By October 19, six of the asylum-seekers were in police custody in Balidi Prison, Port Moresby. It is not known whether they are still there. The six are Jimmy Wawar, his wife and their four sons Isaac, Nelson, Ottis and Jackson. Wawar was practising as a lawyer in Jayapura until he fled from West Papua some years ago; the family has been living in Port Moresby for several years. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Geneva, six of the asylum-seekers [the Wawar family] were living in the capital without permission and would be returned to the East Awin refugee camp. If they are to be charged with a crime, clearly they are in grave danger of being handed over, like Mecky Salosa, to the Indonesians.

Other West Papuans who sought refuge in the French embassy include Michel Kareth, a camp leader in East Awin camp who ran the Arnold Ap school for refugee children until it was closed down; Agust Jambuani, Baldus, Donny Karury and Mesak Bame who were also living at the camp, John C. Jambuani and George Djit-

mau who live in West Papua; Timothy Kambu, Titus Kareth, Elieser Harra, Sonny Aroy, Alfred Numbery, Elimas Ick, Marthew Asikasay and Paul Hembring.

TAPOL was informed by the UNHCR that one of the refuge-seekers would be allowed to remain in Port Moresby as he already had a residence permit to live in the PNG capital. Bar the six who were living in Port Moresby without permission [those in police custody], all the others were said to be refugees from the East Awin camp and would be flown back there.

Indonesia welcomed the French refusal to assist the West Papuans, alleging that they were clearly not political refugees.

No. 4 - 5, January - June 1990

SETIAKAWAN

A Call for International Solidarity on Indonesian Tropical Forest Issues

A Complete Account on Irian

REVEALING
MODERN GENOCIDE
ON PAPUA LAND

SYSTEMATIC DESTRUCTION
OF ASIA'S AMAZON

World Bandits Set Foot
in Irian Jaya



This packed issue of the journal of Skephi (NGO Network for Forest Conservation in Indonesia), a hefty 96-page issue, can be obtained from TAPOL. £3.00 plus £1.00 post & packing (UK or surface worldwide) or £3.00 (air).

Third country asylum has proven extremely difficult for West Papuan refugees, since most countries are unwilling to provoke Indonesian ire. For France, whose embassy in Beirut recently gave refuge to General Aoun, the right to security of twenty one West Papuans was outweighed by the need to avoid upsetting the Indonesian government.

It is not as if West Papuan refugees in PNG do not have well-founded reason to feel vulnerable. On 22 July, a well-known OPM (Free Papua Movement) fighter, Mecky Salosa, was forcibly returned to Indonesia, in what amounts to an extradition. He was immediately taken into custody and is shortly to face trial [see *TAPOL Bulletin* No 101]. Jimmy Wawar was among several refugees who publicly expressed dismay on hearing this news. As PNG, under pressure from Indonesia, hardens its attitude towards the OPM and sympathisers, the security of more West Papuan refugees is under threat. ★

Replying on 30 September 1990 to a letter of protest about the deportation of Mecky Salosa, PNG's Attorney General and concurrently Minister of Justice, Bernard Narakobi wrote:

Thank you for your letter relating to Mr Mecky Salosa. I too regret the actions of the authorities in PNG in handing over Salosa to Indonesian authorities. PNG is powerless against authorities in Indonesia. [Unabridged text of letter.]

Before his appointment as Minister of Justice, Narakobi was well-respected as a human rights lawyer with a record for defending the rights of West Papuan refugees.

Harsh sentences in West Papua

Five West Papuans, all of them former members of the Indonesian army, have been tried in Jayapura for subversion and found guilty of activities in support of the liberation movement, the OPM.

The fact that these trials have been reported at all in the national press is unusual. However the reports are strictly limited to the case against the defendants; nothing at all is reported about their defence pleas, whether they were allowed to call witnesses or how their defence lawyers were appointed.

Life sentence for Elieze Awom

The heaviest sentence was given to Elieze Awom, 41, who was sentenced to life imprisonment by a military court on 29 September.

Awom who is from Biak, was arrested at Tarifa village on February 17, 1989. He was found guilty of desertion and joining the OPM in the West Papua-PNG border region. He was defended by police officers, Maj. D. Putu Sukardja and Police Lieut. (Letda) Widodo. There were eleven witnesses.

Awom was allegedly involved in a series of ambushes on Indonesian troops from 1985 up to his arrest with 11 others. A member of the regional mobile brigade of the police since 1965, he deserted his unit in January 1984, taking a Colt 38 pistol with him, and crossed the border into PNG. (This was the time of an abortive uprising planned for early February 1984, following which hundreds of West Papuans from all walks of life in Jayapura, and thousands more from border villages, fled to Papua New Guinea.)

The verdict said that, with 11 other members of the armed forces led by Marthen Prawar, the accused fought for the "the freedom of West Papua" and killed Indonesian troops (some reports say 8). Together with others, such as Leo Ap, he is said to have burned down a security post of Shell oil company at Sarmi and killed a Jayapura businessman whose wife he abducted. *Tifa Irian* says he held Unurumguay sub-district officials hostage and burned down the sub-district office and sub-district military headquarters, killing a number of employees. The news agency Antara claims that

Awom admitted all the charges, but had not yet decided whether to appeal. At a previous session he told the court: "I entered the forest and joined the OPM because I was frustrated at my rights being ignored". He denied that his actions had disrupted public order. [*Kompas* 27/9/90] After the trial he was taken to the Waena military prison.



Elieze Awom. From Tifa Irian, September 1990

Thirteen years for a song

First Police Corporal Sokrates Yerisetouw, 33, father of four children, member of Depapre police force (Jayapura), was sentenced to 13 years and dismissed from the police force for circulating copies of West Melanesian songs to

students at the Depapre Pembangunan High School. He was arrested in December 1989. The prosecution had asked for ten years.

The other three men sentenced in September were:

- * First Police Sergeant **Yance Konora** who was given 3 years for helping deliver a letter from Dr Thomas Wainggai about the "OPM 14 December anniversary" in 1989;
- * Sergeant Major **Kiwai**, given 2 years.
- * First Sergeant **Mangiagasi**, sentenced to 3 years.

(Sources: *Post-Courier*, October 1, 1990 *Tifa Irian* 4th week, September, 1990, *Kompas* 27/9/90).

WEST PAPUA

AI Japan campaign for release of Wanggais

The Okayama branch of Amnesty International is campaigning for the release of Thomas Wainggai, sentenced to 20 years in August 1989 for declaring an independent West Melanesian state in Jayapura on December 14, 1988. His wife, Teruko, got 8 years for sewing the flag.

Amnesty Okayama is appealing to people to send 1,000 postcards to President Suharto and Indonesia's ambassador to Japan, Yogi Supardi. Amnesty said: "They are innocent according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Teruko's mother, Shizuko Kohara, 76, said she is grateful that AI regards the Wainggais' imprisonment as a human rights violation and is praying for the couple's release. ★

Indonesian troops for PNG villages

Papua New Guinea has sunk to new depths in its betrayal of the West Papuan independence movement by agreeing to the presence of Indonesian troops on PNG territory and by pledging closer cooperation with Indonesia to eliminate the Free Papua Organisation (OPM).

Papua New Guinea's minister of defence, Benais Sabumei, has stated that Indonesian troops will be 'invited' into villages on the PNG side of the border with West Papua in the near future, to carry out "civic mission" work [*kerja bakti*]. The aim is to persuade the people of PNG, especially those living in the border area, 'no longer to regard Indonesian troops as their enemy.'

Sabumei told the news to journalists immediately before returning to PNG from Yogyakarta in Java, where he had been attending the ninth session of the PNG-Indonesia Joint Border Committee from 29-31 October.

According to Indonesian defence minister General Benny Murdani, Papua New Guinea has also agreed to step up military cooperation with Indonesia by conducting joint patrols along the 800km (500 mile) border. Until now, PNG has resisted Indonesian pressure to form joint patrols, but, in what could be interpreted as a veiled threat, Murdani said Port Moresby had now "realised that to allow the OPM to act as it has done in the past is harmful not only to Indonesia but also to PNG." [*Reuter* November 4, 1990]

Before returning home, Sabumei gave further details of the increased cooperation. He outlined a solution to the 'hot pursuit' issue: by Indonesia informing PNG about upcoming military operations against the OPM, increased coordination between PNG and Indonesian troops could prevent OPM guerillas seeking sanctuary in PNG and avoid the possibility of misunderstandings on the part of PNG troops. He denied past Indonesian accusations that PNG gave sanctuary to the OPM saying that, since PNG had no troops in the border region, the OPM could freely enter villages on the PNG side. [*Kompas* November 3, 1990]

The agreements outlined by the two defence ministers formalise a situation which has existed for some time. Indonesia has *de facto* enjoyed the right of hot pursuit into Papua New Guinea, although there is no formal arrangement, because PNG is unable or unwilling to resist. Officially, Indonesia claims incursions into PNG are 'accidental' but implicit in the plan to have Indonesian troops working in PNG villages, is the understanding that such incursions will become normal events. Why else would PNG want its

Mass repatriation of refugees

Six hundred and ninety refugees are to be repatriated over from November 22-24, from East Awin refugee camp in Papua New Guinea, back to the West Papua.

They will be taken from East Awin to Kiunga, and then flown by planes belonging to the Missionary Aviation Fellowship to Mindiptana in the Merauke district. A provincial military official quoted in *Jakarta Post*, November 13, said the refugees were returning voluntarily and that regional commander Major General Abinowo had guaranteed their safety. After their return they will be "counselled by the provincial government."

Independent sources have confirmed that some 350 refugees from East Awin camp are waiting at Kiunga to be flown back to West Papua, but indicate that only about 400 have expressed the desire to return voluntarily, meaning that almost 300 may be going back against their will. The PNG authorities have not given them cause for optimism over a new life in PNG or a third country. Although East Awin is now a permanent settlement, not merely a refugee camp, social and physical conditions are appalling and the refugees, who have been issued no documents, still feel their status is uncertain.

The refugees to be repatriated are thought to be part of the mass exodus of villagers from the Mindiptana area who fled atrocities committed by Indonesian troops during clashes with the OPM in 1984.

border villagers to get used to having the troops around if not to prepare them for further encounters?

Of course, the troops are there for other reasons too. The 'civic mission' of the Indonesian troops will doubtless be a

cover for intelligence networks and the conducting of counter-insurgency from within Papua New Guinea. Scope for gathering information about West Papuan refugees suspected of OPM involvement or sympathies will benefit Indonesia enormously and will, at the same time, heighten the threat to the security of those West Papuan refugees. Not only will West Papuans, Papua New Guinean sympathisers and all villagers living near the border suffer under the lengthening shadow of the Indonesian military, but Papua New Guinea's sovereignty will be further compromised.

New screening test for border-crossers

People living along the common border between Papua New Guinea and Indonesia are to be issued with new border crossing cards. The new cards which are valid from September 29 and which replace the border passes, will only be issued to successfully screened applicants. They are part of a concerted attempt by the Indonesian and PNG governments to root out OPM independence fighters in border areas.

According to PNG Foreign Minister Sir Michael Somare, "The issuing of the border crossing card is discretionary but every eligible person over 18 years of age will get one if he or she passes the screening tests." He said the screening process would include the views of elders of the village and [more significantly] checks by government officials from both countries.

