

AUSTEO

International Message Form

387

AUSTRALIAN DIPLOMATIC NETWORK

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Reference No.	12506	Time/date of lodgment	UNC	CLA	SECRET
TO.	ACTION POSTS (TO)				
RR	CANBERRA.	/ 185	/	/	/
RP.	INFORMATION POSTS (REPEATED TO)				
RR	WASHINGTON	/ 230	BANGKOK FOR PARSONS.	516	/
FM. Originating post	JAKARTA	/	FILE 860/119/1/10	REF O.	
Security classification	SECRET - AUSTEO				
Subject heading	U.S. VISITS TO EAST TIMOR.				

WE SPOKE TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY ESCORT OFFICERS FOR MEYNER (GARDNER) AND GOODLING (LANE) ON THEIR VISITS TO TIMOR.

2. THEY SAID THAT THE VISITS COULD BE FAIRLY DESCRIBED AS A "SNOWJOB". THEY WERE HIGHLY STRUCTURED, CHANGES WERE NOT PERMITTED AND THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED ALL THE TIME. THE STREETS WERE LINED WITH CROWDS SHOUTING "VIVAS" AND WITH SCOUTS SINGING INDONESIAN PATRIOTIC SONGS. FOR THE MOST PART THERE WERE OBVIOUSLY MORE PEOPLE IN THE CROWD THAN LIVED IN THE TOWN. THE SPEECHES WERE LONG AND PLENTIFUL. THE MAIN THEME WAS THAT THE SON HAS COME BACK TO ITS MOTHER AFTER 400 YEARS; FOREIGNERS NEVER TOOK ANY INTEREST IN THEM WHEN THEY SUFFERED UNDER PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM SO WHY WERE THEY SO ACTIVE NOW ?

3. WIDESPREAD ANTI-FRETILIN SENTIMENT WAS OBVIOUS AND SEEMED GENUINE. THE AMERICANS SAID TIMOR WAS VERY OBVIOUSLY VENDETTA COUNTRY AND THEY WERE INCLINED TO BELIEVE MOERDANI'S CLAIM THAT THE INDONESIANS RESTRAINED THE TIMORESE FROM TAKING STRONGER MEASURES AGAINST FRETILIN SUPPORTERS.

4. MEYNER VISITED DILI, BAUCAU AND VIQUEQUE AND BOBONARO BUT HAD VERY LITTLE TIME IN DILI. GARDNER SUSPECTS THAT WAS BECAUSE MEYNER WAS ACCOMPANIED BY SALZBURG WHO THEY BELIEVED TO BE ^{INDONESIANS}

Authorised by:	CAVAN HOCUE	(Enter distribution instructions on reverse side of form)	18/4/77	MINISTER	SECRET
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AAUSTEO

SECRET 386

- 2 -

NOT ONLY ANTI-INDONESIAN BUT ALSO PRO-FRETILIN: THEY DIDN'T WANT HIM TO HAVE TOO MUCH TIME TO TALK IN DILI. THE OTHER GROUP VISITED THE SAME PLACES AND SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN A LITTLE BIT FREER ALTHOUGH STILL WELL CONTROLLED.

5 THE VISIT TO VIQUEQUE HAD NOT ACHIEVED MUCH. THE GOODLING GROUP WENT BY HELICOPTER FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE TOWN BUT THE MEYNER GROUP WENT BY (A VERY BAD) ROAD. GARDNER SAID THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY TIME HE SAW SERIOUS SECURITY PRECAUTIONS IN THE FORM OF TROOPS ALONG THE ROAD. LANE WAS TOLD THAT VIQUEQUE HAD BEEN FRETILIN'S LARGEST SINGLE STRONGHOLD. ALL CONVERSATIONS WERE THROUGH AN INTERPRETER.

