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## SENATE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE  
REFERENCES COMMITTEE

**Reference: Economic, social and political conditions in East Timor**

FRIDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1999

SYDNEY

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

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**SENATE**  
**FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE REFERENCES COMMITTEE**  
**Friday, 10 September 1999**

**Members:** Senator Hogg (*Chair*), Senator Brownhill (*Deputy Chair*), Senators Bourne, Lightfoot, Quirke and West

**Participating members:** Senators Abetz, Bolkus, Boswell, Brown, Calvert, Chapman, Cook, Coonan, Crane, Eggleston, Faulkner, Ferguson, Ferris, Forshaw, Gibbs, Gibson, Harradine, Knowles, Mason, McGauran, Parer, Payne, Tchen, Tierney and Watson

**Senators in attendance:** Senators Bourne, Brownhill, Hogg, Lightfoot and Payne

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

- (a) economic, social and political conditions in East Timor including respect for human rights in the territory;
- (b) Indonesia's military presence in East Timor and reports of ongoing conflict in the territory;
- (c) the prospects for a just and lasting settlement of the East Timor conflict;
- (d) Australia's humanitarian and development assistance in East Timor;
- (e) the Timor Gap (Zone of Cooperation Treaty); and
- (f) past and present Australian Government policy toward East Timor including the issue of East Timorese self-determination.

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**Committee met at 9.30 a.m.****GOODMAN, Dr James (Private capacity)**

**CHAIR**—I declare open this public meeting of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee. The committee is inquiring into East Timor in accordance with terms of reference given by the Senate on 30 November. I welcome Dr James Goodman. The committee prefers all evidence to be given in public, but should you at any stage wish to give any part of your evidence in private you may ask to do so and the committee will consider your request. The committee has before it your submission. Are there any alterations or additions you would like to make to the submission at this stage?

**Dr Goodman**—No.

**CHAIR**—The committee has agreed to its publication in a separate volume. I now invite you to make an opening statement, and then we will proceed to questions.

**Dr Goodman**—Reading through my submission again some months after I sent it in, I feel in many ways that aspects of it have been overtaken by events. Nonetheless, some of the points that I developed in the submission I think are still relevant.

I want to begin by giving some background about myself. Until four years ago I was living in Britain. Most of my research was on the question of peace in Ireland. I published three books on the whole issue of the peace process in Ireland. More recently, I have been here in Sydney researching the question of self-determination within the region—specifically, of course, in East Timor. I have published a number of academic articles on the question of self-determination in Timor and, most recently, a comparison between the CNRT strategy—the ‘peace offensive’, as I have called it in the submission—and the Sinn Fein peace offensive, discussing the changing logic of self-determination in the post-Cold War era. That is my academic background.

I will not go through my submission laboriously. I would be very keen to answer questions on it. I might just quickly outline, though, some of the themes. The first point that I would make is that the CNRT peace offensive, which was launched in the early 1990s, was a concerted effort to sidestep what many self-determination movements have been faced with, which is a catch-22 situation of an inability to achieve their goals through military means but at the same time an inability to give up the goal of self-determination.

This has been a political strategy pursued largely through international fora. It centres on, most significantly, the formulation of transitional demands. The demand is not for self-determination now, but for a phased process of realising self-government in East Timor, leading to self-determination. It is a reformulation of self-determination as a process to embark on, rather than an act to be delivered by the government or by the United Nations. Crucially, the CNRT peace offensive argued that this transitional phase could last up to 12 years and would involve autonomy in the first instance, addressing the symptoms of the conflict and achieving reconciliation in East Timor, and reconstructing East Timor as a prelude to meaningful self-determination in the country.

The submission discusses some of the detail of this and some of the impacts. The peace offensive has had significant impacts in terms of building international support at the level of people's organisations—non-government organisations—in the region and internationally. It has also reaped some significant diplomatic rewards for CNRT in the United Nations, through the Nobel Peace Prize, Kofi Annan and so on. And it has reaped significant rewards in terms of the Indonesian government.

In 1998 the Indonesian government—and this is obviously coinciding with the transition towards democracy in Indonesia—began to accept that a period of autonomy was required in East Timor. It did not accept that this would lead to self-determination, but—and I quote from the negotiations in October 1998—the negotiators on the Indonesian side, on the Portuguese side and in the United Nations agreed that they would put aside the question of the final status of East Timor in order to discuss autonomy proposals under the UN 'without prejudice as to whether autonomy would be a transitional one or the basis for an end solution'. This saw the Indonesian government becoming involved in what was effectively the CNRT peace strategy.

In January of this year, as everybody knows, there was a dramatic turnaround as the Habibie government announced that it could accept self-determination in East Timor. But, significantly, what the Habibie government did was to set its proposal for autonomy plus against self-determination. Instead of autonomy being a stage on the process to realising self-determination, the Habibie government said that it would mount a poll in which the East Timorese people would be forced to choose between autonomy and self-determination—in other words, it was heading off the possibility of a peaceful transition.

I have argued in the paper that this was a deliberate attempt to polarise the political situation, which was combined with the process of recruiting and arming anti-CNRT militias, which everybody knows about. Finally, in the last part of the submission I talk a bit about the implications for Australian government policy, and maybe I could respond to questions on those.

**CHAIR**—Firstly, on the matter of a transitional phase, you have outlined the choice between autonomy and independence and the path that Habibie went down. Is there now a transitional phase for East Timor once peace can be re-established? If so, is there a model that can be followed for that transitional phase, given that in your submission—and I think you said this this morning as well—it could last for 10 to 12 years?

**Dr Goodman**—There are many examples of processes of decolonisation where there has been a period of autonomy, of building the conditions for self-determination. PNG is a nearby example, and New Caledonia is another.

**CHAIR**—But none with the bloody consequences of what is happening currently.

**Dr Goodman**—Yes. As to whether such a transitional phase is possible now, CNRT remain committed to their peace offensive. If it is possible for an autonomous government to be constructed in East Timor, that would have to be backed by a UN police force. That was actually within their original peace plan—that the Indonesian military and the Indonesian police would not be on the ground in East Timor during the autonomy phase. But the events

of the last few weeks have forced that option off the agenda, because in many ways the Indonesian government has proven itself unwilling to secure the conditions for peace in East Timor—and, in fact, quite the opposite. So I think that in many ways that transitional phase has been overtaken by events.

**CHAIR**—My question, though, is: will a transitional phase need to be put in place post peace being re-established in East Timor, and who will take responsibility for that? You obviously cannot put it back in the hands of Indonesia.

**Dr Goodman**—I think it would have to be under the United Nations, as the CNRT argued previously. It would have to be a period of reconciliation between the, hopefully, now disarmed militias and the CNRT itself. There have been a number of attempts at reconciliation, attempts at constructing peace negotiations between those groups in the past few months. Those attempts could be built on and, I think, would be successful in the absence of the Indonesian military.

So, yes, I think a transitional phase would be absolutely necessary, given the existing conflict in East Timor. It is clearly a divided society at the moment. It is clearly a society in need of massive reconstruction and in need of restoration of civil administration, which appears to have completely disappeared. Who knows how long that period would have to last. That would really depend upon what happens over the next few weeks in terms of whether this process of destruction in East Timor can be brought to a hasty end.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—I will be very quick, because there are two people on the committee who have been up in East Timor during the process of the referendum. The thing that fascinates me is the agreement that was signed on 5 May 1999 between the minister for foreign affairs of Indonesia, the minister for foreign affairs of Portugal and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Just to refresh your memory, article 6 of that agreement said:

If . . . in accordance with this Agreement . . . the proposed constitutional framework for special autonomy is not acceptable to the East Timorese people, the Government of Indonesia shall take the constitutional steps necessary to terminate its links with East Timor thus restoring under Indonesian law the status East Timor held prior to 17 July 1976, and the Governments of Indonesia and Portugal and the Secretary-General shall agree on arrangements for a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority in East Timor to the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall, subject to the appropriate legislative mandate, initiate the procedure enabling East Timor to begin a process of transition towards independence.

Article 7 said:

During the interim period between the conclusion of the popular consultation and the start of the implementation of either option, the parties request the Secretary-General to maintain an adequate United Nations presence in East Timor.

Where does that stand?

**Dr Goodman**—It stands at the moment in abeyance, because of the recent events.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—But why should that change an agreement that has been signed by countries at the top level?

**Dr Goodman**—The CNRT were arguing not for an immediate vote on self-determination but for a period of transition to secure the conditions for that vote. The problem was that, when the Indonesian government insisted on separating the question of autonomy from self-determination, the CNRT was put in the position of being unable to turn that offer down, for obvious reasons. But, at the same time, this has created enormous instability in East Timor. As to the question of a transitional period after the vote, that in a sense has been pre-empted by the vote itself, which has created a much more divided society, because it has been undertaken under conditions of extreme division in East Timor.

I think the other point to be made about the vote itself was that the Indonesian government never recognised it as an act of self-determination. It was only ever recognised as a consultation with the people of East Timor and this was, of course, reflected in the fact that Indonesia would not accept UN peacekeepers and would not accept UN jurisdiction, only UN monitoring. So, while the UN on the one hand was interpreting it as a final act of self-determination for the East Timorese people—and indeed the CNRT were—on the other hand the Indonesian government was interpreting it as a consultation that would then have to be ratified by the national parliament.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Yet Habibie said that he would honour the results of that referendum.

