

HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST TIMOR

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COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Prof. Elizabeth Traube teaches at Connecticut Wesleyan University and received her doctorate at Harvard, and her dissertation topic was based upon her field work in East Timor.

On July 19, the subcommittee will continue these hearings, receiving testimony from the Department of State as well as Leonard Meeker, former legal adviser of the Department, and Prof. Thomas Frank of New York University Law School.

We are honored and delighted to have our colleague, Helen Meyner, with us today, who is one of our full committee members who made the trip to East Timor.

We also have, for the information of those in the hearing room, a copy of the report made by Congressman Wolff's special study mission to Asia, which incorporates a section on the East Timor situation.

STATEMENT OF HON. HELEN S. MEYNER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Mrs. MEYNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am delighted to be here and appreciate very much having the opportunity to testify before you today on the subject of human rights in East Timor. My knowledge of this matter, such as it is, and as sparse as it is, derives largely from the fact that I visited that territory in April of this year. My report on that trip has been included as an appendix to a report of a special study mission to Asia conducted by members of the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, which was published on June 19. I would like to submit my full report for the record, if I may, and merely summarize my views in the interest of time.

Mr. FRASER. We will put the full report in the record.

[The report follows:]

REPORT ON THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION VISIT TO EAST TIMOR BY REPRESENTATIVE HELEN MEYNER

REASONS FOR THE VISIT

On March 22, 1977, a joint hearing was held by the Subcommittee on International Organizations and the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs to consider the reported mass atrocities in East Timor during the invasion and occupation of the territory by the Indonesian forces beginning in December 1975. Testimony was received by Robert Oakley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Jim Dunn, Director of the Foreign Policy Section of the Legislative Reference Service, Australian Parliament, Mario Carascalao (leader of Uniao Democratic party) and Jose Goncalvez, Timorese Governmental official.

Mr. Dunn testified on the basis of reports from Timorese refugees in Portugal. These refugees had reported to him that Indonesian forces had committed gross atrocities against Timorese people. Mr. Carascalao and Mr. Goncalvez, referred to the atrocities committed by the Fretilin (an acronym for Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independente, the East Timorese party which sought independence).

Several issues were the focus of attention at the hearing:

(1) The question of the use of U.S. military equipment by the Indonesians in the invasion and occupation of East Timor. Was the use of such equipment in compliance with U.S. laws regarding security assistance? It was disclosed during the hearing that the Department of State had administratively suspended military aid to Indonesia from December 1975 to June 1976.

(2) Did the people of East Timor have an opportunity to freely exercise their right of self-determination? Under Indonesian supervision an "Act of Free

Choice" was held in which the chieftains of East Timor affirmed their support for union with Indonesia. The United Nations General Assembly and Security Council continue to recognize East Timor as a nonself-governing territory.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DELEGATION VISIT

As a result of the hearing, the Government of Indonesia invited members of the two subcommittees to visit East Timor. Representative Meyner accepted the invitation.

On behalf of Representative Meyner the subcommittee staff began to discuss with State Department officials arrangements for the visit. The Department in turn was in communication with Indonesian officials. Having extended an invitation for a Congressional visit, the Government of Indonesia was in general determined to retain control over the trip arrangements. It was not happy at certain requests by subcommittee staff to meet privately with East Timorese individuals, or proposals that we bring an independent interpreter. As the time for the actual visit to East Timor drew near, other requests on behalf of Representative Meyner and staff for specific arrangements were likewise politely ignored. In short, it was clear that the Government of Indonesia would consider efforts to tamper with or question its arrangements as an ungracious response by guests of the Indonesian Government. As a result there was little free time for conversations which were not directly in the presence of Indonesian officials; those individuals whom the delegation asked to see were available only, if at all, in the context of public group meetings.

There were only 2 weeks to arrange the mechanics of a side trip to East Timor, and the normally demanding details of such a visit at such a distance were even more complicated. During that time, efforts to arrange a schedule more suitable to the purposes of the delegation were generally thwarted. Requests made by Mrs. Meyner and staff for a limited itinerary with ample free time for individual appointments met with frustration. In fact, it was only after we boarded the aircraft in Kupang, West Timor, and met with GOI officials who were to accompany us throughout the trip, that we began to learn the itinerary. We were informed that we were to visit the towns of Viqueque and Baucau, where we would stay overnight.