There is some confusion over the restrictions the cards will place on border-crossers, however. According to Somare, the card enables the holder to cross the border freely for traditional activities such as access to use of land for hunting and gardening or to visit relatives on either side of the border. But according to Indonesian Director General of Immigration, Roni Sikap Sinuraya, card-holders are limited to 30 days at a time in the neighbouring country and, since the cards are not passes, visits cannot be made without notice, as the cards must be signed and stamped by a government official in the visited country. [*Kompas* October 30, 1990]

A ceremony to mark the introduction of the cards, witnessed by village elders and officials of both governments, was held simultaneously on 29 September in the border villages of Skouw, 60 km east of Jayapura in West Papua, and Wutung in West Sepik province, PNG. The Temawo barter market, which closed down due to clashes between OPM and Indonesian troops, has been reopened. [*Post Courier*, October 2, 1990, *Suara Pembaruan*, September 29, 1990]

OPM attack on Skouw

Some time earlier in September, the same border village was subject to an OPM attack. Regional military commander Major-General Abinowo, in a rare public account of OPM activities, told *Jakarta Post* that OPM members had set fire to houses in Skouw, but that peace had now been restored. A local man said 25 houses were badly damaged in the attack, but that villagers had now come out of hiding. According to Abinowo the OPM only has 200 members, scattered in the jungle – this figure is also used for the number of Fretilin guerrillas in East Timor! – and that although they had received weapons from abroad, they were getting weaker. Diplomatic sources quoted by *Reuter* said the Indonesians had "rounded up a lot of leaders" and

the Indonesians had "rounded up a lot of leaders" and had had "quite a lot of success" but also said that the OPM enjoys widespread sympathy among the local population. [*Reuter*, October 18, 1990 *Jakarta Post* October 18, 1990]

In contrast to the government practice of staying silent about the security situation in West Papua, Major-General Abinowo has been unusually willing to talk about the OPM recently. While brushing off the OPM as a weakening force, he admits nevertheless that there are serious problems in the territory. In a lecture to the Indonesian Christian Student Movement (GMKI) in Jayapura, Abinowo said 'separatist' activities in Irian Jaya were fuelled by Melanesian racial sentiments and by people's frustration over living in backward conditions since colonial times. Living in small, isolated groups made these people suspicious about new and foreign things, made them feel inferior, alienated and withdrawn, he said. Separatist tendencies were an indication that they had little desire for nationhood or belonging to a state, which was linked to their low level of education, he said. [*Jakarta Post* October 23, 1990]



Yali men, West Papua. Photo: Owen Jelpke.

Abinowo later stressed development over military action, as the answer to these 'separatist tendencies'. "We cannot eliminate them by killing the people. The only way to defeat the idea is through development." He said the OPM and other separatist movements used the ethnic issue and the gap between living conditions in Irian Jaya and other provinces to instigate hatred of the government among the common people, university students and intellectuals. The unusual allusion to 'other separatist movements' contrasts with the usual practice of labelling all anti-Indonesian activity as OPM-inspired.

Abinowo went on to say that the creation of a united Melanesian nation was impossible – "They're dreaming. Look what happened at Bougainville" – and that the ethnic issue was not valid: None of the countries in the world purely consist of one ethnic group... Besides, history shows that Irian Jaya is part of Indonesia. Nothing can change it." [*Jakarta Post* October 26, 1990]

OPM kidnap missionaries

On November 19, a group of OPM resistance fighters kidnapped six people – two western missionaries, a PNG official and three Filipino construction workers – during a raid on the patrol post of Amanab, about 40 km into PNG from the border.

The OPM group, reportedly led by Mr Hans Bomai, demanded that the PNG minister for provincial affairs,

Father John Momis, and the Minister for Justice, Mr Bernard Narakobi, fly to Amanab to discuss independence plans. They also demanded that no troops be sent in. The PNG government sent in troops under an operation code-named 'Shooting Star' and imposed a curfew and ordered journalists to leave Amanab, where they regained control of the airstrip from the OPM group. Other Papua New Guinea patrol stations were put on alert for increased activity by OPM groups. Both the government and the mission group said they had received assurances that no harm would come to the hostages. PNG's prime minister Rabbie Namaliu urged the OPM to hand over the hostages immediately, or face "the full consequences of their actions." [sources: *The Age*, 21 November; *AP*, *Reuter* 20 November]

The kidnapping is clearly an attempt to bring to the world's attention, the desperate situation now facing West Papuans who oppose the Indonesian annexation of their country. PNG's strategy to actively support Indonesia's moves to crush this opposition by extraditing OPM suspects and agreeing to conduct joint border operations, has placed the lives of West Papuan refugees living in the PNG camps in grave danger.



Indonesia: border incursion was "accidental"
Over the past few months, Indonesian troops made a series of incursions into PNG in pursuit of OPM, during which a number of Papuans, some believed to be Papua New Guineans were killed [see *TAPOL Bulletin* 101]. According to reports in the PNG press, troops surrounded a PNG government post in which West Papuans were taking refuge, and an attack was only avoided by the arrival of PNG troops.

Now Indonesia has answered Michael Somare's letter of protest with the claim that the incursion was an accident. A diplomatic note presented to PNG Foreign Affairs officials on September 25, more than one month after the main incursion, admitted that troops crossed into PNG in pursuit of OPM, but said the crossing was not a deliberate act, it was "accidental". The Indonesian government would always respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of PNG, and wished to maintain lasting friendly relations with PNG. Indonesia "deeply appreciates the firm measures taken by the PNG government against the terrorist elements in the border area," said the note, going on to point out that "close cooperation between the two countries will prevent future incidents recurring." [*Post Courier* September 26, 1990] ★

PKI exiles can return ... to face trial

President Suharto has announced that PKI members in exile will be allowed to return to Indonesia but will have to account for their actions before a court of law. Far from being a generous gesture to thousands of Indonesian citizens forced into exile for more than a quarter of a century, the announcement once again shows Suharto in his true light as merciless persecutor of anyone connected to the Indonesian Communist Party.

Suharto made the announcement on the way home from Hanoi after an international tour which had also taken him to Beijing. He said that these people must go before the courts to ensure that justice would be done. "If they are able to convince the courts that they are not guilty, they may possibly go free." He said there were no more PKI prisoners in Indonesia except those serving sentences.

The president actually alleged that ex-PKI prisoners who had served their sentences now live freely in Indonesia. [See below.] He compounded this lie by saying: "If they expect to come home and have an easy time of it, that wouldn't be fair on the other former PKI members who have been brought to justice for their deeds, and some of whom are still serving sentences."

In truth, over 95 per cent of the hundreds of thousands held following October 1965 were never "brought to justice", if that is what Suharto calls trying people before anti-subversion courts or special military tribunals whose sole purpose was to pin the blame for the events of October 1965 on the outlawed, silenced and decimated PKI.

A gesture to Beijing

The announcement has far more relevance to Indonesia's relationship with China following the restoration of diplo-

matic ties in September. According to Suharto, a clarification of his government's treatment of PKI people was necessary, to improve understanding not only with the Chinese government but also with the Chinese Communist Party. During his discussions with senior Chinese leaders, he was asked by Ziang Zhemin, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, whether the remaining PKI exiles in China would be allowed home. They were elderly and ailing and have never been allowed to engage in activities against Indonesia because they are treated as aliens, Suharto was assured.

There are many thousands of Indonesian political exiles abroad. Most of those who were in China in the late 60s and early 70s have left and are now living in the Netherlands or Germany. Having been forced to remain in exile for so long, many cut off from their closest relatives, it is difficult to imagine queues forming outside Indonesian embassies for the privilege of facing trial back home and, even if acquitted, living out the last years of their lives as fifth-rate citizens.

According to Brig-General Nurhadi Purwosaputro, head of information at the armed forces headquarters, all PKI exiles are certain to be classified at least as Category-B which means they are deemed "to have been clearly

involved directly or indirectly in the G30S/PKI". [Hundreds of thousands of Category-B prisoners were held for years without trial.] Those given Category-A status would be considered seriously enough 'involved' to be brought to trial. Nurhadi said any exiles who return "will be met at the airport and thereafter subjected to a 'litsus' test", a special investigation to determine the level of their ideological commitment. [*Tempo*, 1 December 1990]

Basuki: General amnesty

Basuki Resobowo, artist and communist, who has been living in exile since 1965, told TAPOL that the only circumstance under which he would return home would be if a general amnesty were declared for all people alleged to have been involved in the October 1965 affair. This should include unconditional rehabilitation for all the children of so-called 'ex-tapols' and the quashing of all sentences against those still in prison, including the seven men under sentence of death. Apart from the righteousness of such an amnesty, Basuki said that only in such circumstances would he feel protected against possible persecution and arrest.



Basuki Resobowo

Tempo, 1 December 1990

In his early years as a painter, Basuki was associated with well-established painters like Affandi, Sudjojono, Soedarso and Soerono but when the leftwing cultural workers' organisation, Lekra, was set up, he joined as an executive member and was for many years active in the PKI.

Basuki spent the first years of exile in China. He was there in 1965 to process a film he had made on the May 1965 celebration of the 45th anniversary of the PKI. Before he could return home, the persecution and massacre of the PKI had begun, forcing him to stay in China. Unhappy with the isolation imposed on exiles in China, he left for western Europe in 1972, hoping to live in the Netherlands. After years of unsettled existence in West Germany, he was granted political asylum in Holland and now lives and paints in a tiny studio in Amsterdam. Among his recent paintings is one depicting the struggle of Kedung Ombo peasants and one dedicated to the death-sentence prisoners.

Hunger striker at 76

Although 76, Basuki took part in a hunger-strike staged earlier this year in the centre of Amsterdam to protest the execution of six political prisoners and urge the Dutch

government to press Jakarta not to execute the remaining death-sentence prisoners. The initiative to organise the hunger strike came from radical Indonesian students in Holland but of all the older generation PKI exiles, Basuki was one of the few to respond positively and eagerly. He believes that the action was an important landmark; it drew widespread media attention to the plight of the death-sentence victims and the injustices still suffered by all communist suspects in Indonesia.

His wife, two daughters and two grandchildren live in Jakarta. In the early days of his exile, his wife was often pestered by the security authorities, but has since been able to stabilise her life. When they met some years ago, the family advised him not to return home, partly because this might disrupt the conditions in which they now live.

"Suharto washing his blood-soaked hands"

Asked what he made of Suharto's recent visit to China and Vietnam, Basuki said Suharto wants to obtain absolution for his blood-soaked regime's extermination of the communist movement in Indonesia from the world's two remaining 'leftwing' regimes and get these countries' approval for the destruction of a political force that threatened the existence of the Indonesian State, all in the name of the Pancasila. [Source: TAPOL interview, with additional material from *Tempo*, 1 December 1990]

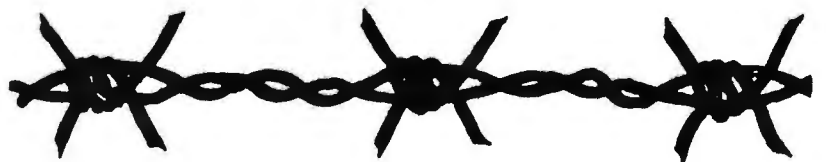
'ET' status challenged

While Suharto played his sick joke on thousands of political exiles, a group of villagers in Boyolali were hoping, through the courts, to clear their names and have "ET" status removed from their identity cards. "ET" stands for *ex-tapol* or former political prisoner but in the Orwellian nightmare of official Indonesia's blind hatred for communists, you don't need to have been a political prisoner to become a former political prisoner. All you need do is take a stand against officialdom, which is what happened when villagers objected to the paltry compensation offered for their land expropriated to make way for the World Bank-funded Kedung Ombo dam. To their amazement, when they submitted their identity cards for routine renewal, they founded the dreaded initials stamped on the new cards.