6. IN BAUCAU SECURITY WAS OBVIOUSLY GOOD AND NO APPARENT PRECAUTIONS WERE TAKEN. MOST OF THE PEOPLE THEY MET WERE TIMORESE. GARDNER WAS ABLE TO VISIT A SCHOOL PRIVATELY AND WAS IMPRESSED BY THE STANDARD OF INDONESIAN SPOKEN BY THE CHILDREN. LANE SAID THE GOODLING GROUP HAD SPOKEN TO AN ITALIAN PRIEST IN BAUCAU (OBVIOUSLY THE SAME ONE HOGUE SPOKE TO IN JANUARY) WHO SAID SOME THINGS THE INDONESIANS WERE CLEARLY NOT VERY HAPPY ABOUT, E.G. HE GAVE THE BROADCAST TIMES OF FRETILIN RADIO WHICH HE OBVIOUSLY LISTENED TO. HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE FRETILIN SUPPORTERS TO REALISE THAT THE WAR WAS OVER. HE SEEMED TO GIVE A BOWDLERISED VERSION OF WHAT HOGUE WAS TOLD. LANE MANAGED TO SPEAK TO HIM PRIVATELY VERY BRIEFLY AND HE SAID THAT GENERALLY HE WAS GETTING GOOD CO-OPERATION FROM THE INDONESIANS AND THE ONLY THING TO DO WAS TO LOOK FORWARD AND NOT BACK.

7. IN BOBONARO ONE OF GOODLING'S PARTY WAS ABLE TO SPEAK PRIVATELY (IN SPANISH) TO THREE SPANISH NUNS WHO RAN A MEDICAL CLINIC ABOUT 17 KILOMETRES OUTSIDE OF TOWN. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE IN THE TOWN OF ANY SECURITY PROBLEMS, THE NUNS SAID THAT THERE WERE FRETILIN REMNANTS OUTSIDE THE TOWN AND THEY WERE IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THEM: THE AUTHORITIES KNEW THIS. THE NUNS SAID THAT FRETILIN FORCES WERE IN DESPERATE STRAITS AND THE INDONESIANS HAD CUT OFF MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO BOBONARO TO PREVENT THEM GOING TO FRETILIN (WHICH THEY WOULD). T. B. WAS RIFE AND

AAUSTEO

SECRET

AUSTEO

- 3 -

SECRET 385

HALF THE POPULATION HAD MALARIA. BOTH GARDNER AND LANE AGREED THAT THE PEOPLE MUST HAVE COME IN FROM MILES AROUND BECAUSE OF THE NUMBERS, WHICH SUGGESTED AT LEAST, SOME INDONESIAN CONTROL IN THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE. THE NUNS SAID THAT THE INDONESIANS DID NOT CONTROL VERY FAR OUT OF BOBONARO AT NIGHT. LANE SAID THAT THE BOBONARO CROWD WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT LOOKED REALLY HAPPY BUT GARDNER SAID ALL THEIR CROWDS SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING THEMSELVES AND MEYNER, WHO HAD A POLITICIAN'S EXPERIENCE OF CROWDS, THOUGHT THERE WAS A DEGREE OF GENUINENESS IN THE RECEPTION.

8. IN DILI MEYNER CALLED ON THE GOVERNOR WHO SPENT MOST OF THE TIME RECOUNTING FRETILIN ATROCITIES AND COMPLAINING THAT DUNN COULD NOT BE TRUSTED BECAUSE HE HAD ONCE HOISTED HIS UNDERPANTS ON A FLAGPOLE IN DILI, THUS SHOWING HE HAD NO RESPECT FOR ANYONE. THEY ALSO CALLED ON THE BISHOP OF DILI (A PORTUGUESE) WHO GARDNER DESCRIBED AS PROBABLY THE MOST CREDIBLE OF ALL THOSE THEY SPOKE TO. BISHOP ~~XXXXX~~ RIBEIRO WAS DISTRESSED BY WHAT HAD HAPPENED BUT SAID IT WAS POINTLESS TO ALLOT BLAME. HE DID HOWEVER DISTINGUISH BETWEEN FRETILIN ATROCITIES WHICH RESULTED FROM POLICY SANCTIONED BY FRETILIN LEADERS AND INDONESIAN ATROCITIES WHICH WERE CARRIED OUT BY INDIVIDUALS AND NOT SANCTIONED BY JAKARTA. HE THOUGHT THAT FRETILIN COULD HOLD ON INDEFINITELY AT A LOW LEVEL BECAUSE THEY STILL HAD SOME SUPPORTERS AND THOUGHT IT WOULD EVENTUALLY BE NECESSARY TO EXTEND AMNESTIES AND BRING THEM IN.

