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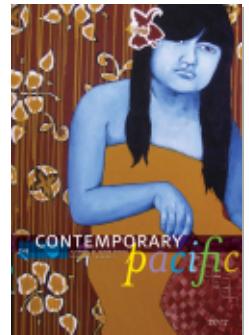
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reducing contributions from 12 percent to 8 percent (currently employees contribute 6 percent of their salary each month and employers contribute a further 6 percent; contributions were to be reduced to 4 percent each). The proposed legislation would also have reduced the amount of the fund permitted to be invested overseas from 50 percent to 15 percent. This was seen by many as a way to increase political interference in the provident fund. However, the Minister of Finance maintained that this move was proposed due to the need to maintain currency stability, given that foreign currency reserves were already very low. The bill was withdrawn for the midyear session of Parliament; it resurfaced for the November session of Parliament but was again withdrawn. In August reports that the provident fund was being pressured into buying long-term government bonds that were not of interest to commercial banks because they were not a good investment increased concern about political interference in the provident fund (*VDP*, 2 Aug 2003). Molisa has also been involved in internal struggles for leadership in the Vanua'aku Party, and some have questioned his role in government.

The political events of 2003 have been turbulent and many are ongoing. For 2004 we can therefore expect to see further developments in these areas. However, whether Vanuatu will settle into another period of relative stability, or whether scandal and changing alliances will continue to affect politics, remains to be seen.

ANITA JOWITT

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WEST PAPUA

The year 2003 was marked by a proliferation of erratic Jakarta politics toward Papua and a related reconfirmation of the role of the Indonesian National Military Forces (TNI) in the province. Parts of the military effectively induced powerful elements in the central government to support its presence in Papua, on the one hand by suggesting that there is a need to stem secessionism, and on the other hand by conniving at communal conflicts. In line with the current policy of the Megawati government, the military defines its role in Papua as safeguarding the unity of the nation and its activities there as necessary to prevent the “terrorist” acts of indepen-

dence movements. By referring to Papua as the second in line for secession after East Timor, elements of the military have practically sidelined Papua's civil society organizations, its intellectual elite, and significant parts of the population that support resolutions short of violence. Moreover, since the Bali bombings in October 2002 and the explosion in front of the Marriot Hotel in Jakarta in August 2003, the National Intelligence Agency (BIN) has positioned itself at the forefront of the war against terrorism and is attempting to take a leading role in drawing up plans for Papua.

Positive developments were expected to sprout from the Special Autonomy law for Papua (Law No. 21/2001, commonly referred to as Otsus, from its Bahasa Indonesia name of Otonomi Khusus), which would give more autonomy to local communities in terms of equal sharing of the benefits of resource extraction and democratic governance. But these faced a dead end after President Megawati promulgated a decree on the expedition of the implementation of Law No. 45/1999 regarding the creation of two new provinces (West Irian Jaya and Central Irian Jaya), three new regencies (Paniai, Mimika, and Puncak Jaya), and one municipality (Sorong). The plan to divide the province was actually devised in the early 1980s by then Irian Jaya Governor Busiri Suryowinoto and Minister of Home Affairs Supardjo Rustam. The idea was to Papuanize the bureaucracy, beginning at the district level, and create six provincial levels based on the administrative areas

demarcated by the colonial Dutch government. The plan was shelved largely because there were not enough qualified locals to fill the required positions. In 1999, the division of the province was proposed again by the transitional government of President Habibie as a way to speed up the "pemekaran" (blossoming), or administrative fragmentation, of the province. However, the law was suspended after sweeping resistance in Papua, where the provincial government and a majority of the people feared that it would spread discord among the people of Papua.

On 27 January President Megawati issued the decree that raised the matter again, apparently as a result of BIN and security leaders encouraging groups of Papuans to lobby for the change to three provinces. The decree was issued without consultation with local communities, the provincial government, or leaders of religious and other civil society organizations. Malcontent Papuan political elements were mobilized by Provincial Secretary Decky Asmuruf and Brigadier General (ret) Abraham Atururi, the former regent of the Sorong Regency who had lost against the current governor, Jaap Solossa, during the election rally in 1999. Shortly after the decree was issued, the Ministry of Home Affairs appointed Asmuruf as the chair of the assistance team for the pemekaran. During interviews with journalists, Asmuruf made no secret of his aspiration to become governor of Central Irian Jaya.

Despite growing controversy over the status of the province, the Minister of Home Affairs, Hari Sabarno,

inaugurated Atururi as the governor of West Irian Jaya in November, leading to a barrage of criticism from Papuan leaders and people. The Speaker of the Papua provincial legislature, John Ibo, said that the inauguration contradicted a recommendation issued by the People's Consultative Assembly during its latest annual session, recommending that the government should revise the law on the division of Papua. Atururi arrived in Manokwari in February to start work on the establishment of new provincial headquarters. On the way from Jakarta he stopped in Jayapura to present to Speaker Ibo an official BIN statement signed by its head, Lieutenant General (ret) Hendropriyono, saying that Atururi has the authority to establish West Irian Jaya. According to a Manokwari-based legal-aid organization, local customary leaders were supporting the creation of a new province because the division plans would lead to the establishment of twenty-eight new regencies, including Teluk Bintuni. The importance attached to the creation of a separate Teluk Bintuni regency is related to the operations of the Tangguh liquified natural gas plant in the area, managed by British Petroleum. The new regency, and the new province of West Irian Jaya of which it is part, will be abundantly rich in natural resources.