After repeated attempts to have the initials removed, they decided to sue the two officials responsible. Two of the 22 villagers affected told the court that with "ET" identity cards, they have encountered insurmountable difficulties in obtaining official documents at all levels of the administration. [*Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 4 September 1990]

There are 1.4 million Indonesians whose identity cards bear these initials and who suffer the iniquities of this inhuman form of discrimination. Returning exiles would suffer the same fate.

The district and sub-district chiefs who are being sued have argued in their defence that it has now been ascertained (after 25 years) that the villagers were members of PKI-affiliated organisation. "How can we be accused of lacking humanitarianism? We did what we did in order to prevent the re-emergence of communism and the PKI on Indonesian soil." [*Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 4 October 1990]



Shanana speaks

The following is part of an interview of Shanana Gusmao, commander of Falintil, given to Robert Domm, which took place in a guerrilla camp in the interior of East Timor, on 27 September 1990. Some answers were given orally while others were given in writing. (Although the guerrilla leader signs his name with an X, he said he would prefer it to be spelt 'Shanana' in English documents.)

On the war

Following Indonesia's announcement to 'open up' East Timor, has the resistance movement made changes in its strategy? Have ABRI (the Indonesian armed forces) changed their strategy and tactics?

Any initiatives taken by the occupier invariably have a boomerang effect. None of their threats or manoeuvres ever scare us because our principle has always been, never to be defeated by anything forced upon us by the enemy but to explore all possibilities. This means that every advantage we reap is the result of a methodical assessment of the situation thrust upon us. Because we are always in a position of subordination to the enemy's strategy, we have never been driven by a desire to engage in frontal combat, trying to create obstacles that would prevent the enemy from achieving their aims. Our way of thinking is: **To resist is to win.** The nature and dynamism of this principle stems from the attention we devote to consolidating and continuing the resistance; this is what has given us the serenity we need to cope with the difficulties we have had to face.

Some people think we are incapable of thwarting the enemy's plans and see this as evidence of our inadequacy. We do not think it necessary to obstruct something simply for the sake of being obstructive. We believe there is a much greater necessity – to prevent the enemy from benefiting in any way from their plans. Hence we can say that we exist in the shadow of the enemy's plans. As everyone knows, "the day belongs to the Javanese, the night belongs to the guerrillas".

Whenever the enemy devises a strategy in any field of activity, it goes without saying that they will greatly underestimate the possibility for us to take our share of the benefits they intended for themselves. To this day, the enemy persists in wrongly assessing the Maubere attitude; they fail to realise that the war which has been forced on us for the last 15 years has **unified and consolidated the people.** Moreover, there is no way out for them. They cannot escape the inevitable: any attempt on their part to create a situation favourable to them, creates another situation that is unfavourable. The very nature of the supremacy they impose on us means that they can only correct one mistake by committing others.

It is a vicious circle; something that initially looks like a stroke of genius will lose its shine in the end because of the numerous small failures at the heart of their strategy, many of which they are not even aware of. Things then move in the opposite direction to what they had intended, forcing them to devise new methods so as to improve their conduct of the war.

With regard to 'opening up', while Jakarta continues to celebrate a propaganda victory, the Maubere resistance has used every opportunity to adapt to the changes introduced. We have benefited much more from this policy than they have. Many of our gains have gone undetected and have reinforced the foundations of Maubere resistance. We have never been over-awed by the initial brilliance of the enemy's successes as they appear to the outside world however virtuous they seem.



Shanana Gusmao. Photo: Robert Domm.

The final aim of ABRI's strategy has not changed. However, if by strategy you mean the policies they adopt to reach that goal, there have been changes. At first, the army wanted a speedy end to the war. Today however, although the enemy's conduct of the war is more effective, their strategy has shifted towards one that corresponds with our strategy of a protracted war.

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How do the Indonesian troops conduct their operations against the Resistance?

[After describing the changing tactics used by the Indonesians in 1981, 1983-4, 1986-7 and 1988, Shanana went on to describe how the army uses the population.]

They cover an area with the people, and then attack another area. Then they move and in this way they practically cover everywhere. The population is used to cover the terrain, so that they push us into the Indonesian forces. The Indonesian troops are ready. They are covered by the population, they push us, they force us to clash with the troops. If we enter into their circle, then we would not be able to leave safely in time.

What are the current tactics of the Indonesian army?

Now they are using territorial counter insurgency. They send out small groups in every direction in a particular area... so that we are constantly in armed clashes with these small groups. From time to time, they use larger forces which spread out by zones, in each region. Where there are bigger Falintil forces, they use a larger number of troops, supported by counter insurgency troops. This is the current military situation.

If you want to better understand counter insurgency, I would say it has the following purpose: it spreads

throughout a large area; it has a great capacity for mobility, to quickly detect the presence of guerrillas. This makes it very difficult for the guerrillas to take their own initiatives. We don't have a permanent, fixed enemy with real volume or quantity, and we don't know what to confront. We feel that the enemy is everywhere; we even say that we carry the enemy in our bags. They have improved their technical knowledge of guerrilla tactics; at the sign of the presence of guerrillas, they chase them until they provoke an armed clash. This is different from their previous tactics when they used many troops in a fixed period.

In Australia we heard many reports of atrocities by Indonesian troops in the past. Did the Indonesian troops adopt those tactics in your experience?

Yes, particularly against the Resistance. The Indonesian troops do not behave in any other way. They chop off the heads of the guerrillas, they torture them on the spot. For instance, if a guerrilla is wounded and captured, he is killed; recently, at the beginning of September, a guerrilla in the eastern sector was wounded and taken to a village and killed.

Can you explain, sir, what types of military equipment the Indonesian troops use against the Resistance?

Lately, we have not seen the brand name which we saw earlier on all the equipment and weaponry, which all bore the brand name of NATO. They also use Bronco OV-10s,



Robert Domm explains a point during his 12-hour interview with Shanana Gusmao. Two cassettes were recording the conversation, one brought by Domm and one owned by the guerrilla leader.

Skyhawks, Tigers and other aircraft. They use M16s and AR15s.

I might just explain for the tape that Mr Shanana is showing me an automatic rifle captured from the Indonesian troops, and on the other side of the rifle are the words: "Property of the US Government, M16A1 Calibre 5.5 6mm and the serial number is 532 0696" and the rifle is made by Colts Firearms, Colt Industries, Hartford, Connecticut, USA. It's a semi-automatic.

Lately they use this one, not AR15, it is similar, but it's an M16, the others are AR15s. This is what the Indonesian troops use.

Mr Shanana, what effect does the war between your troops and the Indonesians have on the civilians?

I would say horrendous. The war has caused many deaths and great suffering for our people. All the atrocities you hear about outside are only a tiny part of what actually happens in East Timor. It is really difficult to tell you the extent of the impact. But since we say that the peoples' resistance continues, this is the true effect of this war.

There have been reports in Australia that maybe 100,000 civilians have died through fighting and through famine or disease?

I believe that it is more than 200,000.

Sir, you have commented on your military strategies in the current situation. Could you comment in a bit more detail on your offensive capabilities?

Militarily, we are very realistic. We don't dream of great military offensives; we cannot do that. Our strategy is conditioned by the occupiers' strategy. That's why our motto is: "To resist is to win", not 'to annihilate them is to win'.

Mr Shanana can you describe for me the difficulties of conducting a war of resistance in East Timor, given the communication problems you have and the problems associated with the difficult terrain, the mountains?

The question is interesting; the communications factor is very important. The guerrillas in East Timor do not have any means to enable us quickly to have a view of the evolving military situation throughout the country. Lately, we have had even more difficulties because of the nature of the enemy's activities, territorial counter insurgency. But the clandestine organisations have been able to warn us in advance. We must be the only guerrilla army in the world with so many difficulties in all aspects - our own subsistence, in health, in our own capacity to maintain adequate human resources.

But we must stress, it is our political motivation that sustains us in this war, it is too great for us to lose, our morale is unshakeable. It is this morale that allows us to overcome all these difficulties. In such a small territory hardly visible on the map, with a tiny air space and sea surrounding us on all sides and a naval blockade imposed by the enemy, everyone can understand the difficulties faced by Falintil. The fact that we have resisted for 15 years now and we are still able to cry out that we are determined to win is because our people demand this, our homeland demands this of us. People should understand that for us the enormous difficulties are not really felt, they only strengthen our unity, our determination to search for new methods to face up to these difficulties.

Without sanctuaries, our guerrillas are very mobile in the full sense of that word. Without even the minimum capacity

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to create production zones to supply ourselves and which we can defend, without the minimum conditions to acquire a piece of land, build a small factory to make our own clothing, you can understand our difficulties. Mr Robert, you cannot see these problems here because my men wear good civilian clothing sent by our parents, brothers and sisters, our children in the underground resistance.

On the Indonesian army

What is your assessment of the fighting capacity of the Indonesian armed forces?

In our opinion, the Indonesian armed forces are worthless. What we note is that the '1945 generation', most of them white-haired Javanese, have only wanted to wage war against 'communist rebels'. These generals are not soldiers, they are fanatics. They have learned a lot from the war in East Timor but only about fighting subversion. Their military might rests on the fact that they can send an Indonesian soldier into battle with a full round of ammunition, as compared to our Falintil guerrillas who always go into battle with a single bullet in their gun.

A technically well-prepared guerrilla army with the bare minimum of ammunition for its men can always defeat the generals from Jakarta on the field of battle. The antiquated OV-10 Broncos proved very successful in East Timor as did the Skyhawks. But even without radar, they could have been shot down with a single missile! In the August issue of TAPOL Bulletin, we read about the war that has started in Aceh. I can believe that. ABRI's morale has been undermined by the war in East Timor. If this has been a training ground, the training has been very costly.

The essential factor for any guerrilla movement is strong political motivation. This is the foundation, the basic prerequisite, for our unshakeable morale. Another vital point is, having confidence in the availability of human reinforcements. Our strategy of 'resolving things through war' makes a regular supply of ammunition essential. The weapons are bound to come, for which we have Benny Murdani to thank. Another important thing is to take advantage of the enemy's contradictions. As I have said, the Indonesian armed forces are worthless. They lack what the guerrillas have in plenty, while that which they possess is taken from them by the guerrillas.

Falintil's politics

What is your organisation's political philosophy? Some people claim that you are communists? Is this true?

No, it is not true. It is true that years ago we took up a Marxist ideology, but to say that we are communists today is not so, because at the right time we revised our thinking. I cannot deny facts that are history, that Fretilin at one time might have taken up the communist ideology. Today we all declare that this belongs to the past. I myself created a Marxist-Leninist party, transforming the Fretilin movement into a party, but very soon I realised that that ideology did not serve us. So we changed our previous thinking and enabled Fretilin to regain its former nationalist character. Today, not being a member of Fretilin myself, I believe that the differences between the nationalist parties are not that

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great. If you ask what my political philosophy is, [it is] only the liberation of my country.

I understand at this moment that politics in the larger sense of the political nature of the resistance, is taken up by all the children of East Timor. The political philosophy of Falintil is patriotism, a nationalist philosophy.



Robert Domm with a group of Falintil guerrillas.

The unarmed resistance

How well organised is the underground in the towns, the resistance underground and how does it work?

We cannot say clearly how the underground organisation works as this would harm the resistance. But we can say that the underground organisation is now at an unsurpassed level, at a level for which we've been striving for the past 15 years. There are popular organisations at every concentration camp. Even in Oe Cusse there are organisations, in Suai, Bobonaro, Maliana, Liquica, and Ermera, areas where at the moment we don't have a military presence, but we have underground organisations.

