

# THE WAR AGAINST EAST TIMOR

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**Carmel Budiardjo** has worked for TAPOL, the British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia, for the past ten years. Before that, she experienced three years political imprisonment in Indonesia. She is the joint author of *West Papua: The Obliteration of a People*.

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# Document 8

## **Military Regional Command XVI, Udayana Established Procedure for the Interrogation of Prisoners. PROTAP/01-B/VII/1982**

### **I. Introduction**

#### *1. General*

Pursuit operations against GPK leaders and operations to destroy armed GPK groups can only succeed if we are able to detect and know the places which are the hideouts of the GPK groups. One of the ways to find out about these places is through captives who surrender. As soon as these prisoners are taken, the information obtained must be quickly processed as part of data-gathering activity. Data-gathering activity requires the skill or ability to interrogate people so that correct conclusions can be drawn about where the GPK leaders or units are hiding. Incorrect data-gathering methods will lead to wrong conclusions and will result in sending our troops in the wrong direction.

#### *2. Aim*

The purpose of this PROTAP is to ensure that the techniques of interrogating former GPK prisoners or of people who have just come down should be directed more effectively towards obtaining correct information and not directed towards confirming the interrogator's assumptions or in other words, interrogation results obtained by force.

#### *3. Scope*

This PROTAP deals with interrogation techniques, the aims of interrogations, and things that need to be avoided when interrogations are conducted. The points dealt with are as follows:

- a. Introduction.
- b. GPK efforts to eliminate their traces.
- c. The aims of interrogation.
- d. Techniques for the conduct of interrogation.
- e. Things to be avoided when conducting interrogations.
- f. Conclusions.
- g. Final Section.

## II. GPK Efforts to Eliminate Their Traces

### 4. *General*

The GPK realise that, in the conduct of a guerrilla war in which their units are relatively small in number in comparison with ABRI units and the people, they cannot possibly win victory. They therefore pursue their guerrilla war by:

- a. Avoiding pursuit operations and encirclements.
- b. Spreading false reports so as to mislead efforts to discover their positions.

### 5. *Avoiding Pursuit Operations and Encirclements*

As soon as the location of one of their bases is discovered, pursuit operations must be launched, supported by encircling the region. To escape pursuit and to extricate themselves, the GPK adopt the method of dispersing themselves into small groups, thus making it difficult for those in pursuit to follow their tracks. By dispersing into small groups, the GPK gain the advantage that if one of the groups is caught or captured, the captured group will not know the direction taken by the other groups; it is therefore possible for them to avoid total destruction.

#### *Example*

During pursuit operations against the Ologari and Kalisa group in the Uaimori complex, pursuit was conducted by troops of Infantry Battalion 745 and Manatuto Ratih troops, and encircling operations were conducted by the Baucau Civil Guard and Infantry Battalion 509. When they were hard-pressed, the group dispersed into small groups so that when contact was made and one of their platoon commanders was shot in the leg, this person could not, when interrogated, say for sure which way the other groups had fled. This is one of the tactics used by the GPK to elude pursuit by other troops.

### 6. *Spreading false reports about the location of their bases, their plans to move and their hideouts.*

Besides moving in small groups and avoiding contact with us, the GPK also uses the method of spreading misleading reports, which are disseminated by letters and pamphlets as well as through people who have just come down from the bush. Elderly people, the sick as well as women and children who are felt to be a hindrance to their operations are told to go down from the bush and surrender, bringing various stories with them. They are even often threatened against saying anything about the true situation in the bush. Thus, for instance, when the GPK is going to move eastwards, they will tell these people that they are going westwards, and so on. Or, they threaten the people who are about to go down that if they tell the truth, they will be murdered. Such things are encountered among almost all the people who come down from the bush.

### III. Aims of Interrogation

#### *General*

7. Before successfully conducting a security operation, the aims of the operation must first be clear. As we all know, the aim of all security operations is to smash the GPK remnants, their leaders are well as their armed units.

#### 8. *Aims*

The aims of interrogation are as follows:

- a. To discover where the GPK leaders are.
- b. To discover the regions through which these leaders frequently move.
- c. To discover the regions often visited by the leaders, as well as their activities in these regions.
- d. To discover regions where armed GPK units operate, regions where they often travel, regions from which they get their logistical supplies, and regions often used as hideouts.
- e. To discover anything about GPK organisations, including those in the settlement areas.
- f. To discover the names of people in the settlements who are involved in these organisations.
- g. To find out about GPK plans.