**Dr Goodman**—Yes, but it was conducted under the jurisdiction of the Indonesian military, with the Indonesian military responsible for security, and was conducted with the leader of the independence movement still in jail. It was unprecedented for an act of self-determination to occur with the actual leader still in jail, so in many ways the process has been very flawed. Anyway, that is behind us.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Have the events in Indonesia itself overtaken the events in East Timor, with the power struggle in Jakarta now being the main game and East Timor being a side player?

**Dr Goodman**—It is not unusual that movements—and the conflicts around them—for self-determination or independence on the periphery of a multinational state, as in the case of Indonesia, lead to, express and exaggerate political conflicts at the centre. I can think of many examples of that. The question is whether the conflicts at the centre are now driving the political agenda within East Timor. Addressing that is, of course, a much wider issue.

One point I do want to make on that, in terms of Indonesia, is that two or three months ago I was in Jakarta and interviewing people from a whole range of pro-democracy NGOs and I found that there had been over the last year in Jakarta a wave of concern about East Timor amongst NGOs. For the first time NGOs have emerged that are openly advocating self-determination for East Timor, not as a concession to international norms—they are arguing that in fact the Indonesian 1945 constitution requires that the state respect the self-determination of peoples, and that the Indonesian invasion of East Timor was an affront to Indonesian national principles, the principles of the national constitution. So I think the picture that is often painted of Indonesian people seeing a withdrawal from East Timor as an affront to national pride is actually mistaken in many ways.

**Senator BOURNE**—Dr Goodman, you must see—as we do—the whole situation at the moment as being very worrying for the future of democracy in Indonesia as a whole, not just in East Timor. Can you tell us where you think that is going, especially in light of your discussions with the NGOs in Jakarta recently?

**Dr Goodman**—The major concern amongst those NGOs is about the military. What was achieved in Indonesia as a whole last year was the transition to formal democracy, representative democracy, but not the transition to meaningful democratic governance in a more broad sense. The major concern is to remove the military from politics and to remove the military from the economy as well because the military has many economic enterprises under its control. That is very much in the minds of democracy campaigners within Jakarta. There remains a pervasive fear of the military and of its ability to act arbitrarily in Jakarta as much as in the peripheries—Kalimantan, Aceh and East Timor.

What has been so interesting in the last few months has been that democracy groups in Indonesia as a whole have been seeing the experience of people in the periphery of Indonesia as symptomatic, in a way, of the issues that they are facing at the centre in terms of how to deal with the military.

**Senator BOURNE**—The military is not even pretending anymore in East Timor.

**Dr Goodman**—It isn't.

**Senator BOURNE**—I suppose most of the people in Indonesia do not know that, as they are not getting that sort of news, while the NGOs would be using the Internet and that sort of thing.

**Dr Goodman**—The news is coming through—very much so. You would be aware of that. I think in many ways it is the struggle with the dilemma of diversity and unity within the Indonesian multinational state. That is really what is at stake here and, of course, overlaying all of that is the question of democracy within the regions as well as in the centre. It is the question of self-government for the regions as well as for the centre. The question of East Timor, of course, is raising these questions very sharply but is always treated as an exemplar of the wider world.

**Senator BOURNE**—You mentioned reconciliation programs, which we all hope eventually will be desperately necessary. Have you looked at any particular ones that you think might be useful in these circumstances?

**Dr Goodman**—The process of reconciliation, wherever it is embarked on, is always shaped by the prevailing political balances or imbalances. In the case of Ireland, reconciliation becomes a priority for all sides only when all sides cannot rely on the backing of a state to save the day for them. The reconciliation only becomes a priority when all sides see it as a necessity. In the case of East Timor, the pro-Indonesian militias have been engaged in the reconciliation process at the level of rhetoric at public meetings and so on, but there is no reason for them to embark on the reconciliation process in a meaningful way because they have the backing of the Indonesian state.

In fact, there is a built-in incentive for the pro-Indonesian militias not to embark on a reconciliation process. The same has been argued in Northern Ireland in relation to the unionists: that, until the British government ensures that there is no incentive for extreme unionists to refuse to reconcile with nationalists, republicans and so on, they will not. I think the same holds true in East Timor.

**Senator BOURNE**—Eventually, we hope, it will become necessary. Have you seen any models that you think would be useful to have a look at, if and when it does?

**Dr Goodman**—There has been a wave of truth and reconciliation commissions created in post-conflict situations around the world—in South Africa but also in Guatemala and a range of other places. Those sorts of commissions are crucial in bringing together peoples that have previously been divided. One of the most telling statements from the CNRT over the last week or two was from Ramos Horta when he said that the militias in East Timor were victims: they were victims of Indonesian policy; they had been forced into a situation where there was no way out other than violence.

**Senator BOURNE**—That is interesting because I was in Dili on election day and a man who was with the CNRT and who had just voted said the same thing to me. He said he had been at a party the night before with militia people and they had been saying to each other, ‘We are all victims in this.’ He had hoped that would lead to something.

**Dr Goodman**—In my submission I did say something about Australian government policy on East Timor. I said in the submission that in many respects Australian government policy has rested on a contradiction. That contradiction remains in place now and is still impeding the development of Australian policy on East Timor.

I have argued that, in essence, the Australian government has been hamstrung on the question of East Timor. Specifically, on the one hand it recognises that East Timor’s people have the right to self-determination—and has done so since the 1970s—but, on the other hand, it recognises the Indonesian claim to sovereignty. Clearly, if the East Timorese people have the right to self-determination, the Indonesian occupation which flouts that right is illegal.

Continued Australian recognition of the occupation suggests that the right to self-determination for the East Timorese people is a secondary consideration; it is not a legal right but a pragmatic necessity. The Australian government respects the right to self-determination but legally—*de jure*—it is recognising occupation. I argue that this deadlocks Australian government policy, preventing it from taking a pro-active role on East Timor, which is desperately needed.

It is very clear that contradiction is deadlocking Australian government policy now. On the way here this morning, I heard the Prime Minister on the radio clearly stating that he was taking the diplomatic road to persuading Indonesia to accept a peacekeeping force in East Timor—the road of diplomatic persuasion—and rejecting any more confrontational actions such as cutting off military and economic ties and removing *de jure* recognition of the occupation. There is a whole range of measures between the current situation of inaction

and diplomatic manoeuvring, which is the government's current policy, and all-out unilateral military action in East Timor.

All of those options are not taken up, in my view, because the Australian government still recognises Indonesian sovereignty in East Timor, and any of these more confrontational actions would be immediately interpreted as illegitimate on the basis of the Australian government's present position. In a sense, the government is tying its own hands behind its own back, which has had tragic consequences over the last 20 years but it is really coming to a head now. There needs to be, urgently, some change to enable Australian government policy to be more proactive on the question of East Timor and to move beyond the diplomatic manoeuvring—especially given that Australia's major ally, the United States, is willing to take more substantive measures, which were just announced yesterday.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Dr Goodman, given the track record of Portuguese colonies—there is still a civil war raging in Angola after a quarter of a century; war raged in Mozambique for a couple of decades, and, more recently, Mozambique decided to join the Commonwealth of Nations and switched to English from Portuguese; Goa in India is one of their oldest colonies apart from East Timor; and they are soon to lose Macau—and given that Portugal will play an important role, just what role do you think Portugal should play in a post-settlement in East Timor?

**Dr Goodman**—I agree with you that Portugal has been a vicious colonialist, unprecedented. In 1975, East Timor was the poorest country in the world, in the figures that came out, when it was supposedly making its transition to self-determination. The conditions were not there for self-determination.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—There were five university graduates in East Timor.

**Dr Goodman**—Yes. The role for Portugal now is to assist in the process of self-determination in East Timor, and that has been written into the Portuguese constitution from 1974—the commitment to self-determination within its colonies. It is not, as far as I can see, to have any role in the new country other than the ordinary relationships that ex-imperial states have with their now independent colonies, such as Australia has with Papua New Guinea. I do not think that the Portuguese government wants to have much more of a role than that. In fact, from 1974 right up until 1991 when it took the international court case against Australia, Portugal had minimal involvement in the question of East Timor. So its record since 1974 has not been exemplary either.

Given the proximity of Australia, it is likely that Australia would have a more significant role in the development of East Timor in the years to come than would Portugal.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Why?

**Dr Goodman**—The proximity is one thing. Economic ties are another, in terms of the oil reserves and exportation of oil, and the presence of East Timorese communities in Australia. There are between 15,000 and 20,000 East Timorese living in Australia; there are only about 5,000 living in Portugal.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—And yet East Timorese nationals are Portuguese citizens?

**Dr Goodman**—East Timorese refugees have been given leave to remain in Australia. Many have taken up residency in Australia and they will more or less be a permanent presence in Australia in the years to come.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—In post-invasion years, weren't all those who were East Timorese citizens given Portuguese citizenship?

**Dr Goodman**—Yes. In formal terms, they were Portuguese citizens, but many fled to Australia, for obvious reasons, and they have been granted residency here.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Given the lack of proximity of Portugal to East Timor, should Portugal contribute in any other way than acting as an interim caretaker for a fully independent East Timor? Should it contribute significantly to the \$US300 million to \$US400 million that is now an economic vacuum left in East Timor?

**Dr Goodman**—I am not sure, but I think the Portuguese government has indicated it is willing to put in a significant—

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—It has.