When we talk about the concentration camps, we mean the small villages in the more remote countryside as well as in the towns and even Dili. Dili is the centre of clandestine activities – the engine of underground activities. The enemy knows this, it is no secret. The level of the underground organisation enables us to affirm once again that if Jakarta continues to be inflexible, the war will not end soon.

How important to you are the Timorese students?

The role of these students is of great significance, especially those who have graduated and have the intellectual capacity to understand the problems. They have not abandoned the Maubere people. The Maubere people are not disappointed with the position taken by their children. Their importance lies essentially in the fact that they can better understand the essence of the peoples' problems. It is not convenient to talk about the way they are organised. What we can say is that they are completely organised. They all live up to their responsibilities to their homeland, and they are mobilised to take practical actions in the struggle.

What role does the Catholic Church play in East Timor today?

A very important role though from the outside it might be

difficult to fully appreciate it. The Catholic Church in East Timor has played an essentially moral as well as a political role, and is involved in the popular resistance. This almost unseen action by the Church is deeply felt by our people, because it also supports our resistance. The clergy play an indirect but very committed role; actions by the Church have strengthened the popular, patriotic consciousness and helped the people see that we are Maubere people who have nothing in common with the Indonesians. The Church has not spoken out openly, but acts with prudence so as to continue to be on the peoples' side.

So, the Church has an enormous influence; increasingly the people have great trust in the Catholic Church because it is not isolated from their suffering. Priests' lives have been threatened, for example Father Joao de Deus. Father Locatelli has been interrogated and beaten up many times. We recently learned that a priest was interrogated, but the clergy did not get directly involved, only giving advice on what action to take.

Life under Indonesian rule

Can you describe life under Indonesian rule?

In Indonesian controlled areas the people are not healthy, not because they don't have enough to eat, but as a result of the constant fear of the Indonesian presence.

Do you disagree with the Australian government when it says that the human rights situation has improved?

There are two points of view corrupted by the interests of the Australian government. For the Timorese in general, if things have improved in the sense that they can buy an item of clothing, this does not mean that the situation has improved for the majority. They are still malnourished.

More interestingly, many schools are losing students because the parents cannot keep their children at school. They go for the first 3 or 4 years but no longer. Materially, foreigners might see some light in Dili. If they think East Timor is Dili, then maybe materially some Timorese are better off, but if they think East Timor is not only Dili, then materially the people still face a lot of difficulty to survive.

Economically, we should consider the interests of the generals in Jakarta; for instance, General Benny Murdani has an interest in the exploitation of coffee. Because of the proliferation of people coming from Jakarta, our people cannot keep up with the prices imposed by the occupier. The Maubere people are confined to small pieces of land to cultivate, not capable of providing a proper existence.

You will have noticed beautiful houses which are the product of the people's effort. The occupier distributed roofs for instance, but they charge for it which makes our people angry, resentful. They gave us zinc to cover our homes and now they want us to pay but how can we do that? What they have introduced does not satisfy our people, and does not conform with the previous economic life of our people.

If the Timorese do not benefit, who does?

The generals. It is said often that General Benny Murdani has economic interests here. They are the first to benefit. Secondly, those who come here to take most government jobs. Dili is full of Javanese making money while working as civil servants. Thirdly, the transmigrants are themselves poor people; they themselves say 'we are poor' and 'it's our government that sent us here', although they are happy to come. They even say that if Fretilin wins they don't want to leave. The government gives all the facilities to these

people; the so-called new method of agriculture is for them. The transmigrants are settled in fertile areas, whose real owners are Timorese who have been forced into concentration camps for security reasons. When these transmigrants come, they can sell their produce from which they profit. They can travel freely on paved roads, travel freely in the thousands of cars brought here.

It's said that women suffer more than men. Can you comment on that, and on the role women play in the resistance?

The horrors of war are felt particularly acutely by the women, who feel even more oppressed than the men. There are so many cases – violations, abuses, threats – they are widely known, and they take place from Tutuala [in the far east] to the border region. An entire platoon raping a woman, sexually abusing her until she's almost dead. Many give their lives, preferring a bullet to dishonour, while others who are weaker or pursued by a large number of troops, are unable to resist. They are bestial, assassins, inhuman. For them anything Maubere is to be violated, oppressed and killed. This is the situation of Timorese women.

To describe the role of Timorese women as something separate from men would mean dividing the resistance into two fronts, which is inconceivable. The only thing we do not allow our women to do is carry arms, because we still have men. But, on a par with men, they contributed in the most dangerous years of 1979 to 1981 and other difficult periods from 1983 to 1985, when the enemy directed reprisals against men and the Timorese women knew how to respond. They were the last stronghold of the resistance when the men were not allowed to move about.

On the international front

The visit to East Timor of a Portuguese parliamentary mission has been postponed again because Jakarta fears it will unleash demonstrations. It seems the visit is being used by Jakarta to trick Portugal and delay discussion at the UN about self-determination. What is your opinion?

I agree. Jakarta's intentions are unmistakable.

I would agree to the territory being placed under a UN administration as the first step towards seeking a final solution, under certain indispensable conditions. I think it is our duty to confront the problem more realistically than

"I am interested in discussing any plan for a solution, without preconditions, under the supervision of the United Nations"

hitherto and since we were the ones to opt for war, we should be the ones to set out the terms of peace.

I think that the statement by Rafeuddin Ahmed, deputy secretary-general of the UN, recently published in Lisbon [see box] needs careful analysis. He says that the UN interprets the East Timor question within the Asian context, and wrongly compares the situation of Macau and Hongkong with East Timor. Such a generalization is inadequate since war has been raging in East Timor

between Jakarta and the Maubere people for 15 years. Because of this, Portugal cannot exercise its powers as the administering power of a territory over which it does not even exert minimum control.

There would need to be a revised interpretation of who the interested parties are, because, whereas the UN's interpretations are specific and conditional and not based on universal principles, Maubere resistance to the military occupation of their country means that it is the people of East Timor, not Portugal, who are the legitimate party to negotiate an end to the conflict. I have already stated and will repeat, that I am interested in discussing any plan for a solution, without pre-conditions, under the supervision of the United Nations (for the solution reached to have the backing of the UN and to respect UN principles) and under conditions of a cease-fire.

Rafeuddin Ahmed on East Timor

In a meeting with Japanese MP, Takemura Yasuko, in New York on August 8, the UN deputy secretary-general with special responsibility for East Timor, Mr Rafeuddin Ahmed, explained the differing views at the UN regarding self-determination for former colonial territories:

While in Africa, he said, the trend is to support the maintenance of the colonial borders, in Asia it is not. He said the trend among Asian countries is to seek the unification of territories that were separated by colonialism. For example, China, Macau and Hong Kong are being reunited now and no one objects. The same for Malaysia; this is seen as the unifying of areas that were formerly one, but were divided by colonial conquest. He said the same was true of Indonesia.

[The full report of this meeting was published in the Lisbon daily, *Publico*, on 4 September 1990.]

On the pro-democracy movement in Indonesia

How do you assess the pro-democracy movement in Indonesia? Do you see prospects for collaboration between that movement and the movements for national liberation in East Timor and West Papua?

It is difficult to anticipate a common platform because this movement has only just begun to be a mass movement. The slogan "from Sabang to Merauke" is a Pancasila-ist doctrine and as a colonised country, we well understand the strength of this colonial principle. But I noticed in a recent issue of TAPOL Bulletin that a leading Indonesian dissident has acknowledged the relationship between East Timor and the spirit of Indonesian expansionism. [This refers to the defence plea of Bandung student Ammarsyah – see *TAPOL Bulletin* No 98.]

We hope the movement in Indonesia understands our struggle and appreciates that true democracy can only be

achieved by recognising the basic rights of all people.

Regarding collaboration between movements with quite distinct features, such as the pro-democracy movement in Indonesia and the nationalist movements in territories which now "belong to" Indonesia, I think this is possible as long as everyone understands the illegality of what took place and the criminal methods used to make these territories "a part" of Indonesia. We would welcome with open arms any sign of a will to unite forces and reinforce efforts to bring changes in present-day society, while respecting the mutual interests of all sides. Collaboration should be firmly based on principles.

Constructive dialogue needed

What is your message to the world, in particular regarding the international position of East Timor?

After 15 years of a difficult struggle, we are more than ever convinced that only constructive dialogue can pave the way to a new era of peace, justice and liberty which the world community is striving to create on earth.

For 15 years, the East Timorese people have lived under an injustice, based on the total lack of respect of universal principles. Some people talk about differences of principle between what has happened in Kuwait and East Timor. They argue for self-determination for Afghanistan, Cambodia and now Kuwait because they are sovereign countries whereas East Timor did not, judicially speaking, fall under this category. Ironically those who defend this indefensible thesis admit that the way East Timor was annexed does not conform with the norms set for non-self-governing territories, implicitly recognising that the invasion and military occupation of East Timor is illegal.

As regards the violation of borders, the use of force and so on, vis-a-vis self-determination, Kuwait is a carbon copy of what happened in East Timor. This is why we are puzzled by the statement of the UN deputy secretary-general, Rafeuddin Ahmed, who introduced geographic interpretations in discussing self-determination. This can only diminish the universal validity of these principles and make the UN look like a government that interprets its programme on the basis of its own special interests. We believe that the principle of self-determination is an eternal principle, without which other Kuwaits will succeed. Rafeuddin Ahmed's warped interpretation of a basic UN principle will only encourage expansionist ambitions between sovereign territories which can easily discover historical ties of one kind or another to invalidate the divisions between countries separated by colonialism. Iraq asserts that Kuwait was always a part of Iraq but was separated by colonialism. In response, the UN has stood up in defence of its universal principles, and created a "desert shield" because the Middle East is not Asia.

According to this geographical interpretation, we can now expect Pakistan to reserve the right to challenge the colonial borders of Kashmir and the UN will not be able to create an "Asian shield". Under the protection of such an interpretation, Indonesia will hardly be able to wait to grab Papua New Guinea. That, of all places, is a real farce because it was colonialism which drew the border down the middle of the huge Papuan island. Elsewhere in Asia, nobody will be able to comment about the complaints of the Tibetans, because the Asian context rejects the right of

self-determination and confers the right of reclaiming territories to big states which have power...and oil. Iraq is in Kuwait because of oil and Indonesia is in East Timor because of oil.

Rafeuddin Ahmed takes no account of the fact that there are major differences between Macau and Hongkong on the one hand, and East Timor. The pacts that allowed Portugal and England the right of a physical presence in the two territories do not apply to East Timor; there was no such pact between Portugal and Indonesia, a country then under domination and now the continuation of a Dutch colony. The agreements that have given People's China sovereignty over the two territories were entered into in light of those pacts. In East Timor, the Maubere people continue to resist the invasion and military occupation by Indonesia.

In spite of all this, the Maubere people are convinced that the correct way to resolve conflicts where world principles are at stake is dialogue. We believe that the tenacious defence of democracy and human rights has today acquired a universal validity. In today's changing world, genuine change can only occur when all the people of the world benefit from the universal values of freedom and rights. Although the free world now celebrates the dismantling of the iron curtain, there still are people, in particular the small and defenceless, who are at the mercy of the mighty ambitions of the strong and powerful.

We shall continue to defend dialogue in the case of East Timor and are convinced that dialogue between the interested parties, including the resistance movement, will reconcile the interests of all. We will take into account the interests of Jakarta but only dialogue can iron out the difficulties and indicate a possible solution.

