

Indonesia and Irian Jaya: The Enduring Conflict

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On June 28, 1984, spokesmen of the "Lembaga Bantuan Hukum" (LBH-Legal Aid Institute) in Djakarta, charged the Indonesian government with committing "excesses" and violations of human rights, and with other acts of terror and repression against the indigenous Papuan inhabitants of Irian Jaya (West New Guinea), Indonesia's easternmost province. Two leaders of the LBH, its chairman, Mulya Lubis, and an executive member Dr. Yap Thiam Hien, both lawyers, who had made an on-the-spot investigation in Irian Jaya, also excoriated what they termed a covert colonization of the province's Papuan population by newcomers and immigrants from other parts of Indonesia. The latter were being sent there at the urging of the Djakarta government as part of its "transmigration" (i.e. population redistribution) programme. The non-Papuan immigrants, Lubis and Yap asserted, were not only colonizing the province, taking over tribal Papuan lands, but, in effect, were generally establishing a dominant political and economic control over the indigenous Papuans.(1)

The substance of these and similar charges was not new. For example, already in 1971 foreign observers in Jayapura, Irian Jaya's capital, had commented on the "thousands upon thousands of sharpwitted Sulawesians from Makassar "who had invaded" the city, and who were setting up markets. It was noted that such "large scale migration of Indonesians from other provinces" appeared to be a "deliberate and official policy," despite the resentment it had been creating among the Papuans.(2) As for repression and other human rights' violations, in this respect also periodic allegations of mass killings of Papuans by Indonesian forces, extensive arrests of Papuan political opposition figures, and sharp curtailment of all freedom of expression have been heard of since May 1, 1963, when Indonesia formally had taken control of the territory (3).

Rather, what made the July 2, 1984 LBH accusation note-worthy was 1) that this was the first time that an allegation of this kind publicly had been voiced by Indonesians, and, 2) that it was reported in some of the Indonesian press - a press which generally has been adept

in the practising of self-censorship. Then, too, Yap and Lubis appear to have had access to experienced observers in Irian Jaya, particularly personnel of Roman Catholic and Protestant missions long domiciled in the province. (4) Predictably sharp, therefore, was the official reaction of the Suharto government. Both Home Affairs Minister Supardjo Rustam and Cabinet Secretary Murdiono denied the LBH allegations. The latter considered the charges "dangerous", asserting that LBH thinking was setting the clock of Indonesian unity back by a "hundred years". Supardjo was of a similar view, insisting that the LBH present "proof" of its charges, and adding that "We are one nation and Irian Jaya is part of Indonesia". "Narrow interests", as evident in the LBH accusations harmed the current policy of "nation and character building", Rustam said, and "therefore are not tolerable any longer." (5)

It seems unlikely that Lubis and Yap will be intimidated by such official reactions, however. After all, both are veterans of earlier, perhaps even more difficult conflicts with the Suharto government over human rights issues, for example over the recent operation of police "death squads", and, earlier, over the case of the so-called tapol or political prisoners - the 300,000 arrested and held usually without trial for years because of alleged complicity in the abortive 1965 coup attempt in Jakarta. (6) But, perhaps, more important in staying any government move against the LBH because of its criticism was the backlash over the recent killing of a prominent Papuan anthropologist and of other Papuan political opponents of the Indonesian regime in Irian Jaya. Nearly simultaneously there was increased tension between the government of neighbouring, independent Papua-New Guinea (i.e. Eastern New Guinea) and Indonesia resulting from border clashes, the flight of Papuan refugees from Irian Jaya into Papua New Guinea. All these developments were still further amplified by an escalation of anti-Suharto government sentiment in prominent academic, press, and political circles in nearby Australia.

Arnold Ab (or Ap, aged 39), a prominent Papuan intellectual and curator of the anthropological museum of the Cendrawasih University in Jayapura, was arrested on November 30, 1983, presumably on grounds of suspected unlawful political activity, briefly released and then rearrested. As late as April 21, 1984, friends still saw him alive in a Jayapura prison. But on April 26, Ab's corpse, riddled with bullets, was found in the Aryoko military hospital. Pressed for an explanation Indonesian officials in Jayapu-

ra asserted that Ab had been shot while trying to escape. Despite efforts by such groups as Amnesty International, further details of Ab's death or of the deaths of other prisoners arrested with him, have not been given.(7)

Nor are they likely to be forthcoming, considering the record of similar instances in the past. In a recent report on human rights practices in Irian Jaya Amnesty International notes that "several people" believed to have been associated with the Papuan opposition group "Organisasi Papua Merdeka" (OPM-Free Papua Organization) died in detention because of "ill treatment". For example, "Marthen Tabu who had been arrested in April, 1980, after reporting to the authorities under an amnesty guaranteeing his freedom", reportedly died as a result of ill treatment following his transfer to a special army camp in September 1981, "after an attempt had been made by OPM partisans to rescue him from the prison where he was held".(8)

As indicated, maltreatment of Papuans, including killings, whether after skirmishes with Indonesian military or, after arrest, inside Indonesian prisons, has been reported for more than a decade.(9) The death of Arnold Ab, however, particularly seems to have galvanized, segments of public opinion in Australia and in the Netherlands (where there are some 1,800 Papuan exiles, including some who were in Dutch colonial civil service in the territory before, in 1963, it reverted to Indonesian control). A group of Australian academic specialists on Indonesian affairs, for example who were not previously stirred to protest about Indonesian policy in Irian Jaya, now suddenly felt compelled to denounce the Ab killing in a public statement as being an "act of singular inhumanity".(10) In the Netherlands, meanwhile, pressure across a wide band of the political spectrum led to a demand for an explanation at the cabinet level.