**Dr Goodman**—One of the crucial roles of Portugal has been the tripartite negotiations—Indonesia, UN and Portugal. The Indonesian government was not willing to have those negotiations extended to include the Timorese people themselves. So one of the problems of the UN process has been that it has been an intergovernmental process that has not included the people affected by their decisions on the ground in East Timor. That has been a major problem, and that is a legacy, of course, of Portugal's colonial role in East Timor. But hopefully that will be overcome in the coming months if there is a period of transition towards self-government in East Timor, which is what we were talking about earlier.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—The Australian government is involved in a balancing act, trying to juggle—if that is not a contradiction—maintaining some kind of relationship with Indonesia, with its 200-plus million population, and with East Timor, with a population of less than one million—which would probably empathise more with Portugal than what it would with Australia. How far should Australia go, considering the possibility, not the certainty, that it will irreparably damage relations with Indonesia that have been built up over the past—at least in the Suharto rather than the Sukarno years?

**Dr Goodman**—The fallacy of that balancing act is the notion that the Indonesian government will always remain opposed to self-determination in East Timor. I think it was very clear, from the moment that the political situation started to change last year in Indonesia, that Australian government policy on East Timor could not move fast enough to keep pace with the changes. In many ways, I believe the Australian government would have served its own interests and the interests of the people of Indonesia by adhering to international norms on the question of East Timor in terms of self-determination. It would have done a service not simply to the East Timorese people but to the Indonesian people as a whole. I think the point there is that the Indonesian government is not the Indonesian

people and that possibilities for change in Indonesia, and the transition to a more meaningful relationship between Indonesia and Australia beyond the relationships that were established in the 1990s, hinge on such a transition away from existing—

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Were you implying that—notwithstanding Dr B.J. Habibie's decision to test the East Timorese will with respect to remaining a province of Indonesia—should Megawati Sukarnoputri take over as president or as some kind of executive power in Indonesia, the future of East Timor might be better under Ms Megawati than under B.J. Habibie?

**Dr Goodman**—Oh, certainly, and that has always been the position of the CNRT, that what they are concerned about is the transition to meaningful self-determination. That might not necessarily be an independent state—it could be autonomy status, it could be forms of local self-government within Indonesia. The CNRT have never defined self-determination as equalling independent statehood; it has always been defined as a process of self-determination. If a more democratic government was to come into being in Indonesia as a whole, particularly a government that was able to control the military—

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—But that is an impossibility in the next decade, isn't it?

**Dr Goodman**—That is an impossibility, and that is why, in practice, the CNRT political position is that, given the situation, independence is a necessity, especially now because of what has happened recently.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—What do you see as the role of General Wiranto? They do not have a separation of powers in Indonesia like we do under the Westminster system—he is, of course, chief of the army and defence minister as well. What role do you see him playing? Is it going to be a role that benefits East Timor, or do you think that his presence is one of detriment to East Timor?

**Dr Goodman**—I think to the extent that the military has a role in political and economic affairs in Indonesia then they are going to have a detrimental impact on the process of realising self-government in East Timor. Until the military is required to step out of politics and required to step out of the economy, there can be no prospect of a transition to self-government for East Timor within Indonesia, and similarly for the other regions of Indonesia. As to Wiranto himself, whether you can put faith in an individual I do not know. Given his performance over the last couple of months, I do not think so. Wiranto met with Jose Ramos Horta and Xanana Gusmao a month or so ago and apparently in a private conversation in this meeting Wiranto said that he could call off or disarm the militias within two days if he wanted to.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—There may be some evidence of that now, that there was, I think, a notice given that by midnight of Wednesday that it would take two days to settle down. It appears to be settling down. Do you have some evidence of that or was that a concurrence?

**Dr Goodman**—I have no idea; I have no more information than you have on that. The point I was trying to make by that is that it is a question of political will on his part.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—I just have one more question, Dr Goodman. You mentioned that you have some three publications of the strife-torn island of Ireland and the terrible sectarian conflict that has gone on there. Do you see this as somewhat of a sectarian conflict, not between Protestant and Catholic but between Catholic and Muslim?

**Dr Goodman**—The conflict has been sectarianised over the last 25 years. In 1975 the proportion of the Timorese population that was Catholic was about one-third. Within about seven or eight years—by 1982, I think it was—90 per cent of the Timorese population was Catholic. This was largely because of the Indonesian requirement that you sign up to a particular religion, but also due to the role of the Catholic Church in promoting human rights in East Timor, and due to the sectarian nature of the invasion itself—there are numerous accounts of sectarian incidents in the process of invasion and occupation. So it has become a sectarian conflict, but the driving impetus behind that sectarianisation of conflict is in fact the political and military process that is under way, if you see what I mean.

I would see the sectarianisation as a symptom, not a cause of the conflict. There have been numerous sectarian attacks well before this immediate peace process with the Indonesian government began. There were numerous sectarian attacks, often orchestrated by the military, often deliberately targeting the Catholic hierarchy. But part of the nature of these sorts of conflicts is that they do become sectarianised, and that is another parallel with Ireland.

**Senator PAYNE**—Dr Goodman, just on that point, one of the things which we were told in various parts of East Timor in the last week in our observations was that people had joined the Catholic Church in many ways as the only method of political expression they had available to them. When we asked Bishop Belo about how difficult it was for him, his comment was that there are Catholics on both sides: there are Catholics in the militia and there are Catholics campaigning for independence, and they are campaigning against each other. And so he was concerned that some of his priests were campaigning also for independence in various parts with CNRT directors, for example, which made it very difficult for him. Is that something that you have heard of?

**Dr Goodman**—The relationship between the Catholic Church and the independence movement in East Timor is fascinating in many ways. The Catholic Church did not view Fretilin particularly positively in the early stages but over a period of time has become, as you say, the major vehicle for political participation in East Timor for those campaigning for self-determination. It is a key expression of distinctive Timorese identity, and this links with the whole sectarianisation process, that the Catholic Church has become inseparable from the East Timorese identity in so many ways, which creates its own problems in terms of reconciliation, with a hundred thousand, now increasingly less, Indonesians living in East Timor—I think down to 50,000 now or even less. This creates huge problems in terms of achieving a peaceful outcome. So it is a double-sided process at work there.

**Senator PAYNE**—On the question of what I think you refer to in your paper as a transition to meaningful self-determination, you make extensive reference to Jose Ramos Horta, and I am interested in your views of the importance of individuals from CNRT post the popular consultation period. For example, in one of today's newspapers is the report that the Vice-President of CNRT, Leandro Isaac, whom Senator Bourne and I met last week, has

been killed, but it is unconfirmed. David Ximenes's location is unknown. Those are very important individuals in what CNRT has done to date and may do in the future, and I am interested in your perspective on that.

**Dr Goodman**—I agree that it is very significant, because in many ways it is these individuals that have formulated, promoted and carried out the CNRT peace offensive. They are the people with the insight, the experience and the commitment in many ways to these principles. It is important that, whatever happens in East Timor, the Timorese in exile, in conjunction with Timorese leaders in Timor, have created the National Political Commission—this was created last year—and that will remain committed to the principles that are embodied in the peace offensive, for instance, with the Magna Carta which was agreed at the meeting last year. So I think in many ways the peace offensive has been institutionalised within the Timorese diaspora as well as within East Timor itself and that that will outlast individuals, which is, of course, a terrible thing to say, but I think it can have some sort of faith that it has gone beyond the formulation of individual peace proposals.

**Senator PAYNE**—In your submission, you go through a number of international aspects of this process: Australian foreign policy, ASEAN and Indonesia, UN and so on. You commented on the United States decision favourably in your previous evidence, that they had made a significant decision in announcing, through President Clinton, cessation of military ties. As I understand it, there has been no direct military to military contact between the United States and Indonesia for a decade and we are actually talking about \$US700,000 in terms of what President Clinton has announced today. It could be construed as a minimal effort by the United States to indicate that they do know where East Timor is on the map and are taking this seriously. What is your interpretation of that?

**Dr Goodman**—Yes, I agree with you, it could be interpreted in that way. But in many respects we are in the realm of the symbolic, we are not necessarily in the realm of the substantive. If we are talking about diplomatic manoeuvres to isolate East Timor, a decision by the United States government to publicly close down whatever military ties it has, however minimal they are, is a significant step. First of all, it is significant because it is unilateral. Secondly, it is significant because it is the United States. I do not agree with the argument that the cessation of military ties, the removal of the *de jure* recognition of the occupation and the application of economic sanctions are empty gestures in the context of a diplomatic offensive. They are crucial elements in a strategy of persuasion. To pose the alternatives in terms of all-out unilateral war with Indonesia on the one hand against diplomatic behind doors manoeuvring on the other is quite patently a fallacy. It is quite patently a rhetorical means of doing nothing, a means of justifying a do nothing position.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—With respect, that is possible, surely?

**Dr Goodman**—It is possible in the sense that diplomatic manoeuvring might achieve something, certainly, but I think it is much more likely that diplomatic manoeuvring will achieve something if it is linked with measures to increase the pressure on the Indonesian government. That is not happening from the Australian side. This is why I said the United States decision was significant, because I think it has important symbolic effects in terms of the diplomatic process. I am sorry if that is too strongly put.