### IV. Techniques for Conducting Interrogations

#### 9. *General*

In order to collect as much information as possible about the enemy, the interrogation techniques used must be good and correct so that the results will be really useful for operational plans and will not just consist of data or stories made up in the bush.

#### 10. *Interrogation Techniques*

The interrogation techniques set out below are an improvisation (sic) between interrogation and on-the-spot implementation considered suitable when out on operations. The techniques are, among others:

- a. Give assurances of survival (life) to the person being interrogated. At the start of the interrogation, the person must be given a guarantee of his/her safety and survival so as to eliminate any idea that they will be killed regardless of whether they tell the truth or not. This is because of the stories and threats made to them by their leaders and commanders while they were still in the bush who told them: 'When you go down and are interrogated, they will kill you regardless of whether you tell the truth or tell lies, so you might as well tell lies, because you'll be killed all the same'. Another threat is that if they confess and then the soldiers go back to Java, Fretilin will come down and kill all those people who told the truth.

b. Let the people who have just come down or who have been captured know that we are well aware of the threats made by the GPK against the lives of those who tell the truth. We often forget to do this, or it is not done by the interrogator. Most of those people who come down or are captured are people who have never been to school; they therefore do whatever they have been told by the people in the bush. We must therefore approach them in the same way and say that we know all about the threats made in the bush as a way of cornering us, and we must urge them to speak the truth.

c. Give them the freedom to talk about anything they know. Once these people feel assured about their personal safety, the next step is to give them the opportunity to speak or give accounts about everything they knew while they were in the bush. We can then make our analysis and draw our conclusions from the things they tell us.

## V. Things That Must be Avoided

### 11. *General*

To prevent the collection of inaccurate information through interrogations, there follows an account of some things that must be avoided during the course of interrogations.

- a. forcing the wishes of the interrogator.
- b. the use of violence and threats.
- c. drawing conclusions too hastily.

### 12. *Forcing the wishes of the interrogator*

A frequent mistake committed by interrogators is that, at the very start of the interrogation, the interrogator has already placed the person being interrogated in the position of being guilty. Consequently every question asked by the interrogator only remains to be answered, yes or no.

This method must stop since if the person under interrogation is [not?] given the chance to speak freely, anything he/she says that differs from the direction being taken by questioning will be ignored, particularly if accompanied by acts of violence.

### 13. *The use of violence and threats.*

Hopefully, interrogation accompanied by the use of violence will not take place except in certain circumstances when the person being interrogated is having difficulty telling the truth (is evasive).

If it proves necessary to use violence, make sure that there are no people around (members of TBO, Hansip, Ratih or other people) to see what is happening, so as not to arouse people's antipathy. The use of violence often results in the person under interrogation being forced to admit guilt because of fear, and thereafter he/she will just comply with all the wishes of the interrogator. Avoid taking photographs showing torture in progress (people being photographed at times when they are being subjected to electric current, when they have been stripped naked,

etc). Remember not to have such photographic documentation developed outside, in Den Pasar, which could then be made available to the public by irresponsible elements.

It is better to make attractive photographs, such as shots taken while eating together with the prisoner, or shaking hands with those who have just come down from the bush, showing them in front of a house, and so on. If such photos are circulated in the bush, this is a classic way of assuredly undermining their morale and fighting spirits. And if such photos are shown to the priests, this can draw the church into supporting operations to restore security.

*14. Drawing conclusions too hastily.*

Interrogators must not draw hasty conclusions about the results of the interrogation. If necessary the interrogation should be repeated over and over again using a variety of questions so that, eventually, the correct conclusion can be drawn from all these different replies.

## VI. Conclusions

*15. When an Operasi Kikis is in progress, it will be more effective to know beforehand whether the aim is to get a leader or an armed unit. And in order to discover the whereabouts of the leader or armed unit, one of the ways is to collect data from information given by people or by GPK members who have come down from the bush or who have been captured.*

*[The remaining points of the Concluding Section simply summarise the headings already given in the earlier sections of this Protap.]*

*Issued in Dili on (?) July, 1982 [the date is blurred.]*

*Commander:*

*(signed)*

**A. Sahala Rajagukguk,**  
Infantry Colonel NRP no. 18805.