All these developments came as a kind of culmination of yet another recent new surge of unrest in various parts of Irian Jaya noticeable since the beginning of 1984, a surge interspersed with fresh incidents along the Irian Jaya - Papua New Guinea border. The new wave of troubles began, typically, with yet another flag-raising incident. In the past, anti-Indonesian Papuan nationalists, some claiming connection with the OPM (itself a generic term for a number of different Papuan opposition and guerrilla groups), from time to time have tried to raise the colours of their hoped for future independent state of "Papua Barat" (West Papua) at some public building or other prominent site in the province's capital. In a celebrated 1980 incident of

this kind, for example, six Papuan women subsequently received prison sentences of from two to five years. On February 13, 1984, an Indonesian soldier of Papuan origin attempted raising the "Papua Barat" flag in front of the provincial legislature building. He failed, and he and a Papuan building worker who had helped the soldier were killed by nearby Indonesian guards. The incident touched off several shooting incidents between OPM sympathizers and Indonesian military in Jayapura in the ensuing days. These incidents reflected tensions throughout the province generally which had begun to escalate when in the closing months of 1983 some 4,000 Indonesian troops (some of them crack Kopassandha or paracommando units) had launched their "Operasi Tumpas" ("Clean Up Operation"), a sweep of suspected OPM guerrillas and village sympathizers, around the Lake Sentani area. During this sweep and in subsequent weeks several scores of Indonesian military of Papuan or East Indonesian origin deserted, taking their weapons with them into the jungle. Meanwhile clashes between Papuans and Sulawesi traders over the latter's allegedly sharp business practices erupted in Jayapura. Papuan medical staff at the Cenderawasih University hospital also deserted.(11)

As the unrest grew, some 3,000 additional Indonesian troops were flown into Irian Jaya from nearby East Indonesian bases. By mid-February, 1984, the Papua New Guinean and even the Indonesian press began carrying fresh reports, some by refugees from Irian Jaya, about OPM attacks on government installations in Jayapura and about stepped up anti-OPM operations by government forces.(12) Alarmed by "Operasi Tumpas" and by OPM-Indonesian fighting or rumours of it, a stream of Papuan refugees from Irian Jaya had begun crossing into Papua New Guinea since the close of 1983. One West German journalist in Port Moresby estimated their numbers by mid-1984 at about 12,000 (Irian Jaya's total population is about 1.2 million) though various official Indonesian sources have insisted to this author that there were "less than six hundred" refugees. The Papua New Guinea government, anxious not to inflame its border problem has declined to give its estimate. The refugees reportedly included a minority of urban Papuans, among them Indonesian army deserters, and a handful of teachers and lesser ethnic Papuan officials. Most were villagers, however, many of them living along the 800-kilometres-long poorly marked and jungly Irian Jaya-Papua New Guinea frontier zone.(13)

Already on March 25, 1984, Papua New Guinea officially

announced the closing of its border with Irian Jaya in order to stem the refugee tide. But this move, actuated by political considerations, had little success, given the geographic realities of the border. The government of Premier Michael Somare of Papua New Guinea, like those of his predecessors has made it plain that in principle it is committed to return to Irian Jaya all Papuan refugees without demonstrably compelling claims to political asylum. However, Port Moresby's relations with Djakarta remain badly frayed because of the persistent OPM struggle for which there is considerable, though not unqualified, sympathy among most of Somare's constituency.

Repeatedly, in April, 1984, Somare's government protested against alleged violations of Papua New Guinea airspace by Indonesian jet fighters as well as encroachments on PNG soil by Indonesian road construction crews. As Somare insisted also that Indonesian military had conducted cross border raids into Papua New Guinea, so in turn on July 14, 1984, the Indonesian military commander in Irian Jaya charged that 50 Papua New Guinea villagers had attacked three border hamlets inside Irian Jaya territory.(14) Relations were further strained by the expulsion of the Indonesian military attache from the Indonesian embassy in Port Moresby on grounds that he had become actively involved in anti-OPM intelligence work in the PNG capital, and indeed, had been seeking to organize a counter-OPM network among PNG citizens.

But, as has happened often before, a PNG mission, this time consisting of the PNG Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Trade visited Djakarta to smooth matters over. By mid-April, 1984, a joint communique had been issued. This document affirmed both governments' desire to "respect each others's sovereignty" and the "principle of non-interference" and pledged that both sides would cooperate in "repatriating" the refugees "through a good method" (not further specified).(15) Mindful of the cumulative effect on opinion abroad of the adverse publicity being generated by its persistent Irian Jaya problems, Djakarta also began showing itself to be adapt in trying to capture a more positive media attention. On April 28, 1984, in the town of Manokwari, in the northwestern part of Irian Jaya, 6,000 local inhabitants "peacefully demonstrated" to protest the expulsion of Indonesia's military attache from Port Moresby and the recent granting by the Netherlands of political asylum to Papuan refugees. A few weeks earlier a similar demonstration had been held in Jayapura, in which

representatives of youth groups, "watched by security forces" carried banners protesting "outside interference" in the province's internal affairs. Given prevailing martial law conditions and emergency military powers in all major phases of Irian Jaya's public life today, it is unlikely that such demonstrations would have been held without the instigation and encouragement of the Indonesian authorities.