**Senator PAYNE**—It is not our role to assess whether you put things strongly or not. You referred in your evidence to the possibility of a truth and reconciliation commission. My observation would be that where there has not even be a pretence at the operation of the rule of law for an extended period of time it is very difficult to have an effective truth and reconciliation commission. Secondly, I would be interested in your comments on the importance of a continuing United Nations presence of some reasonable size in East Timor itself as opposed to either Darwin or Jakarta, or anywhere else for that matter, and how important that is in terms of what you have just been talking about—the realm of the symbolic, international pressure and those sorts of things.

**Dr Goodman**—On a truth and reconciliation commission, clearly such a reconciliation process could not begin until the restoration of civil administration in East Timor. That would hinge upon the United Nations presence. That does look like it is going to happen after the MPR approves self-determination. How would that operate? I would imagine that would have to be in place for a number of years. The original CNRT peace plan spoke of 10 years transition to autonomy. I really think that, given what has happened recently, that period is getting longer and longer.

**Senator PAYNE**—It becomes a conservative estimate.

**Dr Goodman**—The period of UN administration and intensive direct assistance to East Timor is, sadly, becoming more and more important for a longer period of time as well.

**Senator PAYNE**—I take the point that you are making in relation to important symbolic efforts by countries around the world. But say Australia does the sorts of things that we have noted the United States has done, goes down the road of ceasing any military contact, persuades the IMF, through Camdessus or whoever is appropriate, not to make any more payments and so on, and then Indonesia just says, ‘We are not going to speak to you at all about anything any more.’ How does that actually benefit our efforts in negotiation in this situation to insert an international peace enforcement operation and then peacekeeping operation in East Timor?

**Dr Goodman**—I do not think it is true that the Indonesian government is no longer going to be talking to the United States government following the cessation of military—

**Senator PAYNE**—Australia is not the United States, though, no matter which way you try and construe it.

**Dr Goodman**—I do not think it is the case that the Indonesian government is likely to refuse to negotiate in the current context. Given that we are looking at the transition to independence in East Timor in the next month or two, the Indonesian government will need international assistance in ensuring that East Timor is stabilised in that post self-determination period. In any case I do not think there is any evidence that the Indonesian government has cut off ties, for instance, with Portugal, which is in favour of self-determination for East Timor. On the contrary, it has actually embarked on a period of a phase of negotiations with Portugal and has acknowledged the central role for Portugal in negotiations over East Timor. Of course there will be a period of coolness, I would imagine, but that is exactly what is required at the moment.

**Senator PAYNE**—What concerns me is the capacity for people in the current state of Indonesian politics to want to be, for want of a better turn of phrase, more hairy-chested than each other, to keep General Wiranto and his supporters on side to a degree. What Ambassador Wiryono said yesterday, to paraphrase, was, ‘You should be sympathetic to the plight in which we, the Indonesians, find ourselves.’ Most people watching that were a little bemused. If that was extended, that is a concern.

**Dr Goodman**—But I do not think there is much ground for the Australian government to be afraid of a nationalist reaction in Indonesia against any actions by the Australian government in terms of isolating Indonesia on the question of East Timor. I do not think that reaction is going to come from Megawati. It might come from the military but I do not think it is going to wash in Indonesia as a whole. As I was saying earlier, I think there is widespread popular awareness that the problem of East Timor is a creation of the military. That is something that should guide Australian policy on its relations with Indonesia.

**Senator PAYNE**—Thank you. I appreciate your response.

**CHAIR**—We will have to stop there, unfortunately. I thank you for your evidence before the committee. Undoubtedly, you will have assisted us in our deliberations in the longer term. Thanks very much.

[10.35 a.m.]

**SCOTT-MURPHY, Mr John, Public Policy and Advocacy Adviser, Caritas Australia**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Caritas Australia is the overseas aid agency of the Catholic Church in Australia. We are located at 19 McKenzie Street, North Sydney.

**CHAIR**—The committee prefers all evidence to be given in public but should you at any stage wish to give any part of your evidence in private you may ask to do so and the committee will consider your request. The committee has before it your submission. Are there any alterations or additions you would like to make to your submission at this stage?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I guess if we were writing the submission today it would probably be couched in somewhat different terms than it was written in in May. The essential point of the submission is that it is possible to plan an aid strategy in places like East Timor or around—

**CHAIR**—So there are no alterations or additions?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No.

**CHAIR**—The committee has agreed to its publication in a separate volume. I now invite you to make an opening statement, and then we will proceed to questions.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—If we were to make a submission today I think it would be somewhat different in that there are some really important additional points that need to be made. But the essential point of the submission was that it is possible to programmatically design a strategy around conflict prevention in places like East Timor and that this is only starting to be realised by official aid agencies and non-government aid agencies as well.

There is a rise in conflict throughout our region, as we have seen, particularly in various parts of Indonesia and Papua-New Guinea. We need to get our collective brains around how to actually operate on the ground to try to reduce the impact of those conflicts, reduce the size and spread of them, and engage in a positive program of peace building.

I have recently come back from a trip to West Kalimantan, where there has been extensive intercommunal conflict. It was perhaps one of the few places in Indonesia where I have been which does not involve the role of the army, but it was clear to us that we could design a program around conflict prevention and peace building and that in fact the local initiatives were already in place on which to base that sort of program.

The purpose of our submission was to inform the committee of those ideas and to suggest that they be included in AusAID's own policy work and its development of country strategies, particularly for Indonesia, in that conflict in many parts of Indonesia is going to be crucial to its future and to any development possibilities in Indonesia. We are already

seeing how conflict in East Timor has caused the rupiah to dive 10 to 15 per cent in the last few days.

There are incipient conflicts in other parts of Indonesia, particularly Irian Jaya, which, if not addressed now and in the next year or so, could erupt in a similar manner to what we are seeing now in East Timor. It is no longer good enough for official aid agencies to simply wait for the conflict to happen and then to move in with massive quantities of relief aid. We can do better than that.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Who is ‘we’?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The aid community, both government and non-government. Just on the issue of intervention in East Timor at the moment, Caritas Australia has supported the idea of a UN mandated peacekeeping force to be involved in East Timor. It is necessary that that would have to have the acceptance of the Indonesian government and military, and they are two separate identities. We see any armed intervention without acceptance by the military as being potentially disastrous for the Timorese people in that it would enable the military to kill even more East Timorese than they are killing at the moment. They would then be classified as ‘enemies’ in the same way as armed personnel would be classified as enemies.

The people who are forcibly taken across the border into West Timor, particularly in the Atambua area—we had information yesterday that approximately 30,000 people had crossed there—should be viewed as hostages rather than refugees. It is entirely possible that that is the objective in trucking them across the border. If you want to draw a parallel with Kosovo, it would be as if the Serbs—instead of trucking Albanians to the Albanian and Macedonian borders—had taken the Albanians further into Serbia and established them in camps. It is an extremely serious situation there. Consequently, the UN presence in East Timor is paramount. The continued operation of the UNAMET office in Dili is paramount to keep international communities present. All efforts should be put into securing that presence, so that it is not abandoned.

It is time to start planning for a future East Timor. We would call on, particularly, AusAID involvement in planning for East Timor to be done in a more consultative way than has been possible in the past. There have been significant moves from AusAID to greatly increase their consultation with non-government aid agencies and with the public, but that has not gone far enough yet. I give as an example of that the mine action program which has been under way for some years now. Approximately \$100 million was designated for demining action. Half of that has been spent—approximately \$50 million—but only just now is consultation taking place with the international campaign to ban land mines, of which I am the New South Wales representative, and with the aid agencies that are actually active in the field of mine action. That is all I need to say at this point.

**CHAIR**—Before I turn over to my colleagues for questions, I just want to focus on one issue that has been raised before the committee and that has been raised privately with me—that is, there may be a concern with sending Australian troops into East Timor in a peacekeeping force; that, whilst our presence through the AFP as part of the UNAMET is quite respected, our troops may be viewed in a different light if they went in there in a

peacekeeping force. Do you have a comment on that? This is not an attempt to abrogate our responsibility or the undertaking that the Prime Minister has already given; it is purely and simply trying to get a feel from you as to how this would be viewed.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—In probably 10 or 15 years of visiting Indonesia I have always found Australians to be extremely welcomed by ordinary Indonesians wherever I go. The involvement of armed personnel in a peacekeeping function could be viewed by certain elements of the Indonesian army as an aggressive act. There is no doubt about that. The army is a separate entity to the government. Even the army personnel in East Timor and West Timor appear to be operating independently of other army command, though we have no clear idea as to how that works. It is entirely possible that individual Indonesian commanders could view an Australian presence in an antagonistic way, but the acceptance of Australians is generally very high.

**CHAIR**—Would they be seen differently from peacekeeping forces that might come from other nations in the region or from Europe or America, for example?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I do not think so. What you tend to get from the military in Indonesia is intimidation conducted as a highly developed art form. The ability to make threats and to appear to have the capacity to carry out those threats—and, in fact, on occasions to carry out those threats—is a well developed mechanism of control that they use throughout Indonesia. It is notable that in the current appalling situation no foreigners have died in East Timor. The American who received a bullet and was saved by his bulletproof vest was probably lucky, but there is clearly a policy and a directive not to kill foreigners.

**Senator BOURNE**—Let me say, first of all, how sorry we all are about the murders of so many of your East Timorese colleagues, many of whom Senator Payne and I met when we were there. Do you still have much of an organisation of Caritas in East Timor, and is that able to carry out any work at the moment?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No, there is no functioning organisation at the moment. We cannot even contact the staff of Caritas East Timor.

