

This item contains:

- Control of East Timor handed to Indonesians (07/1976) *The Washington Post*
- East Timor becomes Indonesian Province (07/1976) *The Washington Post*
- Timor: Staging the rites of integration (18.06.1976) *Far Eastern Economic Review*
- The South Pacific: The making of Tim-Tim (14.04.1976) *Far Eastern Economic Review* | 2 pp.
- Australia: Switching off Fretilin (15.10.1976) *Far Eastern Economic Review*
- Indonesia: Suharto tinkers with the engine (14.04.1976) *Far Eastern Economic Review*
- The man in the Timor sandwich (14.04.1976) *Far Eastern Economic Review*
- Australia's rift with Indonesians over Timor troubles U.S. (02.05.1976) *The Washington Post*
- East Timor becomes Indonesian province (18.07.1976) *The New York Times*
- Timor (1976) *International Institute for Strategic Studies* | 2 pp.
- Indonesia's hidden hand in Timor (23.09.1975) *The Christian Science Monitor*
- Indonesia faces guerrilla action in East Timor (08.12.1976) *The Christian Science Monitor*
- Indonesia pays a heavy price for its Timor invasion (07.10.1976) *London Guardian*
- U.N. calls on Indonesia to leave Eastern Timor (23.04.1976) *The New York Times*
- Men freed in Timor returned to Lisbon (28.07.1976) *The New York Times*
- Death toll in East Timor overstated, Australia says (02.03.1976) *The New York Times*
- East Timor acting on Indonesian link (22.03.1976) *The New York Times*
- Waldheim urging new Timor efforts (16.03.1976) *The New York Times*
- Fighting on Timor said to kill 60 000 (15.02.1976) *The New York Times*
- Indonesian force quits East Timor (20.03.1976) *The New York Times*
- Ten attack Indonesia over Timor (17.11.1976) *The Age*
- Indons. killed 60,000: report (19.11.1976) *The Age*
- U.S. will send Indonesia grain worth \$35.2 million (19.04.1976)
- Suharto dismisses head of troubled Pertamina (04.03.1976) *The New York Times News*
- East Timor: Back to mother (24.07.1976) *The Economist*
- Portugal refugees face bleak winter (1976) *The New York Times*
- East Timor: The war Australia might have prevented (19-24.07.1976) *The National Times* | 6 pp.

Indonesia Completes Takeover Of Portuguese Colony of Timor



The New York Times/June 1, 1976

By DAVID A. ANDELMAN
Special to The New York Times

JAKARTA, Indonesia, May 3 —Indonesia today completed its takeover of East Timor, ending 400 years of Portuguese rule.

A 37-member People's Assembly, meeting in Dili, the capital, approved a resolution officially integrating the tiny colony with Indonesia as that country's 27th province.

Today's action came six months after Indonesian troops stormed ashore on the eastern half of Timor island, driving before them forces of the leftist Revolutionary Front for an independent East Timor.

There has been little doubt since then that Indonesia would eventually integrate East Timor with the Indonesian nation.

The western half of Timor island, at the eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago, has long been an Indonesian province but until today Portugal continued to hold legal dominance over the eastern half.

This morning in Jakarta, Gen Ali Moertopo, the deputy chief of Indonesian intelligence, which has played a leading role in the entire Timor affair, emerged from a conference with Indonesia's President Suharto and urged Portugal to accept the "will" of the People's Assembly. Portugal broke diplomatic relations with Indonesia after the Indonesian invasion.

Indonesia repeatedly refused to negotiate any solution to the complex question of this remote Portuguese colony where since last summer various revolutionary forces battled sporadically to impose their own solution on the colony.

However, Indonesia, which repeatedly urged self-determination for the desperately poor colony, clearly had no intention of allowing any independent government to be formed in such a strategically integral part of its own archipelago.

Number of Emigrants From Poland Increasing

WARSAW, May 31 (Reuters) —The number of exit permits granted to people wishing to emigrate to West Germany has risen sharply since ratification of the Warsaw-Bonn agreement on payments and emigration in March, West German sources said here today.
In April, more than 2,260 exit

permits were granted compared with just over 1,000 last January and only 300 in January 1975.

Under the agreement, West Germany will pay Poland \$900 million in credits and indemnities, while Poland agreed to issue exit permits for up to 150,000 persons during the next four years.

COOL, GREEN, CAMP, KIDS
AID THE FRESH AIR FUND

U.N. Calls on Indonesia to Leave Eastern Timor

By PAUL HOFMANN

Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.,

April 22—The Security Council called on Indonesia today to withdraw its forces "without further delay" from eastern Timor, a remote scrap of the defunct Portuguese colonial empire that it has been controlling since early December.

The veto on a resolution implicitly denouncing continued Indonesian occupation of the former colony was 12 to none. The United States and Japan abstained, and Benin, formerly Dahomey, did not participate.

Passage of the resolution ended 10 days of debate in public Council meetings and behind closed doors, with third world countries split in their evaluation of Indonesia's stand, which was discreetly backed by the United States.

Eastern Timor, an area a little smaller than New Jersey, has 630,000 to 650,000 inhabitants, more than 90 percent of whom are said to be illiterate. Communications are difficult, and the local society is described as clannish. The western part of the island of Timor, is Indonesian.

When the remnants of Portu-

Security Council Votes 12-0 for Resolution, but Language Is Considered Ineffectual

gal's colonial rule collapsed last year a leftist faction, the Revolutionary Front in the Liberation of East Timor, sought to take over the territory, proclaiming an independent state. Other groups came out for integration with Indonesia.

On Dec. 7, Indonesian troops, described as "volunteers," invaded the former Portuguese colony. Revolutionary French forces abandoned Dili, the territory's capital, and withdrew into the interior. Since then, guerrilla fighting has been going on in various parts of the territory.

Last Dec. 22 the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution requesting Indonesia to withdraw all of its troops from East Timor.

Indonesia and spokesmen for the pro-Indonesian "Provisional Government of East Timor" told the Security Council in the debate that closed today that more than 1,000 Indonesian "volunteers" had recently pulled out of the former colony, and the remainder of the military force would be withdrawn soon. Indonesian doctors and other civilian personnel were remaining in eastern Timor, it was stated.

During the Council discussions, representatives of the Revolutionary Front movement, and the pro-Indonesian factions exchanged charges of atrocities that they said had occurred in the territory during the last several months.

Before the vote, Japan intro-

duced an amendment that would have inserted the word "remaining" before the word "forces," thus acknowledging that some Indonesian troops had already pulled out.

The amendment was defeated because only eight votes, instead of the required nine, were cast in its favor.

Many delegates and some United Nations officials said privately that the rather bland language of today's Security Council document practically meant that Indonesia was given leeway to consolidate its hold on the former Portuguese colony.

Indonesian Soldiers Leave Eastern Timor Territory

JAKARTA, Indonesia, April 18 (Reuters)—Three hundred Indonesian soldiers have been withdrawn from eastern Timor because peace has been restored there, Foreign Minister Adam Malik said here.

He said yesterday that the former Portuguese colony was now completely controlled by the pro-Indonesian Provisional Government of East Timor.

Indonesia has said that the troops, officially described here as volunteers, were sent to eastern Timor at the request of the provisional government.

Mr. Malik did not say whether there were any more Indonesian soldiers in eastern Timor.

July 1976

U.S. Post

Around The World

Indonesia Annexes E. Timor In Defiance of U.N. Council

JAKARTA—Indonesia defied the United Nations and annexed yesterday the former Portuguese colony of East Timor.

Signing a bill that institutionalized East Timor's integration as Indonesia's 27th province, Indonesian President Suharto appealed to the leftist Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor (Fretilin) to work with other Timorese in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country.

Fretilin claimed recently that its forces had inflicted heavy losses on Indonesian-backed troops and had captured a number of the territory's positions.

The integration of East Timor and its 630,000 people, under Portuguese rule for more than 400 years, defies a resolution by the U.N. Security Council in April that called for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops and reaffirmed the Timorese right to self-determination.

Control of East Timor Handed to Indonesians

DILI, East Timor, June 24 (Reuters)—An East Timorese political leader symbolically handed over this former Portuguese colony to neighboring Indonesia today.

Arnaldo dos Reis Araujo, chairman of the Provisional Government of East Timor, set up after an Indonesian-led invasion last December, presented a bit of soil and a nugget of gold to an Indonesian mission to symbolize "the return of East Timor to its motherland."

Then the mission, accompanied by journalists and foreign diplomatic observers, split up for what had been billed as a fact-finding tour to confirm that the 600,000 East Timorese wanted integration with Indonesia.

Before the tour started, however, the Indonesian Home Minister, Maj. Gen. Amir Machmud, made it clear that the mission had already accepted a petition approved last month by a hastily convened 28-member East Timor People's Assembly calling for integration.

World News Briefs

East Timor Becomes Indonesian Province

JAKARTA, Indonesia, July 17 (Reuters)—More than 400 years of Portuguese rule in East Timor officially ended today when President Suharto signed a bill incorporating the territory into Indonesia.

With the signing of the bill, passed by the Indonesian Parliament two days ago, East Timor became Indonesia's 27th province.

The Western half of Timor, an island north of Australia, has been part of Indonesia



The New York Times/July 18, 1976

since the Dutch East Indies gained independence from the Netherlands after World War II.

When Portugal withdrew from East Timor last year a civil war broke out between leftists seeking independence and pro-Indonesian Timorese. Indonesian troops intervened, and although about 800 members of the independence movement, Fretilin, are still believed to be operating in the territory, they appear to have been contained.

TIMOR

Staging the rites of integration

By Hamish McDonald

Dili: The streets of this small town were crowded with cheering crowds waving red and white Indonesian flags. Chinese citizens led a papier-mache dragon to the sound of gongs. Hill tribesmen in black and red-woven sarongs carried cutlasses made from old car springs and pranced along while their betel-chewing womenfolk beat time on cymbals made from tin cans and hub-caps. It was thus, with concerted shouts of "viva Indonesia, viva Suharto, viva integration," that Dili

feted on May 31 what in effect was the territory's "act of self-determination." An assembly, called the East Timor People's Representative Council, met for the first time in a hall formerly used as a sports club by the Portuguese elite. The members — 26 men and two women — were presided over by the former Apodeti leader and Raja (ruler) of Atsabe, Guilherme Maria Goncalves, who sat below a huge Indonesian flag. To one side sat the East Timor Provincial Government's chief executive, Arnaldo Dos Reis Araujo, and his deputy, former Timor Democratic Union (UDT) leader Francisco Xavier Lopez da Cruz.

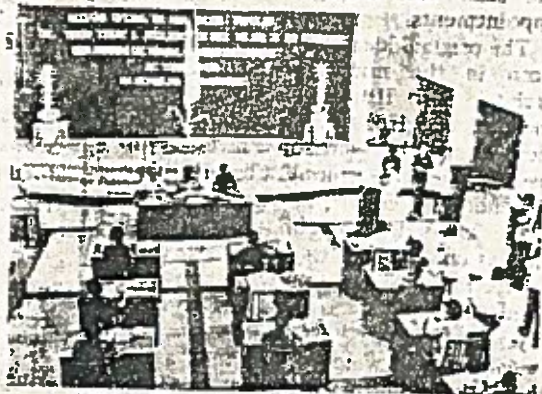
With a bang of Goncalves' gavel, the meeting began and delegates began trooping up to a dais to deliver speeches in Portuguese, interrupted by shouts of *viva*. After one hour and 20 minutes of sitting time, and another three raps of the gavel, Goncalves declared the council's decision to petition Indonesia for immediate integration of the territory in the name of East Timor's 650,000 people.

Watching the proceedings from a roasting-hot gallery was the first group of foreign diplomats to visit East Timor officially since the Indonesian takeover, and the first group of foreign journalists since those Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik accompanied last January. The observers had taken off from Jakarta's Kemayoran airport at 6 am, transferred to a smaller aircraft at Kupang, Indonesian Timor, and arrived in Dili just in time for the council meeting. Only one of the party is believed to have spoken any Portuguese. Apart from occasional commentary in English, the only explanations given were by the former UDT leader Domingos Oliveira, who appeared badly briefed for his task.

Oliveira said that of the 28 council members, five had been elected from

the Dili area. One-man, one-vote elections had taken place between April 30 and May 4, he said. When pressed for details of numbers involved, he said about 18,000 people aged 21 and over had taken part out of about 27,000 people in the region. In the other areas, delegates had been selected by "traditional consensus and consent." All the people had gathered together and chosen their representative, he said. Asked whether anyone had opposed integration, Oliveira said: "Now there are no more doubts about integration."

Apart from a break when the observers went outside to watch a procession, movement was confined to the council hall. Journalists who attempted to "stray" further afield were politely but firmly ushered back. Immediately after the council meeting, all were led back into their cars and briefly driven round the town before going straight back to the airport and taking off for Kupang. No one had a chance to even shake hands with council members, and executive members of the Provisional Government refused to answer press questions, climbing immediately into their new Volvo cars. Observers therefore had no opportunity to probe behind the ritual to see how genuinely the Timorese people had been consulted, if at all.



"Long live Indonesia": No more doubts.

The diplomatic turnout for the ceremony was a disappointment for Indonesia. Despite weeks of forewarning, many countries hung back from accepting invitations, apparently for fear that their presence might seem like an endorsement of the proceedings or recognition of the Provisional Government. Only seven embassies in Jakarta eventually sent officials: Malaysia, Thailand, New Zealand, India, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria.

Officials in Jakarta were angered by Australia's refusal, which they felt had influenced other countries in their decision, and the refusal seemed likely to plunge relations between Canberra and Jakarta back into the cold after the improvement worked on by Australian Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock recently. Among the absentees was Japan,

which turned down an invitation to attend with the explanation that it would be inappropriate to do so without UN representation. Up to then, Japan had been one of Indonesia's most unequivocal supporters on the Timor issue, taking its side in the various UN debates. Other absent friends were the United States, the Philippines, Singapore, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and several European nations.

Some of the non-attendance, however, appears to have been caused by pure muddle. The Philippines had in fact accepted the invitation — but their representative overslept and missed the flight. The French Embassy in Jakarta did not receive its invitation until six hours after the aircraft took off. No public explanations have been given for the absence of the UN Secretary-General's special envoy on Timor, Vittorio Winspeare Guicciardi, although he has made little secret of how hopeless he feels his task of salvaging self-determination to be.