Amidst the crossfire of charges and claims between - on the one hand - the OPM and its foreign supporters, especially in the Netherlands and Australia, and - on the other hand - the Indonesian government, the origin, scope and context of the seemingly endless Papuan opposition to Indonesian rule in Irian Jaya tend to become obscured. Assertions by pro-Papuan Dutch sources of there being a "massive surrection against Indonesian occupiers" in Irian Jaya, in the early months of 1984, or the claims by a London-based anti-Suharto human rights periodical concerning "increasingly tense" conditions, "mass arrests" and "fierce fighting" between the OPM and Indonesian troops in the province are all readily dismissed as false or as mere hyperbole by official Indonesian quarters.(16) A claim by OPM spokesman, reported in early May, 1984, in a leading Australian daily, that since February, 1984, "more than 140 Indonesian troops have been killed in border clashes" was quickly dubbed an exaggeration by the Indonesian ambassador to Australia, who admitted, however, that the figure of "20 or so" Indonesian deaths was more accurate.(17) The ambassador also professed himself to be "amused" at reports that the Papuan insurgent force claimed to be 5,000 men strong; usually, Indonesian spokesmen have described the OPM as having no more than two hundred followers.

Though Irian Jaya and its problems remain inaccessible to independent investigators, even so the steady trickle of reports over the decades about the opposition movement in the province coming from sources both in situ and nearby, and, above all, today the intrusion of an Indonesian agency, the LBH, into the matter, allows for formulation of the following theses, embodying the basic reasons for the Papuan resistance and the extent of its organization and appeal.

1. Papuan nationalism and separatism are decades old and show no signs of abatement, on the contrary. Originally part of the Dutch East Indian colonial empire, West New Guinea had been excluded from the territory

transferred to the control of the Indonesian Republic in 1949. After a campaign of political pressure and military threats, Indonesia acquired control in 1963 under a United Nations-sanctioned agreement stipulating that before the end of 1969 the Papuans would have an opportunity to participate in an "act of free choice" (the term "plebescite" was carefully avoided) to determine whether they wished to remain with Indonesia or become an independent state.(18)

In July and August, 1969, the "act of free choice" did in fact take place, resulting officially in favor of continued inclusion of the territory into Indonesia. But outside observers have been virtually unanimous in questioning the fairness and accuracy of the "act of free choice". The Bolivian diplomat, Dr. F. Ortiz Sanz, who was the principal United Nations representative in Irian Jaya at the time of the "act of free choice", noted that Indonesian officials at all times exercised "a tight political control over the Papuans". He expressed his "reservation" as to whether Papuan freedom of choice - which the Indonesians had pledged to guarantee - had in fact prevailed.(19) Nor were the Indonesian authorities unaware of Papuan opposition. Already in 1967, for example, one leading Djakarta daily commented editorially that:(20)

"Observers returning from West Irian some time ago frankly said that the situation in the territory is quite different from official reports received here (i.e. in Jakarta). The behaviour of the Government officials "imported" from other parts of Indonesia reportedly was more repugnant than that of the colonial rulers. Many people having returned from that territory (i.e. Irian Jaya) are pessimistic that, should fair chances be given, under the present conditions, the local people would choose to remain in the (Indonesian) Republic."

In the closing years of their post-World War II administration over West New Guinea, the Dutch, whether in anti-Indonesian "revanchist" reaction to the loss of the rest of their East Indian empire, or because of genuine concern for the political development of Papuans, or both, directly and indirectly encouraged the rise of an already nascent Papuan nationalism in the area. This they did through creation of elected local governing councils and of a semi-parliament, called the "New Guinea Council" (Nieuw Guinea Raad), for the whole territory, approving formation of political parties, as well as encouraging the growth of the number of Papuans in various public services, and of education and economic development, and, not

least, granting permission to display a distinctive "Papua Barat" flag.(21) Not surprisingly, the Djakarta government's absorption of West New Guinea, eventually dubbed Irian Jaya, as Indonesia's twenty-sixth province, came to be experienced by much of the emerging Papuan elite as a betrayal of what they believed to be their legitimate political rights. The meaningless formality of the 1969 "act of free choice" only deepened this sense of betrayal.

Between the assumption of Indonesian control in 1963, and the "act of free Choice," in 1969, and during all the years since then, this Papuan sense of betrayal was fed by various perceived inadequacies in Djakarta's policies toward the territory, to be touched on shortly. Permission to enter the region remained difficult for foreign observers. But the few who were able to do so, notably Australian specialists on Indonesia, repeatedly were struck and occasionally admitted even to being "jolted" by the strength of the Papuan nationalism that they encountered. (22) Even before incoming Indonesians formally had taken over control of Irian Jaya after a brief United Nations interim administration (1962-63), it had come to violent Papuan clashes with the Indonesians and to repeated, if abortive, attempts to hoist the Papua Barat flag at public buildings. A loosely organized guerilla movement, the earlier mentioned OPM, also began to take form.

Meanwhile, there were to be continuous eruptions of local resistance. A few examples must suffice. On April 27, 1967, the Irian Jaya military commander, Brigadier Bintoro, declared that Indonesian air force jets had been compelled to strafe the town of Manokwari causing scores of casualties. In the vicinity of Manokwari, OPM insurgents had been persisting for more than a year in their attempt to destroy Indonesian oil and military installations and indeed were trying to seize the town itself. (23) Late in April, 1969, fighting erupted in the Central Highlands of Irian Jaya, particularly around the villages of Moanamani and Enarotali. Here several scores of Indonesian military were killed, airstrips were temporarily occupied and the Papua Barat flag was hoisted.(24) On July 1, 1971, a "proclamation of Papuan independence" from Indonesian rule was formally issued at Markas Victoria/Port Numbay by one OPM guerrilla faction and attacks on Indonesian patrols along the northwest frontier increased in frequency. Provisional West Papua government offices meanwhile were opened in a number of European capitals.