**Senator BOURNE**—You mentioned conflict resolution before. That would be pretty impossible at the moment, I should imagine, because the TNI are not going to be interested. Dr Goodman was telling us before—and he is absolutely right—you have to have a need for it; everybody has to want to do it. Where do you see that conflict resolution might be useful in the future?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It is something that we can plan for. We are running on a lot of assumptions. We assume that there is going to be an international presence in East Timor at some point—whether next week, in six months' time or in 12 months' time, we do not know. But it is likely that there will be an international presence at some point and there will be an independent East Timor at some point, because the UN ballot has been taken and it is very difficult to see that really being denied in the long term. So, in thinking about what sort of aid program we should have there and what sort of diplomatic relationship we should have there, the capacity to identify sources of conflict and working towards solving those conflicts before they erupt are likely to be key elements of whatever happens on the ground.

The fact that we have not concentrated on those sorts of issues has resulted in conflict overwhelming us and surprising us in government policy and government programs.

**Senator BOURNE**—Do you think that could have been helped, though? It seems to me that the TNI are just beyond that sort of reach; that, even if we had had those sort of conflict programs, it would have meant nothing to TNI and this would have happened anyway.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes, there are elements of conflict within the Timorese community—

**Senator BOURNE**—True; good point.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—as well as between the military of Indonesia and the East Timorese.

**Senator BOURNE**—Which could have been helped by this.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There is a number of levels and ways in which you can operate—the army is one particular aspect.

**Senator BOURNE**—Yes, and just because it is the most overwhelming issue at the moment does not mean it is the only one that needs addressing. Can you tell us which other areas in aid delivery you would be most able to help with once—God willing—this stops?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The development of a civil society in East Timor should be a very high priority for Australian government aid programs—the capacity for the Timorese to govern themselves and to develop not just a state infrastructure and administration but a set of civil organisations that can participate in the governance and the politics of that new country. I think it would be a mistake to implement some sort of a state-driven governance which is really a military style of governance. We need to plan around the need for civil organisations that can participate in the governance of the country.

**Senator BOURNE**—We are also looking at Australia's relations with Indonesia in the future. Does Caritas work elsewhere in Indonesia and do you think that there are any programs we should now be concentrating on that would be useful to concentrate on in aid throughout Indonesia?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There are a very large number of areas that it is possible to concentrate on in Indonesia. AusAID is working on its next country program strategy at the moment. Caritas Indonesia is present nationally throughout Indonesia. We as Caritas Australia have programs in Irian Jaya, West Kalimantan and in the Jakarta area. We concentrate our programs on tribal people's issues, particularly land issues to do with tribal people in West Kalimantan and Irian Jaya, partly because we identify those as a source of conflict for the future and partly because the tribal communities are the poorest of the poor in those areas. There are building conflicts, particularly in Irian Jaya, which should be addressed as quickly as possible.

**Senator BOURNE**—Do you think conflict resolution might be useful?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I would call it peace building rather than conflict resolution in that conflict resolution assumes a particular conflict and then tries to resolve that by bringing parties together. Peace building works by building up communities of peace, in other words, by bringing together, say, Islamic and Christian communities. I have seen that done by particular parish priests, for example, who have developed the capacity to work with Muslims in their area, and when intercommunal rioting breaks out they have seen their church surrounded by Muslim youth protecting it. Those sorts of examples can be built on and there are marvellous initiatives like that throughout Indonesia which can be taken up.

**Senator BOURNE**—Thank you.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—As you opened your contribution this morning you said that in Kalimantan there was an intercommunal conflict. What is another name for that? Is that a sectarian issue, or is that merely some kind of dissent between two similar types of people?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It is not a religion based issue. There are three parties essentially involved in conflict in West Kalimantan. There are the Dyaks who, while recorded mostly as Christians in the Indonesian system, are not necessarily all Christian because the Indonesian system forces them to register as one of the five major religions; it does not recognise the Dyak's own traditional beliefs, so they tend to register as something that they actually are not.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—But it is a sectarian issue in East Timor—that is what I was getting at—between East Timor and the balance of the island and, indeed, the balance of the archipelago.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The other groups in Kalimantan are the Malays who are Muslim and Madurese who are Muslim. The Dyaks and the Madurese have fought each other and the Malays and the Madurese have fought each other. Muslims can fight Muslims in that situation. It is an ethnically based conflict.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Rather than sectarian based?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes, and more to do with land and the encroachment onto people's land, particularly by the Madurese, who are recent settlers who usually come themselves. They are what they call spontaneous migrants.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Not transmigrants?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No. In fact, the transmigrants are usually much more peaceful and cause fewer problems than those they call the spontaneous migrants who tend to be involved in commerce and trade, who get involved in various corrupt practices, who take over the markets, who corner the market in various goods and who cheat people and so on.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Let me get back to East Timor. Do you see the conflict in East Timor being one of a sectarian conflict, similar to say, Ireland, between the north and the south of Ireland?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No, I do not, because the church itself is split on the issue of independence. There are many people in the Catholic Church in East Timor who do not support independence. There are many people in the Catholic Church throughout Indonesia who support independence and there are some who do not support independence for East Timor. In my experience, it is not a religion based issue.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Given the low infrastructure that has now perhaps been almost totally destroyed in East Timor, particularly in Dili, and given that the education system there has never been good—some four or five tertiary graduates during the Portuguese time, but significantly more than that under the Indonesians—do you think the practicality of mandating East Timor to an appropriate country, say Australia, is a practical solution in the interim period for what is going to be some years of transition? Is that a practicality from the Caritas point of view?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I do not think I could really comment on how practical it is without consulting with Timorese leadership to see what their attitude to it would be. Any idea of that sort needs to be undertaken in a very consultative manner with the Timorese leadership.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—So Caritas does not have a view?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No, we would not have a view on that without having been able to consult the Timorese.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—What about the interim period, regardless of whether it is mandated, or the administration of the economic survival of East Timor? Do you see that as being a United Nations responsibility totally? Or do you see Australia playing a significant role? If the latter, why?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The economic sustainability of East Timor would really not be a United Nations responsibility. It would probably fall to Australia and to Portugal as the key players in it—Australia by its proximity and by its long history of involvement with East Timor, going back to the Second World War, and our own national interest in ensuring that there is a peaceful and sustainable nation on our doorstep.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Talking about proximity, what about the wealthy nations of Singapore, Brunei and the partly developed nation of Malaysia? What role should they play, using the same criteria that you have outlined?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There are a lot of things that I would like to see Singapore and Brunei undertake, but they do not appear to have a spirit of generosity in those areas or to see their own national interests in those terms.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Has Caritas approached those countries?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No, not at all.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Do you think it is a negative and a waste of time to do that?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I think those countries should be brought within the international community in a stronger manner. Singapore tends to play, in many ways, a very negative role in lots of issues in the South-East Asia region. It would be good to see Singapore in a much more positive light, but until the current regime melts away I do not see that as a practical possibility.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Given Portugal's role in pre-colonial days in Mozambique, Angola and the Indian subcontinent, where it had an enclave of Goa—East Timor is another classical example—do you think that there should be a significant change with respect to culture, which includes language, in any development in East Timor? For instance, Mozambique has switched to English. Mozambique is now a fully fledged member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Is that a move that you would see as beneficial to the advancement and development of East Timor—to, say, use English or use some pattern or model other than having a carry-on culture of the Portuguese?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It is very unlikely that the Portuguese language will survive very long in East Timor because it is only the older people who speak it. Nearly all young people speak Indonesian.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Bahasa Malay?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Indonesian is a form of Malay. There is very little English. Ultimately, I think it would be of benefit if they were able to communicate in English to neighbouring countries. That would help their development. Whether that is possible, I really have no idea.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Does that say, yes, you believe that the basic education should change at some appropriate time to English?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Again, that is a matter for consultation with the Timorese people as to what they think would work best in an educational setting. Changing the language of a country is no small—

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Doesn't Caritas have a view?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I do not think we do, no. Again, we would have to engage with a large number of people before determining what we thought was practical on the ground.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Talking about practicalities on the ground—and I mean this literally—what role could Australia play, given its expertise with drilling, in establishing further potable water supplies and sanitation for Indonesia, and what is the state of those particular two utilities at the moment—water and sanitation?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There is an enormous lack of clean water, not just in East Timor but throughout Indonesia. Australian expertise is a wonderful thing, but the important point is, I think, to develop the local capacity to undertake this work themselves. We should see our expertise as something that can be transferred rather than something that can be utilised

