



EAST TIMOR UPDATE

Number 32 — April 5, 1994

In December 1975, just ten days after it had declared its independence from Portugal, the tiny southeast Asian country of East Timor was invaded by its neighbour, Indonesia. In the 18 years since then, 250,000 people — over a third of the indigenous Timorese population — have been killed. Genocide and massive human rights violations — everything from rape to indiscriminate killings to forced abortions — go on to this day. But so does the struggle for freedom of the East Timorese people. It is largely the support of countries like Canada that allows the Indonesian armed forces to maintain their illegal occupation of East Timor.

East Timor Update is a monthly news service edited in Toronto by the East Timor Alert Network. The service is also available by electronic mail: email etantor@web.apc.org. Contact ETAN for more information:

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For up-to-the day information on East Timor, call ETAN/Vancouver's information line: (604) 739-4947.

Indonesian professor backs Timor

A leading Indonesian intellectual is testing the limits of dissent in his country by speaking up against the illegal Indonesian occupation of East Timor. Since he published several articles in the Australian press that spoke of "a culture of violence and intimidation" in Indonesian-occupied East Timor and confirmed many of the claims made by human rights activists about the brutal nature of Indonesian military rule, Dr. George Aditjondro has been threatened by the military with dismissal and punishment, and his house has been stoned by unknown persons.

Aditjondro released two academic papers in Australia which contained little new information, but have made a splash because they represent the first time such academically-grounded and damning (to the Indonesian military) research has been released by a member of the Indonesian elite. Aditjondro, was given an award as Indonesian environmentalist of the year by President Suharto in 1986. "I am not a traitor and my credibility is already established," he pointed out. "I don't want the rest of the world to think that everyone in Indonesia accepts what has happened there."

Among Aditjondro's findings:

- He confirmed a study by Timorese activists and church-based human rights researchers that 271 people were shot by Indonesian soldiers in the Dili massacre of November, 1991. The government had admitted to only 50 killed, and still denies that there was at least one massacre of eye-witnesses in the days following.
- Indonesian soldiers have raped East Timorese women on a routine basis since the 1975 invasion, using rape as a weapon of war in much the same way it is now being used against Bosnian Muslims.
- High school girls have been forcibly given contraceptive implants and injections.
- Occupying forces have engaged in destructive campaigns against indigenous Timorese cultures and destroyed Catholic symbols.
- Defoliants like napalm and Agent Orange have probably been used against civilian populations.
- There have been severe environ-

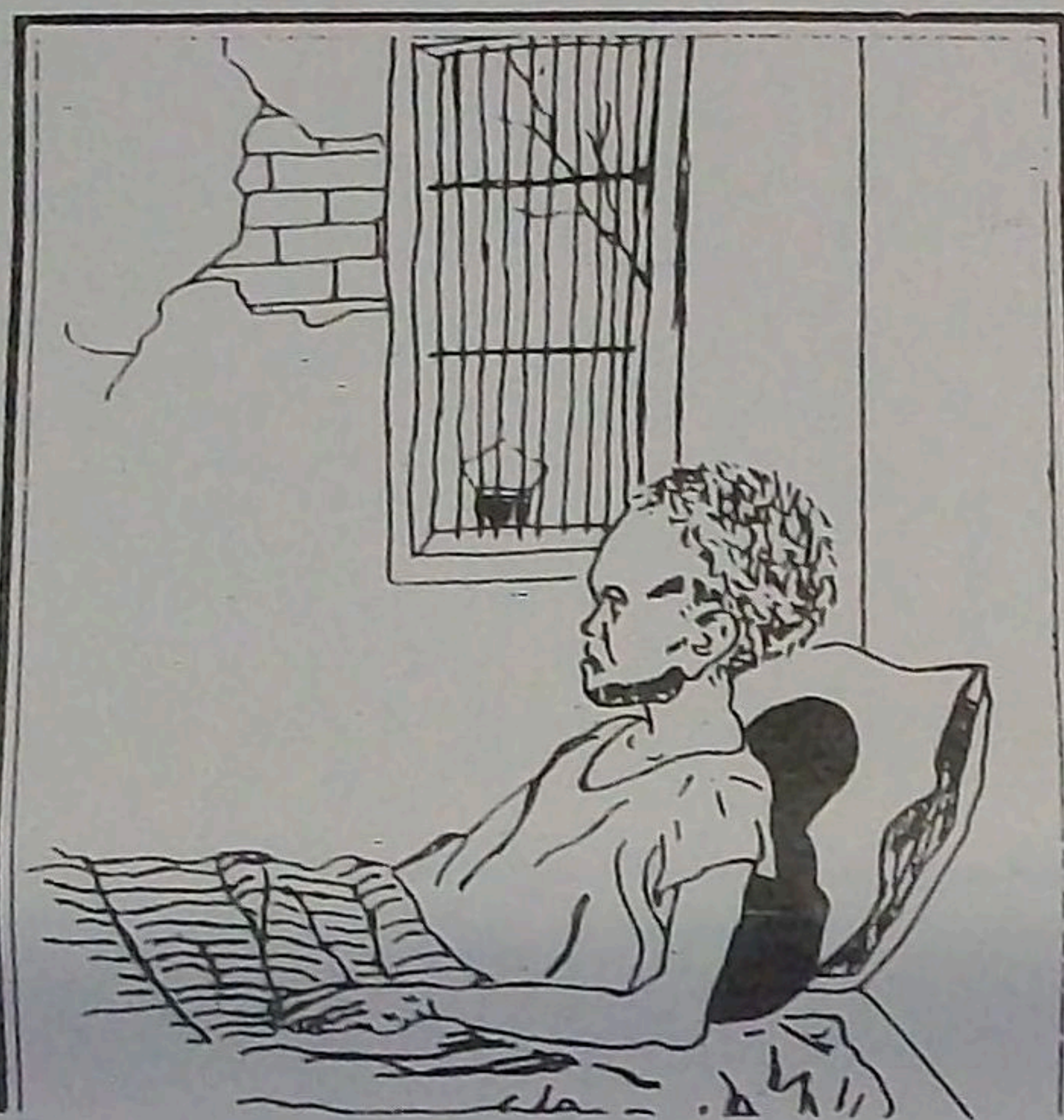
mental problems as a result of the occupation.

