

AETA Newsletter

Newsletter of the Australia-East Timor Association
PO Box 93, Fitzroy 3065, Australia

Registered by Australia Post
publication no. VBH2322
ISSN 0156 - 1731

Vol. 11 No.1
January - February 1986

At the AGM...

During our A.G.M. in December, the meeting concurred with the proposal of retiring president George Preston, that AETA could benefit from having a president/chief spokesperson from amongst our "higher profile" supporters. Following discussion of the role of such a person essentially in publicly representing AETA (as distinct from chairing and organizing week to week activities), an invitation was extended to RAY HOGAN - Vic. State Secretary of the Miscellaneous Workers Union and member of the A.C.T.U. Executive.

We are pleased to say that Ray has accepted the position expressing his desire to use what influence and access he has in pursuit of our aims. He also emphasised that his full time job as a Union Secretary and his many demanding positions held within the Labor Movement and the ALP would necessarily limit his frequent attendance at our monthly meetings.

Ray described Australia's involvement with East Timor since 1975 as "something we are rather ashamed of", and noted that "Australia has walked away from its responsibility on this issue". Reflecting on expressed disappointment with the 1984 Federal ALP Conference decision, he took a practical attitude, describing it as "the best that could be obtained at the time" in view of the very strong lobbying made by supporters of East Timor.

We welcome Ray Hogan as President of AETA for 1986.

AETA Officebearers for 1986

CHAIRPERSON	Ray Hogan
VICE CHAIRPERSON	John Arrowsmith
SECRETARY	John Sinnott
ASSISTANT SEC.	George Tieman
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER	Tom Spencer
MEMBERSHIP OFFICER	George Preston

- WE STILL NEED A TREASURER FOR 1986!

This is a task that mainly involves book keeping and dealing with AETA expenses.. Call John Sinnott (489 7661 AH) who will be pleased to discuss this position with you.

- We need your support !

AETA GENERAL MEETINGS (Monthly)

Held at 124 NAPIER ST FITZROY - 6.00 PM
(Room at rear of Uniting Church)
FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

Your interest and enthusiasm are welcome

Mochtar visit



DEC. 18. OUTSIDE THE SOUTHERN CROSS.
"DR. MOCHTAR NOT WELCOME.."

See Report on page 2.

Palm Sunday Rally March 23rd

Join AETA members at the Disarmament Rally and keep East Timor on the agenda for peace in 1986. Look for the AETA banner on the steps of the Treasury Building at 1 pm on March 23.

Visit the AETA bookstall and information display at the Freedom From Hunger tent.

"EAST TIMOR IS BUT ONE FURTHER EXAMPLE OF THE PRICE TO BE PAID FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE 'WARFARE STATE' ..."

- Dr. Keith Suter - U.N. Association speaking at our Dec. 8th Rally.

INTERNATIONAL SCENE 1986 ON EAST TIMOR

Indonesia remains extremely sensitive on East Timor, so it is important that the Timor movement keep the issue alive before the international community. In our own region, there is some benefit from linking together the struggles in East Timor, West Papua, and Kanaky. Each are denied an act of self-determination, each are determined to live free and in peace.

Perhaps we in Australia should be giving more attention to this. One opportunity is the joint Committee on Foreign Affairs is inviting submissions for an inquiry on the South Pacific. Closing date is in May. / Cont'd page 2.

Internationally speaking ..

From page one

The main international forum remains the United Nations. Resolution 37/30 (Nov. 23rd, 1982), of the General Assembly requested the Secretary General to "initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned, with a view to exploring avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem". That is to seek a peaceful solution rather than the current Indonesian military solution.

For the past few years then, U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar has organised several meetings between Portuguese and Indonesian officials, but to date no representatives of the East Timorese people (who resist the present occupation), have been included. While these consultations have proceeded, debate on East Timor has been deferred from the Assembly floor. However, the Secretary General has been asked to present a report to the 1986 General Assembly. An important decision then will be made as to whether or not East Timor is dropped from the United Nations agenda.

At the beginning of last year, East Timor was dropped from the United Nations Human Rights Commission agenda. There are plenty of reasons why it should be reinstated, particularly considering the Amnesty International Report of 1985, containing documentation of barbarities and killings committed by Indonesian forces. Information obtained via the radio confirms that such violations continue. Indonesia's constant refusal to accept any international human rights fact finding mission suggests they do have something to hide. No solution can be said to be comprehensive or lasting unless the Timorese are included. Their ten years of resistance is a sign of their determination of spirit and fighting strength.

"Peace in East Timor"

"PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT" (??)

The former Catholic Apostolic Administrator for East Timor, Mgr. Martinho da Costa Lopes responded during September '85 to several articles in the "New York Times". Amongst other concerns he addressed the issue of assertions about the countryside being largely peaceful and the alleged benefits of Indonesian development programs. Some extracts from his letter to the editor of the "New York Times" read..