Even at the last moment our urging that we limit our visits to Baucau and Dili, and stay overnight in Dili, were frustrated. Indonesian officials indicated that it was not possible to change our schedule since people were expecting us in each of the scheduled stops.

We reiterated our desire to meet with certain individuals and presented the list which had already been given to Indonesian officials in Jakarta. Our Indonesian Government escort officers said that they had learned of our request but that sufficient time was not provided to fulfill this request.

VISIT TO EAST TIMOR

On April 14, we visited Viqueque and Baucau. We stayed overnight in Baucau. On April 15, we visited Bobonaro and Dili.

In each town the format was fairly similar. We were received by large and friendly crowds including children dressed in uniforms and tribal people in colorful indigenous dress. Both at the airstrips and in proceeding to the villages we were greeted with banners, signs, and chants saying "Viva Indonesia, Viva Suharto, Viva Jimmy Carter," and even some saying "Viva U.S. Congress." Upon arriving at each village, we would proceed to a meeting hall. The administrator of the village or sometimes several local officials would formally address the delegation.

Following these speeches other Timorese would make statements or ask questions of us. The Timorese spoke in Portuguese and their comments were interpreted into English. These meetings were always held in the presence of Indonesian Government officials.

At each of these meetings the Timorese expressed their affirmation of integration with Indonesia. They noted that union with Indonesia made sense in terms of geography, ethnic bonds and common history. Particular emphasis was placed on Timor's economic, social, educational and health requirements, and the conscientious efforts being made by the Indonesian Government to help in this regard.

The Timorese often referred to atrocities committed by the Fretilin when they had been in control. They indicated resentment towards foreign governments and individuals who seek to interfere in the internal affairs of Timor. They alleged bad faith on the part of some who express concern about human rights. On several occasions Australia was singled out for criticism.

It was not possible to meet with Fretilin forces nor did we attempt any such meetings. No evidence of Fretilin activity was noticed by the delegation and Indonesian control of the five towns we visited appeared secure. In some towns local militia seemed fairly numerous. Very few Indonesian forces were noticed, although we were introduced to several Indonesian officers.

Indonesian Government officials stated that there were only a few hundred Fretilin troops remaining. They have been offered general amnesty and a number have surrendered.

CONCLUSIONS

(1) Restrictions on the trip make it difficult to reach firm conclusions on (a) the question of whether the Timorese have freely chosen integration with Indonesia, and (b) the question of alleged atrocities by Indonesian or Fretilin forces. The Indonesians were concerned about our security and this may explain the reason for the restrictions.

(2) The delegation received the impression that the Timorese people were satisfied with Indonesian integration. It appeared as though the Indonesian Government was making a determined effort to assist Timorese economic development.

(3) There was no opportunity to investigate the charges of Indonesian or Fretilin atrocities as alleged in the subcommittee hearing. However, there was no indication of ongoing repression; quite the contrary, the people appeared free and uninhibited.

(4) There was no opportunity to investigate the extent of current use of U.S. military equipment in the conflict with Fretilin forces. Local militia were all armed with Sten guns or NATO type small arms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are addressed to the Department of State for its consideration. It is hoped that the Department can pursue all or some of these recommendations with the Indonesian Government and other interested parties:

(1) Neither the U.N. nor the former colonial administrator of East Timor, Portugal, have accepted the integration of East Timor as part of Indonesia. The United States does not challenge the position of the Indonesian Government that East Timor has become an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia. However, the Indonesian Government might profitably be encouraged to address the task of arriving at some mutually acceptable formula under which the United Nations could send a visiting mission to East Timor.

(2) It would be helpful if the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were permitted to visit East Timor for the purpose of (a) providing humanitarian relief, and (b) studying the conditions of prisoners of war.

Other nongovernmental humanitarian relief organizations might also be permitted to engage in relief work in East Timor.

Mrs. MEYNER. I developed an interest in the situation in East Timor during hearings on security assistance to east Asia conducted by the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, of which I am a member. I pursued that interest in the joint hearings conducted by this subcommittee and on my own on March 23. Soon afterward, the Government of Indonesia invited members of the two subcommittees to visit East Timor. Mr. Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, extended a personal invitation to me to visit the territory during the special study mission of my subcommittee to that region.

I accepted the invitation in the hope that I could learn more about the issues that were the focus of our joint hearings, especially the use

of American military equipment by Indonesia in East Timor and the question of self-determination by the East Timorese people.