Meanwhile, the formalities of taking over the territory have picked up pace. The council meeting in Dili was followed within the week by the dispatch of a 50-man delegation to Jakarta in an In-

donesian Air Force Hercules transport. On June 7, they were ushered before President Suharto and senior Cabinet members in the Merdeka Palace. Suharto greeted them as "brothers long separated by colonialism," and said he received their petition with gratitude, confidence and responsibility. In a defiant speech, he said that self-rule was not a matter of recognition by others, but of the people's will and decision.

Even now, the act of integration will not take place immediately. Indonesians do not lose enjoyment of their theatre by intimate knowledge in advance of the plot, and the world is still to be put through two more months of the Timor wayang. Suharto announced that a delegation of Indonesian officials and parliamentarians would be sent to Timor, not because of doubts about the Provisional Government's consultative process but so that "the people of Indonesia will witness themselves the situation and speak face to face with their brothers in East Timor." This is expected to happen within the next month or so, enabling formal incorporation to take place before independence day on August 17.

THE WORLD

political refugees, many of his fellow officers suspect that the murders are the work of right-wing Peronist death squads trying to discredit the Videla government.

Worries about the refugees are indeed widespread. United Nations High Commissioner Sadruddin Aga Khan expressed his concern for the safety of the estimated 25,000 political refugees in Argentina following the murder of the Uruguayans. Last week Bolivian President Hugo Banzar Suarez, who overthrew Torres in 1971, proclaimed a day of national mourning for his murdered foe and promised him a military funeral befitting his rank. He also invited back to Bolivia all of the some 1,000 exiles who feel themselves "persecuted by any form of extremism."

THE SOUTH PACIFIC

The Making of Tim-Tim

The remote and primitive Portuguese fiefdom of East Timor in the Lesser Sunda islands may have been the closest thing ever to a colony that no one really wanted. Discovered by the Portuguese in the 16th century, it has been theirs by default ever since. A mountainous wilderness roughly half the size of Maryland, East Timor has 650,000 inhabitants, mainly illiterate natives. Colonial mastery, such as it was, lay in the hands of an appointed governor, several hundred Portuguese militiamen, and a handful of coffee planters.

All that began changing rapidly two years ago. The Portuguese, spurred by their anticolonial revolution at home, wanted out. Led at the time by Marxist Premier Vasco Gonçalves, they encouraged formation of a pro-Communist

Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin), which finally seized control and began butchering members of opposing political factions. Suddenly, East Timor became a minor source of international tension. Indonesia, which holds adjoining West Timor, professed horror at the thought of a Communist toehold. In turn, that renewed neighboring Australia's suspicion of Indonesia's expansionist ambitions in the region. *Is that all?*

Six months ago, Indonesian President Suharto struck. He sent thousands of marines and paratroops to Dili, the capital, where the fighting was bloody but short (TIME, Dec. 22). Suharto's problem then was that he earned international disapproval for his invasion. Some show of popular acceptance was needed for the annexation. Last week just such an extravaganza took place as pro-Indonesians welcomed the idea of union with Indonesia. TIME's Robert Kroon was one of about 50 international observers at the event. His report:

The invitation was from the "Provisional Government of East Timor," addressed to 25 ambassadors in Jakarta and a selection of Indonesian and foreign correspondents. The occasion: "To attend the session of the People's Representative Council of East Timor on the exercise of the right of self-determination of the people of East Timor."

When we boarded a spanking new Garuda Indonesian Airways jet, the diplomats were uncomfortably outnumbered by some 40 newsmen. Only India and Iran sent their ambassadors; Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, New Zealand and Nigeria sent lower-level dignitaries. The U.S. and the Soviet Union declined, as did the Common Market countries, Australia, and even such close

Indonesian allies as Singapore and the Philippines. (One reason might have been that Portugal, despite little active interest in the money-losing colony, had filed a complaint with the United Nations Security Council after the invasion.)

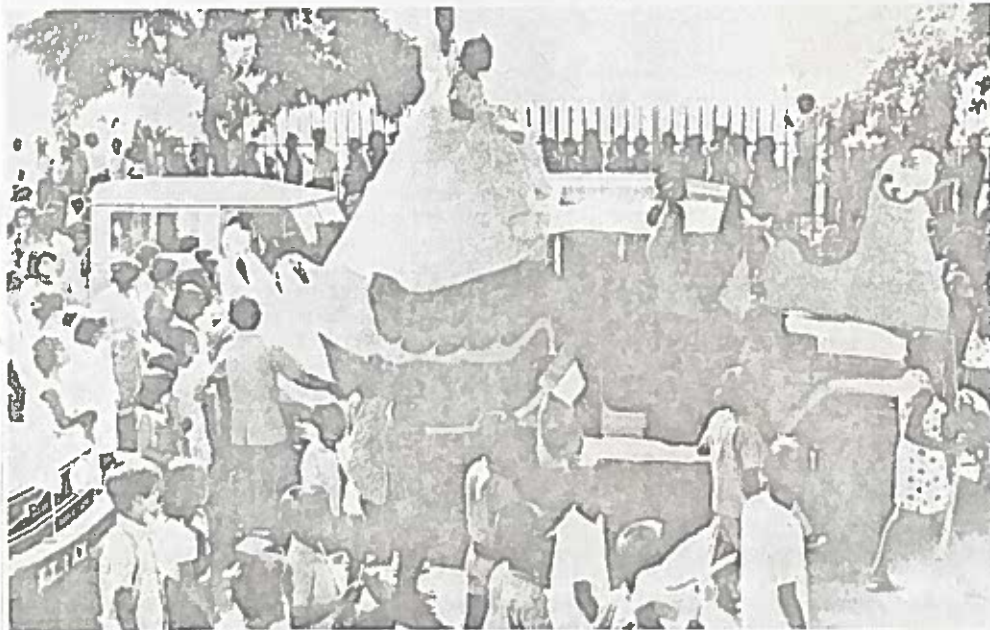
Five hours later, we reached Dili. Crowds of dark-skinned Timorese lined the dusty streets between Dili's pink-and-white stuccoed houses, some of which had been hastily painted over to erase Fretilin slogans. Gongs and cymbals clanged, and drums sounded amidst cries of "Merdeka!" (Freedom) and "Viva Presidente Suharto!" No Indonesian armed forces were in sight, only a handful of local militiamen in ragtag colonial uniforms and wide-brimmed hats, carrying a variety of antediluvian weapons. Finally, we reached a grubby, squat sports hall adorned with a sign saying "We wish you a happy conference." The 28-member People's Representative Council had already started its historic session.

Inside, the Deputies were arrayed in neat rows, many of them dressed in the short-sleeved safari outfits favored by Jakarta's top-level civil servants. There were no Indonesian officials present, and a giant red-and-white Indonesian flag was the only sign of the new facts of life in Dili. A single agenda item figured in gold lettering on a huge red screen: "Integração de Timor (Timor) na República de Indonesia"—Integration of Eastern Timor in the Republic of Indonesia. Already, Indonesians (who love abbreviations) refer to their new territorial acquisition as "Tim-Tim."

Total Integration. Speaker after speaker launched into flowery statements in Portuguese, stressing "cultural, ethnic and material ties interrupted by 4½ centuries of Dutch and Portuguese colonialism." The assembly decided to send a delegation to Jakarta to plead for "total integration," a petition that seemed assured of a sympathetic reception.

In good Portuguese tradition, the 2½-hour session was closed with a prayer. Outside, a festive procession marched past the building. But newsmen were told that there was no time for a press conference, and Jakarta's hand-picked governor, Arnaldo de Araujo, (a former schoolteacher) and all the Deputies suddenly vanished. No diplomat had any contact with them.

Back in Jakarta, officials said that East Timor would be administered as a *daerah istimewa*, or special territory, with separate funds earmarked for its development. Ultimately, it may become Indonesia's 27th province. "It's going to cost us millions," sighed one Indonesian army man, "not only because it may still take a year to pacify the place completely, but also because East Timor is a chronic deficit area." But, added another, "we had to swallow Tim-Tim, and we are sure our friends abroad will swallow what we have done as well, sooner or later."



TIMORESE CELEBRATE AFTER PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT VOTES TO JOIN INDONESIA
After a bloody prelude, agreement among deputies who then avoided the press.



Salim, Widjojo, Murtopo: Old-style New Order.

appearance of several European-educated technocrats, some of whom go to considerable lengths to distinguish themselves from the American-educated Widjojo group. One of these men is Bachruddin Yusuf Habibie, the new Minister of State for Research and Technology. A West German-educated aeronautics engineer, Habibie is self-consciously non-American in his style and approach. Like many members of the new Cabinet, he has close personal ties with Suharto.

Daud Yusuf, though he ended up with the distinctly non-technocratic post of Minister of Education (rather than the Finance portfolio, which he

might have preferred) is another technocrat conscious of his European background. The new Public Works Minister, Purnomosidi Hajisaroso, is, like Habibie, German-educated. However, unlike the Research Minister, he does not make a point about his "alien" background and is expected to work well under Widjojo.

FORCE OF ARMS: If the technocratic group has held on to and perhaps even extended its influence, the military has also done well in terms of seats. There are nine generals and one air marshal in the 24-man inner cabinet and another senior officer, Major-General Bustanil

Arifin, is expected to be named junior minister for cooperatives.

Some military groups have fared better than others, however. For example, the position of Lieutenant-General Ali Murtopo and his group is materially enhanced. An intelligence officer with close personal links to Suharto, Ali Murtopo becomes Information Minister, thus gaining a much stronger bureaucratic base.

Although Ali Murtopo was hoping to land the plum Home Affairs Ministry, he can take satisfaction from his new position and influence. Not only has he assumed ministerial rank, he has been joined by two long-time associates,

ter) Mochtar Kusumaatmadja — by putting Canberra's views "too forcefully."

Last week, shortly after he was confirmed as Indonesia's new Foreign Minister, Mochtar joked with Woolcott about the Australian's alleged pro-Indonesia bias: "Don't they know I almost had you thrown out for putting your views too forcefully," said Mochtar, referring to the time in August-September 1975 when, as caretaker foreign minister, he stood in for Adam Malik, who was away at the UN.

SENSITIVE: Timor was the dominant issue during Woolcott's stay, but it was not the only matter making this a difficult posting. Another highly sensitive issue was the fall-out in Jakarta in 1976 over the leaked Peking transcript in which Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser is alleged to have confided to the Chinese leaders his doubts about President Suharto's leadership and his worries about the stability of the Indonesian regime. The matter had to be defused by the Ambassador at presidential level.

Not long afterwards, Woolcott had to arrange Fraser's first visit to Jakarta as Prime Minister, a tricky exercise in view of the domestic political situation in both Australia and Indonesia. Other

problems on his plate included the Australian ban on Indonesian shipping and, on the administrative side, a sensitive local staff situation.

Overall, he feels, he is leaving the post with the relationship in as good a shape as can be expected, given the stresses that developed during 1975-77. "During this period, and despite Timor, Australia has considerably advanced its position in Indonesia, not only in the investment and trade field but also in areas like commercial aviation.

"I think we have been able to maintain a generally good and sympathetic image of Australia in the Indonesian media, despite Timor, and certainly we have had advances in the cultural field. In other words, quite a lot has gone on parallel with and unaffected by Timor."

Woolcott seems particularly upset by the "pro-Indonesian" allegations, which he dismisses totally. The allegations date back to the selective leaking in 1976 of embassy cables to Canberra. These gave the impression that the Australian Ambassador was leading a one-man campaign to win Australian backing for the Indonesian takeover of East Timor — an interpretation denied by embassy sources.

Given the delicacy of the Timor situa-

tion, one criticism which might be levelled at Woolcott is not so much that he condoned Indonesia's takeover but that he pushed too hard for an official recognition of the reality of Indonesian control.

Woolcott, perhaps because he wanted to tie a ribbon around the Timor file before his departure, seemed at times to be pushing harder than was prudent. "That may be true," he said before leaving. "But I've always taken the view that you decide the best course for Australia and then recommend that course. At times that means that you are putting views which may not be popular and which may have an adverse effect on your future and I guess it's a question of whether you've got the guts to do it or back off."

He was equally frank in dealing with the accusations that he had been too close to the Indonesian generals. "An ambassador, if he is to have any influence on foreign policy formulation and if he is going to inject Australian thinking into the Indonesian decision-making process, absolutely must, because of the way this country works, have a fairly close rapport and personal relationship with the key figures."

— DAVID JENKINS

AUSTRALIA



Fraser: No licence.

Switching off Fretilin

By Kenneth Randall

Canberra: Three carloads of federal police, security men and officers of the Australian Telecommunications Commission last week surrounded a car parked unobtrusively in bushland just south of the outskirts of the northern city of Darwin. Within minutes, they had moved in and put an abrupt end to the only direct communication with Fretilin, the independence movement whose supporters continue to fight on in the mountains of Indonesian East Timor.

It had taken the officials a week to track down the Fretilin radio link, mounted in the boot of the car, but the Government had been painfully aware of its existence for several months. Not only had the Indonesian Government been monitoring and protesting against the signals, but they had also been "following" the work of the top-secret Defence Signals Division (DSD), which had been based in Darwin since it was flushed out of Singapore three years ago.

DSD monitors military, diplomatic and commercial radio traffic within its range — and apparently did so from Singapore with the tacit approval of the Singapore Government until, in 1973, the then Labour Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, deliberately made its activities public, forcing the decision that the unit be withdrawn to Australian soil.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam

Malik, in an interview last month, said he had asked the Australian Ambassador Richard Woolcott to transmit his formal request that the Fretilin transmitter be closed down. Questioned in Parliament, Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser defended the Darwin seizure simply on the grounds that the transmitter was illegal — that is, not licensed — and was being used in matters in which Australia was not a "party principal."

It was the second time this year that Fretilin's communications had been cut off. Another Darwin-based transmitter was seized in January, but apparently was replaced after about three months. When news of the latest raid became public, almost a week after the event, Fretilin spokesmen declared again that the link would be re-opened as soon as they could arrange it.

How long such cat-and-mouse efforts might continue seemed to depend largely on the outcome of the visit to Jakarta by Fraser and his Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock. Official sources in Canberra were hinting strongly, however, that there would be much tighter surveillance of illegal radio transmissions in northern Australia in future.

The latest seizure was given a curious twist by the publication in *The Canberra Times* of a report claiming that the Darwin transmitter had not, in fact, been in contact with East Timor, but had been used to fake messages as if they originated there. Written by a prominent journalist with close links to the security services and military, the report claimed that the Fretilin forces in East Timor were equipped only with short-range portable transmitters "given them by left-wing officers in the old Portuguese colonial administration."