".... From detailed information that I have received I can say that it is simply not accurate to state that 'the countryside is largely peaceful', nor can it be said that 'the pattern of violence may have changed over the last year.' While it is said that 'the number of political detainees has dropped sharply', all too often in the recent past this has meant that detainees are simply moved from one prison to another, less identifiable facility. Some prisoners have even been 'temporarily released' for the duration of visits by foreigners! Regarding the statement in the July 19 article that 'for most (East) Timorese...life has begun to improve materially, I am compelled to say several things. First, one must substitute the word 'some' for 'most', and even then this is true only in a very limited sense. In fact, in certain areas of East Timor, closed to all outsiders (including the International Red Cross), there is great deprivation, even slow starvation.

Blood and Oil

DECEMBER 18 Demonstration against Indonesia's Foreign Minister Mochtar

The message of those gathered outside the "Southern Cross" Hotel was clear - Mochtar was not welcome as he attended a business lunch in Melbourne, following prior discussions about oil reserves in the Timor Sea. His visit was perceived as part of a continuing operation to carve up the seabed resources of East Timor between Indonesia and Australia - the seabed boundary has been disputed for some time.

During this rather unexpected detour to Melbourne, a midday demonstration of about one hundred supporters and members of A.E.T.A., Christians in Solidarity with East Timor and Timorese themselves sang and chanted as they awaited the arrival of the Indonesian Foreign Minister. The presence of masked street theatre performers emphasised the nature of the Suharto regime and the suffering of the people of East Timor, West Papua and Indonesia.

As Dr. Mochtar entered he was greeted by loud cries of "Indonesia Out!" For those of us who gave up a day's pay to express our disgust at this visit, it was a timely, if rather unexpected opportunity to protest.



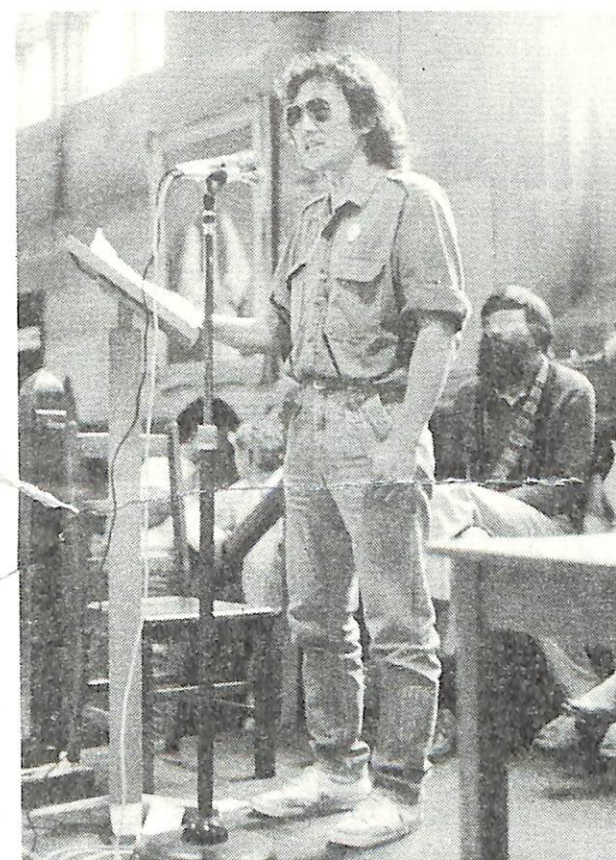
MGR. DA COSTA LOPES REPLIES.... / cont'd

Secondly, thousands of military men, civil servants and others sent by Jakarta with their families are mixed in with the local population; their presence may help create misleading impressions for foreigners unfamiliar with East Timor. And while it may seem that the marketplaces are well stocked, few local people can afford to buy much - such markets exist almost solely to serve Indonesians who have migrated to East Timor."

And the Former Administrator went on to add -

"....There are no economic causes behind the guerilla fighting in East Timor, as your (N.Y. Times) August 30 article states: the tragic conflict is over East Timor's right to nationhood, the dignity of its people and the right to live free from foreign oppression. Surely witnesses can be found in any situation of conflict to support or denounce a particular point of view, and atrocities are invariably committed on both sides of any conflict. But the basic issue is that the conflict in East Timor stems from the denial of the rights of our people, no matter how Indonesia and its friends abroad may seek to hide the fact..."

"The justness of our cause endures"



ONE OF THE FIVE SPEAKERS ON DEC 8 WAS LY KON NENG WHO ADDRESSED MEMBERS OF THE CHINESE-TIMORESE COMMUNITY PRESENT. HE CALLED FOR UNITY AND COURAGE IN THE COMMON STRUGGLE.

Following is a translation from the Hakka language--

"Ladies and Gentlemen,
First of all, I would like to thank you for your support and for joining in this activity. Today marks ten years since East Timor was invaded by Indonesia.

Obviously we gather here not only in commemoration of those people who were killed and sacrificed in the cruel war, but also to wake those Timorese who were fortunate to escape and gained their freedom. Despite ethnic or political background, one thing we should keep in mind is that we are of the same origin as those who have been oppressed and have suffered for ten years.

Then what should we do? If we are humane and sympathetic, why don't we stretch out the hand of faith and pass the message to the whole world. Tell them what has happened to our Motherland - Tell them what the invaders have done to our people, and tell the world what are our people's expectations. Let the world face the cruel truth - the real truth which I believe most of us have been through, and still continue to suffer in our minds.

