EAST TIMOR: AUSTRALIA, INDONESIA
AND THE UNITED NATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

On 25 April 1974 the Portuguese military overthrew the Caetano regime, thus bringing to an end the Salazar era in Portugal. With the change in government came significant changes in Portugal's domestic and foreign policies, and Portugal's overseas territories were almost immediately affected.

Liberation movements in Portugal's African territories had been active for over a decade. In September 1973 PAIGC in Guinea Bissau had proclaimed its independence and by May 1974 over eighty states had officially recognized the former Portuguese territory. Of Portugal's remaining territories Angola and Mozambique gained most of the limelight. With Portuguese promises of a new policy towards its colonies these territories moved rapidly towards independence. On the other side of the world, almost untouched by the revolutionary fervour of Africa, lay the Portuguese territory of East Timor.

The significance of the revolution for East Timor was slow to be recognized. For example, the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Willesee, made no mention of the implications of the military coup for East Timor in a statement on Portugal's overseas territories. He noted only the importance of the revolution to Portuguese Africa.

In the thirty three months that have followed the April revolution the once quiet colony, which few knew about and an even smaller number cared about, underwent a period of dramatic upheaval and change.

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1 The first official proclamation was Constitutional Law 7/74 of 24 July 1974, which altered the territorial relationship between Portugal and its overseas territories.

2 Australian Foreign Affairs Record, April 1974, p.288.
This dissertation examines the East Timor problem from an international relations perspective. It does not examine the detail of day to day happenings of the past thirty-three months.3

The East Timor case is of special interest for four reasons:

Firstly, from a decolonization viewpoint it is of interest to observe one of the last stages of the decolonization process, particularly from the perspective that East Timor is a small territory distant from the conflict of superpowers, but adjacent to Indonesia, a former leader of the non-aligned movement, and a state that fought a lengthy struggle for its independence.

Secondly, it provides the first real test of Australian decolonization policy. It is the first time that a decolonization process has proceeded so close at hand in which Australia has not been directly involved, and where there has been little interest from the superpowers, thus giving Australia the option of following an independent policy on the issue. It is of interest to analyse the character of and reasons for the extant Australian policy.

Thirdly, it provides a basis for examination of Indonesian attitudes and conduct towards neighbours and regional affairs. It provides a focal point to analyse Indonesia's preoccupation with order and stability, and to examine the implications of Indonesia's actions in East Timor on regional stability as a whole.

Fourthly, it has raised a collection of issues relating to the role and function of the United Nations. For example, the East Timor issue has been an 'acid test' for the role of the security council in resolving issues in the absence of great power confrontation.

This dissertation applies itself primarily to analysing the last three reasons. The role of Portugal, the administering power in East Timor, is not examined in detail. This is justified on two grounds. The first is that with the benefit of hindsight the Portuguese role, while of considerable importance, has not been overriding. The Australian and Indonesian governments stand out as the major foreign actors, and must ultimately accept a considerable part of the responsibility for the course of events in East Timor. Portugal rarely showed any resolve to come to grips with many of the complex issues involved in the decolonization process. Further the East Timor problem can be used to examine some of the problems of Australia-Indonesia relations.

The dissertation contains five chapters. The first four look at the East Timor issue at the 'regional level'. Chapter 1 briefly outlines the story of East Timor. Chapter 2 examines Australian governments' policies towards East Timor since September 1974. Chapter 3 examines Indonesia's policies towards East Timor over the past two decades, but concentrates on the same period as Chapter 2. Chapter 4 extracts the major themes and lessons that are generated by the analysis of Australia's and Indonesia's East Timor policy. The final chapter examines the East Timor issue at the international level, concentrating on the role of the UN and issues raised in debate at the UN.
CHAPTER I

THE EVENTS IN EAST TIMOR - A RESUME

In this chapter attention is focussed on a brief outline of the actual events in East Timor from 1974 to 1976. Explanations, especially those relating to Australia and Indonesia are kept to a minimum. Some expression is given to Portuguese involvement because it is necessary to appreciate the Portuguese role, and because Portugal's role is not detailed in later chapters.

East Timor occupies the eastern half of the island called Timor, at the South eastern extremity of the Indonesian archipelago. It covers approximately 14,000 sq.km. (excluding Oecussi Ambeno) and in 1974, it had a population of about 650,000.

Economically, East Timor was relatively poor and underdeveloped. Portugal had done little to promote economic development. East Timor had few exports (the most important being coffee and copra), and had a continuing balance of payments deficit which Portugal was obliged to meet. Despite this the economy had the potential to become self-sufficient, albeit at a low standard of living. Viability could have been promoted during a relatively long decolonization period (5-10 years) by support of development programs in basic infrastructure, education, agriculture and cottage industries.

At the time of the April revolution East Timor was politically juvenile. Only recently had serious attempts to educate the East Timorese been made, and the Portuguese had partially failed to delegate administrative responsibility, and thus the population remained largely illiterate and politically naive and inexperienced.  

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Soon after the revolution in Portugal three important political parties were established. They were ASDT (Associacao Social Democrata Timorense) - the Association of Timorese Social Democrats, UDT (Uniao Democratica Timorense) - the Timorese Democratic Union and Apodeti (Associacao Popular Democratica Timorense) - the Timorese Popular Democratic Association. Later ASDT changed its name to FRETILIN (Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independente) - The Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor.

FRETILIN, a nationalist party, representing viewpoints from moderate to left wing, was the political party most ardently in favour of the independence option. Initially it favoured immediate independence. FRETILIN was a youthful, socially oriented party. It found support amongst low status civil servants, teachers and people from rural villages. It established a rudimentary network of community organizations that emphasized health and literacy programs, and encouraged and supported new agricultural developments. These activities laid the preliminary grass roots framework for the party.

A second major party, UDT, favoured a continuing association with Portugal. Initially it was the largest party and attracted much of its support from the major population centres, such as Dili and Bacau. Although commonly labelled the conservative party its leaders were generally younger and less conservative than the bulk of its support. UDT's policies were not as positive as FRETILIN's and this resulted in a substantial shift.

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5 In 1974 Portugal allowed political 'associations' to form. It was not until during 1975 that the formation of 'parties' was authorized. The word party is used here for simplicity.

6 See Elaine Capizzi, Helen Hill and David Macey, 'FRETILIN and the struggle for independence in East Timor', in Race and Class, XVII, 4(1976), pp.380-395. This paper is written by individuals ideologically committed to the FRETILIN cause.
in support to the latter. When the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) consolidated its control in Portugal in September 1974, the possibility of continued association with Portugal receded. The Armed Forces Movement was committed to complete decolonization in the long term. This, and the reports that Australia was nudging East Timor towards integration with Indonesia, pushed UDT into the pro independence camp with the consequent outcome of developing common ground between UDT and FRETILIN.

A third party, APODETI, which favoured integration with Indonesia, was the smallest of the recognized parties. It had a varied following - it had members who were involved in the 1959 Indonesian promoted insurrection in East Timor, others were priests, while others yet were chiefs and petty kings from the traditional social structure of East Timor.

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7 Below are some short bibliographic notes on the important politicians in East Timor.

from FRETILIN

Xavier do Amaral - Leader. Xavier is a graduate from the Jesuit seminary, and although not a priest is a devout Catholic. He is middle aged, popular. Formerly he was a middle level civil servant.

Ramos Horta - spokesman on Foreign Affairs. Horta is young and flamboyant. He is a moderate. Formerly he was a journalist for the territory's newspaper 'A Voz de Timor'.

Nicolau Lobato - formerly a school-teacher; now an influential member of FRETILIN.

Rogerio Lobato - formerly an NCO in the Portuguese garrison. FRETILIN Commander-in-Chief.

from UDT

Lopes da Cruz - formerly director of 'A Voz de Timor'. He has been Leader of UDT since late 1974. He has often been associated with pro-Indonesia lobby since August 1975. He is a conservative.

Domingos de Oliveira - formerly a civil servant with a middle class background. He became Secretary General of UDT late in 1974. He is young, and the brother-in-law of Ramos Horta. He is now a strong supporter of independence.

(cont'd)
In 1974 political activity was confined to the propagandising of political manifestos. FRETILIN's vigorous social program attracted both attention and support, and by early 1975 FRETILIN had become the largest party in East Timor.

The new government in Portugal quickly accepted the rights of its colonies to determine their own future. This was formally stated in Constitutional Law 7/74. Portugal recognized three options from which the people of East Timor could choose:

(i) some form of continuing association with Portugal;
(ii) independence;
(iii) integration into Indonesia.

In a statement in October 1974 Dr Almeida Santos, then Portugal's Minister for Interterritorial Co-ordination, held the view that while 'the Portuguese position of the island could not stand on its own economically and would soon fall under the domination of another country [Indonesia] if it was freed', integration with Indonesia was not a likely outcome as few desired it. Portugal favoured the association of East Timor with it for an interim period, to be followed eventually by independence.

 Mario Carascalao - an engineer and foundation leader of UDT; he favoured independence in the long term (15-20 years).
 Joao Carascalao - brother of Mario. With Oliveira and Horta, Carascalao was responsible for the joint UDT-FRETILIN program which emerged in January 1975.

from APODETI
Arnaldo dos Reis Aranjo - the self professed leader of APODETI. He was imprisoned after W.W.II for collaborating with the Japanese. He is committed to integration.
Jose Osorio Soares - school-teacher.

For more detailed examination of the major parties see: Dunn, op.cit., pp.15-22; Ranck, op.cit., pp.25-29; and Jill Jolliffe, Report from East Timor, AUS, 1975.

Canberra Times, 22 October 1974.
On 22 January 1975 FRETILIN and UDT formed a loose political coalition primarily in response to mounting Indonesian pressure against the independence option. In a joint communique critical of APODETI's advocacy of integration with Indonesia, UDT and FRETILIN called for negotiations leading to the formation of a transitional government representing FRETILIN and UDT exclusively. This arrangement would have suited Portugal because it allowed for a period in which Portugal could be seen to be discharging its responsibility, without involving it in an open ended commitment.

FRETILIN and UDT fears seemed justified when reports of an imminent Indonesian invasion appeared in the Australian press, in late February 1975, but if an invasion had been planned it was postponed.

The coalition between UDT and FRETILIN proved temporary. UDT broke off the coalition amid allegations that the MFA officers stationed in East Timor were supporting FRETILIN and counter-allegations that UDT had secured clandestine Indonesian support in return for future Indonesian influence in East Timor's affairs.

The rift between UDT and FRETILIN quickly widened. Firstly, FRETILIN's central committee voted not to attend the Macau conference (a conference organized by Portugal to discuss a timetable for the decolonization process in

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9 Other factors responsible were the similar interests and backgrounds of the leaders and UDT's more forthright move to embrace the independence option. See Dunn, op. cit., p. 22.

10 This demand invoked precedents which had earlier been set in negotiations between Portugal and Liberation movements in Guinea Bissau and Mozambique. See J. Stephen Hoadley, 'Portuguese Timor and Regional Stability', in South East Asian Spectrum, Vol. 8, No. 4, July 1975, p. 6.

11 Originally suggested by Peter Hastings, in the Sydney Morning Herald, 21 February 1975.

12 Decolonization - The East Timor Issue, No. 7, August 1976. (Published by UN Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship & Decolonization), p. 7.
East Timor) on the grounds that APODETI's presence implied that independence was negotiable. This allowed UDT and APODETI to negotiate with each other. The other factor which allowed the rift to expand was the lengthy and simultaneous overseas trips made by the moderate FRETILIN leadership (including Horta, Amaral and Nicholau Lobato). The prolonged absence of this group strengthened the position of FRETILIN's active left wing. One outcome of this was the complete breakdown in UDT-FRETILIN dialogue. This pushed elements of UDT into the pro-integration camp. For example, Lopes da Cruz, President of UDT, went as far as suggesting that UDT would accept integration with Indonesia if the people wanted it, and that negotiations between UDT and APODETI were being encouraged.

UDT launched a 'show of force' in Dili on 10 August 1975. What reportedly begun as a partial seizure of power degenerated, after a brief pause, into civil war.

In the uneasy peace which followed the show of force Portugal attempted to negotiate a peace settlement. These attempts failed because of mistrust on both sides. Elements of FRETILIN wanted to avenge some UDT excesses, while other elements had little confidence in Lemos Pires, the Portuguese Governor of East Timor, whose 'neutrality' had allowed the show of force in the first place.

FRETILIN rapidly gained control of Dili and most of East Timor. This was facilitated by the seizure of the Portuguese armoury, and the defection of most of the Timorese elements of the Portuguese garrison stationed

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13 Indonesian Times, 5 July 1975. It should be added that da Cruz was on UDT's right wing, and it appears that influential UDT personnel like Joao Carascalao and Domingos Oliveira did not support this position.

14 For detailed accounts see: Decolonization, op.cit., pp.19-20 and Dunn, op.cit., pp.43-46.

15 J. Carascalao in Dunn, op.cit., p.45.
in East Timor. UDT had the backing, in the early days of the conflict, of the smaller police force.

Some Portuguese officials gave their support to UDT, while others gave tacit support to FRETILIN.\textsuperscript{16}

There is no direct evidence of foreign involvement in the show of force. However, the presence of senior UDT officials in Jakarta only a week before the conflict indicates that Indonesian pressure may have been partly responsible for the breakdown of civil order.\textsuperscript{17}

By mid September, and after some bloodletting by both sides,\textsuperscript{18} FRETILIN had established control over most of East Timor. Heavy fighting was localized in the border region between East Timor and Indonesian Timor. This fighting caused an influx of refugees into Indonesian Timor, not because of a like or dislike for either warring faction, but simply to get away from the fighting itself.\textsuperscript{19}

In early September Indonesia established a blockade against sea traffic in the Timor sea between Australia and

\textsuperscript{16} Decolonization, op.cit., suggests Chief of Police Maggiolo Gouveia was the driving force behind the show of force, supporting UDT. Dunn suggests the organization was done by Joao Carascalao, Dunn op.cit., pp.43-46. Some sources suggest Majors Mota, Jonata and Coelho, who were senior Portuguese officials in the local administration, tacitly supported FRETILIN. They have denied this in personal interviews with J.S. Dunn.

\textsuperscript{17} Ali Murtopo, a senior advisor of President Suharto of Indonesia apparently told Carascalao, Oliveira and da Cruz that unless action was taken against the FRETILIN left wing independence would not be tolerated by Indonesia. Interestingly, immediately after the show of force Lopes da Cruz was put under house arrest by UDT while other UDT members declared their support for independence and a continuing association with Portugal.

\textsuperscript{18} Dunn estimated about 2,000 dead, in ACFOA, Report on the visit to East Timor, October 1975, p.6.

\textsuperscript{19} Dunn, op.cit., p.49.
and East Timor. From mid September there were unconfirmed reports of Indonesian involvement in border clashes. It was reported in late August that Indonesian troops were being amassed in Kupang in Indonesian Timor. Indonesia became directly involved by withholding assistance to refugees until UDT leaders signed a petition appealing for integration into Indonesia. The petition was signed on 7 September 1975.

From the outset of the conflict Portugal played a minor role. On 27 August Governor Pires withdrew the Portuguese contingent to the small island of Atauro. However Portugal did attempt to find a solution to the civil war. A Portuguese envoy, Major Antonio Soares, attempted to enter East Timor through Kupang in late August, but Indonesia refused to allow his passage. On the diplomatic level Dr Santos had talks with United Nations Secretary-General Waldheim, and followed this with a visit to Australia where he attempted to secure Australian support for direct negotiations with FRETILIN. It was not forthcoming. The proposal also drew a hostile reaction from Indonesia.

