

Congressmen back takeover of Timor

JAKARTA, April 17. — A United States congressional delegation left here today convinced that merger with Indonesia was a good solution for the former Portuguese colony of East Timor.

It also expressed satisfaction that the incorporation of the territory into the Indonesian Republic last year was supported by the majority of the East Timor population.

The delegation, led by the chairman of the House of Representatives sub-committee for Asian regional affairs, Mr. Lester Wolff, had talks earlier this week with President Suharto and other Indonesian political and military leaders.

Two members of the delegation, Mr. William Goodling (Republican) Pennsylvania) and Mrs. Helen Meyner (Democrat, New Jersey), toured East Timor for two days each to assess the situation there.

"Union with Indonesia makes good sense and the people want it," Mrs. Meyner said before leaving for Manila.

It would be disastrous for East Timor if it were to stand on its own. The territory needed foreign aid in addition to substantial central Government allocations to reconstruct and develop its economy, she added.

Indonesia invited the delegation following accusations before a congressional sub-committee in Washington recently by a former Australian Consul in East Timor, Mr. James Dunn, that Indonesian troops had committed atrocities during their campaign against forces led by the Left-wing Fretilin independence movement.

Local community leaders and tribal chiefs told Mrs. Meyner, who visited several towns outside the East Timor provincial capital of Dili, that they did not want foreign interference in their domestic affairs.

"I felt they meant Australia more than America or anyone else," Mrs. Meyner said.

Congressman Goodling told a newspaper on his return here from East Timor earlier this week that Indonesia should have intervened in the civil war much earlier than it actually did.

Merger with Indonesia was the only viable solution for East Timor because the territory could not economically survive on its own, he said.

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