Although the world is full of violence and oppression there are still many righteous people around us. Without self interest, these people stand for the principles of Justice. They strive to help weaker people and fight for Humanity. As you know, many Australians have joined this group. On behalf of our community I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of these kind people for their kind support."

Marking 10 years of suffering and ten years of struggle, Timorese and Australians gathered at St. Paul's Melbourne adjacent to the City Square. Timorese people in Melbourne strongly supported the occasion and many young faces were present. Before a traditional "Tutuala House" specially made for that day, were laid both a large wreath and many personal tributes to those who have perished, and to those who today are still striving for a just peace within their homeland. Candles - one for each year of war in Timor - were lit by members of the Official Party.



The 'Dance of Mourning for the Dead Mother' (East Timor before the war) being performed around the Tutuala House by members of the Cultural Group.

8.12.85 Address to the Hakka speaking Timorese Community in Melbourne.

"However, one thing to be regretted is that the leader of Australia and his Government have done something for our oppressors recently. It has been a big shock to us. As Australia is one of the more notable nations in the realm of humanitarian initiatives and the preservation of freedom, we were surprised when it gave its recognition to the power of that hegemonic regime over our land. To support the oppressor's encroachment upon human rights is to give further assistance to the evildoers. The 'recognition' will also have serious international influences while the problems of de-colonization are being resolved.

This is the situation that we face, however the justness of our cause endures. Don't be discouraged! Don't be afraid of evil - human effort can achieve anything! So let us join together, convert our anger into power and work for peace and human rights!"

Radio message

FRETILIN Radio reports during October 1985 indicated the continuing 'state of siege' that is being experienced by villagers in attempts to isolate them from contact with the FALANTIL fighters.

"In most of the territory the daily lives of the East Timorese population who are confined to concentration camps, are shaped by the foremost concern of the murderous occupiers which is to ensure that there is a false image of so-called 'stability' in the zones controlled by their forces.

This preoccupation is evident by the way in which practically the whole populations is being permanently applied to the war in a way which forces them to be un-productive, failing to tend their tiny food gardens near the camps, and in the exhausting time they spend in night vigilance.

The criminal occupier uses the population in every way as a shield to protect its soldiers from Fretilin attacks. We provide below a real image of Viqueque as a point of reference to see how desperate is the criminal occupier:

- The people in the town and around it suffer from bleak hunger at present. We are sure that many people including children will die of hunger from now until the first months of 1986. The small corn crop of the first harvest is insufficient for the need of six months, while the tubers, pumpkins and others products have been abandoned to the animals due to prohibition on the population going out to tend them and the recent limitations of the production areas (imposed by the occupiers). Most of the populations did not produce during the second harvest...-- many because they had no land, and others due to the restrictions imposed, under which the population was forbidden to go more than 500 metres outside the camp...."

FRETILIN also reports that the use of medicines whose 'use-by' date had long expired in the few times on which health care was available. People are said to be avoiding "healthcare" of this kind.

A SHORT NOTE OF THANKS FOR YOUR
GENEROUS SUPPORT OF COSTS TO
PUBLISH THE "PEACE IN EAST TIMOR"
STATEMENT ON DEC. 7th

AUSTRALIA'S PACIFIC CONNECTIONS - A REGIONAL ANALYSIS

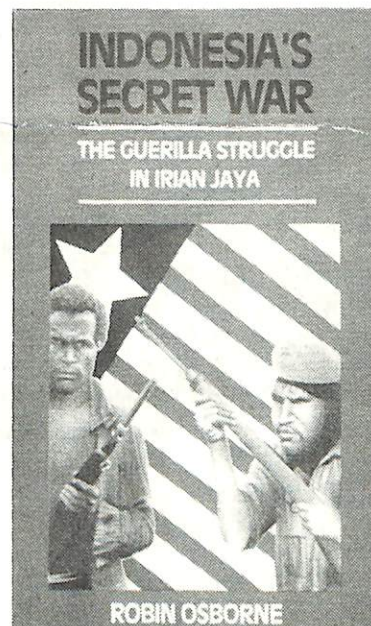
This National Conference will be held on the Anzac Day weekend (Friday 25 April - Sunday 27 April) at the Sydney Institute of Education, Sydney Uni. The Conference will work on an Alternative Australian Foreign Policy in the Pacific - Politically
- Culturally
- Economically
- Militarily

Registration forms and further details from the Melbourne organisers: Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Network, PO Box 338, Fitzroy, 3065.

Telephone: (03) 419 5588 (BH)

(03) 481 3621 (AH)

REGISTER EARLY and NO LATER THAN 7 APRIL



AVAILABLE FROM :

Australia-East Timor Association
P.O.Box 93,
FITZROY Vic. 3065.

Send cheque for \$12.95 to "AETA" as above.
Post free within Australia.

AETA Newsletter



POSTAGE PAID
FITZROY
VIC. 3065

East Timor Human Rights Comm,
Clinton Station,
SYRACUSE, NY, 13201 U.S.A

If undeliverable return to: AETA PO Box 93 FITZROY 3065 Australia