to build up particular infrastructure. Our experience in development is that, if the local people do not own it and create it, it is not going to survive.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—What of the spending of aid money ostensibly for East Timor? Do you think that the habit of channelling it through Indonesia, which was the appropriate thing to do at the time, was a mistake in hindsight and, if it was, what evidence is there that it was a mistake?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There was probably not much alternative for official aid in East Timor. For many years it was closed to the outside world. We, as a Catholic aid agency, have only been able to create an aid program in East Timor in the last few years. It has essentially been closed all that time and it was very difficult to put anything on the ground. The involvement with the Indonesian government essentially relates to the Australian government's recognition of East Timor as being part of Indonesia, which certainly is a mistake, but once made the government is constrained by that decision. They could work through non-government organisations, and they have. AusAID has done that in East Timor to good effect.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—What do you think about the recalcitrance, if I could use that term, of the Indonesian authorities to allow peacekeeping forces into Indonesia, and the view that there should be peacekeeping forces in Indonesia regardless of the Indonesians' attitude to that? Do you think by establishing peacekeepers there, armed or otherwise, that we have damaged our relationship with Indonesia and, if so, to what degree?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The Australian government's relationship with Indonesia is undoubtedly damaged but it has probably been put on a more realistic footing than it was before. Our attitude to Indonesia has been so constrained by wanting to please Indonesia that we have bent over backwards to help on every occasion. The Australian government, in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, actively campaigned against the East Timor human rights votes, and so on. Those policies were mistaken and I think we are seeing the result of that now.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—What years were those policies implemented along the lines that you have just outlined?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Essentially, all the way through.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Since 1975?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Essentially. Australia supported votes on East Timor in the General Assembly right through into the late 1970s and early 1980s, changed to abstaining and then to opposing, and then became completely supportive of Indonesia whenever the issue of East Timor arose. That has to be seen as a blunder.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Isn't it a fact, though, that a country of 200 million people metaphorically on our doorstep is not a country that we should ostracise? What other steps should we take in order to repair that damage without compromising our stance on East Timor?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The 200 million people of Indonesia have no say in their government, essentially.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Not even with the recent elections and the significant vote that Megawati Sukarnoputri obtained?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It is a wonderful thing that there was an election, but you still could not say that ordinary Indonesians have any role in their government. Democracy is still a long way off in Indonesia. So, when we say we have a relationship with Indonesia as 200 million people, I think we have a very positive relationship with those ordinary Indonesians and that they see Australians in a very positive light. But the governing elite—and the military elite, in particular—are after their own interests, and they have certain perceptions. We should not be afraid to be antagonistic to those elites if we think it is not in the interests of the 200 million Indonesians who eventually will be our best friends.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Apart from aid, which is of course essential, what is it that the Australian government can do—and should be doing and should be planning for—for the development of East Timor so that it benefits from its independence or so that it develops towards its independence and becomes self-sufficient, particularly in food?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There is such a wide range of activities that will be necessary.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Could you outline them for the committee?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Almost everything in East Timor will need to be re-created, from the communications system to the water supplies to the administration. It will require a massive effort via the international community. That requires coordination amongst official aid bodies that are not known for their coordination—in fact, they are very uncoordinated. It will be extremely important that they coordinate their activities.

**CHAIR**—Who should coordinate those activities?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—In the Caritas network we face a similar problem in that we have sovereign members—Caritas Pakistan, Caritas France, Caritas Germany and so on—and that it is a federation. It meets as a federation every now and then, but we designate a lead agency on particular issues. Caritas Australia is now the lead agency on East Timor. So where there is money coming from Germany or from France, it will be pooled and there will be a single program put in place, supervised by Caritas Australia. It is actually a coordinated function, but each of those entities is sovereign and raises its own money from its own people. In comparison, the government agencies are totally uncoordinated.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Are you aware of any strategic plan for redevelopment?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—There should be one, I take it.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Absolutely.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Should that include things such as the judiciary and local government?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—And a model of an independent—

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Almost everything that you would see around you in a developed society will need to be created in East Timor. In some ways that is an opportunity, because you are starting from zero, or even below zero.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Does Caritas have a future model?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No, we do not have any model. It would have to be built by the Timorese themselves in some way. Somehow those people have to be empowered to be involved in their own development; there should not be outsiders coming in and putting it in.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—But what about the spark? What about the model to get it going? You cannot call the East Timorese people together and say, ‘What do you want?’

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There is a very highly developed leadership in East Timor, much more highly developed than the equivalent in, say, Irian Jaya or other parts of Indonesia.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Is that a church led hierarchy?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No. The leadership—Gusmao, Ramos Horta and so on—is a very capable and well-developed political leadership. It needs to be translated now into a civil administration, and that is perhaps a different ball game all together. But they do have something there which many other equivalent situations—say, in Africa or South Asia—do not have.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Should Portugal play a significant role, even a veto role in that future?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I do not think anyone should have a veto over East Timor, apart from the Timorese themselves. Portugal certainly has responsibilities and I am sure they intend to meet those, as does Australia, but the whole international community should be getting behind East Timor.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—How is East Timor going to have enough revenue and enough ability to be an independent nation without substantial help from outside if the Timor Gap zone of cooperation treaty is not renegotiated to get the revenues from the gas? Isn't that a part of this whole debate that has been forgotten?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Even with the revenues from the oil and gas, I think they will still require outside assistance. It will be extremely difficult to develop an economy in East Timor. I have no illusions about how difficult that is and I have no solution for it at the moment. They are a subsistence economy for 80 or 90 per cent of their population. There is

potential in coffee and the various commodities, but they face no different a situation than any number of small developing countries around the world. It will require considerable assistance to be able to bring it up to a decent human standard.

**Senator PAYNE**—Do you know whether there are any Caritas representatives in West Timor at the moment?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Representatives of Catholic relief services of the United States are there.

**Senator PAYNE**—And Caritas communicates with them?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes.

**Senator PAYNE**—Do you have any idea of the prospects that exist for Caritas getting back into East Timor?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—At this stage, we really have no idea, though we are planning on the assumption that we will be able to return. At the moment, we are assuming that Caritas East Timor will have ceased to exist and will need to be recreated. We are expecting that at some point the international community will have reasserted control over East Timor and we will be able to return, but we all simply wait for that time.

**Senator PAYNE**—I endorse Senator Bourne's words because we both met Father Francisco Barreto and his staff, his local doctors and support workers in Dili. We were universally impressed with the efforts that Caritas East Timor had made in such a relatively short period to get into the community—particularly the work they had done in health areas, which I imagine Caritas would see as a first priority when you return.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes, we have been planning a health program for some time, but we will do that in conjunction with the other Caritas donors who are already active in East Timor as well. They are Germans, Norwegians, and so on.

**Senator PAYNE**—Yes, the Norwegians were very prominent in our visit. Just to take up a point Senator Lightfoot made in relation to language and education, we found through travelling through regional East Timor to places like Aileu, Baucau, Maliana and so on that the level of literacy after an extended period of the Indonesian education system, so-called, being in place was very high, in some places verging on 95 per cent. Is education another area where Caritas works?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Not so much. We tend to take the view that education is a state responsibility, or where there are church schools that it is a church responsibility to run those schools. As a development agency, we tend to try and leave that to the responsibility of others.

**Senator PAYNE**—At page 3 of your submission you state:

When the time comes for a new administration, probably in a newly independent East Timor, many of those suffering the current attacks can be expected to take their revenge.

I would be interested in hearing—in the context of your remarks on peace building when speaking with Senator Bourne—how you think that can be managed and who, in particular, you were referring to.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—That statement was made in May and the level of violence has increased so much since then that it is hard to imagine how that might take place now. The way we would approach it is to go to the local communities and ask them how they would undertake that sort of work and what they see as the priority in that, to find out what the conflicts are at the local levels and to then find out what way our help might assist. From this distance, it is really impossible to say what you can do, given the events of the last week.

**Senator PAYNE**—In the context of these discussions about the future of East Timor as an independent state, the human rights organisations which we met towards the end of our visit—one can only imagine what is happening to them in the last few days—are part of the political leadership of East Timor to which you have referred. Are they groups with which Caritas East Timor would previously have had contact and would you hope to continue and increase that?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes. There needs to be a very strong cooperation amongst the organisations of civil society in East Timor and as little competition as possible. The problem with funders coming into developing countries is that it is infamously competitive. It is very important that you try and break down the sorts of conflicts that you can create by going to East Timor with a cheque book.

**Senator PAYNE**—Although, as you say, by dint of the fact that in some parts of this process you are going to be beginning at below zero—it is a new beginning, I guess—you can start from the most effective role there. Do you think AusAID has a significant coordination role in that regard?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes. I would hope that AusAID does take on significant coordination with the—

**Senator PAYNE**—Or the United Nations perhaps?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—other official donors. The UN agencies certainly should be involved, but I think there is a special role for Australia in East Timor. We have taken that on, to a certain extent, in our political leadership at the moment in leading the push for peacekeeping. That needs to be maintained. I would assume the Australian government is starting to see it in that light as well.