As a compromise Portugal proposed fresh talks between FRETILIN, UDT and APODETI, at Macau. Initially FRETILIN refused to negotiate because of APODETI's presence, but eventually agreed to talks in Darwin. APODETI refused to consider the proposition because it disagreed with the Australian venue and since it no longer respected

20 Age, 3 September 1975.
21 Canberra Times, 3 October 1975. Andrew Clark writes that the Australian Government knew that Indonesian forces were involved from 17 September 1975, see National Times, 5-10 January 1976.
22 Herald (Melbourne), 29 August 1975.
23 Dunn, op.cit., p.51. Joao Carascalao is reported not to have signed the document.
24 Michael Richardson in Age, 28 August 1975.
25 Age, 23 August 1975.
26 Age, 9 September 1975.
Portuguese sovereignty over East Timor. Negotiations went on at least until late November 1975, but the meeting never took place.

On 28 November 1975 FRETILIN declared East Timor an independent republic. This action formalized its effective de facto status during October and November, and was partly caused by a series of frustrations that it experienced during these months. Although FRETILIN had been able to reestablish contact with the Portuguese administration after forming a de facto government in late September, it was unable to reestablish negotiations. Further its leaders were angry and disappointed with the Rome communique, which explicitly recognized Indonesian interests in East Timor, and the continuing lack of support from Australia. On 29 November the anti-Communist front (MAC - made up of elements of UDT and other small parties) and APODETI reportedly declared Portuguese Timor's independence and its immediate integration into Indonesia.

Indonesia invaded Dili, the capital of East Timor, on 7 December 1975. The capital and Bacau were bombarded from the sea, and overrun by a sea and airborne assault.

Indonesia then set about indiscriminately destroying any resistance it encountered. There have been reports, who's accuracy is gradually being well documented, of

27 *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the *Age*, 18 November 1975.

28 *Canberra Times*, 29 November 1975.


31 *Canberra Times*, 2 December 1975. This 'counter declaration' appears to be little more than an Indonesian prompted propaganda move.

32 *All Australian newspapers*, 8 December 1975.
large scale murder and plunder. This was at its worst during December 1975, but appears to have continued throughout 1976.33

After the invasion Indonesia established a puppet government called the Provisional Government of East Timor (PGET). It comprised the leaders of APODETI and other individuals with varied but pro Indonesian backgrounds. PGET's 'job' was to administer the integration of East Timor into Indonesia. On 31 May 1976 a farcical meeting of the Provisional Assembly was called to 'approve' the integration of East Timor into Indonesia. Of the 28 members of the Assembly only 5 had been elected. The other 23 were 'picked by traditional methods ... described as consensus and consent'.34 That the event was stage managed by Indonesia is reflected by the non attendance of invited 'observers'. Only 7 of the 24 states invited sent representatives.35 Indonesia issued the invitations. The whole event lasted less than three hours.

Indonesia issued a formal statement on 17 July 1976 acknowledging its acceptance of a petition from the PGET which 'requested' that East Timor be integrated into Indonesia. Indonesia 'accepted' the invitation and announced that East Timor had become its 27th Province.36 This 'declaration' did nothing to reduce the resistance encountered by Indonesia in East Timor. Even Soeharto recognized that the resistance was still strong.37

FRETILIN forces, and other anti Indonesian forces which are growing in numbers, continue to be a significant frustration to Indonesia. This was most recently evidenced

33 Discussions with J.S. Dunn.
34 Sydney Morning Herald, 1 June 1976.
35 Canberra Times, 1 June 1976.
37 Canberra Times, 26 August 1976.
by the statement that General Elections will not take place in East Timor in July this year (when they are scheduled to take place in the other 26 Provinces) because 'circumstances' do not permit. The continuing guerrilla activity suggests the struggle may continue for some time.

CHAPTER II
AUSTRALIA'S EAST TIMOR POLICY

During the post W.W.II period Australian foreign policy has faced few significant challenges - the East Timor issue ranks amongst the roughest. In the East Timor dispute Australia could not rely on either Great Britain or the USA. Both remained relatively uninterested. Australia was faced with a decolonization process on its doorstep, a process which it did not control and a process over which it could easily have been drawn into conflict with its closest and most important South East Asian neighbour, Indonesia. This chapter examines the character, the possible options and the problems encountered by Australian governments over this issue.

I

Australia's foreign policy has, over the past decade, redirected itself substantially. It has cast aside some of the cold war overtones of the 1950's and early 1960's, it is no longer obsessed with the 'Chinese menace' and it has attempted to build new types of relationships in the Pacific region and to a lesser extent in the world at large. While the 'first objective of any elected Australian Government ... to protect and promote Australia's security' remains, the emphasis in fulfilling this objective has changed from a reliance on military arrangements (particularly forces stationed abroad) to building closer and less transitory bilateral relationships, through cultural and economic ties.

However the 'new realism' Mr Whitlam stressed in the 1973 Roy Milne Memorial Lecture, which expounds this new policy, contains some inherent dangers. For example, it tends to underemphasize objectives other than realism and security. At least two other objectives are also important to foreign policy. They are the satisfaction of other national objectives (prosperity, welfare, qualitative advancement in life) and the contribution to human purposes in the world at large. Foreign policy decisions are thus made within a framework of objectives which may not always suggest the same action.

Commenting on past directions in Australian Foreign Policy a senior Foreign Affairs official, Mr Woolcott, has said that Australia requires 'a fresh and more genuine approach to the international issues of race and continuing colonialism and a new emphasis on our involvement with the neighbouring South East Asian region'. Just what a 'genuine approach' involves must be puzzling to observers who have examined the attitude of Mr Woolcott towards East Timor. The underlying problem in making such a 'moral' statement can be sheeted home to conflicts between competing objectives, and decisions on the relative importance of each objective.

The second part of the above quotation expresses the desire for closer ties with the Asian Pacific geographic region. In general terms this should lead to improved understandings with neighbouring states, hence improving Australia's position with the third world at large. However, underlying the development of bilateral

43 In particular cables leaked in Canberra Times, 19 January 1976 and 31 May 1976. This is discussed further in sections 5 and 6 of this chapter.
relations should be a basic set of criteria reflecting the mores of Australian society. The Government's policy should be pursuing Australia's interests, as well as taking note of, and attempting to understand, the position of other states.

II

In early September 1974 Prime Minister Whitlam met with President Soeharto for informal talks at Jogjakarta and Wonosobo in Central Java. At the Wonosobo talks Mr Whitlam apparently outlined his Government's East Timor policy. The reported policy contains two separable parts. Firstly, he suggested that an independent East Timor would be an unviable state, and a potential threat to the stability of the region. The second point, and an important caveat, was that the outcome of the decolonization process was ultimately a decision for the people of East Timor to make. 44 The substance of this view needs examining.

As an a priori observation based on the Labor Government's professed anti colonial stance in Africa it would have been reasonable to expect the Prime Minister not to make known a preference on East Timor, besides indicating support for the principle of self determination. Making known the government's stance on any one of the three perceived options (of independence, alignment with Portugal, or integration into Indonesia) could prevent the Timorese from being able to freely


45 On this David Goldsworthy comments that 'anti racism and anti colonialism were not just vague Labor party causes; they were principles that mattered, deeply and personally, to the new Prime Minister'. See David Goldsworthy, 'The Whitlam Government's African Policy' in Dyason House Papers, Vol.1, No.3, January 1975, p.1.
express their desires. For example, if Australia backed the integration option it could influence Indonesia to act in a manner from which it otherwise might refrain. The outcome might be that the people of East Timor are deprived of choosing from the widest range of options.

However an *a priori* observation need not be accurate. If the government placed a different set of values on its criteria for deciding its policy towards East Timor then the above argument does not follow axiomatically.

Mr Whitlam did not follow an approach based on Labor's African policy of supporting self determination. He indicated the government's tacit support for the integration option, and suggested that the independence option was not a viable solution. Before analysing why Mr Whitlam made this statement, its substance should be examined.

In economic terms an independent East Timor would clearly require some sort of financial aid on a short—or not a long term basis. But this is little different from many newly emergent states. PNG provides the closest and most striking example. Should one contemplate the integration of PNG into Indonesia, or Australia for that reason? Economic viability, while clearly requiring careful consideration, should not be the overriding determinant in deciding the future of a colony.  

In terms of geographic area and population East Timor is commensurate in size with many states that have taken their places in the world community. Nauru, Tonga and Fiji in the Pacific, Brunei in Asia and Guinea-Bissau in Africa immediately come to mind. Clearly, absolute quantities should not be an indicator of viability.

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46 This is recognized by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514(XV).
In political terms even the most radical party, FRETILIN, looked tame. It, for example, had recognized the importance of aligning an independent East Timor's foreign policy with the interests of Australia and Indonesia. This position was reiterated in March 1975 by FRETILIN's leader, Xavier do Amaral. In terms of political parties at this stage of development it would have been difficult to support the assertion that independence would destabilise the region, except if one made an across the board judgement that any independent East Timor was destabilising. To briefly summarise the arguments relating to the substance of the statement: although small and underdeveloped, the potential of East Timor was no less than the potential of many existing small states, and perhaps better in economic terms than neighbouring states like Indonesia. One should remember suggestions during the 1960's that Indonesia was unviable economically, but nobody suggested it should be incorporated into another state. Politically there was no indication that East Timor, as a sovereign state, would destabilise the region. Only FRETILIN had expressed a real interest in foreign policy, and it had indicated its willingness to structure its foreign policy on guidelines set by Djakarta and Canberra.

Several other factors might explain why Whitlam made his unprompted statement.

The first related to his views on small states.

In 1973, according to Peter Hastings, Mr Whitlam made a comment on the Solomons with an import similar to his East Timor statement. He said that because the Solomons would be unviable as a separate entity they should be incorporated into Papua New Guinea. He apparently

49 ibid.
found pragmatic state consolidation more efficacious than the existence of an increasing number of small states which might otherwise result from the decolonization process. That this view applied more to the immediate Pacific region than elsewhere (for example in Africa) reflected the pragmatic position of supporting justice (for example, self determination) where Australia had little influence and of supporting order where it mattered to Australia. Mr Whitlam clearly thought that the 'order' case took precedence on the East Timor issue. An important question is whether there was any immediately obvious 'order' grounds to warrant the denial of 'justice'. Apparently the Department of Foreign Affairs thought not, as it attempted to reverse the emphasis of Mr Whitlam's comments from support for integration to support for self determination.51

A second explanation of Mr Whitlam's comments could suggest that he made his remarks as a gesture of goodwill towards the Indonesian President. For the past decade Australia has attached considerable importance to its relations with Indonesia.52 The stature of past and present Australian Ambassadors accredited to Indonesia reflects this.53 Mr Whitlam is on record supporting this view.54

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53 Nancy Viviani, 'Australia and the East Timor Issue' in Australian Outlook, August 1976, p.201.
54 See references to E.G. Whitlam in footnote 52.
Attaching importance to a relationship should be very different from being uncritically involved. It has been suggested that since the late 1960's coalition governments have offered uncritical support to the anti-communist regime of President Soeharto. Inaction by Australia on important issues such as political prisoners and the West Irian plebiscite illustrate this point. In this period, Australian diplomats had a tendency to explain Indonesian actions in Australia, rather than promote Australian interests in Indonesia. The job of the diplomat necessarily involves both functions, but it could be argued that the emphasis should be with the latter. The two will not always differ but the possibility does exist. With the advantage of hindsight, Mr Whitlam's comments could be construed to follow in this vein, although to be fair, his view reflected not only uncritical support for the Soeharto regime but also his view of the world.

Mr Whitlam's problems over East Timor stem from his misjudgement and lack of understanding of the East Timorese people and his underestimation of the resistance a guerrilla force could create against an invading army. He also misjudged the domestic reaction both from within the ALP and the Australian community generally. But perhaps the most important shortcomings of his 'frank' stand were that it held Australia's East Timor policy open to abuse and interpretation at will, and placed restrictions on the range of options which would subsequently be open to Australia. These last two problems are all the more important because they could have been foreseen. All this was not to say that Whitlam's policy was wrong (and more shall be said about this later), but merely that in September 1974 it was not at all clear

that the option of gradual independence (as in the cases of PNG and Brunei) was not feasible, if not desirable. Further, little purpose was served by committing Australia so quickly to one position, given that Whitlam was loath to inform either the Australian public or Parliament of the rationale behind his policy.

III

From the outset the emphasis of Mr Whitlam's East Timor policy created divisions within the Labor party.

In October 1974 Chris Hurford, a Labor back bencher, spoke out in support of the principle of self determination. He said:

In view of the paramount importance of our relations with Indonesia it would seem to be tempting to let this tiny territory to be incorporated into Indonesia regardless of the wishes of the inhabitants ... But we [the ALP] are traditional supporters of the principle of self determination ... Australia cannot connive at the denial of those rights to the Timorese people.57

The first official attempt to correct the balance conveyed by Mr Whitlam's Wonosobo remarks was made at a Colombo Plan conference attended by the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Willesee, in December 1974. Willesee replied firmly to a statement by Adam Malik, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, who said that independence for the colony was not a practical option. Willesee stated that the Australian Government's attitude was that its policy recognized three broad options, and included independence as one.58

These remarks reflected two issues. Firstly, they reflected the suspicion that some generals in Indonesia

57 Australian Parliamentary Debates (hereafter APD), House of Representatives, 30 October 1974, p.3050.
would ignore Whitlam's caveat on the right to self
determination. Secondly, they reflected the pressures
to which Willesee exposed himself. Willesee's role
in the East Timor affair can be seen as that of a
mediator who, unlike Whitlam, was prepared to listen
and take account of the current of opinion, and alter
the tone of government policy if the situation required
it. However it should be added that Whitlam exercised
overall control over policy making on this issue.

The qualms of the 'liberal' elements of the ALP
proved to have some foundation, with the invasion
scare of late February 1975. Australian newspapers
gave considerable coverage to the scare, evoking a
strong public outcry. As a result, communications from
Whitlam to Soeharto and Willesee to Malik documented
that the Australian government did not believe that the
use of force was the appropriate way to solve the current
problem. The Australian position did not reflect a
change in government policy - it merely indicated that
the government refused to endorse Indonesia's proposed
method.

One outcome of the invasion scare was the
dispatching by Labor's Caucus Committee on Foreign
Affairs and Defence of a six-man fact-finding mission
to East Timor. The two most important recommendations
that the delegation made on its return to Australia were
the recommendation to re-establish the Australian Consulate
in Dili (which was withdrawn in 1971 because its

59 Some Labor men continued to hold this even after
Mr Whitlam had assurances from Soeharto; see Sydney
Morning Herald, 17 June 1975.

60 Australian, 25 February 1975.

61 Sydney Morning Herald, 1 March 1975.

62 Including MHR's Kerin, Fry, Gun and Clayton and
Senators Gietzelt and Mackintosh.
advantages were not believed to warrant the small expense), and that direct Australian aid be made available to East Timor.63

Three advantages seemed to flow from re-establishing the consulate:

(i) It would have provided an in situ source of information, which would have appeared as a visible alternative source to the generally biased reports of the Indonesian newsagency, Antara.

(ii) It would have been a positive diplomatic action indicating to Indonesia that Australia would not condone the use of force, and secondly stood by the need for an extended decolonization period (3-5 years) culminating in an act of self determination. This would have given Indonesia more time to come to terms with the distinctive character of political parties in East Timor.

(iii) A firm stance was essential to make it clear to Indonesia, that while Australia regarded its relationship with Indonesia as important, it also expected it to be reciprocating. Emphasising the need for reciprocation would check any tendency that Australia might become excessively partial towards a particular Indonesian regime, and as a result lose contact with the overall aims of Australian foreign policy.64

However several important considerations mitigated against accepting this advice.

