

Correspondence on East Timor

17 September 1999

I attended the GPO rally in support of the East Timor people and also democracy as a supreme political principle. I read your analysis and found myself disgusted enough to write to you.

Why disgust? Because you show absolutely NO LEADERSHIP IN A REAL CRISIS ON OUR DOOR STEP.

After a reasonably accurate analysis of the last 20 years (but then Blind Freddie could do that) you then.

1.) Play down what is happening in East Timor (some 200 deaths, what a joke). And "forced refugees into West Timor", rather than the systematic genocide it really is. The plan is to kill the population who voted NO to autonomy (that's about 80% of the Pop.) and replace them with Javanese.

2.) All those intimately involved in the crisis have called for a peace keeping force as the ONLY way of saving the East Timor people. But you call it a "pretext". It is AGAINST the interests of business for Australia to save the East Timorese, that's why the Australian Govt. is so reluctant to move, as is the US.

3.) Then, what a joke, you call for "the unified struggle of the masses throughout the entire Indonesian archipelago" and absolutely nothing else! All very well in theory, and easy for you to say writing safely in Melbourne. But absolutely no help to the people of East Timor!

WE ARE TALKING ABOUT DEFENCELESS WOMEN AND CHILDREN, and brave journalists and UNIMET officers refusing to leave them and all you can do is quote the shameful past and intellectual theory.

Shame on you.

JB



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