**Senator PAYNE**—There were reports out of West Timor yesterday in relation to the two different groups of people who were being transported one way or another across the border. One group are those Indonesians from other provinces who were previously resident in East Timor, who are in West Timor, saying that they may buy property and have brought a lot of

their personal possessions with them. The other group are those to whom you referred—those that, having been taken forcibly, should be viewed as hostages rather than refugees. What do you believe is the next step to dealing with that particular situation?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I have been trying to get my brain around why they were taking these people for a couple of days, and I think it is becoming clear that they are there simply as a fall-back position, in case there is an armed intervention of some sort, or for future use, because nobody really knows how it is going to turn out in the end. The Indonesian military are very expert in the process of creating civil mayhem by proxies and then creating the space to move in and make themselves the central controlling force. That is their policy in East Timor and that is what they are achieving, and they have martial law now to legalise it. They would see those people as a resource that they can use at some time in the future, and we do not know in what way. But part of the international community's involvement should be to try and get them back.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Do you regard the storming of the Australian embassy in Jakarta as an orchestrated—

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes. There is a long history of that sort of orchestrated civil disturbance in Indonesia.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Just to send a message?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—I have read out to most other witnesses the agreement that was signed on 5 May 1999 between the foreign ministers of Portugal, Indonesia and also the Secretary-General of the United Nations—article 6 and article 7. I guess you understand that the UN are going to keep the transition going and that sort of thing. What is your organisation's opinion now of the United Nations and whether they have actually done their job or whether they have just been a paper tiger?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Certainly if they abandoned the compound in Dili they will have failed, as they failed in other places such as Rwanda and so on. But the United Nations is only as strong as its constituents, as its member states. It is not the UN that should be blamed in these circumstances, it is the member states, particularly in this case the security council members and the regional neighbours. If there is blame to be laid, it really has to go back to the member states. The UN itself is a forum. It is a secretariat and a forum for discussion for member states. The capacity to do anything really goes back to the member states. If they are not prepared to do something, you cannot expect the UN to do it for them.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Do you think if the United States led the way as it has in lots of other conflicts around the world where they had a couple of big warships and a couple of aircraft carriers sitting offshore, that the Indonesians would have been intimidated into actually allowing the process to go ahead, notwithstanding the Timor Gap and notwithstanding the local politics in Indonesia?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I am hesitant to condone the use of force in this situation because the Indonesian military hold all the cards on the ground in East Timor. It could be a mistake to threaten the use of force if you are not able to use it. In those circumstances you could simply play into the hands of the military who will present themselves then to the Indonesian people as having overcome the giant and poked them in the eye. It could actually assist them more than it assists the Timorese. Unless you are able to follow through, it is pointless making a threat to the Indonesian military and they will see it in those terms.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—I think it has been made pretty clear by the Prime Minister that military force is not the way through it, and that it should be a peacekeeping force under the guidance of the United Nations. What is your scenario if the United Nations were to pull out of the compound completely?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I would guess that somehow East Timor would be closed off to the outside world as it was. It is sort of like a re-run of the invasion in many ways. They would close it off. They would insist that only the Indonesian Red Cross, for example, might be able to deliver aid. No other agencies would be allowed in. They would say it is too dangerous, et cetera. It needs to be seen in a wider context of the politics of Indonesia and the selection of a president in November, and to play into that very high stakes game is extremely dangerous.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—In hindsight, this 5 May general secretary's agreement with the foreign affairs ministers was actually a big blunder in that it was being done in a time when the government of Indonesia was in transition or in moulding of a new government. Had that been left maybe until January or February of next year it might have been a different matter, or do you think the same result would have eventuated?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It is always easy with hindsight. At the time it seemed reasonable to assume that some sort of standards of decency might prevail. But it clearly underestimated the Indonesian military's perception that their interests were vitally at stake in the issue. Their interests are not just in East Timor; their interests are throughout Indonesia. The effort to reduce the role of the military in the political life in Indonesia and so on, it needs to be seen in that context. I would hesitate to say that it was a wrong decision at the time. It is very hard to anticipate the sort of vicious illegal brutality that is going on now. I do not think that anyone really could have anticipated that.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—That is basically the built-in animosity between different groups within the community there that has been going on for 24 years.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No. It is a deliberate mechanism of control of those who run the Indonesian military. We all wondered what happened in 1965 in Java when 500,000 people were killed and there were rampaging mobs of militia and so on. Those who were not there at the time like myself have wondered how this could have taken place, but now we are seeing it actually taking place and how they do that. It is controlled, but in some ways it is out of control, too.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Contrived.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes, contrived is a good word. Its objective is to cement military power and to bring them into the centre of politics in Indonesia as well as East Timor. It is not a conflict between different groups. They have set up these militia; they pay them, they train them, they arm them and they command them. Many of the people in the militia are probably army personnel.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—Probably or are?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—We cannot prove it. Certainly Timorese tell us that they are.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—We have had anecdotal evidence where people have said that they have seen a person as a militia person in one part of the day, and the next day they will be in civilian clothes.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—There is a joke that is doing the rounds: why does it always take the police five minutes to arrive after the militia have attacked? Because that is how long it takes to change.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—It is not too funny, is it really?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—No.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—So the UN is not the answer to that?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The international community is the answer. That is what the Prime Minister is expressing and that is what the Americans are saying, too. The pressure must be on the Indonesian military to conform to international standards and to engage in the use of violence in that situation is not necessarily a productive way to tackle it.

**Senator BROWNHILL**—What about a war crimes tribunal?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes. We have actually supported the idea of a war crimes tribunal in letters to the Prime Minister that that should be established, but we have had no response.

**CHAIR**—I have a limited number of questions in respect of aid. One of the problems as I see it that is going to beset us is the fact that there will be so much aid required, but the pockets might not be deep enough to deliver all that aid. Therefore, that will frustrate the processes within East Timor for some time. How does one prioritise the aid? I know it is a difficult question, but are there priorities that must be put in place for aid?

Secondly, I get back to the issue that was raised earlier, the coordination of that aid. The other fear that I have held as a result of this inquiry is that, whilst there might be a number of organisations with the best of intention of assisting the East Timorese people, the aid may well be misdirected in the sense that they will be falling over each other, duplicating processes or simply misdirecting the aid that is being given because it is not being given where it is most needed. How do we (a) prioritise it, and (b) coordinate it? I am not saying 'we' being Australia, but the general aid community across the board.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It is an infamously difficult task to prioritise aid and we see that on a small scale in our own organisation getting requests for assistance from many places. The government has gone through the Simons review as an effort to review the aid program and to prioritise and has made recommendations on that, most of which we agree with. The need for coordination is really important. We have seen in places like Cambodia, where a large aid effort has come in after this sort of devastation, that cross-purposes by aid donors, official and non-government, can be quite counterproductive.

It would help if, for example, AusAID were to designate funds for coordination. At the moment for our agency to put funds into the coordination of aid is to have to use what you call your non-tax deductible funds. Because when we give tax deductibility to donors it is because those funds will go overseas. Yet in so much of the work of planning and designing of programs that takes place in Australia you cannot use those funds. You have to use the funds given to you which are non-tax deductible and which are shrinking every year because increasingly people want tax deductibility.

**CHAIR**—If I can just stop you there, that is something that we have not heard before in this inquiry—that it may well be that there needs to be an examination by the government of offering tax deductibility to aid coordination processes. Is that fair?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The whole tax deductibility debate is a very vexed subject because the tax deductibility is designated as relief. It is all very unclear and very messy. A simpler solution would be for AusAID to designate funds towards coordination and actually make those available—

**CHAIR**—Some form of grant?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes.

**CHAIR**—What about the actual prioritising of aid?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—I cannot offer any answers to that apart from the need to assess what is on the ground, to consult with the local people and to see what comes out of that. That should be a joint official and non-government approach because, in order to cement that sort of coordination, it is important that each country does not send its own assessment mission. The poor old Timorese will face one assessment from the EU, one from the World Bank, one from AusAID, one from the USA and one from the Japanese. They will come one after the other and ask the same questions. Then the non-government agencies will come one after the other asking the same questions.

**CHAIR**—Who should be driving the process, therefore, to seek a coordinated approach? Should it be aid organisations such as yourself? Or should it be aid organisations such as yourself in cooperation with the federal government? Or should it be the federal government on its own?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The realistic aspect of this is that those who have the most money involved really need to drive it and to supervise the use of their money, because they have a responsibility to the original donors of that money. If AusAID is the major donor, it should

be coordinating. If Portugal is the major donor, perhaps it should be coordinating, or USAID. It is something that has to be part of our diplomacy and it is something that our diplomacy does not take account of. We tend to view aid programs as a sort of aspect of our national interest and believe that it is not necessarily a humanitarian or disinterested function. So bringing into the thinking in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that this is something that actually requires coordination to be done better is a new step for them.

**CHAIR**—The last question I want to ask is in relation to Radio Australia, which currently has a weak signal, as I understand it, into East Timor. Prior to the closure of the Cox Peninsula transmitter near Darwin, it had a fairly strong signal into East Timor. How important is it for getting across educational messages and just general communications within East Timor in the future for a transmitter to be re-established in northern Australia and for services to be provided by Radio Australia into East Timor to give an independent view of what is happening? I am talking about that in a post-violence situation. Is there a need for us to recommence those sorts of services in a significant way in places such as East Timor?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—The answer is, completely, yes. In fact we made a submission at the time of the proposed closing down of the service to that effect. It is a crucial element of the provision of information to the local people for them to get independent views and for communication with all sorts of people on the ground throughout South-East Asia. It really should be seen now as a terrible mistake to have reduced the service.

**CHAIR**—What language should that be broadcast in?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—It could be in a number of languages. Certainly the English language is a key element of the Australian presence in South-East Asia. But there should be local language services as well.

**CHAIR**—Indonesian, Tetum?

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—For East Timor.

**CHAIR**—I am talking specifically of East Timor because one of the things that will be important will be the ability to communicate, and one of the simplest means by which communication can take place is through short-wave radio.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Yes, quite possibly Tetum should be one of the languages used. Again, that is something that we need to consult the Timorese about—what shape those sorts of radio broadcasts should take and what suits them the most. That is something that we cannot easily decide without consultation.

**CHAIR**—Fair enough. We have now gone the full extent of the time that we have allocated. Thank you very much for your presentation to the committee today. We have appreciated the evidence that you have given to us and the frankness with which you have presented your submission. We wish you all the best in your endeavours into the future.

**Mr Scott-Murphy**—Thank you.

**CHAIR**—We hope you will influence some of our colleagues as to the way we should take things within this nation.

[11.38 a.m.]