It said that equipment of this sort could not have sent the regular messages about Fretilin "victories" that had been received in Australia this year. Indonesian authorities, the report said, had informed Australia several months ago that the so-called broadcasts from East Timor were hoaxes. Fretilin spokesmen promptly described the report as a fabrication and suggested it was part of an attempt to "smother" genuine messages in future. They said that Fretilin's "Radio Maubere" broadcast on 3804 kilohertz in the 75-metre band and invited public verification of the claim.

HONGKONG

'Mr Culture' gets in on the act

By Raymond Yao

Hongkong: The Urban Council (UC) is to stage "the first ever Festival of Asian Arts" in November. Performing groups and artists from Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore and India will participate. Announcing the festival only last week, UC chairman Sonny Sales proclaimed it as "the fruit of Hongkong's increasingly close cultural links with other parts of Asia."

Sales has painstakingly cultivated a "Mr Culture" image in recent years, but his critics see the new festival as a rival to the now well-established Hongkong Festival of the Arts (in which Sales has little direct say although the UC manages the City Hall, in which it is held). One of his fellow UC members dismissed the new festival as a scheme for "self-aggrandisement."

The festival's expensive brochure reveals a lop-sided emphasis on the performing arts and an almost complete absence of the visual arts. Out of a total of 23 items, there are only three exhibitions.

Geographically, the festival's title is an exaggeration. A Chinese group from Singapore is the only representative of the Indochina-Malay peninsula while the whole of the Subcontinent is providing only one recital of Indian music. The title is also inaccurate: It is not a Festival of Asian Arts but of Asian artists, many of whom will be performing Western works, including orchestral and modern ballet.

Although most urban councillors agreed in principle to back their chairman's scheme, several expressed reservations. The festival will cost the Council HK\$750,000 (US\$154,000), only 40% of which is expected to be covered by ticket sales. "This is a service to the community and there will be no attempt to make it pay," announced Sales. But Urban Councillor Peter Chan was not alone in dismissing it as "a waste of our money."

Another councillor pointed out that there will be a total of only 40,000 seats and that over half of Hongkong's 4.5 million population is under the age of 25. Although over 50% of the tickets are below HK\$15 (prices range from HK\$3 to HK\$30), "that is no small sum for young art-lovers," he said.

Preparations for the festival have been rushed although the idea was mooted in mid-1975. The announcement was made on October 5, leaving only five weeks for promotion and ticket sales.

Suharto tinkers with the engine

By David Jenkins

Jakarta: President Suharto's Third Development Cabinet (REVIEW, Apr. 7) indicates that he is firmly in the saddle. He has his own men in all the key military and political posts in the Government and has balanced the various groups which are jockeying for power beneath him. He has a mandate from the People's Congress to rule for another five years and shows every intention of doing just that.

One problem, however, is that there is no designated successor who could take over the presidency should anything happen to Suharto. In such an eventuality power would almost certainly remain in the hands of ABRI (the Armed Forces), but there is no saying which man or faction would emerge as the dominant force.

For the foreseeable future, the new Cabinet keeps the basic combination of generals and technocrats that has been the hallmark of the New Order Government for more than a decade. There have been modifications, however. One is a substantial increase in the military representation (from five out of 22 seats in the old cabinet to 10 out of 24 seats in the new), even if some of those gains are more apparent than real.

Another change is that, by and large, the new technocrats tend to have a somewhat higher level of technical competence than their predecessors. "It is very much a stand-pat operation," said one source. "The tinkers they have brought in are a bit more competent. But it's the same car and the same engine."

One reason for such scepticism is that there are few signs that the new-look Cabinet is likely to mount an all-out assault on the key problems of income distribution, land reform, cooperatives and the promotion of small business. For the most part, the philosophy seems to be that the poor will steadily become prosperous as the nation pushes ahead with its basic development plans.

Suharto did announce that six junior ministers would be appointed to look after specific problem areas like food production and cooperatives. However, given the calibre of the men reportedly chosen, there seems to be little prospect that they will make a great impact on their respective areas of responsibility.

In view of the key role of the technocrats in the Suharto Government, much attention was focused on the position and power of Widjojo Nitisastro, the head of the so-called "Berkeley mafia," Indonesia's technocrats.

In fact, the technocrats emerged with their power and influence largely intact.

Although Public Works Minister Sutami, who was ill, and Mohammad Sadli, who had been hinting that he was tired of being a minister, were replaced, Widjojo retained the key men in his team. Finance Minister Ali Wardhana was kept on after Widjojo went in to bat for him very hard and although Emil Salim was moved upwards and sideways from communications to become Minister of State for Control of Development and Environment, he remained in the Cabinet. (One reason for this, it is said, is that the President did not want to curb the power of the technocrats or even have it thought that he was doing so.)

MEGA-MINISTRY: Widjojo himself held on to the two key economic posts. He was Minister of State for Economics, Finance and Industry and chairman of Bappenas, the national planning board. His ministerial post has even been elevated to "mega-ministry" status.

"Suharto needs Widjojo and Widjojo won't work without his team," said one source close to the technocrats. "The technocrats have come out quite well. The only loss is Sadli. It is a pity but it is not a vital loss... they can work as well without him."

Emil Salim's replacement, Air Mar-

shal Rusmin Nuryadin, while not a technocrat, is seen as an able and energetic administrator who should have no difficulty working with the Widjojo people. As an added advantage, he has the political clout and backing to counter the unwieldy, corruption-ridden Communications Ministry. Although Emil Salim was technically competent, they were important independent power bases in the department over which he had little or no control.

Another plus for the technocrats is the appointment of Harun Zain as Minister for Manpower and Transmigration. Zain, who is also a Berkeley graduate, is a tireless administrator who won widespread praise during his governorship of West Sumatra. His appointment is expected to give a shot in the arm to the nation's stalled transmigration programme.

Another technically competent addition to the ranks of the technocrats is Sudarsono Hadisaputro, the new Minister for Agriculture. Known as the father of the BUUD (village business units) and the KUD (village cooperatives), Sudarsono has also been intimately linked with the Bimas (rice intensification) programme. His detractors point out that all these programmes have run into serious difficulties, but associates say that they did well in the Jogjakarta area where Sudarsono personally supervises their implementation.

Another feature of the Cabinet is th

The man in the Timor sandwich

Jakarta: As Richard Woolcott left Canberra early in 1975 to take up his new appointment as Ambassador to Indonesia, reports were already circulating that Jakarta planned to invade the tiny Portuguese outpost of East Timor.

The reports turned out to be true and during the three years that followed hardly a week went by in which Woolcott and his staff were not preoccupied with at least some aspect of the Timor affair.

It was one of the most exacting assignments ever given to an Australian ambassador; during that time relations between Jakarta and Canberra sank almost as low as they had a decade earlier during the Indonesian confrontation of Malaysia.

Woolcott's 37-month term coincided almost precisely with the Timor crisis. He arrived in Jakarta in March 1975, just as the situation in Timor was beginning to get out of hand. He left in April 1978 shortly after Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser accorded de



Woolcott: Forceful views.

facto recognition to the Indonesian takeover of the province.

During this time, Woolcott had to bridge four changes of government in Australia and he often seemed to be meat in the diplomatic sandwich between Australia and Timor. At home, he was criticised for being too close to the Indonesian officials. In Indonesia, he sometimes found himself in those same generals' — and, on one occasion, acting foreign minister (now M.

Australia's Rift With Indonesians Over Timor Troubles U.S.

By Peter Costigan
Special to The Washington Post
CANBERRA—A bitter dispute between Australia and Indonesia over East Timor, the internationally forgotten tail end of Portugal's abandoned empire, is causing U.S. officials in the area deep concern.

Both the rightist military government of Indonesia's President Suharto and the rightist democratic government of Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser have reluctantly acknowledged their dispute.

But both maintain that they will not let the argument—generated by growing anger in Australia over Indonesia's invasion of East Timor in November and its determination to incorporate the tiny territory into Indonesia—disturb the basic friendship between the two nations.

American concern over the dispute has deepened in recent weeks with signs of a possible long-term split between Australia and Indonesia. The two nations militarily and economically dominate the confluence of the Indian and Pacific oceans.

With the State Department and Pentagon watching closely, American diplomats in the area have worked overtime since early April to contain the dispute.

Indonesian and Australian officials have gone out of their way to avoid any reference to the American interest in their dispute.

The death of five young journalists from Australia—three of them Australian citizens, one British and one a New Zealander—in October has threatened to escalate the dispute into confrontation. They were killed near East Timor's border with the portion of Indonesia that shares the same island.

The five television journalists went to East Timor last September to cover the exploding civil war there after the Portuguese administrators left the island.

In October they disappeared and the Indonesian government originally claimed that they accidentally burned to death when mortars set fire to the house they were in during cross-fire between warring Timorese factions.

At the time, the Labor Party government of Gough Whitlam was in the middle of a constitutional crisis that resulted in Whitlam being sacked in November.

On Dec. 13, Prime Minister Fraser's conservative government was elected by a landslide majority. Australians paid little attention to the fate of the five newsmen.

But suddenly the mood has changed. Newspapers and the Australian journalists' association generated parliamentary pressure that pushed the government into ordering an inquiry.

Australian concern was heightened by the realization that Indonesian "volunteer" forces had invaded East Timor while Australia was consumed by its December domestic political crisis and had set up a provisional government that planned to supervise the incorporation of the 600,000 people of East Timor into Indonesia.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik added fuel to the fire of Australian anger last week by announcing that President Suharto would have an "important" announcement in August, that there would be a new national day and that Indonesia would then invite foreign correspondents to visit East Timor.

Nobody doubted what he was talking about—the incorporation of East Timor.

Even more infuriating for Australians, Malik proposed a very Asian answer to the problem of the five journalists' deaths.

"Let us forget them," he told a press conference in Jakarta attended by Australian correspondents, "and we will erect a monument to them."

Jose Martins, the leader of one of several small political parties in East Timor that until recently encouraged the Indonesians to move into the tiny country, last week gave a detailed version of how the journalists allegedly were gunned down by Indonesian troops.

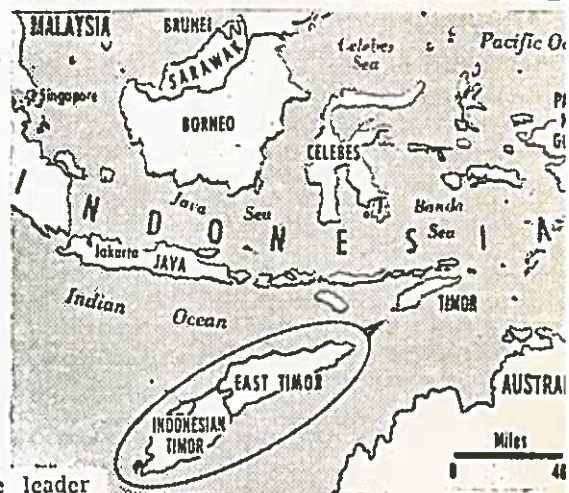
Australian Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock managed to persuade the Indonesian government to allow three Australian officials to visit East Timor in an effort to find out what happened.

But government officials in Canberra are pessimistic about how much they will find out.

Since the late President Sukarno was eased out of power beginning in 1965, Australian-Indonesian relations had been stable. Despite cultural and economic contrasts. But Australians have always been extremely nervous about events to their immediate north.

Australians have regarded Papua-New Guinea, immediately to the north, and Indonesia as buffers, against the more powerful nations of Asia farther north.

During the Sukarno years, Indonesia demanded control of the western part of New Guinea, known as West Irian, and annexed it. This made Australia worry about



Indonesia, and later it ordered American F-111 jets, fitted as strike aircraft, as a deterrent.

Australians are beginning to believe that the Indonesian invasion of East Timor is part of a pattern of military expansion by their most powerful neighbor.

The Fraser government has called for withdrawal of Indonesian forces from East Timor and supports U.N. initiatives calling for self-determination for the people there.

That aggravates the Jakarta government, which believes that Australia gave it the diplomatic go-ahead with its invasion of East Timor in the pragmatic interests of maintaining stability and keeping out any leftist rule on the island—which is only 96 miles from the northern Australian coast.

Both nations are allies of the United States, and Australia is formally linked to it through the ANZUS treaty. Both Australia and the United States have been involved in efforts to develop Indonesia's largely untapped resources and to tackle poverty among its 120 million people.

The last thing American diplomats in the area want is a split between the two friends, especially one that current Australian emotions could force into a confrontation in which Washington would be asked to choose sides.

World News Briefs

East Timor Becomes Indonesian Province

JAKARTA, Indonesia, July 17 (Reuters)—More than 400 years of Portuguese rule in East Timor officially ended today when President Suharto signed a bill incorporating the territory into Indonesia.

With the signing of the bill, passed by the Indonesian Parliament two days ago, East Timor became Indonesia's 27th province.

The Western half of Timor, an island north of Australia, has been part of Indonesia



The New York Times/July 18, 1976

since the Dutch East Indies gained independence from the Netherlands after World War II.

When Portugal withdrew from East Timor last year a civil war broke out between leftists seeking independence and pro-Indonesian Timorese. Indonesian troops intervened, and although about 800 members of the independence movement, Fretilin, are still believed to be operating in the territory, they appear to have been contained.

1976

(London)

International Institute for
Strategic Studies

48

DECOLONIZATION

could spark off Algerian retaliation, which in turn could perhaps lead to wider conflict. Short of such a full-scale war, the regime that appeared most threatened by events in the area was that of Mauritania. By the end of the year the settlement of the Spanish Saharan dispute had resulted in a major rift in Algerian-Mauritanian relations, with the possibility that pro-Algerian elements in Mauritania might attempt a coup against Mokhtar Ould Daddah in Nouakchott.

TIMOR

Following events in Portugal during April 1974, the belief that the tiny colony of Portuguese East Timor would ultimately become an integral part of Indonesia was widely shared in the western Pacific. The parallels with Indonesia's claims to Dutch (West) New Guinea in early 1960s seemed obvious. Moreover, a gradual programme of incorporation (based on the West New Guinea model of 'national self-determination' under Indonesian political tutelage) appeared to win the approval of Indonesia's South-east Asian neighbours and Australia, since neither Australia nor Malaysia, the Philippines or Singapore were willing to risk upsetting harmonious relations with General Suharto's regime, on which regional stability was thought to depend.