The staff members who accompanied me on the trip encountered considerable difficulties in making mutually acceptable arrangements for the trip. In the end, the trip was obviously structured by our Indonesian escorts. However, I believe that the restrictions imposed by the Indonesians were largely motivated by legitimate concerns for the security of our delegation.

It took almost 3 days of traveling in order to spend 23 hours in East Timor. Clearly, 23 hours of observation does not an expert make. However, I can only report my own impressions as I saw them through my own eyes. I do not deny that others might see the same things differently.

One of the most surprising aspects of my trip was the extent of our travels. I had been led to believe beforehand that the Indonesians would not allow us to spend a night anywhere in the territory, and that our visit would probably be confined almost exclusively to the area around Dili, the capital of East Timor. To my surprise, however, we did not dally in Dili, but rather visited every corner of the territory—Viqueque, in the southeast; Baucau, in the northeast, where we spent the night; Bobonaro in the northwest; and Dili on the northern coast. I have brought along a map that you have that shows underlined the four towns that we visited. You might like to look at that.

Our delegation saw no evidence during the 23 hours we were there of Fretilin activity, nor did I notice any evidence of war damage. In each town the format was fairly similar during our 23-hour stay. We were received at the airstrip by large friendly crowds of people of all ages, many of them in colorful native dress. Both at the airstrips and in proceeding to the villages, we were greeted with banners, signs, and chants saying, "Viva Indonesia, viva Suharto, viva Jimmy Carter" and, yes, even "Viva U.S. Congress." Upon arriving at each village, we would proceed to a meeting hall, where we were addressed by village leaders. Following these speeches, other Timorese would make statements or ask questions of us. The Timorese spoke in Portuguese, and their comments were translated into English.

I am well aware of the charges that these receptions were manufactured for our benefit. However, I left these meetings with the strong impression that these people were not being forced to express views contrary to what they truly felt. I sensed a strong and sincere feeling by these villagers that they had had enough of killing and chaos and wanted to be left alone in peace so that they could go about the business of developing their land. Many of the villagers spoke about the centuries of Portuguese oppression that they had endured.

My report reaches four conclusions:

One, the restrictions which were placed on our visit made it difficult to reach firm conclusions on (a) the question of whether the Timorese had freely chosen integration with Indonesia, and (b) the question of alleged atrocities by Indonesian or Fretilin forces. I am of a mind that there were indeed atrocities on both sides in 1975.

Two, I received the impression that the Timorese people were satisfied with Indonesian integration and that the integration of East Timor into Indonesia is a fait accompli. It appeared as though the

Indonesian Government was making a determined effort to assist Timorese economic development.

Three, there was no evidence of ongoing repression in the territory that I could see. On the contrary, the people appeared free and uninhibited.

Four, there was no opportunity to investigate the extent of current or past use of U.S. military equipment by the Indonesians in their conflict with Fretilin forces.

I concluded my report with the recommendations that efforts should be made to permit missions by the United Nations and the International Red Cross to enter the territory to survey the situation in more detail and provide humanitarian relief. In addition, I expressed my hope that nongovernmental humanitarian relief organizations might be permitted to engage in relief work in the territory.

East Timor needs all the economic development help that it can get. Enough blood has been shed. As I said before, I sensed a powerful and persuasive desire by the people of East Timor for a peaceful and progressive future.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to applaud the intent of your subcommittee to examine the issue of self-determination for small territories. However, I would like to suggest that you examine additional examples, such as the former Spanish Sahara, where issues such as viability and popular will may appear in sharper focus.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for allowing me to testify on this subject of mutual concern. I would be delighted to try to answer any questions that might come to your mind.

Mr. FRASER. Thank you very much, Mrs. Meyner. Your suggestion in the closing part of your statement that we look at the subject of some self-determination for small territories, I think, is a very good one, and we had the thought of the problem of the Spanish Sahara, as you point out, Belize in Central America, maybe Djibouti in Africa.

It may well be that attempting to deal with these issues as a group might help throw some light on the U.S. policies and on world policies toward these areas. Because where there are large territories involved, of course, then more often there is more international interest, but I think small areas tend to be lost, as of not as much concern and not worth anyone's time and trouble.

You visited four towns. Did you get outside the towns on your visit?