We appeal to all to press Jakarta to search for a solution by negotiation, because we believe this is the only way to safeguard the interests of each and every one. We hope that Jakarta will demonstrate its political maturity. We repeat that we are prepared at any time to enter into talks, under the auspices of the United Nations, about any plan for a solution, without pre-conditions, obviously under conditions of a cease fire.

On the Timor Gap Treaty

What do you think about Australia's policy on East Timor?

Australia has adopted the attitude of accomplice to genocide by the occupation forces; the interests it wants to secure from Indonesia's annexation of East Timor are obvious. The best proof in the Timor Gap Treaty. It is inconceivable that a democratic country with a western way of life, claiming to defend human rights, should profit from the blood of other people, a small neighbour that has not forgotten the role it played in defence of Australia when so many Timorese died fighting the Japanese. We feel betrayed that a country with western values should help Indonesian propaganda, covering up a tragedy and participating in this rapacious exploitation of what is legitimately ours.

The Timor Gap Treaty is a unilateral, illegal and criminal treaty as we are being exterminated by one of the parties. Through this Treaty, Australia has become an accomplice. Australia talks loudly about international law, yet this Treaty disrespects (international) principles, one of which says that no acquisition by force is legal. As far as I know, Australia is a signatory to this principle but has contradicted it by concluding this treaty with Jakarta. It shows how dirty, cynical and criminal the Australian government's policies are regarding East Timor. ★

Historic meeting in the bush

In September, an Australian citizen, Robert Domm, went to East Timor for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to interview the guerrilla commander, Shanana Gusmao. After a hazardous trip to the bush, he brought back six cassette tapes. The following are extracts from an exclusive report of Domm's meeting with Shanana by ABC radio producer, Mark Aarons.

Climbing a 'mini-Matterhorn'

The guerrilla officer pointed vaguely and said encouragingly, 'We're very close now. It's just up ahead.' The Timorese knew that his Australian companion was just about done for. For the past 20 kilometres, the security unit had insisted that they travel at a forced march. The rugged mountains were literally teeming with Indonesian troops patrolling the dense jungle. They knew that the resistance leader, Shanana Gusmao was in the area and desperately wanted to capture or kill him.

By then Robert Domm was already exhausted, dripping with sweat and covered in a thick coat of mountain dust. Domm squinted into the late afternoon light and silently groaned. From where the small group was standing at the foot of the mountain, it was impossible to tell that anyone was there, let alone how to get up it.



Domm photographed with some of his guerrilla escorts, on his way to meet the guerrilla leader.

A few hours earlier, Domm and his battle hardened bodyguards had met just outside a tiny Timorese hamlet. Domm's first impression was that they were a somewhat rag-tag band. Although they all wore uniforms, no two were alike. Some wore 'Afro' hairstyles and each was distinctive, far removed from a conventional army's neatness and uniformity. 'My first reaction was: "Oh no, I thought these guys were a bit better than this."

Domm reflected on the traditional Timorese ritual that had occurred shortly after they had set out from Dili. Suddenly the car had stopped and one of the men asked him to unbutton his shirt. His companions at this stage were members of the local underground. One produced a green leaf, dipped his finger into a supposedly magical substance

and drew a symbol on Domm's chest and forehead, and then repeated the ritual on the others. He explained that 'now the Indonesians won't see us. We'll be invisible to them.' Although Domm joined in with good humour, he quietly hoped that they were not putting too much faith in this tradition.

After two days travelling through the inaccessible mountains, the Australian thought twice. They had passed by thousands of Indonesian troops, on occasion within metres of them, 'but they never saw me'. Perhaps the tradition had worked, after all. More likely, the success of Domm's mission is explained by the extraordinary, military-like precision with which the East Timorese resistance organised the mission. Domm is the first outsider to gain an overview of the resistance's organisation; others have known parts of the network, but he saw first hand how the underground operates in the Indonesian-controlled towns and villages, and how the guerrillas live in the bush.

Once out in the bush, Domm realised that his initial impression of the guerrillas was quite wrong. In the mountains they rapidly demonstrated their skills as a guerrilla army. 'They don't march up and down in military parades. They're not like the Indonesian army which is trained like that,' Domm reports. 'But in terms of being able to get through the mountains at great speed, take the best vantage points, liaise with the local people and seize the initiative from the Indonesian troops, they are a formidable force.'

The first contact for 15 years

When he reached their camp on top of their 'mini-Matterhorn', Domm could not see it, even from about 10 metres. 'Suddenly Shanana emerged, and one of the guerrillas said, "There's our leader". I looked up and realised we were there. So you can see how difficult it is for the Indonesians to find them.' The last stretch was very steep, and by then he was on his hands and knees. He struggled to his feet, shook Shanana's hand and said: 'It's been a long time, sir, 15 years.' The guerrilla legend smiled shyly and simply replied: 'Yes.'

Work on making direct contact with Shanana had been under way at the ABC for quite a few years. Earlier this year, I met Robert Domm at a function and we talked all night about East Timor. As a young man in the 1970s he had travelled many times to the Portuguese colony and when Jakarta 'normalised' the territory in January 1989, he was one of the first to take advantage of the easing of travel restrictions and visit as a tourist.

Domm's three weeks in Indonesia and Timor were extremely psychologically demanding. 'I was well aware that 6 Australian media people had been killed by Indonesian troops, and that they are anxious to prevent information from getting out from the guerrillas. I knew

that I'd have to evade the Indonesian army to get to the mountains. Knowing this, there was a real possibility that I, and the resistance people travelling with me, wouldn't make it back. I had to reconcile myself to the real possibility that I may have been killed, and that's a very difficult thing to do.'

A well-organised resistance

Domm found a very different situation from that conveyed by the generals in Jakarta. The Indonesians claim that the situation is normal. But it's one of the most abnormal societies that I have ever been to. I expected a lot of resistance but I never realised that it was all so well organised and so extensive. In Dili and in many other towns there were numerous people involved in the operation to smuggle me to the mountains. Once out of Dili there were people everywhere, monitoring our movements at every stage, organising and scouting ahead to ensure that we got to the army's base camp and returned safely. That really opened my eyes because there are over 10,000 troops in that tiny country. We went through them everywhere in the mountains and it was only that local network of civilians that saved our skins. The small group with me could not have protected me from that sort of power. Our only protection was the local people, and their bush telegraph. It's all word of mouth and foot out there.

Slipping through undetected

They desperately needed this network to evade the numerous Indonesian patrols, especially the small, well camouflaged and mobile patrols hiding in the jungle. 'I saw them everywhere on the roads, patrolling on foot, crammed into military transport trucks, and travelling in armoured vehicles. Once off the beaten track, they were everywhere, and although I couldn't see them, the Timorese could. I was a bit like a blind person. I could have walked right over them without knowing because they blend in so effectively. But the resistance knew where they were, because information was passed to the security unit by the local people.'

To ensure Domm's safety, the guerrillas had spread out all along the route. Like the Indonesians, they were simply everywhere. They would spring up out of trees and the security unit knew exactly where they were hiding. I would suddenly see a guerrilla talking to a tree and I'd look round and a soldier would suddenly appear from nowhere. Shanana's base camp seemed to be ringed with this protective cordon of fighters and peasants, all looking for signs of an Indonesian advance. If one had come, resistance runners would have swiftly brought the news.'

Domm's stay at the camp was by necessity very brief, as a clockwork-like plan had been developed to spirit him back to Dili. It was a 'no nonsense' 18 hours. After a short 'breather and a drink of water', they got down to business.

The guerrilla leader's demeanour changed noticeably through the interview. At first somewhat shy and awkward, he loosened up and relaxed. 'He hadn't met an outsider for 15 years; he seemed to have lost an element of the "civilised world", if I can call it that. He'd never done an interview before and didn't know what to expect, but he was an articulate, intelligent and very thoughtful man, who answered the questions fully and frankly and very spontaneously. He was very honest admitting past mistakes and deficiencies. His only reluctance to answer questions was

that he wanted to avoid exposing the underground organisation and put people at risk.'

A living symbol

It was now easy for Domm to understand the reverence with which he had heard Shanana's name mentioned back in Dili. The Timorese see him as a living symbol of their resistance. To them, he's a precious item, in that Shanana is



Robert Domm and Shanana Gusmao.

there in the mountains, and the Indonesians haven't been able to capture him in 15 years. Despite all their best efforts, throwing as many troops as they could at him, they can't get him. With all their sophisticated US technology, he continues to survive and mount attacks against them. The people in Dili believe there's hope in the hills, it's not all bleak, they haven't been totally subjugated, because their leader is up there. That's the way they see him, sort of like a beacon. He's keeping the flame of freedom alive.'

At midday on 28 September, Domm left the camp to make his dangerous return to Dili. As he packed his small shoulder bag, he looked at the tiny Sony Walkman I had given him to record the interview. The symbolism seemed somehow tragic.

* * * * *

The return to Dili cast new light on the 10 agonizing days Domm had spent there, waiting under the watchful eye of Indonesian security for his trip to begin. He understood much more clearly just how well organised the Timorese resistance are. While the Indonesians have 'opened up' the country, this has given the underground time and space to organise.

Dili's dark underside

From his many conversations with the local people, he discovered 'a dark underside to Dili', a daily battle between the security apparatus, especially military intelligence, and the underground. 'From what I saw, Indonesian intelligence puts an intense effort into turning people into double agents or informants. So the dark underside, which a tourist sitting in a nice hotel could easily never see, is this continual struggle. It's a nasty, violent, dark underside to the place.'

As far as Domm could tell, the Indonesians need every weapon of terror and surveillance to keep the underground in check. 'In Dili, it's a classic situation of popular resistance; people in the army, intelligence, police, shops, hotels, all ostensibly participating in Indonesian rule, are all really resistance people, who are regularly providing intelligence to the guerrillas in the mountains.'

It was only on his return to the capital that Domm appreciated just how important the 'men in the bush' are to the towns. In the eyes of the Timorese living under the Indonesians, 'the guerrillas are not bowing down to anybody. They live that hard life, but they are standing tall, as

they see it. What struck me the most, going back to Dili, straight from the guerrillas' camp, was a sense of revulsion towards the Indonesians. They suddenly seemed ugly, crass and obscene in their attitude and behaviour. I have Indonesian friends there who I get on well with, and they are basically good people. But they suddenly struck me as being quite ugly, and I wanted to tell them to get out of this place.'

Robert Domm risked his life to bring the Timorese guerrillas' message to world attention. From the comfort and safety of Australia, their existence seems a million miles away. 'For 15 years they've known only the mountains, and while they listen to the world on their short wave radios, the world hasn't listened to them. The Indonesians have denied them the right to communicate for all that time, and still do.' The Australian government has actively assisted this censorship, refusing to accept radio messages originating from the resistance, and seizing several two way radio connections established by pro-Timorese Australians. ★

'A sad and terrifying place'

Conditions in East Timor have recently been described as very grim in a number of reports filed by foreign news agencies. According to AFP on 29 October, Western, Asian and Pacific diplomats just returned from a visit "were stunned by the mood prevailing in Dili". The New York Times [21 October] Southeast Asia correspondent, Steve Erlanger filed a report entitled: 'East Timor, reopened by the Indonesians, remains a sad and terrifying place.'

There are several reasons for the deplorable situation now existing in East Timor:

* The pro-independence demonstration at a mass to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Dili Diocese on 4 September led to more acts of defiance among Timorese youth, who were also responding to many arrests and the mal-treatment of detainees.