In August, 1973, there were uprisings in the Baliem valley where Papuan insurgents used captured Indonesian

weapons to occupy the Wamena airfield, and by 1977, OPM bands claimed to be blowing up the pipeline of the U.S.-owned Freeport Indonesia Ltd. copper mining company "at different places every nine or ten days".(25) In February, 1984, there were OPM attacks on airports, military and communications facilities in Sorong, Manokwari, Biak, and even Jayapura, to which Indonesian troop reinforcements had to be rushed from bases in the neighbouring Moluccan region. Meanwhile, there is the psychological dimension of the OPM war of attrition: OPM insurgents have kidnapped Indonesian workers, and military, induced army desertions, harassed the ordinary life of civilians by causing disruption of electrical and other communications services, and spread destabilizing rumours of impending mass raids.

To be sure: the OPM lacks tactical consistency and leadership continuity, riven as it is by frequent factional disputes, and by capture and arrest of its adherents by Indonesian forces. However, it is the long-term staying power of both the OPM insurgency and of the ideal of independence, even among those Papuans not themselves actively engaged in attacking Indonesian military, that is today the significant political dynamic in the territory. After all, a generation has passed since Indonesia acquired control over this, one of the least developed parts, in the Southeast Asian - South Pacific region. And yet, Jakarta has not managed either to suppress effectively the Papuan nationalist ideal or transform the political value system of a younger generation of Papuans educated under Djakarta's watchful eye. On the contrary, as one visitor to the territory, a U.S.-trained lawyer and lecturer at Port Moresby's University of Papua New Guinea found, "anger", a "militant resistance" to Indonesian rule, and a "vision of an independent Melanesian future" are common undercurrents in the political life of the most diverse Papuan groups and in the most varied places in Irian Jaya today.(26)

The self-identification of Papuan nationalists as "Melanesian" is particularly noteworthy, because it adds an incendiary racial dimension to a sense of political oppression. Justifying nationalist claims on the basis of racial distinctiveness always is a hazardous enterprise. Given the long history of commingling of different population strains throughout Eastern Indonesia, it would be doubly risky to do so in Irian Jaya. But nationalism need not reflect historical reality or ethnographic accuracy; it is rather a matter of the mystique of self-perception. Indonesian sources may proclaim themselves "furious" when

they hear Papuans describing themselves as "Melanesians" because "They are Indonesians"; to one OPM leader, however, Fisor Yarisetouw, who also is "chairman" of the rival West Papuan government's "Senate" the case is otherwise: "Irian Jaya is our country", as he recently put it, "it is the place of Melanesians."(27)

2. Alleged Indonesian "colonization" of Irian Jaya deepens Papuan opposition

"The Indonesians plan to kill our culture with resettling people from Java and wipe us out", the previously mentioned Yarisetouw asserted recently, a view that should be placed alongside that of the current, Djakarta-appointed Governor of Irian Jaya, Isaac Hindom. According to Hindom, there is enough room in Irian Jaya to accommodate 45 million settlers or the equivalent of half the number of people now living in over-populated Java. Hindom added that those who oppose the Indonesian government's current policy of settling Javanese in Irian Jaya are "separatists" and "enemies of the government" who should be "exterminated".(28)

Despite the Djakarta government's active encouragement to resettle Javanese in Irian Jaya, it is unlikely that official migration targets will be met. But even the limited migration that is likely to occur, and has already taken place, greatly antagonizes Papuans. Under the Indonesian government's so-called "Repelita IV", or fourth national five year development plan, which began early in 1984, about 1 million Javanese are to be resettled in Irian Jaya, at a cost of 800 million US\$. (29) Much of the funding for this ambitious scheme, like that of the planned resettlement of 4 million Javanese to other areas of Indonesia during "Repelita IV" is expected to come from World Bank and international aid consortia credits. These foreign credit sources already have pumped some 20 billion US\$ into the Indonesian economy since the advent of the Suharto regime in 1965. But for Javanese "transmigrants" Irian Jaya is the least attractive of the government designated resettlement areas, partly because of the low level of its infrastructure development and social services system, and partly because of the animosities of the indigenous 1.2 million Papuans toward Indonesian settlers.

Earlier, a so-called "spontaneous" migration - especially of East Indonesian traders and artisans - already had become quite significant, especially in the years immediately following the "act of free choice" which seemed to

assure future Indonesian control over Irian Jaya. For example, according to one calculation such "spontaneous" migration leaped from about 5,000 in 1970 to nearly 10,000 in 1971.(30) Papuan conflict with the "spontaneous" migrants was frequent, however, and no doubt affected the appeal of Irian Jaya for future colonists. In the 1979-81 period only about 4,500 (about a thousand families) of resettlers under the government's official "transmigration" programme came to Irian Jaya, half the number the Djakarta government originally had calculated.(31)

