

Indons killed 60,000: report

From RUSSELL SKELTON

CANBERRA. — A highly confidential report handed to the Government claims that at least 60,000 Timorese have been killed since Indonesian forces invaded East Timor.

The report says the radical Fretilin independence movement still controls about 85 per cent. of the countryside in Timor and that fighting is widespread.

It says stealing, robbery and the disorderly conduct of the Indonesian occupying troops has led to mass disillusionment with Jakarta's integration proposals.

The five-page document is regarded by Government officials as one of the most authentic first-hand accounts of the situation in East Timor since Indonesian troops invaded the Portuguese colony late last year.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Peacock, was handed a copy late yesterday.

He said: "I am giving it consideration, but at this stage it is too early to make any comment."

Government sources say the document was prepared by independent relief workers who visited East Timor recently. The report was smuggled out of Indonesia.

The Suharto Government has refused to give foreigners open access to Timor for almost a year. The Government has even refused the International Red Cross permission to distribute aid there.

The confidential report on Timor outlines a bleak picture.

It makes the following points:—

- Relief workers in Dili believe 10 per cent. of the population, or 60,000 people, have been killed.
- Fretilin is continuing to put up stiff resistance and enjoys widespread support.
- Indonesian troops occupy villages and towns which contained 150,000 people — only about 20 per cent. of the population of Timor.
- Land communication has been disrupted and Indonesian troops cannot travel with safety in country areas.

Seeking escape

The report says that 20,000 people in Dili, out of a total population of 30,000, have registered themselves for passage to Portugal.

It says: "The desire to integrate with Indonesia is beginning to cool off because of bad experience with the occupying forces including stealing, robbery, burning of houses and the violation of girls.

"Five thousand people welcomed the Indonesian troops at the town of Amaru, but now there are only 1000 people in Amaru."

The other 4000 joined Fretilin in the mountains, it said.

Fretilin tactics have been to evade frontal attack or engagement with Indonesian troops and rely on a "guerilla war pattern".

"The Fretilin has access to the sea on the south coast, facing Australia. It is rumored that they get supplies from Australia."

In other developments on Timor yesterday Mr. Peacock strongly defended the Government's decision to abstain on a United Nations' resolution calling for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops from Timor.

He told the National Press Club that Australia was one of 49 countries that refused to support the resolution.

"We were aware that the resolution had failed to make a balanced appeal to the avoidance of bloodshed," he said.

Mr. Peacock said the Government had decided not to vote against the resolution because it contained points of principle that reflected Government policy.

REPORTS FROM INDONESIAN SOURCES

Estimate of 100,000 killed in E. Timor

By BRUCE JUDDERY

Estimates made in Dili, the capital of East Timor, suggest that the number killed since the Territory's invasion by Indonesian forces last year "may reach to 100,000", according to a report from Indonesian sources which has reached Australia.

This is 40,000 more than the previous "high" estimate of 60,000 killed in fighting between Indonesian forces and those of the Fretilin "Democratic Republic of East Timor", and in alleged massacres both before and since the full-scale invasion last December. An Australian mission to East Timor shortly before then estimated the total of deaths about 2,000.

It is understood that a copy of the report, 'Notes on East Timor', by a non-Indonesian Government visitor to Dili, has been given to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Peacock, and is being studied by his department.

Sheltering

The author of the report remarks that "According to reports, 60,000 people had been killed during the war. We found this figure rather high because it means 10 per cent of the total population of East Timor". Two knowledgeable residents of Dili, however, had suggested the higher figure.

The report seriously claims that Fretilin has been reduced to a rump of no more than a few hundred, sheltering in the mountains. "All villages and towns in East Timor are occupied by the Indonesian military forces Beyond the villages and towns there is no main land (sic)", it adds — apparently suggesting that Indonesian control does not extend beyond urban areas. "And the safety is not guaranteed because of the Fretilin raids.

"The total population of villages and towns occupied by the Indonesian forces amounts to 150,000 people. Taking the total population of East Timor of 650,000 people into consideration, it means that 500,000 people are not under their control". (Presumably this figure should be reduced by up to 100,000, to account for deaths).

"Land communication has been disrupted. The only means of transportation is helicopter or sea route", it continued.

"About 80 per cent of the Territory is not under direct control of

the Indonesian military forces".

The "provincial government" of the territory (claimed this year as a province of Indonesia), is described as "without any authority" and "only a puppet government for the military commander".

The report, strongly anti-Communist in tone, claims that initially Fretilin was an "independent (sic) party although most of its leaders are (sic) Communist. Later it became real Communist".

