

11th November, 1981.

Mgr. da Costa Lopes,
C/- Rm. R. Hardoputranto SJ
Bahagian B
Kantor Waligereja Indonesia
Taman Cut Mutiah 10
JAKARTA
INDONESIA

Your Excellency,

May I introduce myself. I am the Secretary of the Episcopal Committee for Development and Peace of the Australian Episcopal Conference and Chairman of Australian Catholic Relief. (Fr. Zegwaard could explain the activities of Australian Catholic Relief; we are assisting in some of his programmes.) Please pardon my English. I am unable to write freely in Latin ...

I presume to approach you for information that could guide us in Australia with regard to projects or influence to assist the Episcopal Conference of Indonesia and/or the Church and people of East Timor.

Any information or suggestions that you were willing to give me would be used only in the way that you approved.

We hear conflicting reports about the situation in East Timor - about pacification, about present and future famine, about ease or difficulty in providing aid to East Timor, about the most effective channels for transmitting aid or relief, about reunification of families with members in Australia

Would you be willing, please, to advise me on the following matters:

How does the Church see the social and political situation in East Timor at present?

What stand would they like the Australian Church-related Agencies to take?

What is their reaction to what has been covered in the Australian press and through Agency publications in recent weeks?

What sort of assistance would they hope for from Australian Church Agencies?

What are the most viable channels of communication at present?

What channels will be available in the case of the expected famine over the New Year?

I write now because I believe the Bishops are gathering for their Conference. I would not wish to add to your heavy work load with the above questions.

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However, I would appreciate any information that you think could make an Australian stance on action vis a vis the needs of Indonesia and East Timor effective.

With kind regards and every best wish,

Yours fraternally in Christ,

+Bishop J.J. Gerry D.D.

Secretary,
Australian Episcopal Conference .