For to many Papuans the entry of the official resettlers, no less than the influx of "spontaneous" migrants, has seemed to be a new kind of "colonization" of Irian Jaya, indeed a part of a deliberate "Javanization" policy designed to envelop non-Javanese ethnic groups in the other Indonesian islands. Since Indonesia formally achieved national independence from the Dutch in 1949, the ethnic self-consciousness of these non-Javanese groups - e.g. the Achenese and Menangkabau of Sumatra, the Menadonese of Sulawesi (the Celebes), or the Ambonese of the South Moluccas - periodically has erupted into violent political opposition against the government in Djakarta, which is perceived as being too dominated by Javanese or by a Java-centric political perspective. Papuan nationalism also perceives such a deliberate "Javanization" policy at work, although Indonesia's Foreign Minister Mokhtar Kusumaatmadja has declared that only one-third of the 136,000 families which the government expects to move to Irian Jaya in the "Repelita IV" period under the "transmigration" programme will be Javanese. (32) But OPM activists and their sympathizers in Port Moresby view this transmigration scheme as but part of Djakarta's "cultural genocide" policy in Irian Jaya.(33) Such a policy, it is believed, will "flood" and "homogenize" the Papuans, submerging both their ethnic identity and their political aspirations, presumably in the interests of a national Indonesian political stability and economic development. The view is shared by non-Papuans. One Papua-New Guinea scholar, Professor J. Griffin, pointed out at the close of 1982 that the steady influx of non-Papuans into Irian Jaya in recent years, would, if the presently even limited rate continued, result in the Papuans becoming an "ethnic minority" in their own country by 1990. He estimated the total number of non-Papuans in Irian Jaya at 300,000, out of the total population of 1.2 million.(34)

With the arrival of the above-named Isaac Hindom as governor of Irian Jaya in Jayapura early in 1983, the

pressure on Papuans to "assimilate" significantly increased. Hindom appears to let few opportunities pass to rankle Papuan ethnic sensibilities. He has defended "transmigrant" colonization in Irian Jaya on the grounds that Papuan food production is "so backward". Mixing the colonists with Papuan cultivators in the same village, Hindom says, is desirable because the Papuans are lacking in and need to learn new cultivation skills. Hindom also advocates mixed Papuan-Indonesian marriages because "this will give birth to a new generation of people without curly hair, sowing the seeds for greater beauty". He even has banned the term "Papuan", presumably because of its separatist nationalist connotations, and has demanded that henceforth Papuans be called either "Irianese" or else "putera daerah" ("sons of the country").(35)

More than such slights are involved in the government's assimilation policy. For the entry of colonists on land of or near Papuan villages deprives the latter of tribal and other traditionally held communal reserve holdings, needed for hunting and gathering, or to accommodate a future population accretion, but, in any case, not permanently transferrable to outsiders. To tamper with land tenure traditions is to disturb fundamental religious-economic values in Papuan societies. As one Australian specialist on New Guinea affairs has put it:(36)

"Moving Javanese to apparently vacant land without paying landowners adequate compensation and without understanding that land cannot be alienated, only leased - it belongs to the clan in perpetuity and cannot be given away - is a sure recipe for endless trouble, not least because in some instances in the border area the clan owners of the land may well be Papua New Guinea citizens."

Forced restructuring or relocation of Papuan community life has been as bitterly resented as the official attempts to compel Papuans to wear different clothing, or the "Indonesianization" process of territorial laws and education, or the heavy preponderance of non-Papuans in key posts in the civil, administrative, and other government services. In 1961, in the waning days of the Dutch administration, 43% or some 2,800 of nearly 6,500 principal civil service functions were held by Papuans.(37) A decade later, and with the advent of Indonesian administration, the "middle and upper echelons of the bureaucracy" in Irian Jaya reportedly already had come to be staffed "very largely with persons from other provinces".

(38) Since then, one may surmise, persistent nationalist Papuan opposition has given Djakarta even less incentive to accelerate any "Irianization" of the local civil service. The matter can, at the moment, only be speculated upon, because official Indonesian statistics no longer make distinctions between the number of Papuans and other Indonesians in the Irian Jaya public services. When queried about this, one ranking Home Affairs Ministry official told the author in Djakarta in July, 1984, that "we are all Indonesians now."

It is precisely toward the few Papuans in government service, and toward the young intellectuals of Irian Jaya who typically might be recruited for the service, that Indonesian suspicions appear to be directed. Among those apprehended in the wave of arrests of Papuans by Indonesian Kopassandha (paracommandos) in and around Jayapura in October and November, 1983, for example, were Asser Demotekai, recently head of the Village Development Directorate of the Irian Jaya provincial government, Titus Dansidan, head of the Social and Political Affairs Department of the Irian Jaya provincial government, the earlier named Arnold Ab, museum curator, and several Cendrawasih University students.(39) Desertions of Papuan military from Irian Jaya territorial units especially during the 1983-84 period, can only perpetuate the vicious circle of a non-Papuan dominance in Irian Jaya, producing further Papuan resentment and opposition also among members of government services, and resulting in yet another new influx of Indonesians from outside the province as Djakarta remains determined to pursue its policy of assimilation.