The 20 to 30 "top leaders" of Fretilin "who are the real Communists" are alleged to have come from Lisbon University. This figure conflicts with intelligence and other reports that only two or three of the Fretilin leadership had studied in Portugal. Most known leaders are former Jesuit seminarians.

"It appeared that the Fretilin has changed its tactics to win the people", the report said. "They treated the people well now and do not offend them. They tried to keep their discipline high. The Fretilin

soldiers are cultivating land now and make gardens.

"They evade frontal attack or engagement with the Indonesian troops or raid villages where there are Indonesian troops. They employ [a] guerilla war pattern. When they are out on raids for food and material (sic) they often sent (sic) mothers with children first, followed by older men then young villagers and at the rear the Fretilin, as much as six or 10. The Fretilin keep watch while the villagers steal and rob.

Rumoured

"The Fretilin has access to the sea on the south coast, facing Australia. It is rumoured they get supply (men and material) from Australia".

The report claims that two Portuguese, one Indian and three native priests are known to be held by Fretilin in the mountains. Alternative reports say, however, that a number of priests have taken leadership positions in Fretilin.

Another report which recently reached Darwin, via an Australian visitor to Roti Island, near Kupang, the capital of Indonesian Timor, is to the effect that morale is bad among Indonesian troops in the Territory and that some have actually defected to Fretilin.

We are accomplices to atrocity

SIR.—The report of 60,000 casualties in East Timor and the failure of the Indonesian Government to occupy the country by force or consent shows that an atrocity of enormous proportions has been perpetrated on an innocent people over the past 12 months and hidden from the world by the security cordon of the Indonesian army.

Australia's abstention from the United Nations' vote calling on withdrawal of Indonesian forces; asserting the right of the East Timorese to self-determination; protesting at Indonesia's defiance of previous United Nations' resolutions and requesting a United Nations' commission to visit East Timor now makes Australia a clear and committed accomplice to these crimes, and the violations of human rights that are occurring in East Timor.

Those people who hoped that the East Timorese might be put out of their suffering quickly by a speedy and successful Indonesian military operation, or that it would be kinder to the East Timorese not to support actions that might prolong the struggle, are now confronted with an immense crisis of conscience.

If Fretilin forces have withstood for 12 months 35,000 front-line Indonesian troops armed with modern tanks, helicopters and boats supplied by US and Australian Governments, they obviously have the capacity to fight on for many years assuming, of course, that in the current three months' rainy season, the Indonesian army is not forced to withdraw.

For once in our history, Australia is faced with an acute issue of conscience which concerns neighbors who suffered 50,000 casual-

ties in opposing the Japanese — an action which may well have saved Australia from invasion.

Those Australians who may be motivated by concern for national pride should reflect that Australian connivance and devious diplomatic manoeuvring over the past two years will make this one of the shabbiest chapters in our foreign policy history.

Are we so afraid of the Indonesian Government and respectful of the United States as to avoid offending them at any cost — even at the cost of thousands or more East Timorese lives? Now is the time for Australia to take a firm stand and make an effective contribution towards ending the killing and brutality.

We can do this by asserting the East Timorese's right to self-determination, campaigning actively in international circles for pressure on the Indonesian Government, suspending our military aid and insisting that the people of East Timor have a right to receive a United Nations' fact-finding mission and to benefit from the humanitarian services of the International Committee of Red Cross.

If Indonesia denies the reports of what is happening in East Timor, it should allow independent observers into the country to make their own assessment.

The three Fretilin leaders, who only escaped the trap set by Indonesian and Australian Governments to keep them in East Timor as a result of action by the unhappy Andrew Peacock, have been accepted as accredited

spokesmen for the East Timorese people by the United Nations. This should make the Australian Government reconsider its decision not to allow these leaders to meet with supporters of East Timor in Australia. As a matter of principle, they have a right to meet with us and Australians have a right to meet with them. This refusal to allow into Australia responsible representatives who have presented their case to most Governments in the world will only further discredit Australia in the eyes of the world.

The confidential report on East Timor from Indonesian sources states that "it is rumored Fretilin gets supplies from Australia". I do not believe that supplies of any kind have gone into East Timor from Australia. We should be sending supplies for humanitarian purposes to help the East Timorese people, but actions by the Australian and Indonesian Governments have made this impossible. The allegations made by the Indonesian Government have no substance. They should not be used by the Australian Government to suppress Australian public support for East Timor nor to refuse access to Australia for East Timorese leaders.

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Age 25.11.76