

## Block the British plan for disintegration of Indonesia

by Michael O. Billington

On July 11, Amien Rais, head of the second-largest Muslim organization in Indonesia, the 28-million-member Muhammadiyah, and a prominent leader of the student movement which helped to precipitate the resignation of President Suharto in May, warned about the deepening depression and social crisis in Indonesia: "I find that the syndrome of Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union is creeping into Indonesia. There is the danger that the country may go the way those two states have gone—crumbling into pieces," he said.

Rais delivered this warning to a prestigious think-tank in Malaysia, shortly after a meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, who has consistently identified the hot-money speculation of the deregulated globalization process, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditions imposed on the speculators' victims, as the cause of the continuing destruction of the Asian economies.

It is particularly important that Rais, who, during the escalating student demonstrations earlier this year, blamed the Indonesian crisis on President Suharto and his "cronies," is now emphasizing that the economy is getting worse in spite of Suharto's ouster, and that he himself is "losing faith in the IMF."

Rais is not the first to warn against the disintegration of the world's fourth most populous nation. President Suharto himself, who is credited even by his enemies with forging national unity during his 32 years as President, by enforcing the state doctrine of tolerance and collaboration between and among the diverse ethnic and religious layers of Indonesian society, said before he resigned that a loss of national cohesion could provoke a "great conflict that would threaten our development and even give rise to civil war."

Such divisiveness is, of course, the classic mode of colonial control by Britain and other former European colonial powers, and typical of Britain's policy *before* granting independence to their colonies, in order to facilitate continued economic control over weakened nations. So, too, today, the same former European colonial powers, the British, the Dutch, and the Portuguese, are leaping into the chaos of the new depression to achieve what they failed to achieve in the 1940s and 1950s: the breakup of Indonesia. The primary initial targets are the provinces of East Timor, a Portuguese colony until late 1975, and Irian Jaya, a Dutch colony until 1963, but every conceivable separatist tendency that has ever shown promise to the colonial powers is also being activated. The headquarters for these operations is in London, where Tapol, for years the leading clearinghouse for anti-Indonesia propaganda in support of East Timor, functions under the protection of Lord Avebury, the British House of Lords' leading supporter of international terrorist and separatist movements. A secondary center of operations targetting Indonesia has been the Unrecognized Peoples and Nations Organization, based in the Netherlands, which defends claims of separatist movements not only in Indonesia's East Timor and Irian Jaya, but also in Aceh, Sulawesi, Maluku, and Kalimantan.

### British assets in the U.S. Congress

Although President Clinton has strictly defended Indonesia's sovereignty, a faction of de facto British assets in the U.S. Congress has intervened against that sovereignty, directly contributing to a potentially bloody crisis in both Irian Jaya and East Timor. A group of 15 members of Congress, led by three notorious members of Christian Solidarity Inter-

FIGURE 1

**British target Indonesia for breakup**



national (CSI), a British intelligence front, Frank Wolf (R-Va.), Chris Smith (R-N.J.), and Donald Payne (D-N.J.), wrote a letter to Indonesia's new President, B.J. Habibie, demanding that his government initiate a "direct, good faith dialogue" with pro-independence supporters in East Timor and Irian Jaya, to find a "just solution to their political status," while also giving a nod of approval to similar potentialities in Aceh, Kalimantan, Maluku, and Sulawesi. The letter also effectively called on Indonesia to *change its Constitution*, to weaken or eliminate the constitutional role of the military in Indonesian society — the so-called "dual function" (*dwifungsi*) of the military.

This letter, a blatant violation of Indonesian sovereignty — contrary to U.S. policy — was translated into *bahasa Indonesia* and leafleted in both East Timor and Irian Jaya.

In Irian Jaya, according to Antara News Wire, the Indonesian state wire service, "the letter prompted the Irianese to raise the West Papuan flag" (the flag of the Free Papua Movement, OPM), leading to confrontations with police in two locations, in which two youth were seriously wounded. The rector of Cendrawasih University, the scene of one of the

confrontations, told the press that the Congressional letter was misleading and "has aroused emotions and formed public opinion which stirred trouble among the Irianese." Irian Jaya Military Commander Maj. Gen. Amir Sembiring announced that there would be an investigation of "external participation in the rallies," and of who was responsible for publishing and distributing the letter. He made clear that any plot to overthrow the government would necessarily require police action, although peaceful demonstrations and calls for reform were both legal and welcome.

The fact that U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy (D-Mass.) is one of the signers on the letter, is particularly ironic — and is probably causing John F. Kennedy to turn over in his grave. A brief history of the fight over Irian Jaya, which was at the center of the battle against colonialism and the building of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1950s and 1960s, will explain JFK's unrest.