3. Continuing Papuan opposition will aggravate further the already chronic confrontation between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea

"In future we in Indonesia should be more sensitive to Papua New Guinea and realize that sometimes we do take our good neighbour and younger brother for granted. And that as we become a regional power, we must take on the responsibilities that come with that burden", so concluded an editorial in a leading Jakarta daily in mid-April, 1984, on the subject of "Papua New Guinea's Teapot Tempest".(40) The reference here was to the latest upsurge of tensions between the governments in Djakarta and Port Moresby. This resulted from alleged Indonesian violations of PNG airspace, following in the wake of stepped up patrols as hundreds of Papuan refugees crossed the PNG border in an

attempt to escape the Indonesian military's earlier named "Operasi Tumpas". The tone of superiority in this editorial - e.g. the reference to PNG as a "younger brother" who should be accommodated even as Indonesia achieves "regional power" status - hardly is likely to endear the Djakarta government to its Port Moresby neighbour and improve their relations. For more than a decade those relations have been soured by the chronic interlocking problems of Papuan refugees fleeing to PNG, clashes between Indonesian and PNG forces or between the OPM and Indonesian troops at or near the border, and, not least, by the extent to which Papuan nationalism and Indonesian assimilation policies in Irian Jaya also have become issues in domestic PNG politics.(41)

It might be emphasized that the major incident involving refugee movement and border clashes in February and March, 1984, which once again prompted a new, high-level consultation and the issuance of yet another joint Indonesian-PNG communique on April 17, 1984, (cf. note 15 supra) came only a few months after another period of PNG-Indonesian tensions. In the early months of 1982, in an evident display of a new aggressive policy of "hot pursuit" against OPM insurgents located in camps at or just across the border, Indonesian troops repeatedly entered PNG territory, thereby touching off a political furor in Port Moresby. By the end of May, 1982, Indonesia and PNG mutually had recalled their ambassadors, and Irian Jaya had been thrust into the center of the PNG parliamentary elections, fanning even more popular sympathy for Papuan nationalism and the OPM. PNG Deputy Premier Iambakey Okuk strongly protested the Indonesian "transmigrant" colonization programme in Irian Jaya, adding that the PNG nation was, henceforth, entitled to know "here every leader and every party stands on the issue of the rights and future of our Melanesian brothers and sisters in Irian Jaya".(42)

Eventually the incident died down with the advent later in 1982 of a new government in Port Moresby led by Premier Michael Somare. Ambassadors returned to their posts as both sides promised to increase their border vigilance. But already by April, 1983, there was yet another strain, this time resulting from the almost accidental discovery by PNG border patrols that Indonesians in building a "trans-Irian" road along the PNG border were encroaching deep into PNG territory in several places. In June, 1979, Indonesia and PNG had signed a border agreement designed to prevent this kind of intrusion. But in retrospect the treaty seems to have been significant mainly as an ex-

pression of a joint desire to settle peaceably any future problem over the demarcation of their frontier (parts of which remain cartographically still in dispute) and related migration problems.

The April, 1983, border intrusion eventually was accepted as a surveyor's error by the joint PNG-Indonesian border control commission that had been provided for by the 1979 treaty. Nevertheless it got Djakarta another salvo of hostile and suspicious reactions in the PNG press and political circles. For the incident highlighted the long-term implications of the "trans-Irian" road being build along the nearly 800-kilometres-long PNG-Irian Jaya border. In Port Moresby there long has been apprehension that the road is designed both for stepped-up anti-OPM operations, i.e. against the insurgent camps many of which are located in the inaccessible jungle terrain inside PNG territory, as well as to provide future "feeder lines" for the thousands of "transmigrant" colonists to be settled by Djakarta along the border inside Irian Jaya. These border settlements may envelop and eventually dilute the OPM. But it is also likely that land disputes will erupt because of the settlements, since present clan land tenure lines straddle the present border.(43)

Any aggravation of border tensions - and there are likely to be new ones - thus tends to redound on the whole question of Papuan nationalism as well. As Indonesian assimilation and colonization policies proceed, it also extends the conflict between ethnic Papuans and other Indonesians in Irian Jaya today up to and indeed across the PNG border. The whole OPM issue therefore is to an increasing degree a destabilizing factor as well in the domestic political life of what has hithertofore been one of the more secure and economically more prosperous new states of the South Pacific, i.e. Papua New Guinea. The root of this instability is the deepening hiatus between official caution and popular sympathy in PNG with respect to the OPM issue. Every PNG government since independence in 1975, mindful of the strategic realities, officially has sought to get along with its "older brother" in Djakarta. Incident after incident between the two countries is followed by goodwill visit after goodwill visit, and by reassuring communique after reassuring communique - until the next conflict.

The rhetoric of the periodic rapprochements is wearing thin. The joint Indonesian-PNG communique, issued in Djakarta on April 17, 1984, after the upsurge of incidents, dutifully proclaims that "the PNG side reiterated

that it will not permit its territory to be used" for the "operation" of "anti-Indonesian elements".(44) This, by now, is an old political refrain that affects but little firstly, the continued movement of OPM insurgents back and forth across the border, and secondly, the strong, persistent and widening sympathy in many PNG strata for the Papuan nationalist cause - a sympathy always mixed with apprehension about the policies and long-term intentions of the nearby Indonesian "older brother".

Thus far successive PNG governments have been able to walk a tightrope between the need for caution in dealings with Djakarta, and the pressures of OPM sympathies fused with dislike and fear of Djakarta among the PNG electorate. But each PNG government faces the problem of whether or when - in the accelerating chain of border and refugee conflicts over the years - the incident will come that will push the government off the tightrope. Certainly, the nature of recent incidents has become more ugly. At the close of December, 1982, an Indonesian member of the military staff in the Indonesian embassy in Port Moresby was murdered by an PNG citizen with loyalties to the OPM cause. In turn, as recently as April, 1984, the Indonesian military commander of Irian Jaya province repeatedly called on PNG to stop "giving sanctuary" to OPM adherents who, he said had murdered ten Indonesian civilians in Irian Jaya in recent weeks. Allegations of terrorism, torture, murder and random violence now are hurled freely back and forth, and it was noteworthy that already in May, 1981 students at Port Moresby's University of Papua New Guinea began holding "human rights tribunals" and "seminars" during which Papuan refugees from Irian Jaya gave evidence of alleged Indonesian "bestialities."(45)