* Clashes broke out between troops and school-children on two occasions in Dili during October. One occurred after a classroom of pupils at a junior high school in Fatumeta shouted down an official from the local prosecutor's office who lectured them about the Pancasila. A few days later, Sao Jose secondary school was raided by troops searching for pro-independence literature believed to be on the premises. Later, troops were said to be searching for a weapon allegedly taken by a youngster during a scuffle.

* Masked and hooded men have been roaming the streets of Dili at night and beating up Timorese youths, inflicting a virtual curfew on the town. These gangs which have not been identified but are thought to be from the police, are called *ninja* and are reminiscent of the unidentified death squads that killed so many people in the towns and cities of Java and Sumatra in 1983-84.

* There are reports of a major intelligence operation which was launched to penetrate and break up the clandestine network that so successfully organised Robert Domm's trip into the bush to meet resistance leader, Shanana Gusmao.

There are reports of a number of arrests and unconfirmed reports of some deaths. According to AFP [28 October 1990], church sources in Dili said that 45 people were arrested between 15 and 26 October. The same source said: "Never before has the situation been so terrible or so tense." Governor Mario Carrascalao was quoted as denouncing "the climate of terror and the actions of the police whose job is to protect the people, not terrorise them".

Meanwhile, Reuter's Jonathan Thatcher filed two reports following a visit to Dili. In the first on 5 November, he too found Governor Carrascalao in an angry mood, warning that East Timor "could collapse into civil war" if a planned visit by Portuguese parliamentarians goes ahead. People are going to look at (that) moment as their last opportunity to show their feelings, he said. Later, Thatcher quoted a church source as saying that "the hatred (towards) Indonesia is quite deep". A Timorese told him: "All the people in Dili live in terror. This morning a mother told me her son was captured yesterday. She doesn't know where he is. Every day I receive this sort of information." [Reuter, 18.XI.90]

Troop build-up

According to the *Sydney Morning Herald* [30.X.90], Indonesia has increased the number of troops in Dili to combat anti-Indonesian protest. The troops have sealed off parts of the city and are conducting house-to-house searches. Witnesses said they had seen combat-ready troops disembarking in Dili from naval landing craft which had transported them from Baucau.

The *BBC World Service* [29 October] suggested that the so-called 'hearts and minds' policy introduced when the

present military commander, Brigadier-General Warouw took over last December, has been abandoned. The army is said to be stepping up its presence in towns and villages in a show of strength.

Parliamentary mission

Attempts to salvage the planned visit of a Portuguese mission from the deadlock reached earlier this year led to a decision at the UN in New York for the mission to be preceded by a UN preparatory mission, accompanied by Portuguese officials. Indonesia's Foreign Minister Ali Alatas distorted this, claiming that the Portuguese parliamentarians visit would go ahead but with UN officials in tow as the Portuguese could not be trusted to draw objective conclusions. [*Kompas*, 11 October 1990]

Sixty infants die in Oe Cusse

During September and October 1990, hundreds of children under five fell ill with severe diarrhoea in Oe Cusse, East Timor (an enclave on the north coast of West Timor). *The Jakarta Post* [27 October] said that sixty had died through lack of medication or because they had reached hospital too late for treatment. Most of the victims were described as being 'undernourished'.

Family planning 'should be abandoned'

Meanwhile, birth control officials now admit that the East Timorese prefer large families and say that "the idea that a smaller family would bring prosperity should be abandoned in East Timor". The report linked the attitude to 'reduced population numbers', but implied that this had occurred because of 'factional strife'. [*Jakarta Post*, 20.X.1990] ★

223 members of US Congress sign letter on East Timor

On 19 November, no fewer than 223 members of the House of Representatives, more than half the House, wrote to Secretary of State, James Baker, expressing concern about East Timor. The signatories include 170 Democrats and 53 Republicans.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We would like to underscore our deep concern over recent developments in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, the predominantly Roman Catholic island territory invaded by Indonesia in 1975 and forcibly annexed. We believe that it is of great importance that United States' concern over the Timor situation be stressed at this time.

As you are aware, dozens of people were detained and abused following a pro-independence demonstration during the visit of Pope John Paul II to East Timor on October 12, 1989. In addition, many East Timorese who had called for respect for human rights and political freedom were beaten and bloodied by Indonesian police after leaving an informal meeting with United States Ambassador John Monjo during his visit to East Timor in January. To his credit, Ambassador Monjo registered concern over this situation.

However, after our ambassador's visit, an atmosphere of fear and repression has persisted in East Timor. Subsequently, a top-ranking Indonesian official warned East Timorese to cease their protests against Indonesian rule, particularly in the presence of foreign visitors, or face harsh consequences. It has been reported that those who demonstrated during the ambassador's visit, and their family members, were threatened with disappearance. There have been further reports of repeated, unexplained detention and abuse, in some cases including torture, of a broad group of individuals.

We are deeply concerned about such threats as well as repression against those who are peacefully attempting to express their views.

There is also information that more than 100 East Timorese villagers, including women and children, were massacred in a recent Indonesian military operation, said to be in retaliation for the killing of three Indonesian soldiers.

The use of East Timorese civilians as "human shields" (similar to the Indonesian "fence of legs" operations in past years) in Indonesian military operations against pro-independence guerrillas in the countryside is further proof that serious human rights violations continue. The "human shield" operations by Indonesian military forces are known to have caused thousands of deaths in the early 1980s, and the recurrence of a similar practice is deeply disturbing.

Indonesian military policies and actions, such as restrictions on where Timorese villagers can farm their crops, are causing periodic cycles of hunger and malnutrition in East Timor. A precarious situation like this is especially alarming when it is recalled that scarcely ten years ago the population of East Timor was decimated by a war-related famine.

The United States should use its influence to help ensure that humanitarian needs of this nature are promptly addressed. This should certainly include a concerted effort to address the reportedly growing problem of tuberculosis in East Timor.

Finally, in light of the continuing tragic consequences of the 15-year-old conflict in East Timor, the United States should support a process of peace talks that could lead to negotiations without preconditions among the parties directly involved.

Editor's note:

This latest in a series of letters sent to the US administration by members of Congress not only exceeds the previous record of 194 signatures. It also refers for the first time to the crucial question of Washington supporting a process of peace talks to lead to negotiations with no pre-conditions, the very point stressed by Shanana Gusmao in his interview with Robert Domm.

Timorese seek refuge in church

After the 4 September conflict between students and the Indonesian security forces, some East Timorese students went into hiding in the Motael church in the outskirts of Dili. On Sunday 19 November, 13 students still remained in the church. According to sources just back from a visit to Dili, Indonesian troops forced their way into the church and arrested 3 students. The names of those arrested are not known but of the remaining students, seven names have been identified:

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Vasco Gomes, Gregorio da Cunha, Baptista da Sequeira, Estanislau Carcères, Aleixo da S. Gama, Augusto Mausiri, and Jorge M. A. Serrano.

Their demands to the Indonesian authorities: the right to demonstrate, no manhandling by the authorities and a demand to Brig. Gen. Warouw, commander of Dili, and Colonel Gatot Purwanto, head of intelligence, to keep their promise to soften the security approach in East Timor.
[From our Tapol correspondent in Jakarta] ★

CENSORSHIP

Two journals forced to the wall

After much talk about openness, the cause of a free press has taken a battering. A popular weekly owned by a leading publisher, Gramedia, has been banned and the same company decided to surrender another of its publishing licences. Then came the Jakarta police ban closing a satirical drama, police intervention which prevented the poet, Rendra, from reciting a programme of his poems, an exclusion order against the New York Times correspondent and a ban on the circulation of the International Herald Tribune and the Australian Financial Review.

[Tempo, 13 October 1990]

The press

Tabloid banned

A weekly tabloid, *Monitor*, has had its licence to publish (SIUPP) revoked and its editor, Arswendo Atmowiloto, is to be prosecuted for causing offence to Muslim religious sentiment. The publication faced these heavy penalties following an uproar provoked by a story published on 15 October which listed 50 personalities chosen by its readers as their favourites. Many Muslim organisations felt outraged because the poll listed the Prophet Mohammad in eleventh place, with pop stars ranked higher.

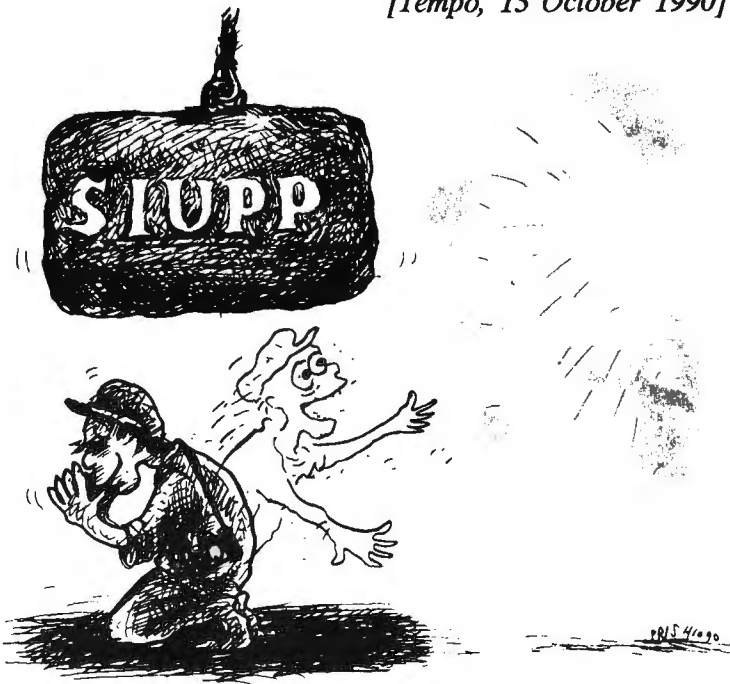
Monitor was a highly popular weekly with a circulation of over 700,000. It highlighted pop stars and well-known TV, radio and film personalities, one of many journals published by the Gramedia Magazines Group (KGM), owned by the company which owns *Kompas*, the second largest daily.

Ban follows warning

Three days before the ban, the government served the weekly with a stern warning which should have been the end of the matter. Shaken by the strength of feeling his poll had aroused, the editor Arswendo published a special edition, devoting the front page to an apology and retracting the article. To placate Muslim groups, he publicly apologised on television.

But some groups started demonstrating outside the editorial office, forcing their way in to cause extensive damage. Some circles even started hinting that the unfortunate Arswendo was 'Indonesia's Salman Rushdie'.

Although normally a 'stern warning' only leads to a ban if the publication later commits another 'offence', in this case,



A fresh wind, under the shadow of the SIUPP.

the Information Minister, Harmoko, announced three days later that the weekly's SIUPP had been revoked.

Meanwhile, Arswendo had turned himself in to the police, to demonstrate that he felt responsible for having unintentionally caused offence but also for his own protection.

But his troubles were not over. After being in police custody for about a week, it was announced that he would face trial for causing offence to religious sentiment under Articles 156, 157 and 171 of the Criminal Code which carry a maximum penalty of five years.

Far from coming to the aid of a persecuted member, the Indonesian journalists' association, PWI, sided with his persecutors and announced his expulsion. Without PWI membership Arswendo's career as a journalist is finished.

Arswendo's poll was nothing more than a circulation booster. He had not compiled a list of people for readers to choose from but invited the readers to vote for anyone they chose, including personal friends. Top of the poll was President Suharto and several of his family. The poll was linked to a lottery, with five million rupiahs for the lucky entrant, of whom there were 34,000.