Firstly, and what seems to be the question at the crux of the problem of the 'liberal' position, is what does support for self determination (and indirectly

63 Australian, Canberra Times, the Sydney Morning Herald of 24 March 1975.
64 See footnote 55.
support for the independence cause) imply for the Australian position? For example, is it adequate to give support up to the stage of self determination only to withdraw if Indonesia proceeded to intervene? And is there any difference between being involved in a conflict in East Timor and a conflict in Asia? Whitlam, at least, took an honest position on this issue when he reiterated the Australian government's stance on military involvement abroad:

One of the first policy decisions of the Government ... was to determine that Australia would not interfere again in land wars in South East Asia. This applies as much to Portuguese Timor as to Vietnam.65

There are some perplexing problems which arise from such an absolutist position. For example, one related to relations between Australia and small Asian-Pacific states. Nauru, the Solomons and PNG, amongst others, have in the past looked to Australia for protection from outside threats. The above position seemed to indicate that such support would not be forthcoming. These problems also applied to the uncommitted position, which offered no certainty as to how Australia would react. In short, Australia was in a bind; its relations with small states in the Asian-Pacific region were to some extent involved in a trade-off with relations between Australia and Indonesia.

Second was the problem of Australia-Indonesia relations. If Australia wanted to maintain a low profile out of deference to the Indonesian interest in the East Timor issue it meant accepting Indonesia's denial that an invasion was planned for early March 1975,66 and accepting assurances that Soeharto gave to Whitlam at the second round of informal talks held between the

65 **APD (H of R) 26 August 1975, pp.491-493.**
66 **Sydney Morning Herald, 26 February 1975; Indonesian Times, 26 February 1975.**
two leaders, in Townsville, during 3-5 April 1975.\textsuperscript{67} Re-opening the Consulate could have been seen as rejecting these assurances.\textsuperscript{68} The major difficulty with accepting this argument was whether Australia as well as Indonesia was, despite claims to the contrary, a party principle in the East Timor issue. Portugal and the East Timorese political parties thought Australia was a principle.

It is not disputed that Indonesia did have an important interest in East Timor (and this is examined in considerable detail in Chapter 3), but it is difficult to accept the claim that Australia was not also a party principle.\textsuperscript{69}

Indonesia's position on East Timor rested essentially on claims relating to the stability of the ASEAN region. A logical extension of its arguments (see Chapter 3) under a set of easily contrived circumstances would have provided Indonesia with justification to absorb Brunei, PNG, the Solomons and possibly other places. For Australia to fail to state its position and regional interests, sharply diminishes the usefulness of its foreign policy. Stability in Australia's regional surroundings can be promoted without necessarily sharing the perceptions of threats perceived by other states.

\textsuperscript{67}Australian Foreign Policy:Past Achievements, Future Prospects, op.cit., p.2.

\textsuperscript{68}As an aside, had President Soeharto been firm in his reported belief against the use of force (see National Times, 19-24 July 1976) re-opening the consulate would have at least marginally strengthened his hand against military officers who were pressing for an invasion. One shouldn't make too much of this point as it is difficult to say what influence, if any, Australian actions have on the way that Indonesia acts.

\textsuperscript{69}This is contrary to Mr Whitlam's position. He argued 'Australia ... does not regard itself as a party principle in Portuguese Timor' and that 'the future of the territory is a matter for resolution by Portugal and the Timorese people themselves with Indonesia also occupying an important place because of its predominant interest'.\textsuperscript{APD (H of R), 26 August 1975, pp.491-93.'
An independent assessment of possible threats is both possible and necessary. If Australia is to contribute to the Asian Pacific region its regional relationship must be put on a level which reflects this.

The third consideration which ultimately decided the fate of the consulate was the position adopted by Mr Whitlam. Despite a Foreign Affairs recommendation in late 1974 that the consulate be re-opened, Whitlam decided that the consulate should remain closed. That the Whitlam line remained intact during the period that Labor remained in office reflected Whitlam's predominance in the foreign policy field, his tactics (for example, the East Timor issue was never discussed in Cabinet) and the failure or lack of interest from other ALP parliamentarians to mobilise a significant contrary pressure group. There was some hot wind, but no one willing to risk the wrath of the Prime Minister.

IV

The Liberal-Country Party (LCP) Opposition found similar dilemmas to those indicated in earlier discussion on Labor policy. In the February urgency debate on East Timor Andrew Peacock, the Shadow Foreign Minister, emphasized the 'highest priority' of Australia-Indonesia relations while at the same time referring to the importance of an un hurried act of self determination. Although recognizing that a dilemma existed between the two points, he offered no concrete suggestions for government actions.

Mr Peacock reentered the debate on East Timor when he replied to Mr Whitlam’s statement of 26 August 1975. He indicated that the Opposition, too, understood the Indonesian position. But as Opposition spokesman he was able to play up to public opinion and put forward

70 Bruce Juddery, in Canberra Times, 24 September 1975.
suggestions without having to risk implementing them. He made two suggestions: Firstly, he suggested that ASEAN could play an effective role and that Australia should promote this possibility. Secondly, he suggested that Australia should reopen its consulate in Dili.\(^72\)

The first proposal has hints of passing the buck. The only ASEAN state seriously interested in East Timor was Indonesia: none was prepared to oppose Indonesia. This was later evidenced in voting on General Assembly resolution 3485 (XXX) of 12 December 1975,\(^73\) which condemned the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. The involvement of ASEAN was a non-starter because ASEAN did not want to interfere in a problem which it recognized to fall into the orbit of Indonesian affairs.

The second proposal, as has been noted, was made six months previously by the Department of Foreign Affairs and elements of the Labor party. Given the Liberal-Country Party policy since December 13, 1975 it is dubious whether this proposal was more than an attempt to make political capital domestically.

The basis of Peacock's stance differed considerably from Mr Whitlam. Peacock argued that the future of East Timor was 'of legitimate concern to the countries of the region' in so far as it has security and strategic consequences beyond the territory. He detailed three areas of concern:

(i) an increased Soviet presence in the Indian ocean;
(ii) a spreading of Sino-Soviet rivalry;
(iii) the territory's links with the extreme left wing in Portugal.\(^74\)

\(^72\) APD (H of R) 26 August 1975, p.509.

\(^73\) ASEAN voting: For - None; Against - Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia; Abstaining - Singapore.

points (i) and (ii) reflected traditional LCP fears more than concrete possibilities. On the third point the territory certainly had left wing connections with Mozambique, though not with Portugal. These connections were, however, of little importance. The three abovementioned points gave little real cause for concern that the territory would destabilize the region.

On the question of accepting political responsibility in the region Whitlam argued a more isolationist line than Peacock had done:

the acceptance of [political responsibility] ...could lead to a situation where Australia was exercising a quasi-colonial role in Portuguese Timor, and might lead to a point where we were assuming some de facto responsibility in the territory. 75

Overall Mr Peacock's position was cautious and not completely committed to the integration option. By identifying two options — integration with Indonesia or an independent state of East Timor with a well defined treaty association with Indonesia 76 — he presented a compromise formula that could have been acceptable to both Indonesia and East Timor.

However with a little help from Messrs Fraser and Sinclair 77 the LCP's East Timor policy became quite similar in substance, if for different reasons, to the Government position.

Whereas the Opposition seemed to fear threats to the security of the region (similar to Indonesia) the Government's East Timor policy seemed to be based on a

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75 *APD (H of R)* 26 August 1975, p.492.
77 *Mr Fraser and Mr Sinclair undermined Mr Peacock's cautious stance by intimating that FRETILIN was a communist party and developed the LCP mania of the prospect of another Soviet base in the region. See the *Australian Financial Review*, 29 August 1975.
complex of factors, the most important being reference to Indonesia and the 'neatness' Whitlam considered the integration option would provide.

V

Late in October 1975 Senator Willesee moved towards what would have been the most severe criticism of Indonesian activity in East Timor to that date. The Balibo incident, in which five Australian journalists died, and the publishing of increasing evidence of direct Indonesian involvement in the hostilities resulted in a draft statement being conveyed to the Australian Ambassador in Djakarta, which apparently included a paragraph suggesting that Australia knew that Indonesia was lying when it insisted that Indonesian forces were not operating in the territory. The Ambassador urged that this paragraph be deleted commenting:

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?

The Ambassador's advice was accepted and a conditional criticism of Indonesia's actions was made in the Senate on 30 October 1975:

78 Canberra Times, 18, 22 and 23 October 1975.

79 Sydney Morning Herald, 29 October 1975.

80 Bruce Juddery in Canberra Times, 31 May 1976.

81 ibid.

82 This rendition of events differs from that presented by Viviani (op.cit., p.220) who suggests that Ambassador Woolcott preempted Senator Willesee by deleting the paragraph acknowledging Indonesia's role in the fighting, presenting the statement to Malik then telling Willesee what he (Woolcott) had done. Such an action would clearly be improper. Despite Woolcott's denial that this is what occurred (Canberra Times, 24 January 1977) it is difficult to know exactly what did occur. I have followed the view favouring Woolcott simply because if Viviani who relies on Juddery, Canberra Times, 31 May 1976) is correct Willesee (cont'd)
The government has viewed with concern widespread reports that Indonesia is involved in military intervention in Portuguese Timor ... Were there substance in these reports, the Australian government would be extremely disappointed and we have so informed the Indonesian authorities. We have told the Indonesians that we remain opposed to the use of armed force.\textsuperscript{33}

Woolcott's moves to amend Willessee's position to this softer line reflected a view held by some in Foreign Affairs that relations with Indonesia were of overriding importance. It also suggests that Whitlam's view may have coincided with the Foreign Affairs' view. Apparently Whitlam had urged Willessee to make no statement at all and Willessee's final position reflected a compromise between the Whitlam position and the view that strongly urged the government to support the cause of self determination.

The whole incident raises an important issue concerning the role of Ambassador Woolcott. While Woolcott should not bear the responsibility for the position adopted, as the final decision was political, Woolcott's duty was to present an impartial picture of the ramifications of government policy. In as far as he failed to present such a picture he must also be held responsible for the continuation of the bland Australian stance.\textsuperscript{33}

The caretaker Fraser government, which was formed on 11 November 1975,\textsuperscript{84} followed quite closely the approach of non-involvement adopted by the former Labor government. Peacock, now Foreign Minister, continued to show considerable empathy for the Indonesian position when he said 'I think

\textsuperscript{82} (cont'd)

should have taken a firmer public stance on the action despite strong support for Woolcott's position from Whitlam. Other sources suggest that Whitlam had a hand in toning down the statement.

\textsuperscript{83} \textit{APD (Senate)}, 30 October 1975, pp.1609-1610.

\textsuperscript{84} In an unprecedented move Sir John Kerr sacked the Whitlam government on 11 November 1975.
Indonesian patience to date with the civil war occurring in its archipelago is something to be noted'.

This statement was made despite evidence available to the Foreign Minister, which confirmed Indonesian involvement in East Timor. Indeed, without the Indonesian involvement in the civil war and its hindrance to Portuguese attempts, it is quite likely that the civil war would have petered out before the end of September.

During the remainder of November the caretaker Fraser government did little to counsel a moderate Indonesian position. Not surprisingly, it also rejected FRETILIN's declaration of independence, saying that it was bound to recognise Portuguese sovereignty in East Timor. In following this policy it had the justification that it was following Sir John Kerr's edict that Mr Fraser not undertake any new policies.

Both major political parties took reserved positions in comments on Ali Murtopo's declaration that Indonesia would send 2,500 troops to East Timor. Mr Fraser said he would like to see what happened, and Mr Whitlam followed predictably with the declaration that 'Nobody would go to war over it'. This approach was the most sensible in the circumstance. Australia had missed many chances of exerting its influence on the East Timor decolonization process. Australia could have opened a consulate at the beginning of 1975. This would have acted as a deterrent to Indonesia becoming militarily involved in East Timor. Australia could have lobbied

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85 Sydney Morning Herald, 27 November 1975.
86 The actual content of the cables leaked by Juddery in Canberra Times, 31 May 1976 has never been denied. Also see footnote 73.
87 Department of Foreign Affairs, Backgrounder, No.19, 5 December 1975, p.11.
88 Australian, 1 December 1975.
89 Canberra Times, 4 December 1975.
90 Sydney Morning Herald, 5 December 1975.
the US through diplomatic channels, and the Congress directly. It could have argued that Indonesian involvement contravened US regulations which stipulate that US military aid cannot be used in an aggression against foreign territory. Thirdly, it could have protested directly to Indonesia saying that Australia was strongly opposed to an Indonesian military intervention in East Timor. Finally, it could have publicised the East Timor issue through the international media. This would have downgraded the impact that Antara was having, and made it less likely that Indonesia would act. President Soeharto, it should be remembered, was very conscious of Indonesia's international reputation. In each case Australia did not act. The Australian position was, during the weeks surrounding the Indonesian invasion of Dili, one firmly based on pragmatism. The divisive election campaign which was in progress during this period may provide some participants with a justification for their inaction. The relatively tame reactions of Peacock and Whitlam, to the invasion of Dili, merely reiterated this pragmatism.

VI

On 12 December 1975 Australia's East Timor policy (under Fraser's caretaker administration) appeared to change at the public level. Australia voted with the majority in support of United Nations General Assembly resolution 3485 (XXX). This vote represented a much stronger stance than that followed by the previous Labor government. It was to reflect the position of the incoming Fraser government which was elected on 13 December 1975.

Some months later the public image that the Fraser government was attempting to follow was summarised succinctly by Peacock:

In short the government believes that there should be a cessation of hostilities, thus putting an end to the bloodshed; a resumption of international humanitarian aid, preferably through the return to East Timor of the International Committee of the Red Cross Society; withdrawal of Indonesian force; and a genuine act of self determination. 93

This more principled stance was adopted by Mr Fraser, at least in public statements.

For example, Mr Fraser would not countenance the line argued by Mr Woolcott in another leaked cable. 94 Woolcott had argued that Australia should accept the inevitability of the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia. He had said that a continuing anti-Indonesian or pro-FRETILIN Australian press would cause Australian-Indonesian relations to deteriorate further. 95 Mr Fraser was put on the spot by the leaks. A close examination of the Woolcott line reveals that its adoption would have been in contradiction of the Australian vote at the General Assembly only a month previously. This necessitated Mr Fraser's public rejection of the Woolcott line. 96

In contrast to its public statements, the Fraser government's actions were not always as impressive. The attempted visit by the United Nations Special envoy, Mr Winspeare Guicciardi, to FRETILIN held areas in late January and early February 1976, illustrates this point.

93 APD (H of R), 4 March 1976, p.568.
95 In particular Indonesia looked to Australia to counter 3 themes:

(i) that East Timor was another Vietnam in the making;
(ii) that PNG and East Malaysia would be threatened next;
(iii) that the Indonesian occupation was analogous with the Japanese occupation of East Timor during the war.

See ibid.
The Portuguese government had indicated its willingness for Mr Winspeare to visit East Timor, but did not have the means to facilitate the visit. Australia did. The PGET issued a six point statement listing the conditions it wanted to be met before it would agree to the visit. The most important condition was the request that the PGET be notified, in advance, of the time and place of landing of the proposed mission. That the UN envoy agreed to accept the conditions did not reflect that he recognised the PGET, but more that he had already decided that visiting FRETILIN held areas was impracticable. Immediately after PGET was notified, Indonesia bombarded the five FRETILIN held airstrips, thus ruling out finally any chance Mr Winspeare had of visiting FRETILIN held areas. The important point about this incident was not how Australia reacted to the PGET statement, but how it did not take positive measures to land Mr Winspeare, the UN envoy, in a FRETILIN held area of East Timor.