Meanwhile, as in the original Dutch-Indonesian dispute over West New Guinea, the international and diplomatic dimension steadily keeps intruding. Despite seeming agreement in April, 1984, between Djakarta and Port Moresby on handling the problem (cf. note 15 supra), toward the close of the year acrimony still persisted. On October 3, 1984, the PNG Foreign Affairs Minister, Zabbie Namaliu, raised his government's persistent border conflict in the general debate at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Indonesian Foreign Minister Mokhtar Kusumaatmadja voiced his pained "amazement" over this, declaring he thought the issue had been settled.(46) But in back of Namaliu's statement lay the fact that Indonesia and PNG still had not come to an agreement on the return to Irian Jaya of several thousand Papuan refugees. The PNG government,

mindful of local sympathy for the Papuans, had kept insisting on Indonesian guarantees that the returning refugees would be protected. Indeed, considerable public opinion was developing in PNG that the refugees should not be forced to return at all, and efforts were being made to have some of the refugees settle in Australia.(47) World capitals and various international forums, clearly, are beginning to hear more, not less, about the Irian Jaya issue.

Nearly fifteen years ago, after a review of the scope of the then popular nationalist opposition in Irian to Indonesian rule, the present writer noted that the "Papuan resistance shows no sign of diminishing".(48) Today, the resistance is entering its second generation, and the steady drumbeat of mutual accusations, interspersed with ever new clashes and border incidents into which the OPM is inevitably drawn, does not augur well, either for Indonesia's own future, or for its relations with its Papua New Guinea neighbour.

Notes

- (1) Kompas (Djakarta), June 29, July 3 and 5, 1984.
- (2) See, e.g. Bob Hawkings in: *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hongkong), May 22, 1971, pp. 66-67.
- (3) For a summary of these reports see, e.g. Justus M. van der Kroef: *Indonesia and West New Guinea: The New Dimensions of Conflict*, in: *Orbis*, Summer 1970, pp. 366-400; and "The Papuans of Irian Jaya (West New Guinea)", in: W. Veenhoven (ed.): *Case Studies on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. A World Survey*. (Foundation for the Study of Plural Societies, The Hague, 1976), pp. 221-246.
- (4) Author's interview with Dr. Yap Thiam Hien, Djakarta, July 6, 1984.
- (5) *Indonesian Observer* (Djakarta), July 5, 1984.
- (6) On the tapol question see *Indonesia: An Amnesty International Report*. (Amnesty International Publications, London, 1977). On LBH protest against the death squads see: *Agence France Presse* despatch, Djakarta, July 25, 1984 (*Foreign Broadcast Information Service Bulletin*, hereafter FBIS, July 28, 1984).

- (7) West Papuan Observer (Amsterdam), Winter 1983-84, pp. 5-6; Amnesty International (Netherlands branch), Indonesien-Bulletin (Doorn), June, 1984 pp. 1-2; Sinar Harapan (Djakarta), December 16, 1983.
- (8) Torture in The Eighties. An Amnesty International Report. Amnesty International Publications, London, 1984, p. 190.
- (9) See: e.g. the report of Henk de Mari in: De Telegraaf (Amsterdam), October 11, 1974.
- (10) Far Eastern Economic Review, June 7, 1984, p. 38.
- (11) For a chronology of the new wave of unrest see: e.g.: Tapol Bulletin (London), March, 1984, pp. 2-3.
- (12) Papua New Guinea Times, (Port Moresby) March 1, 1984 and Post-Courier (Port Moresby), February 15 and 21, 1984; Tempo (Djakarta), March 10, 1984; also cited Tapol Bulletin, March, 1984, p.2.
- (13) Erhard Haubold in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, August 7, 1984.
- (14) The Jakarta Post, July 9, 1984; The Sunday Times (Singapore), July 15, 1984.
- (15) Radio Jakarta, domestic service, April 17, 1984 (FBIS, April 18, 1984).
- (16) Zelfbeschikking (Groningen), February-March, 1984, p. 4, and Tapol Bulletin (London), March, 1984, p. 1.
- (17) The Age (Melbourne), May 2, 1984, cited Agence France Presse despatch, Canberra, May 2, 1984.
- (18) William Henderson: West New Guinea, The Dispute and Its Settlement. South Orange, N.J.: Seton Hall University Press, 1973.
- (19) Report of the Secretary General Regarding the Act of Self-Determination in West Irian. (United Nations General Assembly, Twenty-Fourth Session, November 6, 1969, A/7723, New York), p. 70.
- (20) The Jakarta Times, September 22, 1967. See also Peter Hastings: Indonesians have growing doubts on West Irian policy, in: The Australian (Sydney), June 4, 1969.
- (21) On the emergence of Papuan political parties and nationalism see: C.S. Lagerberg: Jaren van Reconstructie. Nieuw Guinea van 1949 tot 1961 (Dissertation, University of Utrecht; 's Hertogenbosch, Zuid-Nederlandsche Drukkerij, 1962), esp. pp. 182-195.
- (22) See, e.g. Herbert Feith: Visit to West Irian, in: Nation (Sydney), April 18, 1964, p. 7, and June Verrier: Irian Jaya 1975, in: New Guinea (Sydney), August 1975, p. 14.