The events of 1975 shattered the general consensus over the fate of Timor, so that by the end of the year, Indonesia's relations with her neighbours - and particularly with Australia - had reached their lowest ebb since the West New Guinea affair and the Confrontation period. The immediate source of the trouble was Indonesia's direct military intervention in December in the civil war (which had begun in the summer). But a more important factor was the civil war itself - an unexpected development which caught almost everyone unawares, including the majority of Timor's 750,000 people.

The Civil War

In retrospect, it is clear that the governments of Indonesia, Portugal and Australia failed fully to understand both the internal and regional implications of questions posed by Timor after the Portuguese revolution. The Jakarta government assumed (with Australian acquiescence) that the best solution to the problem was Timor's absorption into the Republic, and that this could be achieved rapidly and peacefully with Portugal's blessing. Both these assumptions were to be undermined by the course of events. Furthermore, Indonesia appeared to believe that a combination of Indonesian political appeals, the common ethnic background of West and East Timorese, the Republic's overwhelming contiguity, the apparent absence of any viable nationalism in Dili and (above all) Portugal's seeming lack of interest in the future of its poor, distant colony would make this process inevitable.

Indonesia underestimated the effect of Portugal's revolution upon Timor's political élites, quickening to life after 450 years of Portuguese colonialism. The arrival of a new style of Portuguese army officer in the colony following the Lisbon revolution rapidly helped to bring political awareness to the citizens of Dili, the colony's small capital. A variety of movements sprang briefly to life, but they quickly polarized into two parties: the moderate, pro-Portuguese Timorese Democratic Union (UDT), which at first favoured close association with Portugal and later independence, and *Fretilin*, the Marxist party wanting immediate independence. Membership of *Fretilin* included many of full-blood Timorese stock, among them President do Amaral, a former priest, and returning students from Lisbon - unlike UDT, whose leadership and middle ranks consisted mainly of Portuguese and Eurasian settlers and officials. The pro-Indonesian *Apodeti*, formed in reaction to Indonesian aid and political promises, remained a minority.

The principal reason for Indonesia's decision to intervene with direct military force in December was Portugal's obvious inability to maintain law and order, and her unwillingness to negotiate any settlement with Indonesia. However, more fundamental concerns were also at work. Indonesia feared the example that an East Timorese independence movement might present to separatist movements in nearby Muluku and Sulawesi, and she was also concerned that *Fretilin's* activities and Marxist rhetoric, if not crushed, might capture regional sympathy and, perhaps, the unwelcome interest of China and the Soviet Union in pursuit of their rival claims to protect Third World 'progressive' interests.

Indonesian Intervention

Between January and July 1975 there appeared to be a debate within Indonesian government circles between those who urged a peaceful solution to the Timor deadlock – including the creation of an independent East Timor as a client state of Indonesia – and others who argued that the only realistic solution was military occupation. The UDT-*Fretilin* civil war, which broke out in early August and led to 40,000 East Timorese refugees crossing the border into Indonesian Timor, tipped the balance.

In mid-August UDT forces staged a coup in what was declared to be an action to forestall the expected seizure of power by *Fretilin*. The 400-strong Portuguese garrison on Timor announced that it could no longer maintain security, and by the end of the month Portuguese forces were withdrawn amid continual small-arms fighting throughout Dili. After Portugal rejected a proposal that Indonesian troops should intervene to quell the fighting, Indonesian commando squads flew into Indonesian Timor to train Timorese 'volunteers' for military operations against border towns and villages. Since then, the number of Indonesian troops in Timor, including commandos, RPKAD (army paracommandos), and naval personnel has grown to about 10,000.

The direct attack on Dili in December, and later on Baucau, involved at least three, and possibly five Indonesian destroyers (including the *Mongin Sidi*), 1,000 marines and as many 'Red Beret' paratroops, as well as armoured forces. Against such force the future of *Fretilin* resistance was in doubt. *Fretilin* troops gathered around Maubisse and other mountain centres were well armed, with six, or perhaps twelve, months' supplies of ammunition for arms of all types including mortars. Though Indonesian forces controlled all border centres and the ports of Baucau and Dili, their logistic capacity was strained; it took three months or more to establish the logistic base for their invasion, and to stage troops, aircraft (including one *Mitchell* bomber) and naval ships through Kupang.

Outlook

If *Fretilin* can find the psychological resources, the military skills and popular support needed to sustain guerrilla warfare, Indonesian forces may find themselves engaged in a lengthy and difficult campaign. But Indonesia is in Timor to stay. She faces great problems in incorporating the Territory, as she has in West Irian, but time is on her side. Working through the West Timorese, whose record since 1945 is one of firm support for the Republic, and employing her army's talents of coercion, education and mediation, the chances are good that eventually Indonesia will achieve a reasonably viable and peaceful union between East Timor and the Republic. Destruction of the *Fretilin* leadership – a likely consequence – will, however, cause unfavourable international reaction.

Jakarta is also threatened with a loss of regional credibility. Her neighbours remember the Confrontation and the West Irian affairs, and have only comparatively recently come to accept Suharto's 1965 pledge that Indonesia was determined to seek the resolution of regional problems by peaceful means. Indonesia is unlikely to be viewed as a potential military threat by her ASEAN partners, but a new caution is now apparent even among neighbours like Singapore and Australia, to whom Indonesia's continued national cohesion is of great importance.

Most observers agree intervention in civil war inevitable

Indonesia's hidden hand in Timor

By Daniel Southerland
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Hong Kong
Whatever the truth may be as to the involvement of Indonesian soldiers in Portuguese Timor, Indonesia appears to have taken the plunge into active support for some of the combatants in the Timor civil war.

It is hard to imagine the pro-Indonesian Timorese factions launching the "counter-offensive" that is under way on East Timor without some Indonesian support in the form of arms and food, if not men.

The pro-Indonesian groups were in such disarray, until recently at least, that they had little hope of recovering much territory from the Left-leaning Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor (Fretilin).

Indonesia, which governs the western half of the island of Timor, has made it clear in numerous public statements that it will not tolerate Fretilin rule on the eastern half. The Indonesians fear that an independent Timor might become a base for pro-Communist forces or might encourage the separatist movements that have troubled the sprawling and ethnically diverse Indonesian archipelago ever since Indonesia gained independence.

Indonesia recently reinforced the small naval fleet it had stationed in Timorese waters

after fighting erupted in East Timor more than a month ago. Within the past few days, Fretilin leaders have reported the capture of Indonesian weapons, an attack by unidentified troops supported by a helicopter with Indonesian markings, the killing of a soldier wearing an Indonesian uniform, and the capture of another soldier who allegedly identified himself as an Indonesian regular Army corporal.

The corporal was reported by Fretilin to have said that he was a member of a 30-man group flown from the Indonesian island of Java to a border area with the mission of "provoking guerrilla activity" inside East Timor.

Indonesian military sources have denied the reports that their troops have crossed the border and attacked Fretilin positions. But it appears, despite the denials, that the Indonesians finally have run out of patience and may have opted for indirect intervention, if not a direct invasion.

A direct invasion might result in protracted resistance from many Timorese, and it would hardly enhance Indonesia's image as a peace-loving nation. Indonesian officials have said repeatedly that Indonesia does not want to resort to force unless it gets the blessing of the Portuguese.

Recent Australian visitors to East Timor

have reported, in the meantime, that Fretilin is in control of most of the Portuguese territory.

While the Australian Government cannot publicly condone an Indonesian take-over of East Timor, it has indicated in many ways that it would not oppose eventual Indonesian control of the entire island. The Portuguese territory is obviously of more importance to Indonesia, which shares a border with East Timor, than it is to Australia, which lies 400 miles to the south.

Asked recently if Australia would recognize a Fretilin-controlled East Timor, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam said that Fretilin had not achieved its current dominant position as the result of any act of self-determination.

"They got the Portuguese Army's weapons and then they tried to clean up their opponents," Mr. Whitlam said.

If Indonesia gets control of East Timor, and most observers consider this inevitable, it is not likely to have any effect on power relationships in Southeast Asia.

East Timor is hardly a rich prize. The prime export of the primitive and neglected Portuguese territory is a few thousand tons of coffee each year. And while there may be some mineral deposits in East Timor, Australian mining and petroleum companies have yet to find any significant ones.

Rugged terrain ideal for determined defenders

Indonesia faces guerrilla action in East Timor

By Daniel Southward
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Hong Kong

Having captured Dili, the capital of Portuguese Timor, Indonesia and its Timorese allies may be in for a nasty guerrilla war.

As Australian veterans of World War II fighting against the Japanese can testify, the rugged terrain of East Timor is well suited to guerrilla warfare, and, if Australian journalists' accounts from the scene have been any indication, the left-leaning Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor (Fretlin), which has just been driven out of Dili, has considerable support among the people in the hinterland.

Much will depend on the quantities of arms and ammunition that the Fretlin forces have hidden in the mountains and

whether they can make an orderly withdrawal from the Dili area in the face of the superior Indonesian-backed forces.

Australians familiar with the island of Timor said that if Fretlin could get outside support, it might be able to hold out indefinitely. The island has a number of beaches, they said, which would be suitable for supplying guerrillas by boat.

A Fretlin spokesman in Australia said the independence movement "will mount a never-ending campaign against the invaders. We will fight to the last drop of blood. We will never surrender."

But Fretlin's desperate pleas for support over the last few weeks have met with little international sympathy. Most countries value their relations with Indonesia too greatly to show any official sign of interest in the Fretlin cause. Diplomats who have followed developments in Portuguese Timor doubt whether the poor and undeveloped territory could be viable as an independent state under any circumstances. And, given the tenuous border with Indonesia, intervention by Indonesia was considered by many observers to be inevitable.

The Indonesians, who have long controlled the western half of the island of Timor, fear that an independent Timor might attract Communist intervention or become a base for the

revival of separatist movements in other parts of the sprawling Indonesian archipelago.

North Vietnam, which is greatly distrusted by the Indonesians, has made a statement of support for Fretlin, and the Chinese delegation at the United Nations declared Dec. 5 that Fretlin's proclamation of independence "reflected the aspirations of the broad masses of people of East Timor." The Chinese called for an end to Indonesian intervention but drew short of extending official recognition to Fretlin.

The United States, a supplier of military and economic assistance to Indonesia, has made clear it would not consider recognition of Fretlin under any circumstances.

The intervention in East Timor has strained Indonesia's relations with neighboring Australia. Fretlin had developed ties with some sections of the Australian Labor Party, and Australian dockworkers began in October holding up Indonesian ships in Australian ports.

The Australian Government must move cautiously. One of its main foreign policy planks has been good relations with Indonesia, its big neighbor to the north. Australia has indicated in a number of ways in the past that it would not oppose an eventual Indonesian takeover of East Timor but that it preferred that this be achieved without the use of force.

Indonesia pays a heavy price for its Timor invasion

COMEDIAN GUARDIAN

Indonesian invasion forces in Timor are believed to have run into unexpected difficulties in their attempts to destroy the 3,000-strong Fretilin movement.

According to Australian intelligence analysts, more than 450 Indonesian troops have been killed in Fretilin ambushes and guerrilla raids in the jungles and mountains since the invasion of the former Portuguese colony on December 7.

The Indonesians, with between 15,000 and 20,000 troops, have failed so far to take large areas of Timor. They have had only limited success in uncovering Fretilin bases, ammunition, and food stores.

Australian intelligence estimates, using information from the monitoring of all Indonesian communications in the area, claims that there was more widespread killing of non-combatants by the Indonesians during the invasion than had previously been

believed. There was also an alleged serious breakdown in discipline and tactical command when troops took the capital, Dili.

Indiscriminate shooting by the Indonesian Marines is believed to have caused a large but unspecified number of casualties in Dili. Fretilin's claims last month of atrocities and the torture of suspected Timorese nationalists — earlier thought to be considerably exaggerated — are now given equally considerable credence.

Although the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, continues to deny any large-scale Indonesian military involvement, Australian intelligence has no doubt that the attempted takeover was a carefully planned major exercise involving warships, the air force, and the crack units in the country's burgeoning army.

The first direct military involvement came months earlier on September 17, when Indonesian troops swarmed into

the border town of Batugade, supported by an Indonesian air force Mitchell bomber of the Second World War and a DC-3. After that attack, denied at the time by Jakarta, Indonesian army units were sent over the border from Indonesian Timor on numerous occasions, initially in support of the right-wing Timorese Democratic Union and the pro-Indonesian Apodeti Party.

The Indonesians have been lying through their teeth for months about Timor, snapped one Australian intelligence source. "We have known it, but everyone kept quiet."

In Canberra, both the present Liberal Government and the previous Whitlam Administration reportedly kept most of this information secret as part of their policy of non-interference in the tragic affair. Some disillusioned younger diplomats and intelligence

national assistance. The Indonesian Government has played down its casualty figures.

Intelligence sources in Canberra also say that new information has emerged indicating that the five Australian journalists believed accidentally killed in October in Balibo were in fact executed by pro-Indonesian troops.

The troops allegedly shot the journalists — all from the two major television networks here — after Indonesians realised that they had obtained first-hand evidence of Jakarta's direct involvement. In a monitored army radio communication, a senior officer ordered troops from the Timorese Democratic Union to "dispose" of the five.

The fate of another Australian journalist missing in Timor for the past month is still in doubt. Unconfirmed reports are that Roger East, aged 50, was shot dead by a six-man Indonesian patrol outside Dili last week.

Monitored radio naval communications indicated, the paper said, that there were a number of self-inflicted casualties and accidents which may have contributed to the breakdown in discipline, looting of shops, and shooting of civilians. Paratroopers dropped inland at one point fought with marines landed from Indonesian warships.

The bombardment from the seven frigates and destroyers in Dili harbour on December 7 was imprecise, causing, as one intelligence official said, "a lot of own goals." Fretilin troops withdrew within minutes of the first naval bombardment taking place from the Dili hospital. They had previously dumped about four months' supply of ammunition and food.

Australian estimates of relatively heavy Indonesian losses in the past month indicate that Fretilin may continue to be able to maintain a damaging level of guerrilla activity in spite of its lack so far of inter-

From CHRISTOPHER SWEENEY: Sydney, January 9

New York Times
April 23, 1976

U.N. Calls on Indonesia to Leave Eastern Timor

By PAUL HOFMANN
Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.,

April 22—The Security Council

called on Indonesia today to

withdraw its forces "without

further delay" from eastern Ti-

mor, a remote scrap of the em-

funct Portuguese colonial terri-

pire that it has been controlling

since early December.

The veto on a resolution im-

plicitly denouncing continued

Indonesian occupation of the

former colony was 12 to none.