**Truman, Dulles, and Dutch colonialism**

When President Franklin Roosevelt died in April 1945, his plans for an "American Century" died with him. Roose-

velt was publicly committed to ending both “19th-century British methods” and the European colonial empires which were a crucial part of that system. Instead, Roosevelt envisioned the application of American technology and America’s nation-building methods to the development of the Third World, building on the U.S.-Russia-China alliance that had won the war against fascism. (See, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “Where Franklin Roosevelt Was Interrupted,” *EIR*, July 17, 1998.)

President Harry Truman, however, served his British controllers in creating a bi-polar world, based on a Cold War that was very hot in the colonial world—especially in Asia. In Indonesia, Truman openly backed the British and the Dutch in reasserting Dutch colonial control. To justify the Dutch war against the Indonesian nationalists led by General Sukarno, the nationalists were transformed into “communists” in Western Cold War propaganda.

Nonetheless, the Indonesian revolutionary army defeated the Dutch forces, in a war that lasted from 1945 to 1949. When, in 1948, General Sukarno’s forces also suppressed an uprising by communist forces, the British and Dutch could no longer maintain the myth of “fighting communism.” The United States switched its support to the nationalists, and the Dutch conceded.

However, the Dutch refused to relinquish control over Dutch New Guinea, known today as Irian Jaya, agreeing only to negotiate the issue. Such negotiations were not forthcoming. By 1955, with the Cold War in full swing, and John Foster Dulles as President Dwight Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, the United States was actively supporting French, British, Portuguese, and Dutch colonialism in Asia, supposedly to “combat communism,” and to prop up the European NATO nations against “communism” in Europe. The Dutch refused to budge on Irian Jaya.

In April 1955, President Sukarno co-sponsored and hosted the historic Asian-African Conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia. For the first time in history, the leaders of 29 nations of Asia and Africa came together, without Western sponsors, united by a passionate commitment to eradicate colonialism in all its forms from the face of the earth, and to foster economic development as the basis for peace for all nations. (It was this conference which provided the spark for the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement.) One of the major issues uniting all participants in Bandung, whether generally identified as “pro-communist” or “anti-communist” in the Cold War line-up, was the demand that the Dutch come to the table to discuss the return of Irian Jaya to Indonesian sovereignty, and that the United Nations must support that just demand.

Secretary of State Dulles, however, insisted that the United States abstain on all UN votes regarding Irian Jaya, and even proposed that the United States openly support the Dutch colonial position. In classic British style, Dulles in-

sisted that “in view of the pro-communist trend of Sukarno . . . it is almost absurd to be neutral toward the extending of the Indonesian authority to a new area.”

John Foster Dulles worked in tandem with his brother Allen Dulles, who was Eisenhower’s CIA chief. Allen Dulles had worked directly with British Intelligence during World War II in the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS, predecessor to the CIA), shaping a British-aligned faction in the emerging U.S. intelligence structure. The Dulles brothers and their British allies were involved in far more serious efforts to destroy Indonesia, as presented in the accompanying article. As to Irian Jaya, it remained in colonial hands until the Kennedy Presidency.

President Kennedy sent his brother Robert, the U.S. Attorney General, to Jakarta in 1962, where he pledged U.S. support in forcing the Dutch hand in restoring Indonesia’s sovereignty over Irian Jaya, while also cleaning up some of the other dirty laundry left over by the Dulles brothers.

Is Rep. Joseph Kennedy unaware of the anti-colonial measures of his father and his uncle in Indonesia, which he is trampling on today, in league with the overtly pro-colonial “Wolf-pack” of Wolf, Smith, and Payne?

### **A solution for East Timor**

In light of the history of Irian Jaya, the real issues of the East Timor conflict can be discerned from behind the veil of lies and half-truths spread by the colonial powers and their non-governmental organizations (NGO) apparatus. East Timor is only divided from West Timor, which has always been an Indonesian province, because it was colonized by the Portuguese rather than the Dutch. Portugal held onto its colonial outpost through the anti-colonial ferment of the 1950s and 1960s, keeping it as a primitive backwater with virtually no infrastructure, and few schools, hospitals, and churches—and no plans to change the situation. Only in 1974, when Portugal was taken over by leftist military forces, did the “mother country” suddenly desert its colony, virtually in the dead of night, leaving nothing behind except their weapons, which were turned over to an overtly terrorist organization called Fretelin. With the support of most of the other political institutions in East Timor, the Indonesian military moved in. East Timor became the 27th province of Indonesia, although the United Nations has refused to recognize that fact, officially recognizing Portugal as the “administrative” power. Over subsequent years, the suppression of the terrorist, secessionist movement has led to several incidents of extreme brutality and excesses by sections of the Indonesian military—excesses that have been publicly acknowledged in recent years by Jakarta, with measures taken to punish those responsible and prevent their recurrence.