- (23) The Straits Times (Singapore), March 17, 1967; Sabah Times (Kota Kinabalu), April 28, 1967.
- (24) The Sydney Morning Herald, July 11, 1969.
- (25) Provisional Revolutionary Government of West Papua (London office), South Pacific News Service, Press Release no. 59, October 15, 1977, p. 1.
- (26) Hank di Suvero: Militant Verzet Op West-Irian, in: Zelfbeschikking November-December, 1981, p. 12.
- (27) The New York Times, April 29, 1984; The Age (Melbourne), May 2, 1984 (FBIS, May 3, 1984).
- (28) AFP despatch, Djakarta by Gilles Bertin, March 4, 1984 (FBIS, March 6, 1984); The Age, May 2, 1984 (FBIS, May 3, 1984).
- (29) Peter Hastings: Go East, Young Man, in: Far Eastern Economic Review, October 6, 1983, p. 40.
- (30) Ross Garnaut/Chris Manning: An Economic Survey of West Irian, in: Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, November 1972, pp. 59-60.
- (31) Peter Hastings, op.cit.
- (32) The New York Times, April 29, 1981.
- (33) Post Courier (Port Moresby), May 25, 1981.
- (34) Zelfbeschikking, October-December, 1982, p. 4.
- (35) Kompas (Djakarta), October 26, 1983 (Tapol Bulletin, November, 1983, p.6).
- (36) Peter Hastings: Bumps On the Road, in: Far Eastern Economic Review, June 16, 1983, p. 43.
- (37) Rapport Inzake Nederlands-Nieuw-Guinea over het jaar 1961. Uitgebracht aan de Verenigde Naties ingevolge Artikel 73E van het Handvest (Ministry of Internal Affairs, The Hague, 1962), p. 22.
- (38) Garnaut/Manning, op.cit., p. 58.
- (39) Nederlands Dagblad (Amsterdam), December 6, 1983, and Tapol Bulletin, January, 1984, p.1.
- (40) The Jakarta Post, April 9, 1984.
- (41) Kwasi Nyamekye and Ralph R. Premdas: Papua New Guinea-Indonesian Relations Over Irian Jaya, in: Asian Survey, October, 1979, pp. 927-945.
- (42) Far Eastern Economic Review, June 4, 1982, p. 10.
- (43) Peter King: Papua New Guinea in 1983, in: Asian Survey, February, 1984, pp. 161-163, and Peter Hastings: "Bumps On the Road" op.cit., p. 43.
- (44) Radio Jakarta, domestic service, April 17, 1984 (FBIS, April 18, 1984).
- (45) Agence France Presse despatch, Djakarta, December 15, 1982 (FBIS, December 16, 1982); Radio Melbourne, Overseas service, April 10, 1984 (FBIS, April 11, 1984); West Papuan Observer (Nijmegen), May-August

- 1981, pp. 12-13.
- (46) Kompas (Djakarta), October 4, 1984 (FBIS, October 15, 1984).
- (47) See, e.g. Agence France Presse despatch, Canberra, September 13, 1984 (FBIS, September 14, 1984); Report from Port Moresby, in: Nederlands Dagblad (Amsterdam), July 4, 1984, and Hamish Mc Donald: Seeking Safe Passage, in: Economic Review, October 11, 1984, pp. 30-31.
- (48) Justus M. van der Kroef: Indonesia and West New Guinea: The New Dimensions of Conflict, in: Orbis, Summer, 1970, p.398. See also Justus M. van der Kroef: Irian Jaya: The Intractable Conflict, in: Asian Affairs. An American Review, November-December, 1978, pp. 119-133.

Summary

In the course of 1984 increasing tensions arose both within Indonesia itself, and between the Indonesian and Papua-New Guinea governments, over conditions within the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya (formerly known as West New Guinea). There have been repeated accusations by the Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (LBH-Legal Aid Institute) in Jakarta that the Indonesian military and civil administration in Irian Jaya has committed "excesses" and violations of human rights, including murder and unlawful detention of Papuan opponents of the Indonesian regime, and expropriation of Papuan lands and other acts of illegal "colonization" by Indonesian immigrants from other parts of the country. Repeatedly, in recent years, there also have been protest demonstrations and armed clashes between groups of Papuan nationalists and the Indonesian authorities in Irian Jaya. In the early months of 1984 some additional 6,000 Indonesian troops had to be sent from other parts of Indonesia to quell disturbances in various sections of Irian Jaya, including the provincial capital Jayapura. This was part of yet another Operasi Tumpas ("Clean Up Operation") by Indonesian military forces; similar ones have been held during the past five years, but resentment of Indonesian rule among the indigenous Papuan population has continued. This resentment stems from the manner in which Papuan nationalist feelings were stifled by the transfer of the territory in 1963 from Dutch to permanent Indonesian control, and by the mockery of the self-determination process under the United Nations sponsored act of "free choice" held in Irian Jaya in 1969.

Papuan resistance - loosely identified as the "Organisasi Papua Merdeka" (OPM-Free Papua Organisation) - is, however, internally divided, and rival leaderships also vie for control among Papuan exiles in the Netherlands. A complicating factor is the presence of thousands of Papuan refugees in neighbouring Papua New Guinea (East New Guinea) where popular sympathy compels political leaderships to be more protective of Papuan nationalism than prudent diplomacy demands. Border clashes between Indonesian and Papua-New Guinea patrols are complicated by the uncertainty of the frontier between the two territories in a number of critical areas, particularly there, where clan land rights cross national boundaries. Both the Djakarta and Port Moresby governments have been anxious to avoid major confrontations, however, and periodic efforts have been made to settle outstanding differences. The refugee question, and the effect of unappeased Papuan nationalism, keep intruding, nevertheless.