The United States and Japan

abstained, and Benin, formerly

Dahomey, did not participate.

Passage of the resolution

ended 10 days of debate in pub-

lic Council meetings and behind

closed doors, with third world

countries split in their evalua-

tion of Indonesia's stand, which

was discreetly backed by the

United States.

Eastern Timor, an area a little

smaller than New Jersey, has

630,000 to 650,000 inhabitants,

more than 90 percent of whom

are said to be illiterate. Com-

munications are difficult, and

the local society is described

as clanlike. The western part

of the island of Timor, is In-

Security Council Votes, 12-0 for Resolution, but Language Is Considered Ineffectual

Gal's colonial rule collapsed last

year a leftist faction, the Rev-

olutionary Front in the Libera-

tion of East Timor, sought to

take over the territory, pro-

claiming an independent state.

Other groups came out for in-

tegration with Indonesia.

On Dec. 7, "volunteers," in-

described as "volunteers," in-

cluded the former Portuguese

colony. Revolutionary French

forces abandoned Dili, the terri-

tory's capital, and withdrew

into the interior. Since then,

guerrilla fighting has been

going on in various parts of

the territory.

Last Dec. 22 the Security

Council unanimously adopted a

resolution requesting Indonesia

to withdraw all of its troops

from East Timor.

from Indonesia and spokesmen

for the pro-Indonesian "Provi-

sional Government of East Ti-

mor" told the Security Council

in the debate that closed today

that more than 1,000 Indone-

sian "volunteers" had recently

duced an amendment that

would have inserted the word

"remaining" before the word

"forces," thus acknowledging

that some Indonesian troops

had already pulled out.

The amendment was defeated

because only eight votes, in-

stead of the required nine, were

cast in its favor.

Many delegates and some

United Nations officials said

privately that the rather bland

language of today's Security

Council document practically

meant that Indonesia was given

leave to consolidate its hold

on the former Portuguese

colony.

Hanoi Signs Soviet Aid Pact

HONG KONG, April 22 (Reu-

ters)—North Vietnam and the

Soviet Union have signed eco-

nomi, scientific and technical

cooperation documents, accord-

ing to the North Vietnam press

agency. The documents were

signed in Hanoi yesterday by

a Deputy Prime Minister, Le

Thanh Nghi, and Ivan V. Arkhi-

During the Council discus-

sions, representatives of the

Revolutionary Front movement

and the pro-Indonesian factions

by exchanged charges of atrocities

that they said had occurred in

the territory during the last

several months.

Before the vote, Japan intro-

duced an amendment that

would have inserted the word

"remaining" before the word

"forces," thus acknowledging

that some Indonesian troops

had already pulled out.

The amendment was defeated

because only eight votes, in-

stead of the required nine, were

cast in its favor.

Many delegates and some

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meant that Indonesia was given

leave to consolidate its hold

on the former Portuguese

colony.

MEN FREED IN TIMOR RETURNED TO LISBON

Special to The New York Times

LISBON, July 28—A Portuguese Air Force jet arrived tonight with 23 Portuguese soldiers who had been held prisoner by pro-Indonesian forces since the outbreak of civil war on the island of Timor almost a year ago.

The Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. José Morais da Silva, who accompanied the soldiers, said there was no deal for their release by Indonesia.

He rejected reports that the price Lisbon had paid for the return of the hostages was recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, which had been ruled by Portugal for 400 years.

"Indonesia freed the prisoners unconditionally and independent of future talks that could take place to solve the difference between the two countries, independent of whether Portugal sooner or later will recognize the provisional government," General Morais da Silva said.

Also on the plane were more than 100 Timorese refugees who choose to come to Portugal rather than remain in Indonesia-occupied Timor.

Death Toll in East Timor Overstated, Australia Says

CANBERRA, Australia March 2 (Reuters)—An Australian minister said today that allegations that 60,000 people had been killed in the civil war in East Timor were "grossly exaggerated."

Senator Reg Whithers, Minister for Administrative Services, told the Senate that the Government believed reports of atrocities by both sides in the conflict had been overstated.

He said that the Foreign Affairs Department treated with skepticism claims by the pro-Indonesian Union for a Democratic Timor that there had been widespread massacres by the rival Fretilin movement.

EAST TIMOR ACTING ON INDONESIAN LINK

JAKARTA, Indonesia, March 22 (Reuters)—The pro-Jakarta provisional government of East Timor has decided to set up a parliament to ratify the territory's integration with Indonesia, a Foreign Office spokesman said here.

Indonesia and the United Nations have been informed of the decision, the spokesman said.

The provisional government also said it would repatriate Indonesian troops—officially termed here as volunteers—from East Timor as the situation in the former Portuguese colony has returned to normal, the spokesman added.

A military spokesman reported earlier that 350 Indonesian troops left the East Timor capital of Dili on March 7 for Java after completing a three-month assignment in which they helped pro-Jakarta forces fight left-wing forces.

Remnants of left-wing forces are reported to be facing a serious food shortage after fleeing to the jungle.

WALDHEIM URGING NEW TIMOR EFFORTS

Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., March 16 — Secretary General Kurt Waldheim of the United Nations has recommended the continuation of diplomatic efforts to re-establish peace and order on Portuguese Timor.

However, in a report to the Security Council, he held out little hope that an early settlement could be reached on deciding the status of the island territory torn by civil strife since last summer involving Indonesian-supported forces and leftist Timorese seeking independence. Roughly half Timor,

which is north of Australia, is Indonesian, the other part Portuguese.

Mr. Waldheim's report was based on the findings of a mission headed by Under Secretary General Vittorio Winspeare Guicciardi, which visited the island in January at the request of the Council.

The Timor fighting was clearly linked to the revolutionary change of government in Lisbon in April, 1974. Portuguese administrators quit the territory last August and a leftist organization seized the Portuguese capital. This led, in turn, to intervention by Indonesia, which controls the western part of Timor, and which succeeded in installing a pro-Indonesian government.

FIGHTING ON TIMOR SAID TO KILL 60,000

JAKARTA, Indonesia, Feb. 14 (AP) — About 60,000 people have been killed since the outbreak of civil war in Portuguese Timor last August, according to the deputy chairman of the territory's provisional government. He said that the pro-Indonesian forces would complete their takeover in three or four weeks.

"The war is virtually over because only a few remnants of the Fretilin forces are fighting in the jungles and hills," Francisco Xavier Lopez da Cruz said. He referred to the Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor, which has been fighting forces favoring union with Indonesia. Indonesia controls the western half of the island of Timor, when the eastern half has been a Portuguese colony.

Fretilin has vowed to wage a guerrilla war for independence and has asked the United Nations for help.

Mr. Lopez said that most of the victims in the conflict were women and children on both sides.

Indonesian Force Quits East Timor

JAKARTA, Indonesia, March 20 (Reuters)—Indonesia has begun withdrawing its troops from the former Portuguese Timor, a military spokesman said today.

A total of 350 troops left Dili, the territory's capital, on March 7 for Java, he said.

Foreign Minister Adam Malik has said that Indonesia, which administers the western part of Timor, has 1,500 troops—officially described here as volunteers—in the neighboring former Portuguese colony to help pro-Jakarta forces fight troops of the left-wing independence movement.

The Indonesian news agency Antar today quoted the deputy leader of the pro-Indonesian provisional government of East Timor, Francisco Xavier Lopez da Cruz, as having said the situation there had returned to normal and that many leftist troops had been captured.

NTT 2/15/76
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Ten attack Indonesia over Timor

NEW YORK, Nov. 16 — Ten Third World States have tabled a U.N. resolution calling on the General Assembly to reject Indonesia's takeover of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor.

A draft resolution requests the General Assembly to "reject the claim that East Timor has been integrated into Indonesia", and calls on Indonesia to withdraw its forces from the territory.

The resolution was produced by another former Portuguese colony, Guinea-Bissau, and co-sponsored by nine other States — Algeria, Benin, Cambodia, Congo, Cuba, Guinea, Mali, Tanzania and Mozambique.

"It drew the Security Council's attention to the "critical situation" in East Timor, and recommended that previous U.N. resolutions allowing people to exercise self-determination and independence be implemented.

Indonesia declared it had taken over East Timor on July 17 this year. — AAP.

Age November
17th
1976

THE AGE, Friday, November 19, 1976

Indons killed 60,000: report

From RUSSELL SKELTON

CANBERRA. — A highly confidential report handed to the Government claims that at least 60,000 Timorese have been killed since Indonesian forces invaded East Timor.

The report says the radical Fretilin independence movement still controls about 85 per cent. of the countryside in Timor and that fighting is widespread.

It says stealing, robbery and the disorderly conduct of the Indonesian occupying troops has led to mass disillusionment with Jakarta's integration proposals.

The five-page document is regarded by Government officials as one of the most authentic first-hand accounts of the situation in East Timor since Indonesian troops invaded the Portuguese colony late last year.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Peacock, was handed a copy late yesterday.

He said: "I am giving it consideration, but at this stage it is too early to make any comment."

Government sources say the document was prepared by independent relief workers who visited East Timor recently. The report was smuggled out of Indonesia.

The Suharto Government has refused to give foreigners open access to Timor for almost a year. The Government has even refused the International Red Cross permission to distribute aid there.

The confidential report on Timor outlines a bleak picture.

It makes the following points:—

- ① Relief workers in Dili believe 10 per cent. of the population, or 60,000 people, have been killed.
- ② Fretilin is continuing to put up stiff resistance and enjoys widespread support.
- ③ Indonesian troops occupy villages and towns which contained 150,000 people — only about 20 per cent. of the population of Timor.
- ④ Land communication has been disrupted and Indonesian troops cannot travel with safety in country areas.

Seeking escape

The report says that 20,000 people in Dili, out of a total population of 30,000, have registered themselves for passage to Portugal.

It says: "The desire to integrate with Indonesia is beginning to cool off because of bad experience with the occupying forces including stealing, robbery, burning of houses and the violation of girls."

"Five thousand people welcomed the Indonesian troops at the town of Amaru, but now there are only 1000 people in Amaru."

U.S. Will Send Indonesia Grain Worth \$35.2 Million

JAKARTA, Indonesia, April 19 (Reuters) — Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz today signed a loan agreement under which the United States will provide Indonesia with wheat and rice worth \$35.2 million.

Dr. Butz said in a speech during the signing ceremony that the United States had lent Indonesia a total of approximately \$1 billion since a program of reduced-price sales of American surplus grain began under Public Law 480 nine years ago.

For this year the United States has pledged \$30.1 million in economic assistance to Indonesia, he said.

Foreign Minister Adam Malik, who also signed the agreement, voiced Indonesia's gratitude for the American aid. "One of our objectives is to be self-sufficient in food, particularly rice," he said. "But as long as this aim is not achieved, we shall welcome any food aid."

SUHARTO OUSTS PERTAMINA HEAD

Continued From Page 39

try where for most that is a fine annual income—Dr. Sutowo lived far beyond that.

Moving around Jakarta in his Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud, he was wont to take off regularly in a company jet to Europe or the United States, where he gave lavish dinners in Houston for 1,000 oilmen and matched skill on the golf course" in the Bob Hope Desert Classic.

But at home, it was his equal flamboyance with Pertamina and, more importantly, with the precious heritage of oil that is the only real wealth of his desperately poor nation that finally caused his downfall.

Little Moneymaking Potential

After taking over as chief of the newly formed Pertamina in 1957, General Sutowo, now 67 years old, quickly began branching out in a broad range of projects with little or no relation to oil and with little or no moneymaking potential.

A chain of first-class hotels, a private company airline, golf courses, hospitals and luxury housing developments all rose across Indonesia, with Pertamina money at first and then, increasingly, Pertamina loans that began to be backed more and more by General Sutowo's reputation and word than by anything that was being formed from the ground.

This worked well as long as the world money and oil booms continued through the late 1960's and into the early 70's. But less than two years ago, the bubble burst as bank after bank began refusing to roll over large amounts of short-term paper and default became a real threat.

It was then—late in 1974—that the first rumors began to circulate that "general Ibnu," as he was known, might be on the way out.

Suharto Dismisses Head Of Troubled Pertamina

By DAVID A. ANDELMAN

Special to The New York Times

BANGKOK, Thailand, March 4—President Suharto of Indonesia has ousted the head of the nation's faltering state oil company and dissolved the board of directors.

The announcement, also made available here, was made this morning in Jakarta by a spokesman for the Ministry of Mines, whose head, Dr. Mohammed Sadli, has long been a foe of the ousted official, Maj. Gen. Ibnu Sutowo.

Replacing General Sutowo as head of the state oil company, Pertamina, is Maj. Gen. Piet Haryono, the company's chief of finance and development, who has been virtually running the company for the last six months. Under General Sutowo, the company ran up more than \$3 billion in debts.

The shuffle comes as the state industry of this nation, a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, is holding negotiations with some of the world's major oil companies over substantial increases in Government revenues from Indonesian oil.

\$1 More a Barrel Sought

Indonesia wants as much as a dollar a barrel more in its share of the oil revenues, and Western oil sources close to the discussions said recently that Indonesia was anxious that, in the words of one Western oilman, "none of Sutowo's shenanigans foul anything up."

In an industry known for extraordinary eccentrics and high livers, Dr. Sutowo was virtually in a class by himself. Though his actual salary was less than \$300 a month—a princely salary itself in a coun-

Continued on Page 41, Column 3



The New York Times

Maj. Gen. Ibnu Sutowo

rejection of an Ethiopian proposal that both countries should sign a pact guaranteeing Djibouti's independence. The Organisation of African Unity is calling a special conference about it all.

Economist 24 July 1976
East Timor

Back to mother

FROM OUR JAKARTA CORRESPONDENT

Indonesia has chosen its gift for its 31st birthday on August 17th: East Timor. The half-island officially joins Indonesia on that date. But President Suharto wrapped it up last weekend with a bill making the former Portuguese colony into Indonesia's 27th province.

East Timor, which shares an island with another province of Indonesia, has been Indonesian in all but name since last December when Mr Suharto sent in some 20,000 troops to rout the nationalist Fretilin party which had proclaimed the colony's independence. While the Indonesians were wearing down the nationalist guerrillas to a hard core of an estimated 800 fighters in the hills, the pro-Indonesian Timorese formed a provisional government in the capital, Dili, which embarked on its own act of "self-determination". On May 28th, a 28-man "people's assembly" delivered a predictably unanimous vote for integration.