**HULL, Dr Geoffrey Stephen, Executive Director, Academy of East Timor Studies, University of Western Sydney**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. The committee prefers all evidence to be given in public but should you at any stage wish to give any part of your evidence in private you may ask to do so and the committee will consider your request. The committee has before it your submission. Are there any alterations or additions you would like to make to your submission at this stage?

**Dr Hull**—Only that there is part of my testimony that I would like to give in camera regarding human rights delegation work.

**CHAIR**—I have got no objection to that.

**Dr Hull**—I had mentioned that.

**CHAIR**—I was not aware of that. How long will that take?

**Dr Hull**—Since I did not put in a submission I came ready to answer questions, so it depends on how much you want to devote to language and culture and how much you want to devote to that.

**CHAIR**—I have got a submission from you.

**Dr Hull**—No, that was merely a document. I did not put in a formal submission. I did not approach the committee to speak, put it that way.

**CHAIR**—You have requested that your evidence be given in camera and the committee have agreed to that. We will now take the in camera evidence.

*Evidence was then taken in camera, but later resumed in public—*

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—I am concerned, Dr Hull, that some sort of theocratic political organisation may emerge in East Timor that will be detrimental to its development. Do you share that fear?

**Dr Hull**—I would say it depends on what the East Timorese people want. If they want a theocracy, who are we to tell them they are not to have a theocracy?

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Do you share the belief that a theocratic organisation will emerge in East Timor?

**Dr Hull**—A full-blown theocracy certainly not—if you mean theocracy like that.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—I mean a 1960s style southern Ireland.

**Dr Hull**—It is not very likely if, for example, East Timor is reinserted into its language context and the leadership has every intention of taking full advantage of Portugal's offers to them and they want to restore, for example, Portuguese as the official language with Tetum.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Would you discourage that?

**Dr Hull**—Not at all. I think that that should be done. From my own knowledge of the East Timorese people, I think that if anything should be resisted in East Timorese it is forced anglicisation.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—But anglicisation does not necessarily mean a complete cultural change, does it?

**Dr Hull**—No, but look what has happened to Papua New Guinea. I think English does not need to be promoted. English is well established in the world. I think that other languages and cultures have to be protected. My view is that the East Timorese have suffered enough by people imposing foreign cultures on them. I think if they want to have Portuguese and Tetum as their languages, they should be assisted to do that.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—But you would not suggest that they go back to the animist form of religion?

**Dr Hull**—That is a very interesting question. The Catholic approach to evangelisation as pursued in East Timor has been relatively inclusivistic. It is often mentioned by ethnologists that in those islands to the east, the southern Moluccas, which were evangelised by Dutch Calvinists, the missionaries went around burning idols and discouraging any form of pagan practice. There is a certain amount of syncretism in East Timor which some of the more conservative priests have complained about, but I think that has been very beneficial for the acceptance of Catholicism.

It is important to bear in mind that only a third of the population was Catholic in 1974, but the other two-thirds I would describe as potential Catholics in the sense that for many centuries they have had a cordial social relationship with the church. They used to attend Catholic functions without wanting to be baptised. Usually the reason for not wanting to be baptised was polygamy. They did not want to give up their numerous wives, very often. I think that the synthesis has worked so well that I do not think it would be possible to go back in any way to animism. What you have there now is fairly permanent.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Let me shift on a little. You said that Indonesians have a racist attitude. Surely, apart from some of the admixtures of various racial groups throughout the world—Negroid, Aryan Indian, non-Aryan Indian, Melanesian, Caucasian, et cetera—but notwithstanding those admixtures, East Timor is still predominantly the same as what West Timor is.

**Dr Hull**—There is something paradoxical anthropologically about East Timor in that in the East Timor population the two main elements are proto-Malay, which is a form of Caucasoid like us but it is an earlier form of Caucasoid which came from the Asian mainland, and the other element is Papuan or Melanesian. Interestingly, most of the Papuan

type Timorese are in the west; they are not the ones next to New Guinea and East Timor. In East Timor, even the people who still speak Papuan languages have more Europeanoid features and people think that they are mixed with the Portuguese. In fact, they are not; they are just proto-Malays.

Getting back to the question of racism, it is not a question of what people look like, although in western Indonesia there is this Mongoloid element that you do not get in the east of Indonesia.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Mongoloid as race?

**Dr Hull**—As race, yes. It is based on religion. The reason why the Indonesians look down on eastern Indonesians—it is not just East Timorese; they generally look down on eastern Indonesians—is that this was the pagan part of their archipelago. I think it is a cultural thing, that the west had had Hinduism and, more importantly, Islam—

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—The only survival of Hinduism of any large form is in Bali.

**Dr Hull**—In Bali. There are pockets in the mountains of Java, of course.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Yes. But not a concentration.

**Dr Hull**—No, that is right. I think it is based on that, that there is this perception. It is the same as in Western world. Where people are Christians, you assume that they have all the virtues and refinements and where people worship natural elements we assume that they are primitive.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—So you do not think, then, that it is a sectarian difference. You think that it is a racial difference predominantly between the Javanese and the people of Timor generally, not just East Timor.

**Dr Hull**—Yes. It is a psychological difference which has to do with the different culture. That was a part of the archipelago not touched by these main civilisations that came with the main religions. Timor was not touched by India, it was not touched by Arabia, it was only touched by Europe, and that is why there is this great love of Europeans. East Timorese will always welcome white people—to use that term—because their earliest positive contacts were with Portuguese and Europeans.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Two very quick questions. I am working backwards from what you have said this morning, Dr Hull. What happens to the bodies? You say that people went to the police and said, ‘We heard so and so was shot,’ and the police say, ‘No, he has run away.’ Your evidence is that they were shot by the police. What happens to the bodies?

**Dr Hull**—I have only heard speculations that they have been put in mass graves. Some people say that they have been incinerated. But the answer is no-one knows.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—So there is a possibility there could be something like the Balkans on the island of Timor?

**Dr Hull**—I think some excavations would be very interesting in what they would unearth.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—What kind of torture? You mentioned torture very early in your opening address. How does that torture manifest itself? You said that all those arrested were tortured.

**Dr Hull**—Yes. The beating was fairly detectable. One of the constants of torture that we found was blindfolding. They preferred to inflict physical pain when you could not see what was happening or brace yourself in any way. That was said to be common. The forms were cigarette burning, slashing. There is a machine that they call something or other in Indonesian, some sort of electric shock machine which is apparently used very often.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Like a cattle prod type.

**Dr Hull**—I think so, yes. I have not seen one but they mentioned this machine. They call it ‘maquina de tortura’ in Portuguese. It must be something that they use in the army.

**Senator LIGHTFOOT**—Thanks, Dr Hull.

**CHAIR**—I am just wondering where I should start, given the small amount of time that is left. In the post-current environment, with a peacekeeping force, what is the likelihood of a real peace being maintained? We have also had it put to us that, whilst there are rivalries within East Timor—

**Dr Hull**—There certainly are.

**CHAIR**—At a sub-cultural level rather than at the level between the Indons and the militias and the people, there is also a rivalry across the border into West Timor. What is the real likelihood of maintaining a lasting peace in that environment?

**Dr Hull**—I would say what is cardinal to the establishment of a lasting peace is education and education fast, because the fact that most people are not educated lends itself to this natural divisiveness in the society. The fact that East Timor has 15 indigenous languages, and some of them are not even related to each other, mirrors their history, where it has been a collection of tribes that had very little to do with each other and had a lot of warfare between them. The only thing that welded them into a unity was the Portuguese colony and the fact that they had to have common resistance against common enemies. The natural tendency in East Timorese society is division. It manifested itself in 1974-75 and it always has manifested itself. In church, in government, they will always divide into groups, and they reflect in a way the old division of kingdoms.

**CHAIR**—Could it be that the concept of an East Timor as we have it is really not the correct model? It may well be that there is a need to return to the former ‘kingdoms’. I am not trying to put down a blueprint for what might happen, but that may well be a better model to emerge than our Western idea of a democracy.

**Dr Hull**—I could not agree more with you on that. That is a very intelligent reading of the situation. If something were put in place which actually respected, acknowledged and anticipated these natural divisions, that would be very beneficial. It is very much a feudal society. There is something very medieval about East Timor. Although they hated Indonesian authoritarianism, they are not bolshie people, they are naturally very respectful people. Transmigration was begun by the Dutch. In West Timor the Dutch started to move people all over the place. They interrupted the natural distribution of the population. The Portuguese did not move anyone. All they did was that they baptised the kings and gave them Portuguese aristocratic titles, and so they left everything in place. That is why they like the Portuguese still, because they did not interfere with them directly. There is a continuity in that the people that became senior civil servants in the Indonesian administration were usually aristocrats. If you look at it through the glasses of Western democracies and so on, they have been welded into a unity, but that is recent.

**CHAIR**—Unity is because of their common enemy.

**Dr Hull**—Exactly. Unity and diversity, which is ironically the Indonesian motto, is something that needs to be pursued in East Timor. There is a natural fractiousness which has historical and ethnic antecedents.

**CHAIR**—On that note, Dr Hull, I am afraid I will have to conclude the proceedings. I have found your evidence fascinating indeed. I appreciate that in the in camera session we did have some very frank comments from you. I want to thank Hansard and Sound and Vision.

**Committee adjourned at 12.29 p.m.**