Mrs. MEYNER. Not really. We would land on an airstrip that was near the town. The farthest outside we got was at Baucau, where we spent the night. The landing strip was about 45 minutes over a rather rough road into town, and that was the only time that we had a chance to see the countryside.

Mr. FRASER. You don't remember now, I expect, what portion of the population lives outside of the towns?

Mrs. MEYNER. I don't know. I do know there are about 600,000 people living on East Timor. It would just be a guess to say that the majority live in towns. It is hard to determine how people earned a living there. There just isn't very much going economically or agriculturally.

Mr. FRASER. Did you get into a discussion at all with the Indonesian authorities about the question of access by international organiza-

tions? I had the impression, although my memory is not clear on this, that there has been difficulty with the International Red Cross getting in there.

Mrs. MEYNER. There has. As far as I know, for some reason, we didn't really discuss it, the Indonesians have denied access by the International Red Cross to East Timor.

There was one point I think is interesting that I didn't bring out, and this was the use of American weapons in East Timor in 1975 and after that.

When we met in Djakarta with some of the top Indonesian military men, this was a day before going to East Timor, John Salzberg asked General Moerdani whether U.S. weapons had been used in 1975. He said, "Of course, these are the only weapons that we have. Of course there were U.S. weapons." His feeling is that they went there for a purpose that was a good one.

Mr. FRASER. What do the Indonesians say; why did they go into East Timor? Did they indicate what their reasons were?

Mrs. MEYNER. They said that because West Timor was Indonesian, it logically fell into the pattern that East Timor should be the 23d province of the Indonesian archipelago. They pointed out that Fretilin, the people against union in Indonesia, were few and sparse in number. That was their side of it, that Fretilin was mostly in the hills; that the majority of the people indeed wanted integration with Indonesia.

Mr. FRASER. If there were a plebiscite conducted under international supervision in East Timor, would that be a fair way of solving the case once and for all?

Mrs. MEYNER. It might have been a fair way shortly after 1975. I wonder if the situation hasn't gone on too long. I would think the people that are best able to get the answer to that would be in the United Nations or the International Red Cross. It was my feeling, from the people I visited, we talked with, that it was, as I said in my testimony, rather a fait accompli that East Timor was a part of Indonesia. This may not be true.

Mr. FRASER. I am thinking of the fact that the international community, that is, through the United Nations, did not recognize it, and leaves it, in a sense, as an unsettled issue.

Mrs. MEYNER. It does. It leaves it in limbo. I think that is too bad. One would like to see it settled and give the people a chance to determine their future, and I think plebiscite—

Mr. FRASER. Why would the passage of 2 years make referendum under international supervision either an improbable or—why does the lapse of time—

Mrs. MEYNER. I think a lapse of time doesn't make it improbable, but makes it more difficult.

Mr. FRASER. In terms of the Indonesian attitude, perhaps, they won't agree to it probably?

Mrs. MEYNER. I couldn't say. We would have to check with the Indonesians on that.

Mr. FRASER. I am sure they regard it as—

Mrs. MEYNER. The people of East Timor feel they are part of Indonesia, so why go in there and stir things up again. To their mind and

the mind of the people that we saw and met with, it was a fact. Now we had no chance to meet with any Fretilin or any of the dissidents.

Mr. FRASER. Were you able to meet with any people alone, without an Indonesian authority present?

Mrs. MEYNER. We at no time met with anybody alone. It was always in groups.

Mr. FRASER. Several Australian diplomats apparently went to East Timor and indicated in their report that they were put under restrictions as to what they could do. Your impression is it was purely for security reasons. Is there any reason why, once in a town, you couldn't have met separately with people, or was the schedule too tight?

Mrs. MEYNER. The schedule was very tight. It was extremely strenuous. We hardly had time to catch our breaths.

Mr. FRASER. Were you able to set the schedule, or did they set it for you?

Mrs. MEYNER. It was set up by the Indonesian Government. We were accompanied by a man and woman from the Indonesian Department of Defense. It was completely set up by the Government.

Mr. FRASER. Had you made an effort to try to set your own schedule or pace?

Mrs. MEYNER. Yes, a staff member with us, John Salzberg, had met or tried to arrange meetings with some people that he knew who might have given us another side to the story.

Mr. FRASER. That wasn't possible?