This was gravely borne to President Suharto, who decided that more ritual was needed. So the home minister, General Amir Machmud, was dispatched with a delegation to verify the petition. He was presented with a lump of East Timor earth and a lump of gold to symbolise Timor's return to "mother Indonesia". Although a Fretilin mortar attack on the second largest town, Baucau, disrupted his schedule, impressive crowds were on hand enthusiastically waving Indonesian flags.

Now Indonesia seems to be on its way to solving the problem of foreign recognition by negotiating a deal with Portugal. The Portuguese air force chief of staff, General José Morais da Silva, paid a secret visit to Timor last month, mainly to arrange for the return of 23 Portuguese soldiers who have been held in Indonesian and East Timorese jails since last September. Negotiations were resumed in Bangkok last week. Once its soldiers are freed, Portugal is expected quietly to reopen diplomatic relations with Jakarta. This will amount to abandoning all claim to its colony.

Fretilin is still claiming, through its radio broadcasts, to control 85% of East Timor. But nobody seems to be listening except the New China News Agency, which relays Fretilin's appeals for international action to stop Indonesia's "reign of terror".

PORTUGAL REFUGEES FACE BLEAK WINTER

Timorese, Now Living in Tent City,
See No Hope of Work and Look
to Australia for Better Future

1976

By MARVINE HOWE
Special to The New York Times

VALE DO JAMOR, Portugal—Sharp rains and wind sweep across this valley, just northwest of Lisbon, and beat at the drab rows of mud-bound army tents.

The families living in the tents shiver in flimsy plastic sandals, cotton shirts and pants or skirts and struggle to adapt to the chill European fall.

These are the Timorese refugees, the latest arrivals from Portugal's fallen empire. Many are of Chinese origin, believe in Confucianism, speak Chinese and Timorese and know very little Portuguese. They are mostly construction workers, without jobs or money, and have no idea what they will do in Portugal.

Over 700,000 refugees have arrived in Portugal in the last year and a half from the former colonies of Angola, Mozambique, the Cape Verde Islands and now Timor. It is one of the largest population



The New York Times/Peter Coles
A refugee from Timor in camp at
Vale do Jamor, Portugal.

transfers in history. Portugal, with nine million people, already exports labor and imports half of its food.

Most of the refugees are scattered around the country, living with relatives in crowded conditions. Some 30,000 are occupying valuable hotel space at government expense. And the newcomers are being herded into camps.

The Jamor River valley is a delightful place for a summer outing, but in winter it becomes a vast quagmire.

Some 1700 refugees, mostly from Timor but also from Mozambique and Angola, are living in the Vale do Jamor camp, which is run by the Portuguese Red Cross. Most live in large army tents with mud floors.

The Red Cross president, Lieut. Col. Antonio Tender, a medical officer, has declared that the refugees, particularly the older ones, should not be kept in the tent village after Nov. 15 "because of climatic conditions."

In response, the High Commissioner for Displaced Persons, Lieut. Col. Goncalves Ribeiro, announced that the refugees would be moved as soon as possible. He said that prefabricated houses were under construction and negotiations were under way to obtain space in military barracks in the Lisbon region.

"We came here to find a better life," I Su Li, an emaciated 44-year-old businessman from Timor said in a mixture of Portuguese and Mandarin. He arrived here on Sept. 25 with his two wives and 13 children. They live in a tent with nine beds for 16 people.

Life Hard Under Indonesians

Mr. I, a builder by trade, owned a restaurant in Dili, the capital of Portugal's East Timor, when fighting broke out there a year ago. He fled with his family to Atambua, in West Timor, which belongs to Indonesia.

Life in West Timor was very hard, according to Mr. I, who could not find work. The family lived in the open and ate only manioc and rice.

"People complain about Vale do Jamor but it's better than West Timor," Mr. I said, pointing out that here at least they have a roof, beds and blankets and good food.

Mr. I said he would accept any kind of work but had heard there were no jobs in Portugal. His main ambition is to go to Australia "where there's work for everyone." He has a sister living there and hopes to immigrate under the family reunion clause.

Most of the Timorese in the camp say that they hope to go to Australia. Few have any illusions that they will be able to make a living in Portugal, where 15 percent of the labor force is unemployed.

Australia 'the Only Solution'

"We don't want to stay in refugee camps all our lives and so Australia is the only solution," said Jong Lip Sung, a 24-year-old truck driver, who came here last month with his 66-year-old father, a professor of Chinese, a brother, a sister and two nephews. Another brother has been missing since the fighting in East Timor and his mother was not allowed to leave.

Antonio de Jesus Barros, a 40-year-old mechanic of Portuguese Timorese descent, also dreams of Australia, where he has a cousin. "When the Portuguese Government fled Timor last year, we got scared and ran away," he said. "If the Portuguese had stayed we would have stayed."

About 40,000 Timorese fled the civil war in East Timor last year and took refuge in West Timor, but most have returned, according to Lai Su Tsung, a male nurse who came to Portugal with the refugees. Some 2,000 Timorese have been

TIMOR

FR-TIMOR

EAST TIMOR: THE WAR AUSTRALIA MIGHT HAVE PREVENTED



By MICHAEL RICHARDSON in SINGAPORE

On September 6, 1974, the then PM Gough Whitlam arrived in Central Java to talk with President Soeharto of Indonesia. It was at these talks that Whitlam made his first and most fundamental mistake in dealing with the Indonesians on the crucial matter of Portuguese East-Timor.

The meeting was secret, but a record of conversations taken by the Australian side at the time quotes Whitlam as opening his comments on Timor by saying that, in his opinion, the territory should become part of Indonesia.

He added the important proviso that this should happen only in accordance with the proper consent of the people of the colony. But he did say that he felt East Timor was too small to be independent and was economically non-viable. Again he added a proviso that the Labor Government was anxious to uphold the right of self-determination in the colony.

None the less, Whitlam made a grave error of judgment by putting his personal imprimatur on what was to afterwards become Indonesia's national objective — integration of East Timor.

MICHAEL RICHARDSON has talked extensively in Jakarta and Canberra to people closely involved in shaping Indonesian and Australian policies on Timor. On the following pages he summarizes the key mistakes of Gough Whitlam on the issue, thus:

- Whitlam was, at the time of that first crucial meeting in Jogjakarta, tilted in favour of Portuguese Timor's independence from Indonesia.
- He was convinced at least as early as November, 1974, that Indonesia would not tolerate an independent East Timor on security grounds, but he failed to publicise or challenge this stand, even though it made a mockery of his Government's commitment to self-determination in the territory.
- He knew of and tried to express disapproval of a plan for Indonesia to exert political and other influences on the Portuguese colony to strengthen the minority party advocating integration with Indonesia, even though he should have realised that this would include an array of less than legitimate tactics by the Indonesians.
- Accustomed to a presidential style of Government, Indonesia regarded Whitlam as the *definitive* spokesman for the Australian Government. What he said — or failed to say — had a major impact on Jakarta's Timor policy.
- He endorsed Indonesian military intervention on "humanitarian" grounds to quell the civil war late in August, 1975, when he should have known that Jakarta would take that opportunity to entrench its Timorese proxies in power at the expense of any Indonesian movement, particularly by killing or jailing Fretilin leaders.
- He failed to inform his ministerial colleagues, his party and then the Australian public about



the details which he knew of the clandestine war launched by Indonesia against East Timor on a steadily expanding scale from September, 1975.

Australia's Timor policy bears Whitlam's indelible imprint from its all-important formative stages in the second half of 1974.

Up until mid-October 1975 — by which time Indonesia's plans for absorbing the disputed Portuguese possession were too far advanced to be stopped or substantially modified — Whitlam wielded decisive influence on key decisions about Timor. He overshadowed his Foreign Minister, Senator Don Willesse, who preferred a more even-handed approach even if it meant offending Indonesia and damaging relations with Australia's nearest and biggest South-East Asian neighbour.

Richardson traces the development of the Whitlam Government policy on Timor from that first fatal meeting in Jogjakarta to the violent finale of late 1975, when Indonesian forces launched a full-scale invasion of the colony.

According to one report from Jakarta, published in *The Age*, February 13 this year, a pro-Indonesian Timorese leader was quoted as saying that more than 60,000 people — most of them women and children — had been killed during the six months of civil war in East Timor. This is roughly 10 per cent of the territory's estimated population.

He did not say how many were killed or injured before the December 7 invasion, and how many after, but admitted that frequent "excesses" by pro-Indonesian forces against suspected supporters of the independence movement might have come "as a revenge for Fretilin cruelty."

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TIMOR

THE SECRET STORY OF THE ROAD TO WAR IN TIMOR

Gough Whitlam arrived in Central Java for talks with President Soeharto on September 6, 1974. It was the first time the heads of government of Australia and Indonesia had met informally and privately to discuss a wide range of international, regional, bilateral and domestic affairs.

Mr Whitlam's arrival in Jogjakarta came at a critical stage in the development of Indonesia's official attitude towards Portuguese Timor. Both Governments had started to focus on what came to be known as "the Timor problem."

After more than 400 years of colonial rule, the eastern half of Timor and the Portuguese-controlled enclave of Oecussi in Indonesian West Timor faced an uncertain political future.

In June, Lisbon's reformist military junta promised the right of self-determination to Timor as well as the Portuguese empire in Africa. Indonesia's initial reaction, as stated by Foreign Minister Adam Malik in mid-1974, was to welcome this as an opportunity for East Timor to accelerate progress towards independence. Mr Malik said Indonesia had no intention of expanding its territory and would respect the wishes of the Timorese people.

But by the time of Mr Whitlam's visit, other more powerful figures in the Indonesian armed forces and intelligence network were claiming in private that the interests of Indonesia, Australia and the Timorese themselves would be best served by attaching the 14,953 square kilometre territory to its giant neighbour.

Their argument — which had reportedly impressed the President — portrayed independence as an invitation to instability, while a continued long-term association between East Timor and Portugal — which Lisbon in any case was unlikely to want — would run counter to the principle of anti-colonialism supported by both Jakarta and Canberra.

The territory was said to be economically destitute and its 650,000 inhabitants, the bulk of them subsistence farmers or fishermen, ill-prepared to govern themselves. An independent East Timor under an inexperienced, aid-dependent and possibly radical Government would sooner or later become a hotbed of social discontent and a magnet for communist subversion.

Jakarta was also concerned that independence for the colony, and the publicity that accompanied it, might revive secessionism in the outer islands of the Indonesian archipelago.

Mr Whitlam's brief on Timor was based on a report from a fact-finding mission sent to the colony in June by the Department of Foreign Affairs, and on assessments from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

The departmental report was summarised in a background paper distributed to journalists in July, 1974. It had two features that were very relevant to the evolution of Australian policy.

One was to understate the potential for rapid development of political organisation and consciousness in the colony, particularly through an alliance between the two strongest parties (Fretilin and UDT) in a platform of autonomy and independence with Portuguese backing.

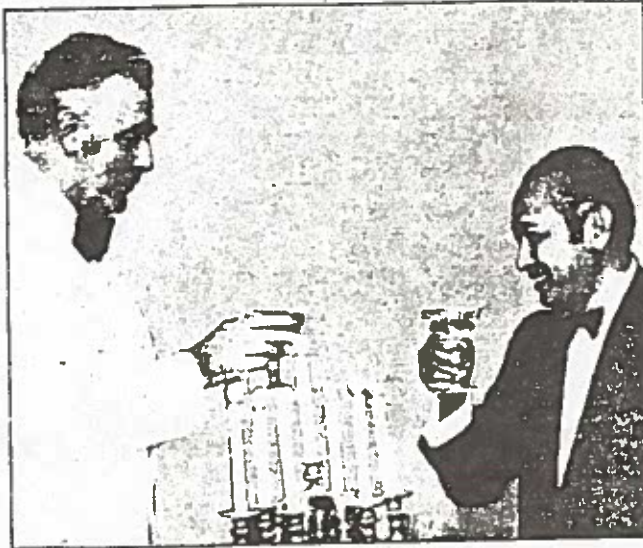
The second was to depict Indonesia as being benevolently disposed towards Portuguese Timor.

"The conclusion was that slow and careful political development would 'probably suit Indonesia's interests by increasing its chances of winning the confidence of the Timorese and perhaps of fostering the idea of integration.'"

Soeharto warned

Mr Whitlam and President Soeharto set aside two days for talks.

The record of conversation is a secret document, but I understand it quotes Mr Whitlam as opening his comments on Timor by saying that in his opinion, the territory should become part of Indonesia, but, in accordance with the properly expressed wishes of the people of the colony,



Mr Whitlam said he felt East Timor was too small to be independent and was not economically viable. But the Labor Government was anxious to uphold the right of self-determination for all remaining colonies and this principle ought to be applied to even the smallest.

He told the President that Indonesia should be aware of the effects on public opinion in Australia if Portuguese Timor were to be joined to Indonesia against the wishes of the people.

He reminded President Soeharto that there were still sensitivities in Papua New Guinea as well as in Australia about the way in which Indonesia had carried out the "act of free choice" in Irian Jaya (then West Irian) in 1969.

He said Indonesia should keep in mind the need for support from the Australian public for incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia, based on respect for the democratic expression of the wishes of the people.

The secret record shows that Mr Whitlam stressed three times how essential it was that the political future of the colony be decided by the people. It is clear from the record that President Soeharto understood this proviso.

None the less, Mr Whitlam made a grave error of judgment by putting his personal imprimatur on what very soon afterwards became Indonesia's national objective — integration of East Timor.

He advanced a set of ideas and, while he may not have intended this to reflect an order of importance in his own mind, the President and his Timor advisers must certainly chose to regard it as such.

At the top was the notion that Portuguese Timor lacked the economic resources and political experience to become a viable independent State. From this dubious premise, he concluded that the territory's most natural future would be as part of the Indonesian world.

In doing so, he appeared to be — and indeed was in Indonesian eyes — prejudging the outcome of the act of self-determination which he said was so important.

Mr Whitlam sanctioned the objective of incorporation. But at this first informal summit with President Soeharto, he was insistent that the manner of incorporation should reflect majority opinion in East Timor and be acceptable to the international community.

At the second summit in Townsville in April, 1975, the Prime Minister was less scrupulous in his concern about the means. And by the end of August, 1975, he was ready to endorse unilateral Indonesian military intervention.

A senior Foreign Affairs official wrote later in a confidential summary that Lt-Gen Ali Murtopo — deputy chief of Indonesia's State intelligence co-ordinating body (BAKIN) and a key figure in devising and handling the political aspects of Jakarta's Timor policy — regarded Mr Whitlam's statement to President Soeharto in Jogjakarta as a "green light" for absorption of the territory.