The explanation offered by several members of the Department of Foreign Affairs (and reported in the Indonesian Times) on the Fraser government's public stance adds weight to the view that there was a difference between the government's private and public position. The officers of Foreign Affairs are reported to have said that the public anti-Indonesian stance of the Fraser government (on issues such as the UN vote and the Woolcott cables) was followed only because of anti-Indonesian interests in Australia.

Two later events caused a further deterioration of Australia-Indonesia relations. One need not be

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97 Press release of PGET, issued through the Indonesian Embassy, Canberra, 4 February 1976.
98 Discussions with J.S. Dunn.
99 One suggestion at the time was to take Mr Winspeare by Australian destroyer to the coast of East Timor, then fly him by helicopter into FRETILIN held areas. ibid.
100 Bruce Juddery, in the Canberra Times, 1 March 1976.
discussed here 101 but the other illustrated the problem of being seen to be following a public policy, and trying to follow a private one. On 31 May 1976 Australia along with the US, Japan, PNG, Philippines and Singapore, amongst others, refused to send representatives to the provisional assembly meeting in Dili which was being promoted by Indonesia as the territory's act of self determination.102 Such a claim was rejected by the Australian Government. Several further statements were made in June and July of 1976 reiterating this.103

According to news reports, Washington warned Australia not to let its relations with Indonesia deteriorate too far, as this might have secondary effects on the US strategic position.104

Shortly after this, one plank of the Australian government's four point East Timor policy disappeared. Mr Peacock's announcement that $250,000 would be channelled through the Indonesian Red Cross could be interpreted as a weakening resolve to the Indonesian ban on the International Red Cross.105

On the eve of the Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia a mobile transmitter unit in the Northern Territory, which had been used to monitor messages from and send

101 While visiting China in June 1976 Mr Fraser is reported to have described the Indonesian leadership as 'ineffective and unstable'. See the Sydney Morning Herald, 29 June 1976.

102 In fact only 7 nations of 24 invited sent representatives. They were New Zealand, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria. See footnote 35.

103 For example Press release issued by Foreign Minister on 20 July 1976.

104 It was alleged that US submarines use the deep water straits of Ombai and Wetar on Timor's northern coast, in the Sydney Morning Herald, 3 August 1976.

105 Sydney Morning Herald, 6 September 1976. The actual announcement was made in late August 1976.
messages to FRETILIN, was confiscated.\textsuperscript{106} That the government acted when it did was an obvious gesture of friendliness towards Indonesia. It had earlier been reported that the existence of the transmitter had been the subject of discussions between the Indonesian Foreign Minister and Ambassador Woolcott.\textsuperscript{107} Senator Missen’s question in the Senate summed up the substance of the issue. He asked whether the government was going to content itself with Indonesian propaganda intimating that although the transmitter’s activities were technically illegal, they fulfilled the important function of providing an alternative source of information.\textsuperscript{108}

Mr Fraser’s attempt to smooth over problems in the Australia-Indonesia relationship ran into a brick wall. Prominent Indonesian government officials made statements during and after the Prime Minister’s visit designed to make the Australian government admit its by now obvious private position on East Timor, in the public arena.

At the State banquet for Mr Fraser, President Soeharto bluntly restated Indonesia’s position:

...the problem of East Timor is a problem of colonialism and deciding their own future ... They have declared their integration with their Indonesian brothers, and the Indonesian nation has accepted such integration with full responsibility.\textsuperscript{109}

In reply Mr Fraser did not restate the Australian position. He made no reference to East Timor.\textsuperscript{110} This type of deference could only be interpreted to mean general acceptance of Soeharto’s position. The private stand appeared to be favoured over the public one.

\textsuperscript{106} Australian, 2 October 1976.  
\textsuperscript{107} Canberra Times, 5 October 1976.  
\textsuperscript{108} APD (Senate), 5 October 1976, p.969.  
\textsuperscript{109} Australian Foreign Affairs Record, October 1976, pp.526-7.  
\textsuperscript{110} ibid., pp.527-8.
In the major speech of his Indonesian tour Mr Fraser again avoided replying to the Indonesian President's challenge. He said the Australian position on East Timor had been documented elsewhere. But which position was he referring to? Mr Peacock's original position did not recognise the Indonesian Red Cross for aid purposes, but in Mr Fraser's speech he drew attention to the Australian government grant to that institution.  

President Soeharto's influential personal assistant, General Sudharmono, as the Australian Financial Review headlined its story, 'pull[ed] the rug from under Fraser'. General Sudharmono commented 'Mr Fraser's statement [in the Indonesian Parliament] has very great importance for us. It implies that Australia has recognised the integration of East Timor with Indonesia'. Indonesia now considered Australia's four point Timor policy a thing of the past. Whether Fraser had implied this was not clear - his statements gave little indication of what he really meant. In some ways the comments by Sudharmono were a gross breach of courtesy. Not only was Indonesia retaliating against Fraser's discourteous Peking remarks, but it was playing the game at hand roughly. It considered the differences between the Australian government's declared and action policy to be hypocritical. Australia did not protest strongly against General Sudharmono's comments. It merely sought clarification of the statement. Even after Sudharmono's comments, Mr Fraser declined to be drawn into a restatement of the government's position. By adhering to this approach Mr Fraser did little for Australia-Indonesia relations. It would not be inaccurate to say that this policy of

111 ibid., p.532.
113 Age, 12 October 1976.
114 See footnote 101.
deception rather than honesty kept the Timor issue alive in Australia, and had the opposite impact on foreign relations to that it was designed to have.

The Fraser government further damaged Australia's relations with Indonesia by leaking a confidential cable reporting a conversation between the Indonesian and Canadian foreign ministers. Putting the allegations of the cable aside (these have been repudiated elsewhere) the incident showed how far the government was prepared to go to restore its sagging domestic image. It was willing to undermine long established and respected confidences in order to draw the attention of the press off its own errors.

In an interview on State of the Nation on 14 October 1976 Mr Fraser attempted to explain his government's position on East Timor. What he said was:

...there is a proper and responsible path between the two extremes - one of de facto recognition, and the other of a situation which demands that statements need to be continued to be made, even though they in part relate to actions that took place a considerable time ago. What we said ... stands as a condemnation of those actions. And time doesn't rub that out.

Fraser claimed that the government had told Indonesia that Australia 'won't just go along with actions or policies if it disagrees with those actions', but he continued 'At the same time it is important to understand that we recognise the need for good relations with Indonesia... The above quotations illustrate the
dilemmas that Mr Fraser faced. His refusal to restate his position emphatically indicated that he was moving towards a de facto stance.

In November 1976 Australia abstained in a vote on a draft resolution in the United Nations General Assembly's Fourth Committee. In an explanation of the vote, Australia said that the resolution was not 'realistic or constructive'. Finally, it appears that the public image is drifting toward the private one. This vote is the closest indication to date that Australia intends to give de facto recognition to the Indonesian position.

119 ibid., No.67, p.10.
CHAPTER III

INDONESIA'S EAST TIMOR POLICY

There has been little attempt to seriously analyse the Indonesian position in East Timor. One may not agree with how the issue was handled by Indonesia but this does not excuse one from trying to understand the rationale behind the Indonesian position. This chapter attempts to provide some explanation for the Indonesian policy - it does not attempt to justify it, but merely to set it out from an Indonesian standpoint (as far as this is possible), and criticise it from an outsider's assessment of the realities of the situation. This author believes it important to recognize that cultural differences between states may provide alternative perspectives to problems - even if in some cases these cultural differences are exploited by a ruling elite to support its position.

I

Under the Salazar and Caetano regimes Indonesia had shown little interest in East Timor. In fact, Indonesian representatives at the United Nations rarely spoke of East Timor, even in their attempts to define the boundary of Indonesia.

In 1960 the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, stressed that while Indonesia considered that West Irian was an integral part of the Republic, it did not 'make any claims to any other part of the Indonesian archipelago'. He went on:

Indonesia explicitly does not make any claim at all to the territory such as that in Borneo or Timor which has within

the Indonesian archipelago but was not a part of the Netherlands East Indies. This was a reiteration of views presented by Indonesian representatives at the United Nations in 1954, 1957 and later in 1962. In short Indonesia maintained that the colonial boundaries of the Dutch East Indies should constitute the boundaries of the Indonesian state.

The period of 'confrontation' with Malaysia, during the early 1960s, was seen by some regional states as the first expression of expansionism, based on President Soekarno's early vision of Pan Indonesia. Indonesia, on the other hand, argued that it had no territorial ambitions, but that its campaign to crush the newly formed state of Malaysia was in line with what it saw as its regional obligations in the fight against colonialism. Indonesia regarded Malaysia as the outcome of a rearguard effort of colonialism.

As President Soeharto eased himself into the Presidency in 1966, Indonesia's actions against 'colonialism' subsided. Soeharto set about rebuilding Indonesia's reputation in the international arena. He devoted himself to the reconstruction of the Indonesian economy, and the side issue of the Act of Free Choice in West Irian. Prior to 1974 Indonesia expressed little interest in East Timor.

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121 ibid.
122 ibid., 9th Session, First Committee, 726th Meeting; 12th Session, First Committee, 907th Meeting; 16th Session, First Committee, 1050th Meeting respectively.
123 See Garth N. Jones, 'Soekarno's Early Views upon the Territorial Boundaries of Indonesia', Australian Outlook, April 1964, p.35.
124 Rupert Emerson, 'Self-Determination Revisited in the Era of Decolonization', Occasional Papers in International Affairs, No.9, Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, December 1964, pp.53-62.
Indonesia's 'non expansionist' position was reiterated in mid June 1974. Following a visit by FRETILIN's Ramos Horta to Jakarta, Foreign Minister Malik wrote to Horta:

The government of Indonesia until now adheres to the following principles:

I The independence of every country is the right of every nation, with no exception for the people of East Timor.

II The government as well as the people of Indonesia have no intention to increase or to expand their territory...

III For this reason, who ever will govern in Timor in the future after independence, can be assured that the government of Indonesia will always strive to maintain good relations, friendship and co-operation for the benefit of both countries.\(^{125}\)

There is little doubt concerning the authenticity of the letter. Horta was reportedly assessed by senior Indonesian officials (Malik and Murtopo among them) when he visited Jakarta, as sufficiently uncommitted and malleable to be persuaded to lead FRETILIN towards the integration option.\(^{126}\) Hence the open support offered by Malik to Horta in his letter. Indonesia was now interested in the territory's future, but as time showed, it had initially backed the wrong horse. While Horta favoured close ties with Indonesia, and for that matter Australia, he was very much committed to the independence of East Timor. Had Malik, among others, recognised this, it is unlikely that the abovementioned letter would have been written.

As early as June 1974 there was explicit support for the integration option within Indonesia. For example,


\(^{126}\) Sinar Harapan, 12 June 1974 taken together with reference 127. See also Sue Nichterlain, Australia, Indonesia and East Timor I: A thousand pines at Wonosobo, New York, June 1976.
the Vice President of the Indonesian Parliament, Mr John Naro, took the view that

from the viewpoint of our national interest our hope is that the Indonesian Government takes preliminary steps and finds a special policy with respect to Portuguese Timor so that finally the area will once again return to Indonesian control.\textsuperscript{127}

The official Indonesian position towards East Timor in general, and towards FRETILIN and UDT in particular, began to shift markedly in the last few months of 1974.

In October 1974, at the United Nations, Indonesia said that while it would like to see the people of Portuguese Timor exercise their right of self determination, Indonesia was also prepared to help the East Timorese to unite with Indonesia 'after a period of 400 years of separation imposed upon them by colonial domination'.\textsuperscript{128} This argument represented a new development in government policy. To this stage the government had adhered rigidly to the line that 'Indonesia was the national political name for the former Netherlands East Indies ... The question of cultural links ... was irrelevant'.\textsuperscript{129}

Perhaps it is inappropriate to resurrect precedents in this way, because primary concerns of nations do change, and with them national policy. However, such an approach can be justified as it seeks to do just that: For a long time Indonesia pursued a consistent non-aligned policy towards self determination. The East Timor issue was the first real test of that policy, since it was a territory where, if Indonesia chose to act in a new way, it was likely to be effective. By late 1974 there were signs that a new policy was emerging.

\textsuperscript{127} Andrew Clark in the National Times, 10-15 June 1974.
\textsuperscript{128} United Nations, ORGA, 29th Session, Fourth Committee, 2090th Meeting.
\textsuperscript{129} ibid., 12th Session, First Committee, 912th Meeting.
In December 1974 Malik effectively ruled out the possibility of independence from an Indonesian viewpoint. Of the two remaining options he saw, not surprisingly, integration as preferable to the maintenance of continuing ties with Portugal. He suggested that East Timor imposed a significant burden on Portugal (a burden which Indonesia was willing but far from obviously able to bear), but more importantly, he indicated that the relationship with Portugal might introduce a new form of colonialism into East Timor. This stronger view that integration was the only acceptable outcome to Indonesia probably had its genesis, at the official level, at a secret meeting between Soeharto and his national security advisors in October 1974.

The second signs of a new Indonesian policy came in aggressive newspaper stance on the East Timor issue in the Indonesian press. One of the strongest expressions of this was to be found in the Indonesian Times in October 1974. In general terms it stated that an independent East Timor would endanger the stability and security of the South East Asian region. At the same time an army newspaper Berita Yudha reported the growth of 'communist activities' in East Timor. These arguments are interlinked and became important as the government's policy developed. They are analysed in the next section.

In early 1975, an editorial in the New Standard developed an argument for Indonesia's claims to East Timor along geographic and ethnic lines. This statement was reported to have been an accurate reflection of the views of Lt. General Ali Murtopo, then deputy chief of Indonesian intelligence (BAKIN) and special

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130 Straits Times, 4 December 1974.
131 Dunn, op.cit., p.28. This has been confirmed from an alternative source.
132 For example Indonesian Times, 23 October 1974.
134 Age, 25 February 1975.
advisor to President Soeharto. Murtopo was reportedly eager to devise a way to make East Timor Indonesia's 27th Province.

It was noteworthy that the views of the Indonesian Times and the New Standard were not universally held in Indonesia. That Kompas was prepared to urge that Indonesia should not interfere in East Timor indicated strong military backing for an alternative position. Some military administrators were aware that the relatively underdeveloped East Timor would pose new burdens for the Republic, and were not convinced of the dangers that an independent state would pose.

The anti independence line was firmly entrenched by action supplementary to military activity associated with the invasion scare of late February 1975. From 2 March all journalists were barred from Indonesian Timor because of the 'sensitive situation', and all reports were channelled through Antara. This information blackout was used to safeguard Indonesian options. After the immediate prospect of an invasion had subsided Pelita reported Malik as again suggesting that while the government would respect whatever decision the people of East Timor made in an act of self determination, should something happen which directly disturbed Indonesia's

136 Michael Richardson, in the Age, 29 October 1974. Murtopo was otherwise best known for his involvement in the 1969 West Irian Act of Free Choice or Musajawarah, and more recently for his hand in the Jakarta riots of January 1974, which were associated with the visit of the Japanese P.M. Tanaka (see E. Utrecht, 'Recent Conflicts Inside the Indonesian Army', Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol.4, No.3, 1974, pp.324-35). It was during the aftermath of the January riots that Murtopo fell temporarily from grace. The East Timor issue was recognized at an early stage as a means, apparently successful, of restoring his position.
137 Canberra Times, 29 September 1974.
security, it went without saying that Indonesia would participate in responsibility. This was a thinly disguised warning intimating direct Indonesian involvement if Indonesian interests were not adequately safeguarded.