Few have rallied to Arswendo's defence. Perhaps the most level-headed response has come from Abdurachman Wahid, leader of the Muslim Nahdatul Ulama, who criticised those who wax furious at this misdemeanour but say nothing about numerous injustices in society. He rejected the use of press bans under any circumstances because they obstruct the free flow of information. [*Tempo*, 27/X/1990]

One group to go against the stream was a Muslim Students Committee in Semarang which called for the tabloid to be reinstated. [*Jakarta Post*, 1/XI/1990] The original document which is circulating abroad bears 452 signatures of students whose names and colleges are clearly identified. It called for the law on publishing licences to be repealed and stressed that the principle of the presumption of innocence must be upheld.



Admiral Sudomo and Information Minister Harmoko. A little tiff over who should keep an eye on the press?
[*Tempo*, 13 October 1990]

Suharto upholds press ban law

A few weeks before disaster befell *Monitor*, a controversy broke out in government circles when Admiral Sudomo, Minister-Coordinator for Political and Security Affairs, said that the law empowering the Information Minister to revoke press licences would be repealed, leaving editors or journalists who step out of line to face court proceedings. Sudomo may have thought he was reflecting Suharto's remark in August that differences of opinion are now permissible. [See *TAPOL Bulletin*, No. 101, October 1990] Sudomo is thought by some to be promoting openness, to encourage people to speak out against Suharto.

Sudomo's promise to end the SIUPP regulation encour-

aged many to describe the fear which pervades the media. The SIUPP cancellations which shut down *Sinar Harapan*, the country's leading daily, in 1986, and *Prioritas* in 1987, were frequently mentioned in the discussion that ensued. However, it was soon apparent that Sudomo had spoken out of turn. Harmoko emerged from a meeting with Suharto to announce that SIUPPs were here to stay. He claimed that media workers need not fear it, as long as 'they keep within the law'. He quoted the president as saying:

The press must use press freedoms guaranteed in the 1982 Basic Press Law in a responsible way. Anyone who disagrees clearly wants to evade the responsibilities of freedom and favours freedom according to liberalism.

(Liberalism is second only to communism as the demon of Indonesia's 'Pancasila democracy'.)

An extreme example of self-censorship

A few weeks after *Monitor* was banned, it was discovered that a light-weight magazine *Senang*, currently being produced by KGM had earlier, in a September issue, committed what could be seen as an offence to Muslim sensitivities.

A reader who was trying to have a vision of the Prophet, had asked the magazine's advice column to interpret a dream. The columnist called the dream 'insignificant' and illustrated the reply with a turbaned and cloaked, faceless figure bearing a halo, presumed to be a visual representation of Mohammad. (Muslims regard any visual representation of the Prophet as sacrilegious.)

The column came to light when *Pelita*, a daily of the government party, Golkar, which addresses itself to a Muslim readership, drew attention to the piece. Without further ado, KGM boss, Jacob Oetama, who also edits *Kompas*, handed the *Senang* SIUPP back to Information Minister Harmoko, and announced that the journal had ceased publication.

Among a number of comments solicited by *Editor*, Nahdatul Ulama's Abdurachman Wahid was critical of 'trigger happy' Muslim leaders who had incited antipathy towards other religions, inflaming demonstrations and the damage of property. Muslims suffer from an inferiority complex and a sense of insecurity, he said.

A scapegoat

In an essay on Arswendo's fate, published by *Editor*, Arief Budiman, lecturer in social science at Satya Wacana University, Salatiga, wrote that Arswendo is the victim of a social process which needs scapegoats.

Although Muslims make up the majority of the nation, their political role is insignificant. The Monitor case has made it possible for them to demand attention. Information Minister needed a case like this to show that his power to revoke a SIUPP is still necessary, (despite what Political and Social Affairs Minister-Coordinator Sudomo has said).

In the fiercely competitive press world, Monitor's competitors have received a blessing in disguise, now that a gap in the market is waiting to be filled. The journalists' association, PWI (by expelling Arswendo) has posed as a body sensitive to public demands. And Gramedia itself, to safeguard its greater interests, has sacked Arswendo from all his posts.

The arts

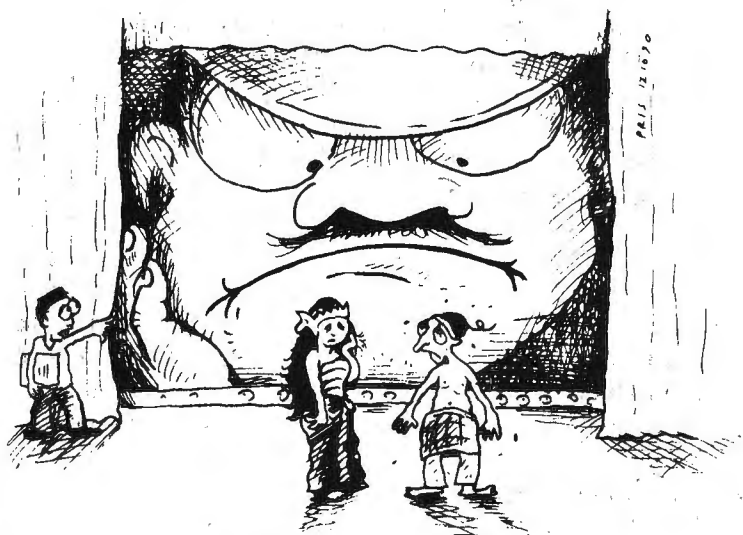
The death of 'Suksesi'

Some weeks before the press crackdown, the Jakarta police ordered a well-attended farce, *Suksesi* to close down. *Kompas* commented in an editorial entitled, 'Has the fresh wind of openness been halted in its tracks?'

Tempo [20.X.1990] quoted the playwright, Norbertus Riantiarno (Nano) as saying his plays are portraits of society and nothing more. Asked whether the ban on an earlier play of his, *Sampek Engtay* in Medan last year had prepared him for the present ban, he said:

I never thought this would happen to 'Suksesi'. My only thought was to produce something entertaining. Succession is not a banned topic. It is being discussed everywhere and now, there is the fresh wind of openness, meaning we need not fear creativity or differences of opinion. This is why I wrote Suksesi.

Now, I'll write another play. If that's banned, I'll write another one and if that's banned, I'll go on writing till my plays are not banned.



Tempo, 20 October 1990.

Tempo summarised the story which centres on the rivalry between four sons and daughters of a king, each plotting to oust him. At first, the daughter, Diah Roro Suksesi, is only interested in accumulating wealth, helped by her father, and busies herself with social works. But later she joins forces with an army officer to oust the king. [The likeness between this character and Suharto's oldest daughter, Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana, Tutut, is unmistakable.]

Before the ban, Nano was interrogated for four hours by the police and later summoned by BAIS, the Strategic Intelligence Agency. There was no suggestion, says Nano, that performances should stop. But the Jakarta chief of police claims Nano was told to stop and when that did not happen, the play was banned.

Rendra poetry reading halted

A poetry reading by Indonesia's leading poet, W.S. Rendra, was called off when Jakarta police interfered just as it was about to begin on 8 November 1990. Crowds were already queuing for tickets outside Jakarta's Ismael Marzuki Art Centre when a statement by Rendra was posted, announcing that the authorities had ordered him not to include two of

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the seven poems on the programme. Rendra refused because this would be in conflict with his own conscience, and it would be an insult to his audience. As a result, the poetry reading was cancelled.

The two poems to which the authorities took exception were entitled: 'The prayer of a young Rangkasbitung man in Rotterdam' and 'For the people of Rangkasbitung'.

In the first of these poems, Rendra wrote about the impact of tourism, motels and plantations on the countryside – girls fleeing the villages to get jobs in massage parlours and young men becoming beggars in the cities, only to be rounded up and thrown into prison.

The second poem expresses the views of a modern-day Multatuli. [Multatuli was a 19th century Dutch colonial official who was dismissed for speaking out against the oppressive role of native administrators, used by the Dutch to exploit village communities. His novel, *Max Havelaar*, published in 1860, was a devastating exposure of the oppressive and corrupt nature of Dutch rule in Java.]

Rendra wrote: "The people are exploited by their own district chiefs. Peasants only sweat, never laugh and their basic rights are flaunted." One verse reads as follows:

I see
the industrialised countries giving economic aid.
The people
in the developing countries
lose their land
so that rich people can play golf,
or so that dams can be built
to supply electricity
to industries set up by foreign investors.
And all the poor unfortunate people get, Dear God,
for each square metre of their land
is enough money to buy
a pack of American cigarettes.

The foreign press

New York Times correspondent in South East Asia, Steve Erlanger, has been banned from visiting Indonesia following the publication of an article which argued that Suharto's main consideration in deciding whether to stand down in 1993 was to protect the business interests of his family. The article first appeared in the *New York Times* on 11 November entitled "For Suharto, his heirs are key to life after '93". A day later, it appeared on the front page of the *International Herald Tribune* under the title "Suharto's Indonesia: A Family Toll Mahal". It was also published in the *Australian Financial Review*.

Besides announcing a ban on Erlanger, Information Minister Harmoko said action would be taken against *IHT's* distributor in Indonesia, NV Indoprom for "failing to apply the country's self-censorship policy". [*UPI*, 17 November] A week later, it was announced that the company would no longer distribute either of the papers. [*Reuter*, 24.XI.1990]

Less than two months ago, Minister-Coordinator Sudomo said the government had stopped blacking out offending items in foreign journals that circulate in Indonesia. However, writing about the business interests of the Suharto family was too much to take. It was, said Harmoko, an "insult to the head of state and discredited the nation".

New labour union formed

Strikes and demonstrations against low wages and abysmal working conditions are becoming more and more frequent in Indonesia. The government-backed union, SPSI, has no teeth to fight for real improvement in workers' conditions, so now, a new independent labour organisation has been established.

The new labour organisation, *Serikat Buruh Merdeka Setia Kawan* or Solidarity Free Trade Union, has been set up by workers and human rights activists. H.J.C. Princen, director of the Jakarta-based Institute for the Defence of Human Rights is the chairperson and Saut Arintonang is secretary-General. At the official launch in Jakarta, November 14, Princen said it planned to campaign for better wages and working conditions through a "union free from the influence of the owners of industry, employers and the government". The organisers acknowledged that cheap labour had attracted investment, but said it also meant "disaster for the workers". The union already has about 5,000 members and plans to hold a congress early next month to elect a leader and agree a constitution. [*Financial Times*, November 15, 1990]

STANLEY MAMUSUNG



Poncke Princen. [Editor, 24 November] With his independent union in the news, his photo is appearing again.

A few days before, Princen said: "We know what's impossible. Let's work on what's possible. If we can't have international standard wages, let's start talking about a decent living wage". On the need to attract investment, he said: "We believe in the importance of economic growth. But what is growth if the people who make it possible don't share the profits of growth?" [*Reuter* 7 November, 1990]

Government: 'Setia Kawan is illegal'

Two days after the launch, Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Admiral Sudomo said the government only recognised the government-sponsored SPSI, not the new one which has not registered with the interior ministry and was illegal. Princen said he was prepared to register Setia Kawan with the ministry. The right to set up a union was written in the constitution and not even the government

could take it away. "I want to bring this case to the courts to see who is right... I'm willing to challenge him [Sudomo] to a public debate on television," [*Reuter* November 16] Officially, the government insists that each sector of the community may have only one organisation, but a precedent breaking the mould was set a few months ago when the lawyers' organisation *Ikadin* split into two; most government departments continue to recognise *Ikadin* while the breakaway IAI has been accorded recognition by the Justice Minister.

