

## TRANSLATION

Letter – Xanana Gusmao to Agio Pereira, April 1988 (McIntosh extracts only)

1 – I'm writing to you and sending you the following materials

- a message for Senator G. McIntosh
- a typical [East Timorese] house that we present to Senator McIntosh on behalf of all the Australians who are fighting for the Maubere cause
- pennants for CIET, ACET and ALP (we are also making them for other institutions) – apologies for our poor English
  
- The artistry of our offerings is limited, of course, but our female comrades and our artists did their utmost, within their skills and our circumstances, to prepare gifts for their friends. The choice of Senator G. McIntosh vis-à-vis other figures was not irrelevant. It had to do with the fact that he had been to East Timor in 1983. This allowed us to get to know him and his views opposing the biased report by other members of the parliamentary delegation. His views earned him the praise of our fighters who, in their simplicity, described him as *McIntosh ulun-tós duni* (\*) It is our wish to offer something to all our Australian friends ... but if our willingness is as vast as the ocean surrounding us, the possibilities are as minute as the island that is our Homeland!

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

(\*) The phrase literally means "McIntosh is indeed hard-headed" (ulun=head, toos=hard/tough).

"Ulun-toos" is often used to describe someone who is "stubborn" or "slow to understand something".

In this case, it suggests that the guerrillas felt that Senator McIntosh held to his views and was not willing to subscribe to the views of other members of the delegation.

I suspect that there is also a play on words here. "McIntosh" echoes the sound of the word "toos" in Tetum and the guerrillas may have concluded (duni=indeed) that the Senator was indeed tosh/toos. "Toos" by itself means hard or tough and would have been a quality appreciated by the guerrillas.

A very appropriate surname therefore for an Australian Senator supporting the struggle of the East Timorese!

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