II

Indonesia's Timor policy received more definition when in September 1975 President Soeharto outlined the salient features of Indonesia's foreign policy as it related to East Timor. He drew attention to the importance of an independent foreign policy serving national interests, to the importance of regional stability (and in this context the role of ASEAN) and thirdly to Indonesia's obligation to assist nations seeking their independence. This can be seen as a broad framework within which the Indonesian stance on East Timor can be discussed.

At the outset attention needs to be focused on the concept of national resilience. To quote Whitlam:

* This embodies and articulates the experience of the Indonesian struggle for independence and of subsequent efforts to defend the integrity of the Indonesian Republic from internal and external threat.

The concept embodies economic and cultural, as well as military elements and is designed to improve defence and security. To the traditional experienter Soeharto added and developed a fervent anti communist ideology. The concept of national resilience brings together these elements. It is the framework which supports and, through the machinery of government, seeks to maintain the unity of the Indonesian state. Although its applicability

139 Pelita, 19 March 1975.
140 Kompas, 11 September 1975.
141 Australia's Foreign Policy: New Directions, New Definitions, op.cit., p.11.
is first and foremost to Indonesia, Indonesia believes that the concept can be developed to have broader regional appeal (manifested through Indonesian support for ASEAN). Ultimately, in the area of security, it seeks regional solutions to regional problems. With this background the East Timor problem can be discussed more directly.

By the end of 1974 reasons for Indonesian opposition to an independent East Timor had solidified into two broad areas:

(i) How would a small independent state affect regional stability? Would it induce big powers (and in particular communist powers such as PRC and USSR) into the area?

(ii) How would a small independent state affect internal stability? What affect would it have on provincial separatism within Indonesia?

Underlying both these themes was, inter alia, the fear of communism - the fear of the resurgence of communism in Indonesia, and the infiltration of communism into the ASEAN region. Both themes need examination. The proposition that an independent East Timor would increase regional instability is examined first.

A major Indonesian fear was that an independent East Timor would create a power vacuum, with the potential outcome being big power involvement. Hypothetically, one could imagine the establishment of a 'puppet' state, or at least a hostile military base in East Timor. The relevant question is whether the threat was more than hypothetical. An answer requires a brief examination of both Soviet and Chinese relations with Indonesia.

142 See Michael Richardson in the Sydney Morning Herald, 21 March 1975 and 26 August 1975.

143 Despite Indonesia's non aligned position no fear has ever been expressed about possible US involvement in East Timor. This slant indicates that it is communist big powers, rather than big powers per se that are the problem.
Relations between the USSR and Indonesia while being cordial are far from close; this reflects Indonesian reserve towards the Soviet Union resulting from the Soviet attitude to the Soeharto regime during the 1960s, and Indonesia's attitude to communism. The USSR, however, has shown no interest in alienating itself any further from such an important member of the non aligned community. Late in 1975 it actually agreed to help build several hydroelectric power plants and to continue several aid projects which were abandoned half completed when the Soviet Union withdrew its technicians in 1965. Soviet relations have now been put back onto a realpolitik basis. It is worth briefly examining whether the USSR had any strategic interest in East Timor.

The first point that needs to be made is that if the Soviet Union was interested, it would have attempted to ferment trouble long ago. The fact of the matter is, and the Soviet's lack of interest in the Timor debate at the UN attests to this, that the USSR has little direct interest in the region. The Soviet Navy's Indian Ocean and Pacific fleets have adequate access to ports more immediately accessible to the major Soviet areas of interest.

The second point is that East Timor has no suitable harbour facilities or ports which could be upgraded to meet the requirements of the Soviet Navy, if they indeed had any interest in East Timor.

It would not have been characteristic of Soviet foreign policy, given Indonesia's close interests in East Timor, to have risked an important and improving bilateral tie for influence in a new state whose future and politics were anything but predictable. The prospect of Soviet involvement in East Timor was then, slight.

145 Discussions with J.S. Dunn.
China had, in the past, offered both rhetorical and material support for national liberation movements. However in the case of East Timor two factors counter-balanced this threat.

Firstly, there were considerations connected with Sino-Soviet rivalry in the region. China's relations with Indonesia were little better than being in a state of deep freeze; China would have been reluctant to risk a complete breakdown of its relations with Indonesia, fearing that Soviet influence might grow disproportionately.

Secondly, while speaking forthrightly of its understanding and support for the FRETILIN movement it has never offered material support. China regards the East Timorese war of liberation as a people's struggle and as such is best conducted from within, and not with outside support.\textsuperscript{146}

As a corollary to the above arguments which indicate why the likelihood of any big power involvement in East Timor appeared remote, one can argue that the prospect of a proxy involvement using a third party, as in Angola, is also remote. There are no interests to protect in East Timor as there were in Africa. The overriding consideration in East Timor was maintaining relations with Indonesia at a workable level.

The second fear related not to big power involvement per se, but to ties a left wing government might have with foreign states. Not only did Indonesia see FRETILIN's left wing links with Lisbon to be a potential problem, it also regarded the Chinese minority in East Timor with some trepidation. Indonesia envisaged a left wing independent East Timor recognizing China diplomatically. This would result in the withdrawal of the Taiwanese consulate, presumably with replacement by one from Peking. It assumes that the local Chinese would be used as agents

by the new consul. It does not recognise that virtually all the Chinese residents of East Timor are Taiwanese Chinese - predominantly small businessmen - who would have little interest in serving a communist regime. By this tenuous chain of deduction Indonesia's decision makers concluded that this was one avenue for communism to infiltrate, and was part of the reason why independence must be prevented.

A more direct fear, based on the communist theme, was the prospect of a left wing government in East Timor itself. After FRETILIN assumed de facto control of the territory in September 1975 the Indonesian government and Indonesian newspapers portrayed FRETILIN as a communist party. By Western standards FRETILIN was clearly a nationalist party attempting to secure independence for its people. It was true that FRETILIN contained left wing elements, but to describe the party as communist was little more than propaganda. Here one must be careful: one must attempt to distinguish between Indonesian perceptions of communism, and ploys by the Indonesian elite to use the 'communist bogey' as a proxy to justify integration. Because of the very limited nature of alternative information sources most impressions are those based on government information. Since the government wanted to create an anti FRETILIN feeling in Indonesia all it had to do was run a newspaper campaign alluding to the threat posed by the de facto government run by FRETILIN. However, there were genuine elements of fear. These fears reflected concern about issues relating to internal stability as well as issues relating to stability in the region. These must now be discussed.

The problem of internal stability can be divided into two fears.

The first was the fear that East Timor could become a base for Indonesian communists. Since the dismemberment of the PKI (the Indonesian Communist Party) in 1965-66, activity by communist groups in Indonesia has been banned.
The right wing military has been continually ready to dispose of what appear to be possible breeding grounds for communist insurgents. It must be conceded that East Timor, because of its geographic location (for example its common border with Indonesian Timor), was always a potential training ground. However being potential does not impute likelihood. On the strength of FRETILIN foreign policy statements prior to the Indonesian invasion, it was clear that FRETILIN intended to pursue a close relationship with Indonesia. This would have meant accommodating Indonesia in relation to any PKI activity emanating from East Timor. While complete control would have been impossible (the problems Indonesia has had with FRETILIN guerillas, and the problem Japan had with a small contingent of Australian soldiers during W.W.II illustrate this), effective control could have been achieved by a campaign of non cooperation from local villagers.147

The second fear was that an independent East Timor could have been used as a base for other separatist groups in the Indonesian Republic, or in a less convincing form, has given inspiration to separatist groups in the outer islands.

Since achieving its own independence Indonesia has from time to time had to deal with separatist uprisings - such as PRRI, Permesta, the activities of the Moluccan separatist group behind Republic Maluku Selatan and the Free Papua movement in Irian Jaya. The argument that an independent East Timor was a real threat to the integrity of Indonesia looks, to an outside observer, a bit thin. While recognizing that the argument does have some basis, to be an effective separatist group really requires a grass roots base for support. No other separatist group in the Republic

147 An ideological campaign by the national government impressing on East Timorese problems Indonesia could create would have been sufficient.
has obtained the grass roots support that FRETILIN has. FRETILIN success has not been based on outside support but on indigenous support to back up its guerilla campaign.

All the arguments presented so far emphasize the potentiality of the fear, and in this lies the strength of the Indonesian case for integration. It is a strength that relies on order and not justice.

If Indonesia had permitted the East Timor decolonization process to proceed unhindered towards self determination the weight of evidence suggests that the colony's inhabitants would have chosen some form of independence. By allowing an eventual act of self determination to take place under Portuguese auspices would have had embarrassing and even damaging international consequences if the people's choice was unsatisfactory to Indonesia, and if Indonesia had then attempted to impose its solution. Indonesia's position was, then, based on perceptions of threats. These perceptions were an outward manifestation of a fervent anti communist and nationalist ideology which was being actively promoted by the military government. The whole of the government machinery was directed at mobilization of support of the population at large. An outcome illustrating the effectiveness of this campaign was that when Indonesia became actively involved in East Timor there was virtually no public dissension in Indonesia.

Hence the integration option was chosen. This was decided in late 1974. Only the method remained a little unclear.

The events in Vietnam during the first four months of 1975 would have made Jakarta hypersensitive to the 'communist' or as it was, the 'nationalist' activity in East Timor. But, as has been noted earlier, Soeharto was very concerned about Indonesia's image abroad. After the exposure of the planned invasion in early 1975 Soeharto took a stronger line against military intervention.
There is some evidence to suggest that Soeharto had never been in favour of using force, although he did want to integrate East Timor into Indonesia. As a general comment, Soeharto was against using the armed forces because it would divert resources away from economic development.

III

For the better part of 1975 the Indonesian government offered a variety of justifications not related specifically to the order issues developed in the previous section. These can be called geographic, ethnic, unviability as an independent state and implementing the will of the people. Each is briefly reviewed.

Firstly, there were geographic claims. These had little applicability to East Timor. Even the most sophisticated version, under the guise of Wawasan Nusantara (the Indonesian archipelago concept argued at the 1974 Caracas Law of the Sea Conference), does not apply to East Timor. East Timor lies at the South Eastern extremity of Indonesia, and shares a common boundary with Australia. Indonesia might have some success applying this argument to the enclave of Oecussi Ambeno because it is totally enclosed by Indonesian territorial waters. If East Timor was considered part of Indonesia under the concept it could be argued that Indonesia includes PNG and other states further afield.

Secondly, there were ethnic claims. Indonesia has itself argued, before the United Nations, that ethnic similarity is no argument to justify unification.

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148 See the National Times, 22-27 September 1975.
149 Hoadley, op. cit., p.9.
150 Oecussi Ambeno was absorbed into Indonesia in late 1975. It was a small Portuguese colony but never really entered into independence claims.
151 See footnotes 120 and 122.
If ethnic arguments were accepted as valid all that could be said is that many East Timorese share the proto-Malay characteristics of peoples in adjacent Indonesian islands, while others exhibit strong Melanesian characteristics. One should remember that East Timor has been culturally and socially isolated from neighbouring Indonesia for over 400 years. The cultural difference is emphasised by the fact that the Indonesian lingua franca, Bahasa Indonesian, is rarely spoken in East Timor, where the most common language is Tetum. To summarise this point: the ethnic argument has little relevance. Cultural similarity is an important consideration, but Portuguese Timor has been isolated from Indonesian Timor for over 400 years - a longer period in fact than parts of Malaysia have been culturally isolated from areas of Indonesia.

Thirdly, President Soeharto, amongst others, has argued along the lines of Mr Whitlam, that East Timor was economically unviable.\(^{152}\) Whilst the substance of the argument has been dealt with elsewhere (Chapter 2-II) it should be asked whether Indonesia was itself in any position to help the East Timorese. Getting into the economics of what funds Indonesia would and could make available rapidly becomes very complicated. Indonesia may have adopted the 'carrot and stick' approach - an approach it adopted in Irian Jaya - making available a proportionally larger share of Central Government revenues than its population would dictate.\(^{153}\) Given the character of the Indonesian bureaucracy it is hard to say whether the East Timorese, or other Javanese administrators shipped to East Timor to run the province, would benefit. Reports from both FRETILIN and UDT refugees suggest that very little of the aid supplied by

152 Age, 10 July 1975.

153 Ross Garnant and Chris Manning, Irian Jaya, ANUP, Canberra, 1974, Chapter 5. Part of this extra revenue would be used to develop the province's communication system (roads etc.) and hence reduce the threat the Province might pose to security.
foreign governments or aid organizations has been sent to Timor.\textsuperscript{154} East Timor, as an independent state could have attracted aid from at least three sources. Firstly, Australia supplies aid to every neighbouring developing country. There is no reason why East Timor should have been an exception. Secondly, Portugal was not about to dump Timor - it would willingly have supplied aid for an interim period. Thirdly, East Timor could have applied for assistance through multilateral bodies such as the World Bank, the ADB and the IBRD. The argument that East Timor would do better economically with Indonesia is far from conclusive.

Finally, and this has been the linchpin of Indonesia's public justification, Indonesia has often expressed its willingness to submit to the 'will of the people'.\textsuperscript{155} This was part of its overall propaganda campaign to maintain its public image. When it was apparent that pro-Indonesian support was minimal it used the press to belittle the importance of FRETILIN compared to APODETI.\textsuperscript{156} Other observers have disputed the Indonesian claim as to the strength of the pro-Indonesian lobby. Ken Fry and Arthur Gietzelt, two Australian MPs who travelled to East Timor in September 1975 have stated that FRETILIN 'appeared to have the overwhelming support of the local population'.\textsuperscript{157} UDT had the second largest base of support, and support for APODETI was, by comparison, small. In an unusually frank series of articles B.M. Diah, the owner of the Indonesian newspaper, Merdeka, came to similar conclusions as Fry and Gietzelt, observing that the pro-Indonesia party had little support.\textsuperscript{158}

\textsuperscript{154} Discussions with J.S. Dunn.

\textsuperscript{155} Bangkok Post, 6 September 1974; Sinar Harapan, 17 June 1974; Indonesian Times, 21 October 1974; Pelita, 19 March 1975.

\textsuperscript{156} E.g. see the Sydney Morning Herald, 11 September 1975.

\textsuperscript{157} Senator Gietzelt and K.L. Fry, op.cit., p.8.

\textsuperscript{158} B.M. Diah in Merdeka, 13, 14 and 15 January 1976. Diah was formerly Minister for Information under Soeharto.
The Diah articles were critical on other issues such as the timing of the invasion and the public image of the Indonesian government. The final section of this chapter explores why Indonesia chose to invade, and what factors contributed to the timing.

IV

Following reports of a proposed invasion in the Western Press in February and March 1975, President Soeharto was reportedly able to restrain his generals by arguing that a substantial justification was required before Indonesia could invade East Timor without injuring its international reputation, and adversely affecting its regional relations.159

One could have argued that the UDT show of force provided this opportunity.

The strongest factors against Indonesian military intervention in August 1975 were the opposition and presence of the administering power Portugal, the attempts (through negotiating channels) that Portugal was making to bring the conflict under control, and the fact that President Soeharto had reportedly given his word to the Australian Prime Minister that force would not be used to resolve the conflict. However, it is more likely that rather than these factors delaying the military intervention, the outbreak of the civil war was promoted and used by Indonesia to become involved in a clandestine manner.