As a result of the Prime Minister's indiscretion, the Foreign Affairs Department attempted to do some fine semantic tuning with the record of conversation when he and his official party returned to Canberra.

The essence of the verbal juggling was to reverse the order of Mr Whitlam's statement to President Soeharto by saying the Australian Government's primary consideration was self-determination, but that it appreciates Indonesia's concern about the future of the territory and shares its belief that . . . voluntary union . . . with Indonesia — on the basis of an internationally acceptable act of self-determination — would seem to serve the objective of decolonisation and at the same time, the interests of stability in the region.

This became the Australian position on Timor immediately after the Jogjakarta talks, and the Indonesian Government was duly informed through diplomatic channels.

But Indonesia ignored the verbal reshuffling.

Willesee unhappy

Foreign Minister Willesee — who had announced in June that Australia was extending de-facto recognition to the armed liberation movement in Guinea Bissau, West Africa, even though it had not completed negotiations for independence with the Portuguese colonial authorities — was aware of the contradictions inherent in Mr Whitlam's Timor stand.

He realised it was a denial of several cardinal principles in international relations which the ALP had consistently championed, was continuing to advocate in distant Africa, but was backing away from close to home.

(Senator Willesee declared in June: "We have given expression not only to the fact that Guinea Bissau possesses the attributes of statehood, but to our support for the legitimate aspirations of black Africans still denied their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.")

His irritation and concern surfaced in Sing-

apore on December 5, 1974, three months after the first Whitlam-Soeharto summit.

Senator Willesee said he disagreed with his Indonesian counterpart, Adam Malik, who reportedly stated a day or two earlier that independence for Portuguese Timor was not a viable option. Asked to comment on this report, Senator Willesee said bluntly: "Well, I don't agree with the Indonesians."

The obvious implication was that he also disagreed with his Prime Minister.

Senator Willesee said the Labor Government's attitude towards the colony was that the three broad options being canvassed should be decided by the Timorese inhabitants "in a freely accepted world standard of making up their minds." He listed the options as independence, retaining some form of association with Portugal and becoming part of Indonesia.

Probably the main reason Mr Whitlam was prepared to give conditional acquiescence to the Indonesian goal of incorporation was that he attached great store to Australia's ties with Indonesia and wished to work in harmony with the Soeharto Government. He believed there were compelling geopolitical reasons for doing so.

Mr Whitlam said in a broadcast on Radio Australia:

"It goes without saying that the number one objective of my Government is to strengthen relations with Indonesia.

"The future of Indonesia and Australia is in-dissolubly linked together. The relationship between Indonesia and Australia is one of the crucial factors which will determine the future of the South-West Pacific for the rest of this century, and largely determine the future of the East Indian Ocean area for the rest of this century.

"So I make this relationship the top priority in my Government's foreign policy."

Those who know Mr Whitlam well say his attitude towards Timor was also reinforced by an ingrained distaste for creating new mini-States.

Mr Whitlam's ready, if conditional, compliance with the objective on integration undermined the influence of those like Foreign Minister Malik, whose original preference was for non-interference.

Confirmed the views of the integrationists in the Indonesian armed forces and intelligence community, and buttressed the validity of their basic case in President Soeharto's mind.

Laid the basis for a supine Australian policy on Timor and pre-empted future initiatives by Canberra to deflect Indonesia from adopting incorporation as an inflexible national interest.

Australia has second thoughts

A secret working paper drawn up within the Department of Foreign Affairs late in 1974 and early in 1975 became the basis of an abortive Australian attempt to head off Indonesian military intervention in Portuguese Timor.

The paper was a reaction to official assessments, given to Mr Whitlam not long after his return from Jogjakarta, that Indonesia's political power-brokers and defence establishment were resolutely opposed to the colony becoming independent.

The assessments from the Australian embassy in Jakarta and from intelligence and other sources led Foreign Affairs and Defence Department officers working on Timor to conclude that Indonesia was prepared to use force if necessary to prevent the territory emerging as a sovereign State.

The fact that Indonesia's views on Timor were hardening in a way that was both unnecessary and potentially damaging to relations between the two countries was causing concern in Canberra by late 1974.

At the end of October, the head of the Foreign Affairs Department, Mr Alan Renouf, and senior diplomats held an annual session of talks in Jakarta with their Indonesian counterparts. Mr Renouf warned Indonesia in forthright terms that the

Australian Government could not condone use of force in East Timor.

He added that even if the Labor Government made allowances for Indonesian action, it expected that influential sections of public opinion would react in hostile fashion and this could jeopardise good relations. This warning was repeated and elaborated on subsequent occasions in high level Government-to-Government contacts, both in Indonesia and Australia.

In December 1974, a draft paper was written by Foreign Affairs officials in Canberra, canvassing the option of independence for East Timor. It did so in ways calculated to soothe Indonesian hostility.

By March 1975, this draft was expanded into a secret working paper which had the endorsement of Foreign Minister Willesse and formed the basis of a private letter sent by Mr Whitlam to President Soeharto. The letter was taken to Indonesia by Australia's new Ambassador, Richard Woolcott. It reportedly contained many of the ideas in the working paper, but in more euphemistic language.

The secret paper was designed as a working brief for Mr Woolcott in Jakarta.

The first section warned of possible consequences of Indonesian use of force, or the threat of force, in dealing with the situation in Portuguese Timor. Repercussions listed included a sharp deterioration of relations with Australia (a relationship that was described as being important to Indonesia as well as to Australia); international criticism of Indonesia in the United Nations and other world forums; and a running sore of unrest and resentment against Indonesian involvement in East Timor that could strain or overtax Indonesian resources, reactivate secessionist tendencies in Indonesia's outer islands and attract intervention by communist States.

The second section of the paper outlined measures for "containing" the Timor problem.

Unlike the brief Mr Whitlam was given before his talks with President Soeharto in Jogjakarta a few months earlier, the paper was based on the premise that independence would be the eventual outcome. This was then a fair assumption because, in late January 1975, leaders of Fretilin and the more conservative Timorese Democratic Union Party (UDT) had formed a coalition to carry the territory through self-government to independence within eight years.

UDT and Fretilin were rated by all Foreign Affairs officials who went to East Timor as easily the strongest there. Apodeti - the party advocating integration with Indonesia - was rated a weak third.

The paper proposed that Australia and Indonesia work together and use constructive influence to ensure that an independent East Timor would have its essential contacts with non-communist nations in the immediate neighbourhood, not with left-leaning former Portuguese colonies in Africa or with communist countries.

The objective was to neutralise East Timor by placing it in close association with Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, making it dependent on these States for aid, trade and other development needs.

The paper pointed out that lack of economic viability did not necessarily mean a small territory like Portuguese Timor would "go communist" and cited the micro-nation States of the South-West Pacific to support this argument.

It proposed a joint Australia-Indonesia aid package to East Timor made up initially of three programs: food aid (including purchase by Australia of Indonesian rice for the territory); foreign training for Timorese (with preference given to places in Indonesia and Australia); and a malaria-eradication program (with assistance from the World Health Organisation, covering Indonesian West Timor as well as the Portuguese sectors of the island).

The key to development of this "client State" strategy was for Indonesia and Australia to work closely with the Portuguese administration and to extend a "hand of friendship" to the Fretilin and UDT parties. While the proposed aid program was welcomed by the Portuguese Governor in Dili, Colonel Lemos Pires, and by leaders of both Fretilin and UDT, Indonesia greeted this proposal and other Australian initiatives without enthusiasm.

So, faced with Indonesian hostility, from early 1975 Mr Whitlam and like-minded Australian officials tried to ensure that the means used by Indonesia were palatable to public opinion in Australia and to the international community.

Whitlam should have realised

As Mr Whitlam should have realised at the time of his first summit with President Soeharto and certainly accepted by early 1975, arranging a marriage between the two halves of Timor Island would necessarily involve Indonesian intervention in the internal affairs of Portuguese Timor, because the Apodeti party favouring merger was by far the weakest of the three main political groups in the territory. It had to have external support to expand its influence.

So far as Jakarta was concerned, the objective of Indonesian policy had been approved by the Australian Prime Minister on behalf of his Government. But the means to this end were still an open question and became the subject of intense debate and manoeuvring in the Indonesian hierarchy.

There were at least two distinct factions in the tussle - one was headed by Lt-Gen Ali Murtopo and advocated a political "solution" to the Timor problem.

General Murtopo had a vested interest in delivering the colony to the President as Indonesia's 27th province. His fortunes had taken a buffering as a result of his involvement in the power struggle which underlay the Jakarta riots in January, 1974. In the aftermath, President Soeharto deliberately distanced himself from his former special adviser.

Timor, however, offered General Murtopo an opportunity to demonstrate his indispensable expertise as Indonesia's political fixer. His formal connection with the Government was as deputy chief of the State Intelligence Co-ordinating Body (Bakin) - the Indonesian equivalent of the CIA. But he maintained his own network of agents and contact men in all the provinces of In-

donesia, and could call on certain Bakin operatives when he needed them.

General Murtopo and his assistants arranged the so-called "act of free choice" in West Irian in 1969 so that small groups of hand-picked representatives of the Irianese reached a unanimous consensus to remain part of Indonesia. They also re-organised the Government-backed Golkar Movement's sweeping victory in Indonesia's last general elections in 1971.

The hawks, on the other hand, believed, like Lady Macbeth, that "if 'twere done, 'twere best done quickly." They advocated a lightning Goo-type military takeover of Portuguese Timor before the independence movement they could get any stronger.

Leading hawks were reported to be General Murtopo's nominal boss, Bakin chief Lt-General Yoga Sugama, Defence Minister General Mara-

Continued on page 12



Make it a Red Label Day



BORN 1820 - STILL GOING STRONG

TIMOR

Continued from page 11

den Pangabeian, and the head of the armed forces intelligence division, Lt-General Benny Murdani.

However, it was General Murtopo who emerged as the initial front-runner in handling Timor policy. One reason was that inspired leaks in both Jakarta and Canberra pre-empted early use of plans for an amphibious assault on the main population centres in the colony.

Partly as a result of this embarrassing publicity, General Murtopo won firmer backing from President Soeharto, who is by instinct a cautious man. The President's reluctance to sanction an invasion stemmed from at least two factors.

He did not want to risk an engagement that would divert resources from economic and other national-development programs to which he was committed. He felt no action should be taken that could bring the country into international dispute and revive memories of the late President Sukarno's adventurist foreign policies.

General Murtopo and his aides felt that a combination of persuasion and pressure could make East Timor and the enclave of Oecussai fall into Indonesian hands.

But two things necessary to incorporation — sufficient time for Indonesia to apply its influence, and a degree of understanding or connivance from the Portuguese representatives, who controlled the colony.

Australia — committed by Mr Whitlam to an inherently contradictory course of simultaneous support for merger and for a proper act of self-determination — readily agreed to help Indonesia lay the groundwork for "Operasi Komodo" (The Dragon Operation) — the plan for bringing East



General Ali Murtopo, the initial front-runner in handling Indonesia's Timor policy.

Timor into the Indonesian fold by means that stopped short of outright invasion.

Australia's initial assistance was to persuade the Portuguese authorities to slow down their Timor decolonisation program and to lend a sympathetic ear to Indonesia. The rationale was set out in the background paper distributed to jour-

nals in Canberra shortly after Mr Whitlam's return from Jogjakarta.

"Because of the rudimentary stage of political development in the territory, an act of self-determination would need to be prepared carefully, gradually and over a period of time, otherwise the decision of the people may not be based on a full and informed appreciation of the best future interests of the territory, and could therefore prejudice regional stability."

This policy appeared to satisfy Indonesian as well as Australian interests.

In practice, Operasi Komodo was an often poorly co-ordinated plan.

In February March 1975, when I first visited Portuguese Timor in the wake of the invasion scare, strident and sometimes menacing radio propaganda was being beamed into the territory from Indonesian West Timor; the Apodeti party was getting financial and other support from Indonesia; and a start was being made to train in West Timor Timorese supporters of integration for possible reinfiltration into the colony, ostensibly to protect Apodeti from "persecution."

Operasi Komodo assumed a more sophisticated political shape under General Murtopo's influence. In October 1974, as President Soeharto's personal envoy, he went to Lisbon for talks with President Francisco da Costa Gomes, Premier Vasco Goncalves, Foreign Minister Mario Soares and the minister in charge of overseas territories, Dr Antonio de Almeida Santos.

An agreement was reached to reopen an Indonesian embassy in Lisbon and to upgrade the Portuguese consulate in Jakarta to similar status. The Indonesian side claims that the Lisbon Government "also consented . . . to the integration of Portuguese Timor into the Republic of Indonesia, provided this is in accordance with the wish of the East Timor people."

The Indonesian side claims these discussions led to a secret meeting in London in March 1975, between General Murtopo and Indonesia's Ambassadors to Britain, France and Belgium, on the one hand, and several important Portuguese Government men on the other, including Dr Santos, his Secretary of State Dr Campinos, and the chief of political affairs in the Portuguese administration on Timor Island, Major Francisco Mota.

But the person most highly regarded and trusted by the Indonesians was a debonair and moderate member of the armed forces Supreme Revolutionary Council in Lisbon, Major Vitor Alves, who in private talks had reportedly shown a ready understanding of Indonesia's interests in and sensitivities about the future of the Timor colony.

According to Indonesian sources in General Murtopo's camp, Portugal reaffirmed that the best outcome of decolonisation was integration of the Timor territory into Indonesia through an internationally acceptable act of self-determination.

Portugal agreed to take Indonesian interests into account in the decolonisation program, and to permit Indonesian support for the Apodeti party advocating merger so long as this support was not embarrassingly obvious.

For its part, Indonesia undertook to persuade Apodeti leaders to co-operate with the administration in Portuguese Timor, and to attend a

proposed summit meeting of the three political parties and Portugal to work out an agreed method and timetable for decolonisation. This summit was eventually held in late June 1975 in Macao, and boycotted by Fretilin on the grounds that Apodeti — which it branded as an anti-nationalist traitor group — was allowed to attend.

As the Special Ambassador of the ruling Supreme Revolutionary Council in Lisbon, Major Alves dominated the Macao summit. The limited accord reached there was an outgrowth of the London meeting and was used as the basis for the Timor decolonisation program promulgated in Lisbon in July.

From Indonesia's standpoint, the core of this program lay in the retention of effective control of the Timor administration by Portugal, and in the decision to hold elections for a Constituent Assembly in October 1976, instead of deciding the colony's future political status in a referendum as mooted earlier.