Nearly always left out of the hue and cry over East Timor by the colonial powers (including George Soros-fi-

nanced NGOs in the United States, such as Human Rights Watch) is the fact that Indonesia dramatically transformed the province economically and socially, in a way the Portuguese never would. Schools, hospitals, universities, and churches filled the province, while development funds were pumped in to bring the backward region up to the standards of the rapidly developing Indonesia.

Despite international efforts to promote the Fretelin terrorists (including awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Fretelin spokesman Jose Ramos Horta), Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, the only East Timorese leader who enjoys the respect of the entire population, has negotiated a promising peace settlement with Jakarta over the past few years, and especially in recent weeks. Bishop Belo has carefully kept his distance from Ramos Horta (even though they were joint recipients of the Nobel Prize) and other Fretelin operatives, while working to inspire the population to win their just demands *within* Indonesian sovereignty, and without falling prey to internal or external provocations to violence.

When President Habibie took office in May, one of his first acts was to declare his intention to promote special autonomous status to East Timor, within Indonesian sovereignty, similar to that granted to other regions of Indonesia. He released many of the political prisoners, and has pledged to release Fretelin leader Xanana Gusmao and others as part of an international settlement—provided Indonesian sovereignty over the province is officially recognized.

Nearly all the forces involved in the East Timor question, including even the Portuguese government, have expressed great optimism that the proposals put forward by President Habibie and Bishop Belo can finally bring about a peaceful solution. And yet, the social situation within East Timor is deteriorating.

A delegation of European Union ambassadors who toured East Timor in late June was mobbed by demonstrators, who then violently attacked the Indonesian security detail escorting the diplomatic delegation. The ambassadors cut the tour short and returned to Jakarta.

There are also reports that thousands of people have already fled or are fleeing East Timor in advance of the July 17 anniversary of East Timor's official incorporation into Indonesia in 1976. Those fleeing are primarily "transmigrants," i.e., farmers and others from more densely populated parts of Indonesia who were encouraged to emigrate to East Timor, but who are now fearful of attack from gangs in the highly politicized environment.

While the ferment can be largely blamed on the economic disaster which is hitting every corner of the Indonesian archipelago, and which has stirred up dormant religious and ethnic prejudices everywhere, it is also the case that external provocations, including the Wolf-pack letter, are fanning the flames.

## **Divide and conquer**

Beyond the immediate crises in Irian Jaya and East Timor is the potential for other separatist movements to reappear across Indonesia. A top adviser to President Habibie, Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, pointed out that, to Indonesians, East Timor is "unfinished business," but that there is no sound basis for questioning Irian Jaya as a legitimate part of Indonesia. "If Irian Jaya starts clamoring for the same special status as East Timor," she said, "that would create a very dangerous precedent for the rest of the country."

This returns us to Amien Rais's warning of the danger of disintegration of the country. Here, again, there is a sordid history of European colonial powers, and their supporters in the United States, sponsoring separatist movements with the explicit purpose of destroying Indonesia's national integrity. Between 1956 and 1958, the British sponsored a group of disgruntled military officers from the outlying provinces to rebel against the Indonesian Republic. In typical Cold War fashion, the British succeeded in using their assets in America, centered around the Dulles brothers in the Eisenhower administration, to do the dirty work and to provide the funds and the weapons. All of Sumatra and the Celebes (Sulawesi) were at one point under rebel control, although the Army relatively easily suppressed the revolt. (See accompanying article.) The exposed U.S. role in this treachery fed anti-American sentiments in Indonesia and elsewhere for many years to come.

## **The U.S. role today**

President Clinton has, thus far, failed to depart from the IMF script for Indonesia and the other collapsing nations of Asia, eastern Europe, and Ibero-America. Continuing support for IMF-imposed destruction of the real economies of these nations will prove disastrous for the United States, both economically and in terms of its moral authority in the global crisis.

The President did, however, to his credit, counter the worst effects of the "Wolf-pack" letter to Indonesia, and the similar howling from U.S.-based NGOs and the U.S. media, which are demanding the breakup of the Republic of Indonesia. On July 15, U.S. Ambassador J. Stapleton Roy responded to reporters, who asked if the United States is financing separatist activities in Indonesia. Roy stated, "We have no position of encouraging separatists in Indonesia. The American government did not give any money to any separatist movement in any part of Indonesia. . . . Our policy remains the same. We recognize that Indonesia has 27 provinces. We recognize East Timor as an integral part of Indonesia." And, he called for all parties to give the Habibie government's new proposal on East Timor "very serious consideration."

The state wire service, Antara, in reporting Roy's remarks, appended a separate story, quoting U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin saying, "The United States recognizes Irian Jaya as an integral part of Indonesia."