Indonesia's desire to become involved can be plausibly explained. Indonesia could not afford to let FRETILIN become entrenched in East Timor and gain, as it would have done, widespread de facto recognition. The appearance that civil war was continuing would delay this process, giving Indonesia more time to mobilize

159 Michael Richardson, in National Times, 19-24 July 1976.
resistance to FRETILIN from refugees in Indonesian Timor. It soon became apparent that this 'local' force could not be expected to regain control in East Timor. Further the gradualist approach was merely solidifying anti-Indonesian feeling, particularly in Australia. So it was a matter of waiting. The necessary justification came on 28 November 1975, with the FRETILIN declaration of independence. Indonesia's approach can be regarded as deceitful and even devious. Only three days prior to the invasion the Indonesian representative at the UN assured the Fourth Committee that Indonesia wanted the people of East Timor to decide their own future. But one would not have expected otherwise - it is not usual for states contemplating an aggressive act to advertise their intentions in advance.

B.M. Diah was one Indonesian who strongly disagreed with the government's method - not because it invaded - but because it waited so long. Diah argued that Indonesia had justification to act with the outbreak of the civil war, in defence of its national integrity. It was a case of establishing hegemony over its domain. He was critical of Australia:

> Do they think they can forbid us to defend sovereignty simply because they arm us?... We should not expect other countries to protect our security and interests ... we must be very alert to the danger of balkanization.  

This view undoubtedly reflected that of many Indonesians, particularly those in the military that had argued for earlier intervention. The strength of feeling of Indonesia should therefore not be underestimated. On the other hand the invasion should not be regarded as a natural outcome. It was an outcome which Australia

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160 Recent evidence suggests that most refugees were kept in concentration camp type conditions, and only the selected 'faithful' were used in combat, these being supplemented by Indonesian regulars.

161 Diah, op.cit. (US Translation service).
aided and abetted. The fourth chapter brings together the main themes of this dissertation, and also examines briefly the issue of Chapters 2 and 3 of the 'inevitability' of continued Indonesian military intervention after October 1975.
CHAPTER IV

AUSTRALIAN AND INDONESIAN EAST TIMOR POLICIES:
THEMES AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapters 2 and 3 have established the character, justification and efficacy of policies adopted by Australia and Indonesia towards East Timor from 1974 to 1976.

This chapter briefly highlights the differences in purposes of and roles played by these two states in the abovementioned period, it refocuses attention on the major themes that have surfaced, and in conclusion it briefly comments on the lessons that emerge from the East Timor issue with respect to the foreign policies of Australia and Indonesia.

I

From his initial reported statement at Wonosobo in September 1974 Mr Whitlam's East Timor policy reflected the mind of a visionary that could not cope with detail. Whitlam lacked an understanding of the East Timorese people, he regarded the rights of the East Timorese as simply unimportant when compared with the significance of Australia's relations with Indonesia. He was, of course, correct in assessing that Australian-Indonesian relations were relatively more important: what he did not ask was whether there was a necessary conflict between fulfilling the call for self determination by the East Timorese, and the maintenance of good relations with Indonesia. Clearly he thought there was, but he never bothered publicly to detail the conflict. Whitlam put Australia's East Timor policy in a straitjacket when there was no need to even announce a firm Australian

162 I have only footnoted references not appearing elsewhere in the text.
position. Calling Whitlam's initial policy 'deferential' is probably inaccurate. Certainly Whitlam was attempting to cultivate his relationship with President Soeharto, but he also was attracted by the neatness of the integration solution. It is possible that Indonesia posed the question on East Timor and Whitlam assented that the integration position was the option that he also favoured. However the policy was germinated is beside the real point, which is that during the remainder of 1974 and 1975 Australia did little to impress upon Indonesia that it believed that the future of East Timor should be determined by the East Timorese.

Indonesia's policy towards East Timor was, from the outset, positive. It was encouraged by Whitlam's earlier reported statements, and pointedly chose to ignore subsequent Australian attempts to telegraph changes in its policy. Following its own Presidential style of government, Indonesia chose only to listen to Whitlam. Whitlam's character suggests that had he wanted to alter the initial impressions that he communicated to Soeharto he would have done so himself, and not relied upon the Department of Foreign Affairs and later Senator Willesee to attempt to redirect Australian policy. With the benefit of hindsight it is clear that Whitlam had no such desire. By not redirecting his initial reported statement Whitlam was in effect ignoring Australian interests. Not only was he to damage the credibility of the ALP's professed pro-human rights stance, he was also undermining Australian relations with small Asian-Pacific states. The damage may not be permanent because the Asian-Pacific countries were not directly involved.

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163 See Chapter 2, section 2.
164 This is the other version of what went on at Wonosobo.
165 One of the underlying reasons for the talks in the first place was to establish dialogue between the two states on a personal level. See also Chapter 2, section 2.
in East Timor, and they welcome what support (particularly economic) they receive. However should Indonesia repeat the 'East Timor' episode in Sabah or Brunei and if Australia reacted in the same way the effect on Australia's regional relations might be considerably greater.

In contrast to Australia's approach, Indonesia moved systematically to protect what it perceived to be its best interests. It made contacts with APODETI and UDT officials after its initial counterproductive flirtation with FRETILIN. It had discussions with Portugal both in Indonesia and abroad (at London, New York and Rome). It used the media to provide 'documentary' evidence that East Timor was a threat to domestic and regional security, and to develop internal support for its position which later, to untinted eyes, looked very much like expansionism in the Soekarno mould.

In the pre-Dili period there was only one occasion when Indonesia appeared to be directly influenced by Australian policy. The release of information by Australian intelligence officials, which set off the press reaction in late February 1975, was one of the few instances when Australia responded positively to alleged Indonesian provocations, and in a way that Indonesia appeared to understand. The intelligence leaks and the backlash they created forced Indonesia to call off the invasion, and were followed by a spate of denials that it, Indonesia, had ever intended to invade East Timor. However it is not clear whether this intelligence leak had official government backing, as subsequent government policy was less decisive. For example, the government rejected the call by the Department of Foreign Affairs in late 1974 to re-establish the Australian Consulate in Dili. Whitlam's policy of giving Australian-Indonesian relations precedence over all else continued, and there was no one in the Opposition or within his own party who was prepared to take him to task for it. To be fair, there were several
reasons which provided support for Whitlam's stance. They were:

1. assurances from Soeharto on Indonesia's attitude towards East Timor;
2. the prospect that a strong government stance on East Timor might bolster anti Indonesian feeling in Australia, thus damaging bilateral support;
3. that by further recognition of the East Timorese position, and by countering its present pro-Indonesian position, Australia might aggravate relations with Indonesia, putting the government's 'low threat' defence posture under a longer shadow than it was already under.

Although these reasons provided support for the government's policy it is difficult to see how re-opening the consulate, on balance, would have damaged relations between the two states. Australia had simply adopted the passive stance that any move was a detrimental move.

By stating that Australia would not accept political responsibility in the decolonization process, in late August 1975, Whitlam virtually gave Indonesia a carte blanche, since it was patently clear that Portugal was unable to restore peace to the decolonization process. Ambassador Woolcott reiterated that Indonesia was probably the only power both capable and willing to settle the conflict in East Timor. He added that Australia was not a party principal and was 'just giving help of a humanitarian character'. One reason which might explain these two statements and the character of Australian policy itself (although certainly not condone them) is that there was an unfortunate coincidence of characters in the important decision making areas.

166 See Chapter 2, section 3.
167 Sinar Harapan, 29 August 1975.
Firstly, there was Whitlam whom Viviani has described as 'confident and strong willed in foreign policy';\textsuperscript{168} once he had made his mind up he was very unlikely to change it. Then there was Willesee who, although he made one attempt to redirect Australia's position,\textsuperscript{169} was altogether too retiring.\textsuperscript{170} Thirdly, there was Woolcott who advised without hesitation that Australia-Indonesia relations were of overriding importance.\textsuperscript{171} From the evidence available\textsuperscript{172} Woolcott, like Whitlam, has provided no adequate explanation why Australia should not offend Indonesia if its interests demand such action. The important thing to note about Australia's East Timor policy during this period was that although it was passive, it was consciously passive. Australia went out of the way not to make trouble. Thus by October 1975 when it was clear that Australia knew of Indonesia's military involvement in East Timor, it was not prepared to declare this publicly.

An important question to ask at this stage is whether Australia could have, in October 1975, prevented the 7 December invasion of Dili, and the continuation of covert military operations which appear to have begun in late September 1975. Now, in 1977, it is pure speculation, but the arguments are worth presenting.

II

One critic of Australian government policy, J.S. Dunn, has suggested that a positive warning by Australia to Indonesia late in 1975 could have prevented a continuation

\textsuperscript{169} See footnote 58.
\textsuperscript{170} This is an impression gained from discussions with senior ALP Parliamentarians. In fairness it was probably Whitlam's tactics of not allowing Timor on the Cabinet agenda, and not attending Caucus discussions on East Timor that were more important.
\textsuperscript{171} Canberra Times, 16 January 1976 and 31 May 1976.
\textsuperscript{172} ibid. See also AM(ABC Radio), 18 February 1977.
of Indonesia's use of force. His argument does not go as far as saying that should Indonesia have called Australia's bluff, Australia would have engaged Indonesia in battle. It relies on the fact that prior to the invasion of Dili Indonesia's armed forces were relatively run down, and could not have withstood more than a modest encounter. Dunn suggests that Australia could have exerted pressure on Indonesia through its relations with the US, and in particular through the US Congress. He argues that because Australia did nothing, the US did nothing. For similar reasons, no pressure was exerted through other bodies like IGGI and various aid bodies.

The argument raises two important questions. Firstly, whether Australia actually had the bargaining power that Dunn suggests - in which case Indonesia would have backed down. Secondly, what if Australia's bluff was called?

As a partial consideration of the first question one needs to ask whether Australia would have received support from the US. While the position it adopted (one of tacit support - remembering that President Ford and Dr Kissinger were in Djarkarta on the eve of the Indonesian invasion of Dili) was not necessarily the position it would have adopted had Australia been lobbying strongly for the non intervention stance, it is a second best approximation of how the US government felt. Indeed on the basis of US position adopted in December 1975 and the US reaction to Australian noises in August 1976 when it told Australia to tone down its objections, it is unlikely that Australia would have received much support from the US.

Support from the US government would have been central to Australian endeavours. It would have been unlikely that Australia would directly approach Congress to terminate

173 Discussions with J.S. Dunn.
military aid to Indonesia over the head of the White House.

Further White House support would have been vital in meetings of various aid groups.

The second question considers two issues
(1) the use of force
(2) damage from an unsupported statement.

The first issue goes beyond Dunn's argument and considers the possible cases where Australia should be prepared to back up a statement with the threat of force. It has been argued elsewhere in this dissertation that Australia should consider the extent of its obligations in the Asian-Pacific region. In a partial framework which relates to Indonesia it is a question of where to draw the line at Indonesian aggression. Few Australian politicians would have countenanced conflict with Indonesia over Timor. The question remains: how far should Indonesia be allowed to expand unchecked?

Given that Australia's bluff could have been called, Australia's bargaining power in the future, had it not been prepared to fight, would have been seriously reduced. On this second point it is difficult to say whether the inactivity which actually occurred, or the hypothetical 'backdown' after making a stand would have been the more damaging.

The East Timor question posed difficult problems for Australia. Even if Australia was not prepared to contemplate the use of force, Australia could have troubled Indonesia in other areas. Australia could have lobbied international aid groups to make their support conditional on Indonesia's Timor behaviour; it could have established a consulate in Dili which would have provided a different picture of domestic East Timor life in the second half of 1975; and it could have threatened to reduce its own aid contribution to Indonesia. The point is not that this would have prevented the invasion for certain. It is simply that it
stood a reasonable chance of doing so. Australia's silence meant that Indonesia was at no time challenged in her objective of annexing East Timor.

III

After the election of the LCP government in Australia in December 1975 the character of Australia-Indonesia interaction changed considerably.

Indonesia's stance remained unchanged. It continued to implement its policy ruthlessly. It made Mr Winspeare's visit pointless, and continued moving relentlessly toward formal integration. Whereas it had previously ignored Australia it now attempted to secure Australian recognition, as it realized that this could result in recognition from other developed states, and that this would virtually have sealed the fate of East Timor.

Australia had two policies, a public one for domestic consumption and a private one which it reportedly conveyed to Indonesia. At the public level Australia adopted a firm policy towards the completion of the decolonization process (Peacock's 4 point policy). At the private level it indicated little intention of implementing its declared policy. The difference between Whitlam and Fraser was, as Mackie comments, that Whitlam 'did not talk one way while acting in quite another'.174

This approach which Fraser adopted did at least as much damage to Australia-Indonesia relations as any honest and firm stance would have done late in 1975. Australia's foreign policy in 1976 was not directed towards improving Australia-Indonesia relations, per se. If improvement occurred it was only by chance. The basic feature of Fraser's 'foreign policy' was its domestic

orientation - an attempt by Fraser to boost his domestic image. Following a string of antagonistic actions by Fraser, Indonesia retaliated with Sudharmono's comments on 11 October 1976, and some days later Malik hinted that he had a secret accord with Fraser which 'could not be revealed because of domestic pressures on Mr Fraser'. This apparent duplicity was a natural outcome of Fraser's attempt to mix foreign policy with domestic image building, with the result that both suffered.

Indonesia reacted late in 1976 to its failure to secure Australia's recognition of East Timor as a province of Indonesia. It tried the 'carrot' method where the 'stick' had failed. It offered Australia generous international boundaries between Australia and East Timor if Australia recognized the integration of East Timor. Indonesia was prepared to explore all available avenues that might further its interests.

In contrast to Australia's narrow, self-restricting and sometimes confused foreign policy on East Timor, Indonesia's policy has been flexible, purposeful and resourceful.

IV

Several important lessons have developed out of Australia's handling of the East Timor issue.

175 In January his comments on the leaked Woolcott cables; in June his comments in China, and in October his failure to explicitly state Australia's de facto recognition of the integration, when he visited Indonesia.


177 Mackie, 'Australian Foreign Policy: From Whitlam to Fraser', op.cit., p.5.

The first is that Australia needs to consider the precise nature of its involvement - economically, politically and militarily - in the Asian Pacific region, and in what ways it envisages that role extending to maintaining regional stability. Stability in the region, and how it is achieved and maintained, is as important to Australia as to other states.

Secondly, Australia should reassess what the maintenance of good relations with Indonesia means, by itself, and in the regional context of Australia's relations with other states in the Asian Pacific region. Pragmatism will always play an important part in foreign policy, but this is not to say that foreign policy should be based on pragmatism. Further, this author seriously questions the value of building uncritical relations with one regime in Indonesia, and supporting everything for which the regime stands. There is a difference, albeit sometimes subtle, between building good relations with a state and with the government of that state.

In connection with its relations with Indonesia, Australia must recognize the character of Indonesian decision making. It is ruthless, tough minded, and as the Timor incident showed, it will use force if it cannot achieve its objective by other means. There may come a time when Australia must be prepared to consider the use of force, if only to back up a threat, to defend its interests.

The conduct of Australian foreign policy over the East Timor issue left much to be desired. It was one occasion where there was little outside influence on the formulation of its policy, and the policy that emerged was of small credit to Australia. The lead given by successive Prime Ministers, Mr Whitlam and Mr Fraser, has been far from inspiring. The former was too concerned with grandiose international designs while the latter was consumed by problems related to his domestic image. But the real tragedy is not the state of Australian foreign policy, for it can be repaired.
It is the plight of the East Timorese who received no support when they most needed it. They escaped the grip of one colonialist power, only to be recolonized by another.