9. NEITHER GARDNER NOR LANE SAW ANY EVIDENCE IN DILI THAT THERE HAD BEEN MORTAR OR ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENTS SUCH AS HAD BEEN CLAIMED IN THE PAST (cf. Winspeare's similar report). There had, however, obviously been a lot of small arms fire. Gardner said he had had experience of war damage and commented that if the Indonesians had managed to rebuild the town to cover heavy bombardment, then they had acted more efficiently than they had ever managed to anywhere else in the country.

AUSTEO

4/...

SECRET

AUSTEO

10. LANE SAID THEIR GROUP DID NOT HEAR MUCH ABOUT AUSTRALIA BUT GARDNER WAS GIVEN A VERY STRONG FEELING OF RESENTMENT AGAINST AUSTRALIA. BOTH HAD HEARD EXPRESSIONS OF RESENTMENT AGAINST "FOREIGN INTERFERENCE" WHICH OBVIOUSLY MEANT AUSTRALIA. GARDNER HEARD MANY EXPRESSIONS FROM THE FLOOR OF CRITICISM OF DUNN AND AUSTRALIA. BOTH HEARD THE CHARGE THAT THE ACFOA GROUP WHICH VISITED TIMOR HAD GIVEN ARMS TO FRETILIN. MOERDANI TOLD THEM THAT THE STORY WAS VERY WIDELY BELIEVED ALTHOUGH THE INDONESIANS HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN ANY EVIDENCE WHICH SUPPORTED IT. THE SPANISH NUNS IN BOBONARO ALSO SAID IT WAS TRUE. IT SEEMS THE CHARGE IS THAT THE GROUP PICKED UP SOME WEAPONS AND TOOK THEM TO GIVE TO FRETILIN. MARIO CARRASCALAO TOLD MEYNER HE WOULD GIVE HER EVIDENCE OF THE ACFOA AID TO FRETILIN (GARDNER ASKED THAT THIS SENTENCE BE PROTECTED VERY CAREFULLY). NEITHER HEARD ANY MENTION OF AUSTRALIAN ASSISTANCE (BUT NEITHER ASKED ABOUT IT).

11. BOTH FELT IT WAS A PITY THAT THE VISITS HAD BEEN SO CONTROLLED. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY SAID THAT THE ORGANIZATION WAS BASICALLY SIMILAR TO WHAT THE INDONESIANS ALWAYS TURNED ON FOR DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN GUESTS IN ANY PROVINCE; THEY ALWAYS TEND TO OVERDO THINGS. MEYNER HAD NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT HOW ORGANISED IT WAS BUT CONCLUDED THAT INTEGRATION WAS A FACT AND THAT THERE WAS NO FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE WHICH WOULD MAKE THE TIMORESE ANYTHING BUT WORSE OFF. SHE WAS IMPRESSED BY THE NUMBER OF TIMORESE RUNNING THINGS. GOODLING WAS PROBABLY LESS AWARE OF THE ORGANIZATION THAT HAD GONE INTO THE VISIT AND CAME OUT VERY WELL-DISPOSED TO INDONESIA. THEY DID NOT KNOW WHAT SALZBURG WOULD REPORT TO FRASER BUT MEYNER HAD SAID THAT IF FRASER DOUBTED HER CONCLUSIONS SHE WOULD TELL HIM TO GO AND LOOK FOR HIMSELF BECAUSE SHE WASN'T GOING BACK !

12. GARDNER AND LANE SPOKE VERY FREELY AND SAID THAT THE ABOVE ACCOUNT WAS FULLER THAN WHAT THEY HAD SENT TO WASHINGTON (WHICH HAD TO BE CLEARED WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL VISITORS). PLEASE TREAT IT ACCORDINGLY.