- Military occupation forces have systematically un-developed East Timor by taking control of key sectors of the economy and placing them under PT Batara Indra Group, controlled by three high-ranking officers.

- East Timorese are encouraged to spy on each other and report to military authorities, which has created a climate of fear.

- The total death toll since 1975 is far

higher than has been admitted. "During the first three years of the war, the population in the territory dropped from 688,771 in 1974 to 329,271 in October 1978. What happened to the shortfall of



Drawing by a Timorese prisoner in Cipinang prison.

359,500 people?" he asked.

Aditjondro is now facing dismissal from his job at Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Central Java, where the rector has said he may not be able to resist the increasing pressure from the armed forces to fire Aditjondro and two supporters, Dr. Arief Budiman and Dr. Ariel Heryanto.

Indonesian human rights groups and East Timor solidarity groups abroad are urgently appealing for support for Dr. Aditjondro. Letters from Canadian academics are particularly needed. Please write or fax:

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 425 University Ave.
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Guelph U. debates aid

The report of an external review committee into the University of Guelph's \$34 million program of aid

to Indonesia has finally been released for discussion by the university administration. The review, conducted by Meyer Brownstone, former head of Oxfam-Canada, and Clovis Demers, vice-president of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, commends the university's policy on overseas projects but finds fault with much of the practice of Guelph's Sulawesi Regional Development Project. A discussion forum on the report, however, excluded everyone but students and faculty from discussion, including the reviewers themselves. Two professors and a representative of OPIRG Guelph said Guelph's presence in Indonesia helps lend legitimacy to Indonesian human rights abuses in East Timor and elsewhere.

Irish call for sanctions

Ireland's Foreign Affairs Minister has called for economic sanctions against Indonesia following a meeting with the East Timor Ireland Solidarity Committee, Amnesty International and Trocaire, an Irish Catholic Church agency. "One has to acknowledge that there are serious human rights abuses in East Timor," said Dick Spring. "In the context of the human rights abuses in East Timor, I think the world should be looking for strong action against the Indonesian government. One can justify sanctions in relation to countries where there are serious abuses of human rights." Irish East Timor supporters plan to ask their government to step up the pressure on European Community partners for sanctions.

Xanana wants new trial

Jailed East Timor resistance leader Xanana Gusmão has asked for a new trial on the basis that his original trial on charges of "rebellion" against Indonesia was unfair. If he is given a new trial, he will be defended by a team of his own choice from the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute, and base his defence on the fact that East Timor is not part of Indonesia.

Xanana was sentenced to life imprisonment in May, a sentence later reduced to 20 years. He was not allowed to read his own defence plea and the trial was widely condemned as a mockery of justice.

We urge supporters to write to the Foreign Affairs minister André Ouellet and ask him to support the request for a new trial. Letters can be sent (postage free) to André Ouellet, House of Commons, Ottawa Ont., K1A 0A6. Please also send copies to Opposition Leader Lucien Bouchard and NDP foreign affairs critic Svend Robinson at the same address.