Indonesia, through its actions on East Timor has illustrated the purpose and drive that the combined force of government action (through military action, diplomacy, and the media) can provide. Although its method is hard to fault from its perception of its own self interests, its method and ends to which its policy was directed, from an observer's viewpoint, require further examination.

The first comment that needs to be made is that Indonesia invaded East Timor under the pretext of restoring order to the territory and stability to the region. It has achieved neither. It has created a bitter conflict in East Timor, one which shows no signs of disappearing in the short term. It has been a costly venture from which no immediate benefits are visible.

Through the incident Indonesia, a former leader in the anti-colonial and non aligned movements, has shown almost complete disregard for the right of self determination, where it impinges in any way on its perception of its security. On East Timor it showed no preparedness to understand the major characteristics of the domestic political parties. It resorted to aggression rather than attempting to understand. For the future Indonesia must consider the reality of its perceptions. The international community (and in particular the non aligned community) may not disregard so lightly aggressive acts committed against a sovereign state, particularly if Indonesia uses methods similar to those used in East Timor.

A further problem is the ideology being promoted by the incumbent government in Indonesia. In East Timor Indonesia chose not to distinguish between nationalism and communism. By doing so it embarked on an expansionist path reminiscent of Soekarno.
Soeharto may be the moderate he is reported to be, Indonesia's international reputation will quickly suffer if it continues to settle disputes by force. With its international reputation sagging it may find foreign aid hard to find, and foreign investment harder to attract, particularly in the wake of Pertamina. Further, it will create friction with neighbouring states, and for as long as the resistance to Indonesia's military force continues, it will redirect resources away from the development effort which has been central to Soeharto's government. Indonesia has a right to protect its interests, but not to expect that every state will support an ideology identical to its own.

As the full story of indiscriminate killing comes out of East Timor Indonesia's reputation will suffer further. It is clear that Indonesia will have to develop better control over its armed forces if it is to be respected, and not only feared, in the Asian-Pacific area.

In its relations with Australia Indonesia has taken advantage of indecision, and selectively interpreted Australian policy at will. If Australia has strong views on an issue it must express them clearly and emphatically. It is important to check expansionist tendencies at the outset. Otherwise other considerations may make this impossible.

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179 Late in July 1975 Indonesia expressed its concern that Sabah separatism (that is Sabah breaking away from Malaysia and joining Palawan, Sulu and Mindinao from the Philippines) could be exploited by communism. If Indonesia means to involve itself will the outcome, as in Timor, be integration? See Kompas, 29 July 1975; Berita Bauna, 30 July 1975.
CHAPTER V

EAST TIMOR AT THE UNITED NATIONS

I - Background

While most colonies that existed in 1945 have been granted, or have taken their independence, decolonization and the recognition of the right of colonial territories to self determination is a recent phenomenon. Only some thirty years ago in discussions on the Atlantic Charter Prime Minister Churchill 'asserted that the Charter was not intended to apply to colonies but was concerned with the restoration of sovereignty, self government and national life of the states and nations under the Nazi yoke'. This view gradually lost currency during the 1950s. The anti colonial group of states made its presence felt in the international arena by achieving the adoption of Resolution 1514(XV) in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 14 December 1960.

This resolution was important for several reasons. Firstly, it reflected the new balance that was emerging in the United Nations - that is the voting strength of third world 'anti colonials' in UNGA. Secondly, it suggested that:

Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence.

180 For a summary of the colonial position today see Department of Foreign Affairs, Background No.51, pp.14-17.


183 Watt, op.cit., p.35.
This declaration ran strongly against the flavour of the UN Charter's treatment of colonial territories, and in particular against its treatment of Non Self Governing Territories. Finally, it gave new stress to the sanctity of the sovereign state after it had established its national unity. While the resolution gave an added impetus to self determination of colonies it worked in the other direction after a state had been established - suggesting that secessionist movements were contrary to the purposes of the Charter.

Chapters XI and XII of the UN Charter consider the question of colonial possessions. Portugal's colonies were deemed by the UN to come under Chapter XI, referring to Non Self Governing Territories. Prior to 1974, Portugal refused to recognize any obligation to the UN for its overseas territories, maintaining that they formed a part of the Commonwealth of Portugal. It was not until after the April revolution in 1974 that Portugal moved to accept the right of its overseas territories to self determination, in conformity with the UN Charter. UNGA welcomed this affirmation.

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185 Chapter XII (Articles 75 to 79) considers the Trusteeship system. One of the objectives of this system, outlined in article 76 is 'to promote ... progressive development towards self government and independence'. However not all territories are covered by article 76. Non self governing Territories are considered in Chapter XI (Articles 73 and 74), Article 73 talks not about independence but about obligations to promote the well being of the territories to the fullest and to develop self government. The obligations under article 73 to transmit information for the consideration of the United Nations can be limited by invoking a clause claiming 'security and constitutional considerations'. See ibid., pp.448-462.

186 Decolonization - The East Timor Issue, op.cit., p.39; for a chronology of UN statements see the above quoted document, p.42, footnote 178.


188 UNGA Resolution 3294 (XXIX).
Law 7/75 of 12 July 1975 confirmed 'the right of the people of Timor to self determination with all its consequences, including the acceptance of its independence'. The envisaged decolonization process, which was to have resulted in the implementation of the people's decision by 1978, was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of civil war in August 1975.

Portugal sought to retain control over the colony and engaged in bilateral negotiations with Australia and Indonesia. The result of one of these negotiation periods was expressed in the Rome Communique issued on 3 November 1975. In the communique Indonesia accepted Portugal as the administering power in East Timor, and also accepted the desirability of a plebiscite in East Timor to decide the colony's future.

Portugal had earlier shown a distinct reluctance to involve the UN in the East Timor decolonization process, since this would have been seen as a failure by it to discharge its responsibilities. Besides, without a ceasefire it was unlikely that the world body would have contended involvement.

189 Law 7/75 quoted in Decolonization - The East Timor Issue, op.cit., p.17.
190 The 7 major elements of the communique were

- an urgent need to restore peace;
- the scrupulous safeguarding of the principle of respect for the will of the people of Portuguese Timor;
- recognition that the fundamental responsibility for decolonization lay with Portugal;
- the need for a speedy and orderly implementation of an act of self determination by the people of Portuguese Timor;
- need to arrange a meeting between interested political parties of Portuguese Timor;
- support for principles of decolonization enunciated in the pertinent resolutions of the UN;
- need to safeguard the legitimate interests of the countries of the region, particularly the interests of Indonesia.

See APD (Senate), 5 November 1975, p.1743.
The Fourth Committee of UNGA began its deliberations on the question of East Timor on 2 December, 1975.\textsuperscript{192} These discussions began as a general contribution to the debate under Agenda item 88.\textsuperscript{193} On 7 December the complexion of the debate changed. Portugal requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council following the Indonesian invasion of Dili.\textsuperscript{194}

The remainder of this chapter examines some of the issues raised at the UN as a result of Portugal's request to the Security Council. Attention is focussed on five main issues:

(i) the efficacy of Indonesian intervention;
(ii) the reactions of states to it;
(iii) the possibilities open to the UN, and what it actually did;
(iv) the issue of self determination;
(v) the nature of the humanitarian issue and why it has been so obscured.

Finally, and taking account of the individual nature of each decolonization process, an assessment is made of the importance of the UN arena (given its apparent ineffectiveness) to the outcome in East Timor.

II - The Efficacy of Indonesia's Intervention

On 5 December 1975 Indonesia co-sponsored a draft resolution in the Fourth Committee which recognized the right of the East Timorese people to self determination and independence, and acknowledged Portugal as the

\textsuperscript{192} It met eight times on the East Timor issue during the Thirtieth Session. See United Nations, ORGA, 30th Session, Fourth Committee, 2178th, 2180th and 2184th to 2189th meetings.

\textsuperscript{193} Agenda item 88: 'Question of Territories Under Portuguese administration: report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People'.

\textsuperscript{194} S/11899.
administering power in the territory. At the same time it was preparing the final stages of its invasion plan.

In defending its decision to invade East Timor Indonesia argued that it had sent troops 'in response to the representations of the large majority of the people of Portuguese Timor'. The Indonesian representative said that Indonesia had been invited to restore order by the four pro-Indonesian integration parties UDT, APODETI, KOTA and TRABALISTA.

J.N. Moore has suggested a set of criteria for evaluating the legitimacy of a putative intervention. It includes:

(i) that there is an immediate and extensive threat to human life, and in particular the widespread loss of human life;

(ii) that the benefits exceed the costs of intervention;

(iii) that the intervention has minimal effect on authority structures;

(iv) that prompt disengagement is assured after the event;

(v) that an immediate report be made to the Security Council.

Another criterion, suggested by Brownlie, is that only disinterested actors should form the intervening body. The Indonesian intervention met few, if any, of these criteria, and from an a priori standpoint few observers would have expected many to have been met.

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195 See A/10426*, paragraph 8.
196 United Nations, ORGA, 30th Session, Fourth Committee, 2187th meeting.
197 The last two were political parties with little backing.
199 Ibid.
On the first, the intervention resulted in a massive loss of human life which would otherwise not have occurred. This is analysed more closely in later comments; it suffices to say here that the full story of bloodshed and acts of violence by the invading troops has yet to be told.200

The second is difficult to assess. It is the question of the value of order (as Indonesia saw it the value of the incorporation of East Timor into the Republic of Indonesia) versus the value of justice (the cost in terms of life lost compared with what would have been lost, and the cost of depriving the East Timorese of the right to self determination and if they opted, to independence). Any calculation is subjective and hence the justification of restoring order as grounds for an intervention is often used.201

Fulfilling the third through to the sixth criteria were simply against Indonesia's best interests. Given that Indonesia had decided on a particular outcome, and that it was prepared to endure the adverse comment which would result from the implementation of its decision, it is unlikely that it ever contemplated the suggestions stipulated by the criteria. In sum then, the intervention was another case where the value of order was placed above the value of human rights.

III - The Reaction of States

The reactions by other states to the intervention were mixed. Former Portuguese colonies were prominent in

200 For recent evidence see: West Australian, 1 January 1977; Australian, 28 January 1977.

201 As China noted the justification of 'maintaining peace and order' and the statement that the situation 'threatened the peace' were no more than cliches used to justify an act of aggression. See UN Monthly Chronicle, January 1976, pp.10-11. In early December the situation changed little, with FRETILIN in almost complete control.
their condemnation of Indonesia. Many nations demanded, and others requested, the immediate withdrawal of Indonesian troops. Both UNGA Resolution 3485 (XXX), of 12 December 1975 and UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 384 (1975) of 22 December 1975 called upon the Indonesian Government to 'withdraw without delay'. The Security Council Resolution was adopted unanimously. Despite the strong stands taken by many countries against the Indonesian intervention, many governments felt that a resolution which 'without approving of Indonesia's intervention did not seek to blame any party or any particular country for the situation prevailing in the territories' was more appropriate. There were several attempts made to water down UNGA's Fourth Committee's draft resolution, but they were all defeated. However the amendments which were raised indicated that some nations felt that:

(i) that although Indonesia was not justified in its actions, it was not the only country that should have been criticised. Portugal, they argued, was also culpable;

and (ii) that the Indonesian action was executed in a difficult and trying situation.

Clearly, some states were prepared to accept Indonesia's statements that it had no ulterior motives. However judged in terms of Indonesia's previous statements,
including the Rome Communique and draft resolution A/C.4/L1125, the Indonesian action can only be regarded as opportunistic.

An important and interesting feature of the two debates in 1975 was the virtual non participation of the US, the USSR and the EEC. China, alone among major powers, played an active part supporting FRETILIN's calls for independence. Japan and Australia did little more than 'deplore' the Indonesian invasion.

Acknowledging the complexity of the East Timor issue, many states had some visible alternative reason for assuming a reserved position. For example, the US had reported strategic interests in its friendship with Indonesia, and in East Timor's incorporation into Indonesia; Japan had a considerable quantity of investment in Indonesia and imported large quantities of crude oil from Indonesia. Japan's position of tacit support for the Indonesian position can be understood in terms of its economic interests; for Europe and Africa generally East Timor was simply too far away, and there were several pressing problems closer to home (such as in the Middle East, Namibia, Angola and Zimbabwe); in the regional environment New Zealand and Malaysia accepted Indonesia's decision to invade - both had expressed fear of a spreading communist influence. However there was some quiet apprehension concerning the future territorial ambitions of Indonesia.

208 A/10426 * paragraph 8.
210 See footnote 104.
212 Strait Times, 13 February 1975 and Malaysian Digest, 31 December 1975 respectively.
This apprehension captures one of the important implications of the invasion: how safe are other small states, given the flaccid response of the UNSC, from any future expansionist thrusts by Indonesia and other like minded nations? While one might expect the UN to react differently if Indonesia invaded a sovereign state, there is no guarantee that it would. Indonesia, for its part, has had a chance to observe the relatively mild response to its actions, particularly from regional powers such as Australia who could have influenced the outcome; it has also witnessed at first hand the ineffectiveness of the UN in disputes far removed from the vortex of superpower struggles.

IV - What the UN could do, and what it did

Under operative article 5 of UNSC Resolution 384 (1975) the Secretary General sent his special Representative, Mr Vittorio Winspeare Guicciardi, to contact all parties and states involved in the dispute, in an attempt to resolve it. But in essence the mission was no more than a fact finding one. Indonesia and the PGET were not interested in negotiating and Australia was content to do nothing to bring them to the negotiating table.

The attitudes of the permanent members of the Security Council (and in particular the US) mitigated against any decisive action even being contemplated. However, even if the major powers had contemplated more decisive action, the UN's role in restoring the peace would have been limited. Since the involvement of UN forces in the Congo, which had serious financial, legal and military repercussions, the military role of the United Nations has been limited to peacekeeping. Co-operation from Indonesia in restoring the peace would have been a necessary prerequisite to UN involvement,

and it was unlikely that, having made a decision to invade, Indonesia would be disposed to turn around and withdraw immediately. Had the view of the US been different it is unlikely that the invasion would have occurred in the first place (see Chapters III and IV). The simple facts of the matter were that few states cared, or if they did, other considerations prevented them from voicing their opinions. The only strong statements came from small states with little influence in the world at large.

The ineffectiveness of Mr Winspeare's consultations was implicit throughout his report to the Secretary General. He found there was little common ground between the various actors. His conclusion that 'it might be possible to build on the slender common assumption that the people of East Timor should be consulted on the future status of the territory' was optimistic in the circumstances - he had said earlier that Indonesia bowed in deference to the authority of the PGET (which was a puppet regime, depending for its existence on the presence of Indonesian troops). This implied that it had accepted the PGET as representative of the people of East Timor, or in other words Indonesia believed that the future of East Timor was decided.

Even during the April sessions of the Security Council, which considered Mr Winspeare's report, there was a feeling that member states of the UNSC were reluctant to apply further pressure on Indonesia. Japan, for example, introduced an amendment which, had it been adopted, would have altered operative paragraph 2

215 S/12011, annex. It has been described in detail in Decolonization - The East Timor Issue, op.cit.
216 S/12011, para 44.
217 ibid., para 43.
218 Discussion with K.L. Fry, M.P. who attended the April sessions of the Security Council.
of UNSC Resolution 389 (1976) of 22 April 1976 to imply that the UN recognized that Indonesia had begun to withdraw troops from East Timor. That the amendment received 8 affirmative votes (it required only 9 to be adopted) indicated the extent to which many states were prepared to counsel moderation of the debate against Indonesia. It took no heed of the fact that the number of troops had actually increased since the previous Security Council resolution. By this stage the UN had, like Australia and Portugal before it, lost what effectiveness it originally had in dealing with Indonesia.