The agreed program gave Indonesia the opportunity to bolster Apodeti's position in the 14 months before these elections were held.

The program also gave Indonesia the chance to weld a pro-integrationist majority within the Constituent Assembly, using the techniques applied in West Irian where votes were bought with promises of future preferment, money, women and good times abroad.

The second round of talks

Mr Whitlam met President Soeharto for a second round of informal and private talks in Townsville from April 3-5, 1975. Portuguese Timor was again prominent.

The record of conversation is also a secret document. But it is interesting that it quotes the Prime Minister as telling his guest that he (Whitlam) was not the source of stories in the Australian press in February that Indonesia was on the verge of invading Portuguese Timor. He added that the Australian Government was pleased to note the categorical denials from Jakarta and the assurances that Indonesia did not intend to use force over Timor.

Mr Whitlam trotted out his revised position on Timor. The Indonesian side, however, chose to regard this as ritual politics designed to protect the Australian leader from attack by the left wing of his party and by the Opposition.

The Prime Minister emphasised the great significance, in the context of Australian politics, that there be no deviation from an internationally acceptable act of self-determination. The Labor Government would accept the outcome of an act of free choice, although he still believed the best result was incorporation.

Mr Whitlam said he did not believe Fretilin was a communist front. But he also did not accept claims that the overwhelming majority of the people aspired to independence.

(In a letter dated April 22, 1975, to Labor Senator Gietzelt, Mr Whitlam declared: "As for the option of integration with Indonesia, it is worth noting that the division of the island of Timor is no more than an accident of Western colonial history. The border was drawn by the Dutch and the Portuguese, powers which were totally alien to the region. Four hundred years of Portuguese domination may have distorted the picture which the people of Portuguese Timor have of themselves, and perhaps obscured for them their ethnic kinship with the people of Indonesia. Time will be required for them to sort themselves out.")

The President referred to the agreement reached in London in March between senior Portuguese and Indonesian Government representatives.

It was obvious at the Townsville summit that President Soeharto and his delegation saw Australia's role in handling the Timor problem as essentially one of support for Indonesian policy. This policy was at that stage being largely devised and managed by General Murtopo who was present in Townsville.

The Australian Embassy in Jakarta is understood to have been fully briefed by Indonesian sources on the agreement reached by General Murtopo in London with Portuguese authorities on "co-operation" in decolonisation of Timor.

This information was passed to Canberra and given to Mr Whitlam before his meeting with President Soeharto in Townsville. When the President mentioned it, the Prime Minister expressed neither surprise nor objection. The Indonesian side interpreted this as approval.

Continued on page 14



"I've tried them all and White Horse is my pleasure."

Sr. John Mills



Fine old Scotch Whisky. For old times' sake.

TIMOR

Continued from page 12

In a joint communique after their talks, it was stated that the two heads of Government agreed that the people of the colony had the right to determine their own future and that there should be a deliberate and measured approach to decolonisation of the territory.

In the private discussions, Mr Whitlam mentioned to President Soeharto that Australia was considering giving aid to Portuguese Timor as well as reopening its Consulate in Dili. He raised the question of whether Indonesia was prepared to consider giving aid also. President Soeharto was politely unresponsive and this was about as far as the matter went in the top-level meeting.

But in separate talks, Australia's Ambassador to Indonesia, Richard Woolcott, and the First Assistant Secretary in charge of the South-East Asia division in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Graham Feakes, tried to interest both General Murtopo and the Director-General for political affairs in the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, Didi Djajadiningrat, in the East Timor independence option and the joint aid program, canvassed in the working paper finalised in Canberra in late February. They were unsuccessful.

None the less, Australian officials went ahead with plans for a unilateral aid program for Portuguese Timor which it was hoped Indonesia might agree to join at a later stage. Proposals were discussed at a meeting in Canberra in July, 1975, between Foreign Minister Willesee, departmental

'Whitlam consistently refused to follow the Indonesian propaganda line and portray the East Timor civil war as a power struggle between 'pro-communist' Fretilin and rival anti-communist groups.'

officers and Australia's Ambassadors in South-East Asia.

As a result, officials drew up some aid recommendations covering food aid and training for Timorese worth several million Australian dollars.

These recommendations were about to be approved by Senator Willesee when the UDT party (having broken away from its alliance with Fretilin) staged a show of force against "communists" in Dili and other parts of the territory last August — triggering a violent backlash in which Fretilin was backing from the bulk of the Timorese army. Civil war ensued, leading ultimately to Indonesian military intervention.

The full weight of the case for an independent East Timor and joint Australia-Indonesia aid program contained in the secret working paper prepared in the Department of Foreign Affairs was never given Mr Whitlam's whole-hearted support, or even well publicised.

Like so much of Australia's Timor policy, it remained a kind of clandestine strategy. It was never injected into the mainstream of public debate for fear of offending Indonesia and bringing differences between the two countries into the open, thereby freezing both Governments into opposing postures.

In marked contrast

However, in marked contrast to Malcolm Fraser and Doug Anthony, leaders of the Liberal and National Country Parties in Opposition, Mr Whitlam (and Andrew Peacock) consistently refused to follow the Indonesian propaganda line and portray the East Timor civil war as a power struggle between a "pro-communist" Fretilin and rival "anti-communist" groups.

Mr Whitlam's justification of Indonesian mili-

tary intervention was made ostensibly on humanitarian grounds, not strategic security grounds.

On August 23, in a statement to Parliament, he ruled out UN, Portuguese, Australian or an ASEAN regional initiative to end the fighting between the factions in the colony.

He concluded: "The last of three appeals addressed this week by the Portuguese Government to the Secretary-General of the UN has spoken of the need for international intervention to effect a cease-fire."

"The Indonesian Government, which over the past year has expressed repeatedly its intention not to intervene in Timor, may thus be turned to as the only force capable of restoring calm in the territory."

Had Indonesia intervened at that time, even without the permission it sought from Portugal, much of the international and Australian criticism that occurred when Indonesia finally moved in strength four months later would not have cropped up.

Canberra expected Indonesian intervention in late August and early September when the facts of the situation in East Timor were still difficult to determine and were, in any case, overshadowed by publicity about refugee stories that spoke of slaughter and ferocity on a scale that appeared to indicate an endless saga of bloodshed unless outside intervention took place.

But Indonesia did not move. Sources in Jakarta said at the time that President Soeharto alone was refusing pressure from the military establishment, intelligence community and other national-security advisers to authorise an Indonesian "peacekeeping" operation.

By letting the civil war in East Timor run its natural course, the President may have calculated that Indonesian intervention would eventually be made easier.

This turned out to be dead wrong. Fretilin, with backing from the Timorese army trained by the Portuguese, drove the remnants of its opposition across the border into Indonesian arms and then set about consolidating its hold on the territory.

At the end of November Fretilin made a unilateral declaration of independence from Portugal and formed a breakaway government.

In justifying the massive entry of Indonesian "volunteers" into East Timor with their warships, tanks and aircraft in December, Jakarta continued to peddle propaganda which I and the very few other correspondents in the territory at the time knew to be grossly exaggerated, if not completely false.

This was that there had been a dangerous radicalisation of Fretilin under the influence of so-called Marxist members of the Portuguese administration and of Timorese students returning from Lisbon; that East Timor was in a state of near anarchy; and that the majority of people (who, of course, wanted integration with Indonesia) were being subjected to a Fretilin reign of terror.

A disturbing reticence

One of the most disturbing aspects of the whole Timor affair is the way Mr Whitlam, and a restricted circle in his Ministry who were privy to the information, reacted when told officially that Indonesian armed forces were becoming more and more deeply embroiled in the East Timor civil war from late September onwards.

This information came from a number of sources. One was the Australian embassy in Jakarta. Some of its data was drawn from "special briefings" given by well-placed Indonesians — briefings designed to condescend and compromise, as well as to inform.

There was also no shortage of reliable intelligence from Australian and other non-Indonesian sources. This included a flow of material from a special facility located in Darwin.

The Whitlam Government's reticence about the ugly side of Indonesia's incorporation program was illustrated by an episode that came to light late in May.

In a front-page story in The Canberra Times of May 31, Bruce Juddery reported that a ministerial statement last October was altered to conceal the fact that Australia knew Indonesian troops were active in East Timor more than a month before the all-out invasion of the territory on December 7.

Australia's Ambassador in Jakarta, Richard

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Gough Whitlam and President Soeharto take a break from their talks in Townsville.

Woolcott, advised that although Canberra knew Jakarta was lying in its insistence that Indonesian forces were not operating in the territory, it should not say so publicly.

Foreign Minister Willessee was to have said on October 30 that he had seen reports suggesting a degree of Indonesian military involvement and that he regretted this development.

But his final statement to Parliament said only that "the Government has viewed with concern widespread reports that Indonesia is involved in military intervention in Portuguese Timor."

Senator Willessee made no direct comment on the validity of the reports except to say, obliquely, that the Labor Government had urged Indonesia to pursue its interests "through diplomatic means."

In his article, Juddery quoted from a cable he said Ambassador Woolcott sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs on October 29. The accuracy of these quotes has not been denied by the department.

In the cable, Mr Woolcott said he had conveyed the text of the minister's draft statement to the Government in Jakarta minus the first paragraph acknowledging Indonesia's role in the East Timor fighting. That paragraph, he said, seemed to pose a problem.

"If the minister says publicly that he regrets the degree of Indonesian intervention in the affairs of Portuguese Timor, will he not stir up a hornet's nest in Australia itself as well as producing a cold reaction here?"

"Would not the first paragraph of the statement in its present form invite headlines of the type, Willessee Accuses Indonesia of Intervention, and would not this lead in turn to increased pressures on the Government to act against Indonesia by stopping the defence-assistance program and, possibly, by cutting aid? Such a statement at ministerial level would also stimulate

hostility to Indonesia within the Australian community, which it has been our policy to minimise.

"Although we know it is not true, the formal position of the Indonesian Government is still that there is no Indonesian military intervention in East Timor. If the minister said or implied in public the Indonesian Government was lying, we would invite a hurt and angry reaction.

"We would also be the only country in the region, probably including New Zealand, to make such a statement and we would then be regarded by Indonesia as having acted in a way which could stir up international opinion against Indonesia."

Mr Woolcott suggested that Senator Willessee use the formula which he (the ambassador) had used with Indonesia's Foreign Minister Adam Malik, that "if there was substance in the widespread media reports of Indonesian military intervention in Portuguese Timor, then the Australian Government would be extremely disappointed . . ."

Whitlam's reaction

Mr Whitlam's reaction to the December 7 invasion of East Timor by Indonesia was predictable. He was no longer Prime Minister and was nearing the end of an election campaign that had been profoundly embittered because of the circumstances surrounding Labor's dismissal from office.

Mr Whitlam said on the day of the invasion: "I think that the fact that Australia is without a government would have accelerated the action which has been taken."

He deplored Indonesia's resort to force, but told a National Press Club lunch on December 10 that "without going into all the details, the

parties in East Timor made the present situation probably inevitable."

At the press conference he gave in Canberra on the day of the invasion, Mr Whitlam said statements by Mr Fraser and Mr Anthony in Parliament at the end of August (describing Fretilin as pro-communist or communist) "would have ignited or fanned Indonesia's attitudes towards Fretilin."

He added: "We all know Indonesia's pre-occupation, almost obsession, with any movements or organisations which are described as communist. And Mr Anthony's use of the term and Mr Fraser's use of the term have undoubtedly confirmed and probably exacerbated Indonesia's attitudes towards Fretilin."

"You'll know that in the last three months, two months I've discussed this matter with the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea and the Prime Minister of Malaysia and the Prime Minister of Singapore, and there was no inclination whatever at an earlier stage to take any regional initiatives."

"But at all events, the fact that Indonesia has held her hand for so long has been due. I think it can be fairly said, to the arguments that I put to President Soeharto in Indonesia about 14 months ago and in Townsville about eight months ago."

The former Prime Minister said he was "absolutely, absolutely" satisfied he did as much as he could for a peaceful settlement of the Timor problem.

However, the web of things said and left unsaid by Mr Whitlam about Timor and about Indonesia's intentions, plans and activities related to the colony casts a shadow over his defence.

Had Mr Whitlam from the start been unequivocal in his support for a genuine act of self-determination in the Portuguese colony, and unequivocal in his opposition to Indonesian intervention, it is at least arguable that the end result might have been different.

Some Australian officials claim that from as early as November 1974 Indonesia was fired by a rigid resolve not to permit an independent East Timor to emerge, especially under Fretilin control. This is simply using fatalism to camouflage the abject failure of Australia's diplomacy.

Had the Whitlam Government been committed to try to ensure that all political voices were given a reasonable hearing in East Timor, it could have taken a number of initiatives.

First, it could have reopened a well-staffed Australian consulate in Dili in the second half of 1974 (the original consulate was closed in 1971) and followed this up in the first half of 1975 with an aid program to the colony.

The Portuguese administration in Dili—headed by the Governor, Colonel Lemos Pires—requested action along these lines. Both initiatives were rejected or delayed in Canberra for fear that Indonesia would "misunderstand" them as gestures of support for independence of the territory.

A second possible initiative was that when the Australian Government learned, as it did by late 1974, that Indonesia's attitude towards Timor was hardening, Canberra could have supplemented strong bilateral representations to Jakarta with a sustained effort to use Australia's influence with Indonesia's ASEAN partners and with the US and Japan to pre-empt foreign intervention in Portuguese Timor on the grounds that this might well create the very instability everyone wanted to avoid.

Third, as a last resort, Australia could have raised the issue in the UN.

Canberra did none of these things—or if it did, they were done in such timid and belated fashion that they had no effect.

It is doubtful whether there has been a more secretive episode in Australian foreign policy than Timor, since the Vietnam commitment.

Mr Whitlam, the outspoken advocate of "open" government, laid the basis for the worst type of covert diplomacy where the end came all too quickly to justify the means.

Indonesia's takeover operation and Australia's official connivance had to be kept secret by the Government and its agencies, because they knew that full disclosure would trigger instant and large-scale public disapproval in Australia.

Mr Whitlam's defence was always—as he put it in his letter to Senator Gietzen on April 22, 1975—that "the question of Portuguese Timor must be seen against the fundamental importance to us of a long-term co-operative relationship with Indonesia."

As the man primarily responsible for shaping Australia's official attitude on the Timor problem, Mr Whitlam must also accept responsibility for being the architect of what seems to me to amount to appeasement.



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