Few people doubt that the SPSI is totally ineffective. It has branches in less than 10,000 of the 126,000 business in the country. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has refused it recognition while the US trade union organisation, AFL-CIO, sees it as nothing more than an extension of the government. Set up in 1985 to replace an earlier government creation, the FBSI discredited itself from the start by electing a businessman, Imam Sudarwo, as chairman. This year's SPSI congress which opened in Jakarta on 25 November is expected to elect a new chair. The three candidates are: Utoyo Usman, deputy head of the indoctrination agency, BP-7; former police chief, retired Gen. Awaluddin Djamin. and retired Gen. Sutopo Yuwono, a former chief of the state intelligence agency, Bakin.

Bitter labour disputes

With Indonesian workers among the worst paid in the world, a new independent union representing their interests has come not a moment too soon. The minimum wage - Rp 2,100 (US \$1.15) a day for Jakarta and far lower elsewhere in the country - is totally inadequate to protect workers from poverty. According to a 1989 study of women workers in 10 typical Jakarta factories by the International Labour Organisation, 88% were malnourished. [*Letter, Far Eastern Economic Review* November 8, 1990] These rock-bottom wages are unlikely to increase under the government's repressive labour policies. Such is the level of repression that some companies have sacked workers pushing for the formation of a branch of the existing government-backed union in their workplaces. Those who protest or strike are typically labelled communists, dismissed, and taken in for questioning by the police. Recent incidents include:

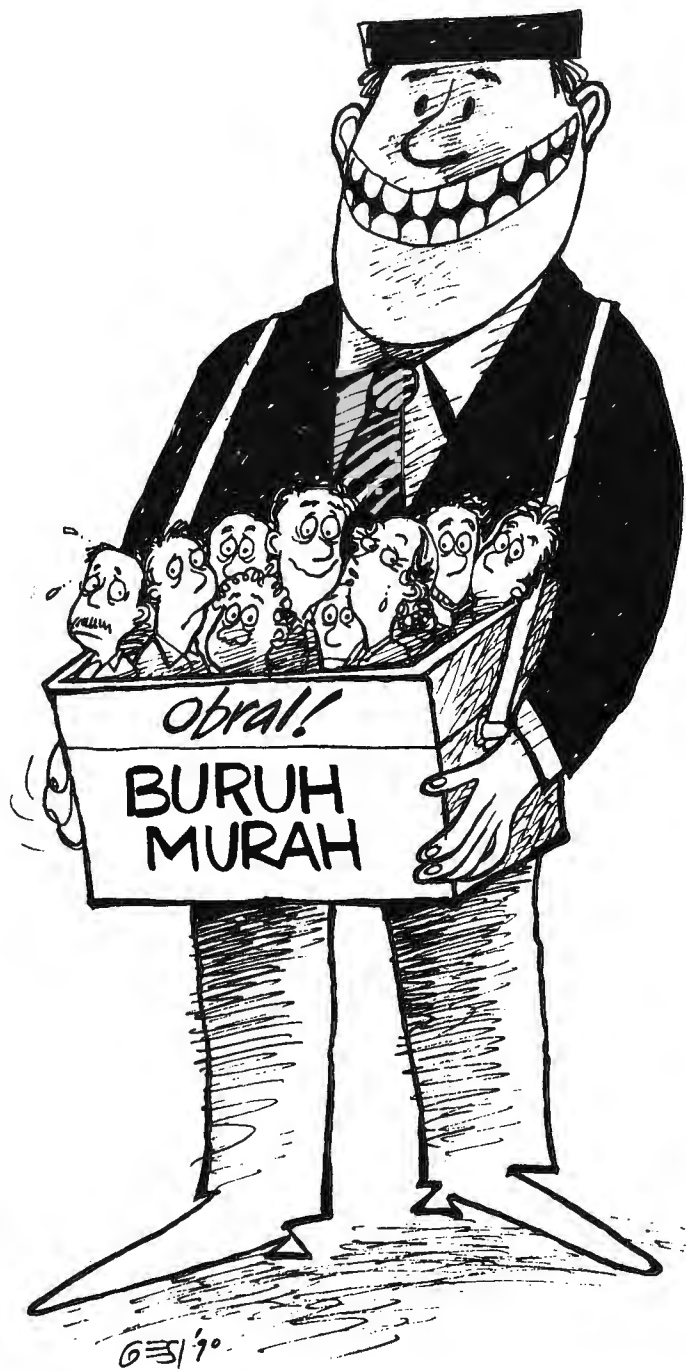
- * the dismissal by a Jakarta real estate company of 38 workers who demanded overtime payment which they had not received since 1986;
- * the interrogation by police of workers involved in a demonstration for higher wages at a plywood plant in Gresik, East Java, during which the head of personnel's car was damaged;

- * the dismissal of 27 workers by PT Sandratex of Tangerang, for demanding the minimum daily wage of Rp 1,600 and asking that married women workers be allowed to live in their own homes instead of in the on-site company dormitories;
- * the publication in a newspaper of names and photographs of dismissed employees, by their former employer, thus ruining their chances of future employment;
- * the failure by a garment manufacturers, to pay severance pay to 100 workers laid off, due to reduced sales resulting from the Gulf crisis.

In Jakarta, there have been 23 official strikes so far this year, against 14 in the whole of 1989 but labour activists put the number of unofficial strikes at over 200. The government is worried by the apparent snowballing of industrial action, but also wants to change Indonesia's image as a heavy-handed labour repressor. The recent revocation by manpower minister Cosmas Batubara of a 1963 presidential decision banning strikes was a gesture towards the US, where the AFL/CIO has long argued that Indonesian labour laws are an obstacle to continuing GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) status for Indonesian exports. In fact the lifting of the ban was meaningless since the 'vital government projects' covered by the ban have long been completed [see *TAPOL Bulletin* 101]. Nevertheless, Batubara found it necessary to explain that the lifting of the ban had been mistakenly taken as a go-ahead for strikes. If both sides observed Pancasila Industrial Relations (where disagreements are settled by consensus), there would be no need for strikes, he claimed.

Low wages: the major attraction

The manpower minister has been trying to persuade companies that permitting their workers to set up a section of SPSI and paying them a decent wage is in the companies' interests. However, according to the *Financial Times*: "The almost total absence of labour unrest, together with officially sanctioned low wages in Indonesia, have been one of the main factors in attracting large amounts of foreign investment to the country." The manpower department prefers to stress 'stability' [ie, the repression of workers' rights] over low wages as the main attraction for investors, but the investors themselves make no bones about the pull of low wages. A Japanese businessman whose company is one of many setting up in a new business park on the Indonesian island of Batam, near Singapore, said: "We're going to Batam in search of cheap labour." In Singapore he would have to pay 900-1,000 Singapore dollars a month for each assembly-line worker, in Malaysia between 300 and 350 dollars; in Batam he will pay his Indonesian worker just 215 Singapore dollars a month. [*Kyodo*, 26 Oct. 1990] ★



"Cheap labour for sale." Indonesia's strongest appeal to foreign investors.

Editor, 8 September 1990

Bonar gets 8 years 6 months

A graduate student at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, **Bonar Tigor Naipospos**, has been sentenced to eight and a half years, accused under Indonesia's anti-subversion law of disseminating Marxist teaching. [For details, see *TAPOL Bulletin*, No 101, October 1990]

Bonar's sentence exceeds the 7 and 8 years handed down to his colleagues, Bambang Subono and Bambang Isti

Nugroho last year. The verdict led to student demonstrations which were broken up by police using teargas. Asia Watch has condemned the sentence as making "a mockery of President Suharto's call for... more political openness. If a student can be convicted of subversion for trying to encourage discussions about social, economic and political change in Indonesia, it suggests that the Indonesian government has no tolerance for differences of opinion."

Owing to lack of space, we are unable to outline Bonar's defence plea in court. We hope to do so in our next issue. ★

***Blood on their banner: Nationalist Struggles in the South Pacific*, by David Robie, publishers: Zed books Ltd. & Pluto Press, 1989**

Journalist David Robie has succeeded in compiling an important up-to-date account of colonialism and conflict in the South Pacific, drawing on his substantial experience in the area as a reporter for Agence France Presse, and several Australian, New Zealand and Third World publications. It is from this Pacific perspective that East Timor and West Papua are discussed, in the second chapter of the book. Identified as one of the three major colonial powers in the region, alongside the United States and France, Indonesia continues to deny the people of East Timor and West Papua the right to self-determination enjoyed by other Pacific nations.

The 'Forgotten Wars' chapter throws us straight into the heart of colonial aggression, at the moment of Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, with the ill-fated Democratic Republic of East Timor's last radioed plea for international help. We are then confronted with first-hand accounts of atrocities committed against Dili's citizens by the invading forces. The immediacy of these reports contrasts starkly with the cool complicity of the nations who failed to condemn the invasion.

Both East Timor and West Papua are presented as the victims of betrayal by larger powers, while those less powerful are prey to the 'political hooliganism' of the more powerful and have been coerced into discontinuing their

support for the liberation movements. The role of foreign support for Indonesia in its occupation of East Timor and West Papua is eloquently exposed. Robie uncovers, for example, how Canberra's lack of response to the killing of five Australian journalists by Indonesian troops in October 1975, and the absence of international outrage, gave Suharto the green light for a full scale invasion of East Timor. Washington's complicity in the invasion of East Timor is linked to the control of the strategic Ombai Straits, in addition to oil. Australia's failure to speak out against Indonesia's handling of the so-called Act of Free Choice in West Papua is roundly condemned.

David Robie's admirable book leads us up to the near-present of 1989, the year of the Timor Gap Treaty and the cosmetic 'opening up' of East Timor and, in West Papua, continued raids by Indonesian troops into PNG in search of OPM guerrillas. Today, in East Timor, resistance against Indonesian rule has intensified with 'intifada'-style actions in the urban centres and continued activity in the bush by Falintil, the armed resistance; for West Papuans, Papua New Guinea's powerlessness to resist Indonesian pressure spells further betrayal after the extradition from PNG of OPM leader Mecky Salosa, and the possibility of Indonesian troops being stationed in PNG border villages. Robie's optimism that 'the future prospect of a Free West Papua may yet emerge' may seem hopelessly misplaced. But if raising international awareness of the persistent colonialism in this part of the world, - whether the colonisers are old-style European or new-generation Third World colonisers - can contribute to their demise, then David Robie's *Blood on Their Banner* has an important part to play.

Frances Carr



STOP PRESS!

Censorship steamroller continues

Yet more censorship has struck the Indonesian capital, with a police order preventing a satirical play about Jakarta's slums from going ahead, only hours before it was due to commence a ten-day run on 28 November. The play, *Opera Kecoa* (Cockroach Opera) was being staged by the same company, the Theater Koma Group whose play, *Sukses*, was closed down a month earlier.

The play, which has been staged several times in the last ten years, contains several songs with lyrics now deemed by the police as being 'likely to create a public disturbance'.

'Economist' banned

Meanwhile, another foreign journal to have incurred the censor's wrath is the London *Economist*. The issue of 17 November 1990 failed to appear on the book stalls because of an article entitled, "Suharto and the reins of power". Oddly enough, the article for the main part eulogises Suharto's regime for being on the brink of producing "another of those famous Asian economic miracles". However, it failed to please the censors for devoting a few short paragraphs to some facts about the business interests of Suharto's children. What better proof that Suharto is acutely embarrassed by any mention of a subject which can only be described as his Achilles' heel?

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Apology: Lack of space has forced us to postpone the continuation of submissions to the UN Decolonisation Committee, promised in the last issue.