V - The issue of self determination

During the initial Fourth Committee considerations on East Timor in December 1975 several states recognized FRETILIN as the de facto government in East Timor. Assessments by many other states differed from this position. This second group argued that the wishes of the people would need to be determined before the future status of the colony could be decided. This professed support for the principle or right to self determination was later shown to have a great variety of meanings. Although resolutions of the UN have held that self determination is a fundamental right of former colonies, it is a right which has been found to be notoriously difficult to safeguard.

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223 E.g. Mozambique, Benin, China.
224 E.g. Sri Lanka, India, New Zealand, Australia.
225 For example, Resolution 1514(XV) and UN Charter Articles 1(2) and 55.
When Indonesia indicated that it would supervise an act of self determination in East Timor many governments expressed doubts concerning its sincerity. Portugal's representative said that Indonesian actions sought only to create conditions which would lead to the integration of the colony into Indonesia. Several other states noted that Indonesia's presence in East Timor was unacceptable if the act of self determination was to be regarded as an authentic assessment of East Timorese' wishes. In line with this opinion the UN declined to accept an invitation to observe the meeting of the Provisional Assembly held in Dili on 31 May, 1976.

When the debate on the Timor issue was renewed in November 1976 in UNGA's Fourth Committee, several delegations indicated that they regarded the decolonization process in East Timor as complete, and that East Timor was now a province of the Republic of Indonesia. Many of these states built their arguments on tenuous assumptions.

The Saudi representative, for example, said that Timor had been part of a relatively homogenous region before division by colonial powers. More accurate

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226 S/PV.1915.
227 United Nations, ORGA, 30th Session, Fourth Committee, 2185th meeting.
228 Benin, Sweden, USSR, China, Portugal amongst others.
229 S/12104 of 21 June 1976, Note by President of Security Council.
231 These included Saudi Arabia, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Iran, Japan and Oman.
is the statement by Henry Kissinger that 'Indonesia ... was nothing but a geographic expression until the Dutch found it more efficient to unite the islands ... under a single administration'. As noted earlier (Chapter 3) Indonesia itself had argued at the UN that ethnicity had little to do with determining state boundaries.

The Indian and Malaysian representatives argued that integration was the 'logical' course since it ended a division created by colonialism. If these representatives had bothered to take the argument one step back their conclusion would have been different. Without colonialism it would be difficult to predict the character of state boundaries that would have emerged. Further their 'logic' would only have been apparent to Indonesia, and not to the East Timorese. The speeches of these two states indicated the pragmatic approach that many states adopted. India, as a 'multinational' state, is very sensitive to any suggestions that ethnicity and state boundaries are closely related. Admission of any link between the two might lead to Balkanization on the subcontinent. The same is true for East Malaysia. Separatist movements in Sabah are just one manifestation of this. Both these states were aware that support for East Timor's independence might have internal balkanization ramifications, despite the fact that East Timor's independence claim was not one based on ethnic arguments, but based on cultural differences between East Timor and Indonesia. In conclusion, the approach had little to do with the rights of the East Timorese and a lot to do with the interests of the states concerned.

Oman's representative argued that East Timor was not a standard case of a whole nation struggling for self determination and independence. This line of argument leaves much to be desired. Firstly, how many

233 Quoted by Horta in S/PV.1908, re-sourced in Henry Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy, Norton abridged edition, p. 213.

234 See footnotes 120 and 122.
'decolonization processes' were standard, and secondly, how many involved a whole nation? On the first point one cannot really say that any decolonization process has been standard. The final outcome relates primarily to the outcome of a complex interaction of interests which are both domestic and international in character. On the second point one can look to Africa and make the observation that little if any of the decolonization process there has been based on national will. Rather, state boundaries represent the haphazard dividing lines imposed by arbitrary colonial decisions.

The issue of self determination, as this variety of opinions show, means different things to different states. In Indonesia the concept of musjawarah or consensus building is very different from what is understood by a referendum in Western nations. As the appointment of virtually the whole Provisional assembly by Indonesia shows, the Indonesian process is open to considerable abuse.235 There is some doubt whether a referendum would fully reflect the view of the people, most of whom are illiterate, and many of whom do not understand the implications of independence or integration into Indonesia. It was for this reason that a decolonization period existed: it may have provided the awareness for a reasoned and relatively informed decision to be taken. There is little doubt that the Provisional Assembly’s deliberations were other than reasoned and informed.

Like Goa and West Irian before it, 'what emerges beyond dispute is that all peoples do not have the right to self determination'.235 A right is something which other nations are prepared to observe and enforce. This is hardly the case with the right to self determination.

235 The nature of the Provisional Assembly, and the purpose of its operation is briefly described in Chapter 1.

236 Emerson, op.cit., p.64.
VI - The Humanitarian Issue

There is evidence that, during the civil war in East Timor, both UDT and FRETILIN executed small numbers of hostages hostile to their respective causes. However during the December invasion of East Timor, and to a lesser extent since, the Indonesian army appears to have committed atrocities on a huge scale. Some reports estimate that as much as 15% of the population of East Timor has been killed.\(^{237}\) The evidence to back up these claims is patchy, but growing. With the repatriation of over 1,300 refugees to Portugal from East Timor during 1976 a substantial bank of first hand information has been waiting for analysis. On the basis of J.S. Dunn's recent trip to Portugal\(^{238}\) it can be said that there is substantial, if undocumented evidence to support claims of mass murder, that to this stage have been little more than allegations. The tenor of Dunn's findings is in agreement with reports of brutality contained in a report by Catholic priests, compiled late in 1976.\(^{239}\)

It is not the intention of this author to attempt to document detail; others have built and are continuing to build compelling scenarios of what has actually occurred in East Timor since the Indonesian invasion.\(^{240}\) The purpose of this section is to draw attention to the allegations, briefly suggest why they have not figured prominently in discussions at the United Nations, and ask whether a *prima facie* case exists to argue that there are grounds for a counter invasion on the grounds


\(^{238}\) Discussions with J.S. Dunn.

\(^{239}\) *West Australian*, 1 January 1977.

\(^{240}\) See footnote 3 and other papers published by Dunn in Legislative Research Service.
of violation of 'humanitarian' rights. The argument over human rights would extend to a dissertation by itself. Here the intention is only to telegraph the major issues.

The main allegation on a humanitarian basis is that Indonesia's military forces have committed indiscriminate mass murder against, for the most part, unarmed civilians. This began as an attempt to crush FRETILIN and all resistance to the proposed integration of East Timor into Indonesia. It extended to reprisals and murder of supporters of UDT, and persons politically uncommitted.

Indonesian troops attacked East Timor with the savagery with which they 'disposed' of the threat from Communism in 1965. That the world had few hints of what occurred can be put down to the effective manner in which East Timor can be and was isolated from the rest of the world. So the first reason why the humanitarian issue did not rate prominently was that there was little reliable information.

The second reason why the issue was not highlighted was that although all states acknowledged that the term human rights meant something, they firstly differed on what human rights were, and secondly on how important they were. For example, a US Congressional Committee Chairman, Mr Fraser, has said

> Our government has accepted the United Nations' authority to protect human rights but, on the other hand, does not believe that human rights shall be a significant factor in determining our bilateral relations with other states.

This is a fairly typical opinion. It is based on the premise that

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241 I have shied away from discussing human rights per se and chosen what appears to be the group of human rights that have most persistently been violated.


Any state which intervenes in another's internal affairs is undermining the institutional foundations of its own existence.244

While the legal and moral obligations that individual states have to intervene on humanitarian grounds are hotly debated,245 the UN itself has some loosely defined obligations to intervene. This is under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations Organization, and applies to situations where the violation of human rights is considered so gross to be a threat to international security. Although the violation of human rights in East Timor can be considered as being of the most serious kind, it is difficult to suggest how this instance of wholesale murder affects international peace and security. Herein is the paradox of the East Timor issue: East Timor was an unimportant and insignificant colony, apparently harmless to all but the perceptions of Indonesian generals, a colony in which no superpower had any direct vested interest - with all this lack of interest no state did anything to prevent Indonesia denying East Timor the option to determine its own future.

VII

The action and reactions of the United Nations have then been restrained, and to many disappointing. While operative paragraph 9 of the November 1976 draft resolution of UNGA's Fourth Committee: that the General Assembly

Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its 32nd session an item entitled 'Question of East Timor'246


245 See the debate between Ulrich and Brownlie, in J.N. Moore, Law and Civil Law in the Modern World, op.cit., pp.217-252.

246 A/31/362, p.35.
keeps the issue of East Timor smouldering, there seems to be little prospect in the short term that the United Nations will have any impact on future Indonesian actions towards East Timor. Despite this rather gloomy observation, however, one must draw attention to the value of keeping the issue smouldering in the international arena.

Each resolution at the UN is a small embarrassment for Indonesia. Indonesia knows, however, that if it can persuade Portugal and Australia in particular, to recognize formally the integration of East Timor into Indonesia, recognition by the majority of important states will follow quickly. This would confirm what Indonesia already claims, that the fighting and struggle which is continuing in East Timor, is covered by Article 2(7) of the UN Charter, or in other words is a matter of domestic jurisdiction. Once this occurs the struggle of FRETILIN, and elements of UDT that are reported to be re-forming a coalition with FRETILIN, will become considerably more difficult. Therefore continuing debate on East Timor at the United Nations, and the non recognition of the Indonesian position by many states keeps the pressure on Indonesia in two forums - in East Timor and at the UN. Continuing international discussion might, and it should be emphasized that this is only a possibility, cause Indonesia to re-think its position. It is known that Indonesia still maintains a sizeable garrison in East Timor, and the costs of maintaining it are not inconsiderable. There is a slim hope that the Administration of President Carter in the US may adopt a different position from his

247 Discussions with J.S. Dunn.
predecessor, and pressure Indonesia into changing its position. Realistically, the chance that this will occur is slight. 248

248 Keeping the debate going at the UN may have one other possible benefit. If Indonesia knows it is being closely watched it is possible that it might attempt to enforce more rigorous control over its troops and plough development aid into East Timor. However there is no evidence that this is in fact occurring. Further with the recent past fresh in the minds of all East Timorese, it is unlikely that much co-operation would be forthcoming. (Thanks to Geoff Jukes for originally suggesting this point.)
CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has examined the East Timor issue from two perspectives.

Firstly, it has examined the influence that two large states of the Asian Pacific region had on the direction of the decolonization process in East Timor. It has shown that in the absence of the administering power, Portugal, Indonesia was left to implement its own solution to the East Timor problem. Australia, which could have influenced the outcome, chose not to become actively involved. Tragically for the East Timorese, the Indonesian solution was savage and barbaric.

Chapter 4 drew together many of the themes and lessons that the analysis in Chapters 2 and 3 had generated.

It focused attention on the partial character of Australia's relations with Indonesia. Australia gave much but expected little in return. Mr Whitlam's East Timor policy was not necessarily inappropriate, but it was certainly premature. For many reasons Mr Whitlam's policy was to set the tone for Australian participation in the East Timor dispute. Not unimportant among these reasons were the character and opinions of Mr Whitlam, the advice that Ambassador Woolcott offered the Australian government, and perhaps most importantly a lack of first-hand knowledge of East Timorese feelings.

With the defeat of the Whitlam government in December 1975, Australia's East Timor policy became ambiguous. At the public level Australia was vocal against Indonesia's military intervention in East Timor. At the private level it conveyed its understanding of Indonesia's position. The conduct of Mr Fraser's Timor policy illustrated the possible conflict between domestic image building and maintaining a consistent foreign policy.
From the analysis emerged the great importance that both the Whitlam and Fraser governments attached to their relations with Indonesia. It also showed how both governments failed to put Australia-Indonesia relations into a regional perspective. While it may be true that Indonesia is Australia's gateway to Asia, uncritical support for a particular Indonesian regime may be seen as dabbling in the internal affairs of Indonesia (by other Indonesians). Further, it could also be the shortest path that Australia can take to earn regional disrespect. Australia must now formulate its future foreign policy towards Indonesia. It needs to consider how far it is prepared to let Indonesia dictate the terms for the bilateral relationship. It must, for example, consider the conditions under which Australia would be prepared to safeguard the integrity of other regional states against an expansionist Indonesia.

The analysis has attempted to provide an explanation or understanding of Indonesia's military intervention in East Timor. It has focussed on the perceptions of the military elite in Indonesia. One important problem which Indonesia will need to tackle in the near future is not the threat from communism, as there is no doubt that the importance attached to it has been overplayed, but the threat from the Indonesian military itself. The danger is that if it has 'nothing else to do', it could 'manufacture' threats to the Republic of Indonesia. These threats will be in the form of civil unrest as in East Timor, and the opportunity this unrest provides for communist insurgents. Arguments may change – as they did from West Irian to East Timor, but actions will be similar. Should PNG become more left wing orientated one can be sure that Indonesia will not let it go unattended. The power of the military should not be underestimated. It controls most of the information channels in Indonesia and it is certainly not beyond using them for propaganda purposes - as the East Timor issue showed. But as the East Timor issue also demonstrated, the military strength
of the Indonesian armed forces has been put under a cloud by a small but effective guerrilla campaign. Rather than restore order, the ineffectiveness of its actions may yet rekindle other separatist fires elsewhere in the archipelago.

Fears of Balkanization are clearly paramount among the concerns of Indonesia. Indonesia needs to concentrate on the many problems that already confront it. There is no need to look for new ones. There is a faction within the Indonesian government which recognizes this. By supporting the incumbent regime instead of developing a general policy towards Indonesia, Australia is making it more difficult for less military-orientated factions to broaden their base of support. It is easy to exaggerate the influence of Australia on Indonesia, but at least Australia should consciously follow a policy which serves its own interests, and not the interests of the incumbent Indonesian regime. Had this been the case in East Timor, Indonesia might never have become militarily involved.

The second perspective this dissertation has examined is the involvement of the United Nations in the search for an acceptable solution in East Timor. It has also briefly examined some issues raised in debate at the UN.

The key conclusion one must highlight is the further demonstration of the ineffectiveness of the UNSC as a body capable of restoring order. Here was a dispute in which no superpower expressed a vested interest, and where none (except China in rhetoric only) played a leading role. As the analysis showed, the inaction of the superpowers (and in particular the role of the US, which supplies Indonesia with much of its military equipment) prevented even discussion of the possibility that force might be used.

Many governments at the UN gave tacit approval to Indonesia's actions because they saw the problem of regional
balkanization, which East Timor was claimed to represent, as similar to problems they faced from ethnic minorities in their own countries. Indonesia is an important non-aligned power, and, through its Ambassador Sani, is well represented at the UN. While it has been consistently defeated on resolutions concerning East Timor, it has been able to ensure that no meaningful action has been taken by the world body.

East Timor is an important case, not because it symbolizes anything special, but because it is so ordinary and so insignificant in terms of international politics. The East Timor incident has reraised the question of whether there is anything such as the right to self determination; in the future this issue will be transformed into the question of whether small independent states have any right to their sovereignty.

By setting up analyses of both the 'regional level' and the 'international level' the reader can attempt to compare the prospects of preventing expansionism at each level. It can be seen that the security functions of the UN are workable only when all sides involved in a dispute (and in particular large participants) are prepared to negotiate. The prospects that more effective action can be taken at the regional level depend upon the stances adopted by individual states. However it is by no means clear that states with influence at the regional level will exercise their power to uphold the 'rights' of smaller states which find this task too great.

In conclusion it is clear that order remains ascendant over justice. That approximately one sixth of any people can be indiscriminately murdered and cause little more than a ripple of protest vividly illustrates the continuing power of might over right.
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