Mrs. MEYNER. That wasn't possible. It may not have been completely for security reasons, but I think they were concerned that an international event or even a tragedy could have taken place, like what happened in Holland. Often attention is focused on a situation when people are taken captive or held. I don't mean to overdramatize this, but I do think this was part of the reason why the Indonesians kept a very sharp eye on where we were going and what we were doing.

There were some armed guards around us. We were told these were East Timorese, not Indonesians, but I had no way of telling.

Mr. FRASER. The language of East Timorese, to an extent, is not an indigenous language, as Portuguese. You indicated the speaking was Portuguese.

Did you get any impression as to how the Indonesians are dealing with the language problem? They don't speak Portuguese?

Mrs. MEYNER. That is a good point.

Mr. FRASER. Are they dealing with that in some way?

Mrs. MEYNER. I have no way of telling that. I think they are, in that there are officials there that probably speak a little, but that is guesswork. They asked me to speak at each one of these village meetings. I should preface that by saying that most of the town officials made it very clear that they didn't want any interference in East Timorese affairs; they had had enough of that with the Portuguese. Many were critical of Australian interference, and I tried to make it plain to them that I wasn't there to interfere; that I had been invited by the Indonesian Government to take a look at East Timor; that I knew that East Timor needed a good deal of help, and that I would try to carry this message back and convey it to the President and my colleagues in the U.S. Congress.

Mr. FRASER. Did they indicate the strength of the Fretilin? Did they give you an estimate, or at least the armed forces, of the Fretilin?

Mrs. MEYNER. We didn't meet with any.

Mr. FRASER. Did the Indonesian or Timorese people at these meetings talk about it?

Mrs. MEYNER. I think the feeling was there were about 3,000 Fretilin and 300 or 400, or 400 or 500 Fretilin guerrillas in the hills. That may have been a low estimate.

Mr. FRASER. Three or four hundred active military and the larger number, 3,000, who might—

Mrs. MEYNER. This is the information that I received from General Moerdani. When you are there for such a short time under a structured trip, I do have to apologize for not really being an expert, but it is very, very difficult to get the answers. And if it was totally a show put on by the Indonesians, they put on an awfully good one. I sensed the feeling of the people that we met that they were very enthusiastic about union with Indonesia.

Mr. FRASER. And I gather about Jimmy Carter.

Mrs. MEYNER. Yes, very enthusiastic about Jimmy Carter, even Members of Congress, surprisingly enough. "Viva U.S. Congress." The word hasn't reached East Timor yet.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Derwinski.

Mr. DERWINSKI. You noted that there were certain restrictions placed on you which you basically assumed was for security purposes, safety, and security.

Mrs. MEYNER. I would suspect so. There may have been other reasons. I would think that would be the principal one.

Mr. DERWINSKI. I have a recollection that we were told by a witness some time ago, or it could have been in a briefing where I was given the information, that the Portuguese in the years they occupied the area had not invested any substantial amount of funds. That ties into your suggestion that they are in need of substantial economic development, which they presumably now might receive from the Indonesians, which perhaps in this sense at least the Indonesians, by trying to integrate them into their economy operation, might be doing more for the people there than the Portuguese every day. Do you have any feel of that?

Mrs. MEYNER. Hopefully, Congressman Derwinski, Indonesia has terrible economic problems. A lot is being done in Java, but that is one main principal island. There are a great many other places where the per capita income is way below any sort of world standard. They have got real problems, and you wonder why they want to add East Timor, to have it become just another problem, but I do feel that there was a sense from the Indonesian Government that they did want to help East Timor economically. By itself, if East Timor was independent, was an independent nation, they would have a pretty tough time making a go of it.

There is talk about oil in the area, offshore oil, but I didn't hear any more details of that.

Mr. DERWINSKI. And you note that the integration of the area with Indonesia, in your judgment, is a fait accompli.

Mrs. MEYNER. As I said, from the 23 hours I was there, and the people I talked to, the enthusiasm of the crowds with their signs, the villagers that we met with not only wanted it but felt it had already taken place, although there has been nothing official. Well, the Indonesian Government has made it official, but the United Nations and the rest of the world has not.

Mr. DERWINSKI. I have a recollection they were supposed to have held elections. Weren't they heading into an election period when you were there for a local Parliament?

Mrs. MEYNER. No; I heard nothing about that.

Mr. FRASER. There had been general Indonesian elections this summer.

Mrs. MEYNER. That would be a good question that I don't know the answer to. Did the East Timorese vote in the recent Indonesian elections?

Mr. SMEETON. Weren't local elections, John, slated to occur this spring?

Mr. SALZBERG. My recollection is that East Timor did not participate in the national elections. I might be wrong.

Mrs. MEYNER. It is my impression they did not. Since 1975, there have been no elections held. I don't think there have ever been elections held in East Timor. You see the Portuguese, it wasn't really a colony, but a military outpost. So they had a few people there. But they never did anything with the eastern section of the island of Timor.

Mr. FRASER. Mrs. Meyner, one of the questions that had arisen at an earlier hearing, were a number of people killed either in the fighting in East Timor or between the Indonesian forces and the Fretilin. Our department said they didn't have estimates that ran higher than I think 10,000, but I think Mr. Malik, the Foreign Minister, was quoted saying there were 50,000 killed, maybe. And I noticed in a publication that Tom Franck, a professor who will be testifying next month, in highlighting, referred flatly to the 50,000 figure. Did you get any sense about this?

Mrs. MEYNER. No sense about this, and I have heard everything from 10,000 to 50,000 to 100,000. There is a great difference between the estimates that I heard.

Mr. FRASER. There is obviously no way you can check that. One of the things we also heard, and I think this came from the State Department testimony, was that paratroopers who landed in Dili in December had been so savage in their assault that they were pulled out. Did you get a chance to find out anything about it in Dili what had happened there?

Mrs. MEYNER. No; but I have also heard the other side, that the Fretilin shot down the paratroopers as they were landing, or coming down by air. There was no verification of what happened there, just as we were unable to get any real facts on what happened to the five Australian journalists.

Mr. FRASER. Did the Indonesians say anything about having pulled out the paratrooper forces from Dili, as our State Department claims?

Mrs. MEYNER. I think they have.

Mr. FRASER. But that they pulled them out early on in the fighting.

Mrs. MEYNER. No; they did not. We did not ask that question, and they did not give us any information on that.

Mr. FRASER. I would like to express my personal thanks for the enormous investment of time and effort you made. I think your trip there is helping our committee—

Mrs. MEYNER. I am sorry I don't have anything more conclusive. All I could give was observations and not conclusive answers.

Mr. FRASER. But it helps us to begin to perhaps recognize that we have responsibilities to more than big issues and that particularly, like the last suggestion, that we should be looking to the generic problem rather than just a single place. I think that is a good point.

Mr. DERWINSKI. I thank you. You took time off from a very busy schedule to make this trip, and it certainly was not any easy pleasure trip to Paris, as the press likes to play up. I commend you for it.

Mrs. MEYNER. It was not particularly a junket.

Mr. DERWINSKI. For demonstrating the kind of work that the Congress does do.

Mrs. MEYNER. Well, thank you.

Mr. DERWINSKI. Especially since you are a very valuable member of our full committee.

Mrs. MEYNER. Thank you, Mr. Derwinski, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FRASER. Thank you very much.

Mr. Goodling apparently is still tied up, so we will turn now to our next witnesses, Prof. Shepard Forman and Prof. Elizabeth Traube. Perhaps they would be willing to appear together, and we can have both statements and then submit questions to them as a panel.

Mr. Forman, we seem to have you first here, if you want to proceed.

STATEMENT OF SHEPARD FORMAN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY, THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mr. FORMAN. Thank you, Mr. Fraser, and members of the subcommittee.

It is the beginning of the dry season in East Timor, and I worry that Indonesian troops might now be preparing a new offensive there.

The last of the monsoon rains have fed the rice fields, but well before the crop is harvested, there is likelihood that American-made armaments will begin to move from the coastal plains up into the mountains. One of the foci of any new offensive undoubtedly will be the mountain range of Mate Bian, the sacred heartland of the Makassae people, among whom my family and I lived and studied for 15 months in 1973-74.

I have no first-hand knowledge of the present state of the war or current conditions in East Timor. However, I do know, directly and indirectly, that the Makassae people have strongly resisted Indonesian occupation of their land and continue to do so. Some explanation of that resistance can be found in the written statement I have submitted to the subcommittee, and I hope you will read it for the background it provides for understanding the complex issues we face here today.

Mr. FRASER. Excuse me. Just so we are oriented here, I was looking at your written statement and discovered that you are not reading it