In Timika, the headquarters of the other new province, Central Irian Jaya, riots broke out when the head of the Timika legislative council, Andreas Anggaibak, supported by a group called "Group of Seven Tribes," announced the official establishment

of the province in late August. Anggaibak's alliance met with opposition from a youth group of the Amungme people led by Yopie Kilangin and supported by other ethnic groups in the regions. The conflict about pemekaran is an extension of older disputes between the communities close to the Freeport mining operations, relating to the misuse of company funds and collaboration with the military in the region. This year's outbreak of violence, during which five people were killed and dozens were injured, will not be the last until the social divisions are settled through the development of a sustainable plan for the extraction of resources and progress for the local communities.

For the pro-pemekaran players in Papua the game revolves largely around personal status, access to the territory's riches, and the Otsus funds. These funds are obtained from 2 percent of the total amount of the state budget and amounted to around 1.3 trillion rupiah (about US\$15.8 million) for the 2003 fiscal year. That the appointed governor of West Irian Jaya also supports the implementation of Otsus makes sense in this respect. Another possible motive for the partitioning of Papua concerns the role played by the military. One inevitable consequence of the creation of three provinces in Papua will be a significant increase in the number of troops in the territory. Each of the separate provinces will have its own regional military command (Kodam), with its network of district and sub-district commands (Koramil and Korem), at a more substantial level than presently exists. That this will

likely create a more effective system of repression throughout the territory arouses the suspicion that this may have been a major reason for dividing Papua.

As it will take at least ten years to get things running efficiently and because the capabilities of newly recruited personnel will initially be limited, the power and quality of the new civil administrations will be poor. In such a situation corruption and nepotism are likely to thrive, leading to more disenchantment among local people and stimulating local atrocities as well as violent protests. This may well pave the way for the Kodams to virtually establish military rule, and when necessary, impose martial law in response to unrest. Moreover, the National Military Forces will gain more opportunities to raise funds from external sources to supplement the 30 percent of its budget that is provided by the state. Central Irian Jaya has the world's largest gold and copper mine, operated by Freeport McMoRan. The security of the mine has so far been under TNI control, allowing the company access to profitable deals and virtual freedom of movement under the Suharto regime, and leading to an appalling record of human rights violations. The attempt of British Petroleum to build trust among the local communities in the Bintuni Bay, and involve them as stakeholders in the Tangguh operations, appears to have prompted elements of the armed forces to destabilize the region, thereby promoting the impression that they are needed to safeguard the operations from "Papuan rebels."

The politics and controversies surrounding the issue of pemekaran were widely discussed in the national news, generally in terms of the gradual acceptance of the politics of chaos as a way to gain political power and to secure access to resources and revenues. It was also argued that any division of administrative organization in Papua should be based on a thorough assessment of social and cultural realities. The focus should be on improving the quality and efficiency of governance at the district levels, and the creation of more districts with borders that match cultural, linguistic, and customary boundaries. Otsus provides for a fair representation of all groups in Papua and the division plans have frustrated those Papuans who were hoping that a Papuan representative council would allow local communities to play a democratic role in the development of their land.

Since the beginning of Megawati's presidency, the people of Papua seem to have no choice but to add the prospects of Otsus to the already extensive history of unfulfilled promises made by Jakarta. Again, their memories are imprinted with the failure of Jakarta in bringing social justice and opportunity to its citizens in Papua. Instead, policies have favored opportunities for the elite to gain access to sources of wealth. Having secured access to political power and lucrative business deals, significant numbers of the elite in Papua have ceased to insist on further reform; instead, they seek order and stability. At the same time, Jakarta feels ever freer to derail the dialogue-based

reconciliation initiatives of Papuans and their powerful and instructive nonviolent responses to military-instigated terror.

Amid significant international support for Otsus as the best available option to curtail the conflict in Papua and provide a better future for the Papuans, the National Intelligence Agency and the National Military Forces seemed to fear that all of this would give impetus to groups in Papua and foreign nongovernment organizations advocating independence. At the same time, Jakarta sees that the US and most European governments are most likely to agree to a crackdown on the “terrorist” Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, or OPM). In a spate of public speeches and during official meetings, military leaders and security people used rhetoric that downgraded the involvement of the military in terrorizing Papuan communities and emphasized the need to curtail terrorist activities that might destabilize the region. For example, the protest in Papua in early February about the pemekaran was followed quickly by responses of the Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, Major General (ret) Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, among others, stating that the international community should stop meddling in Indonesia’s internal affairs.

Yudhoyono’s attack was directed against foreign researchers and nongovernment organizations, particularly from Australia and the Netherlands, who are trying to mobilize support for the independence of West Papua, as such individuals and groups

did in East Timor in the years before independence was achieved there. Two days before the end of 2002, Yudhoyono declared that the Otsus status accorded to Papua (and Aceh) would be final, and any move to secede from the country would not be tolerated. He stated that there was no possibility for the two provinces to hold a vote of self-determination like that held in East Timor. Yudhoyono said that he knew that “political elements” from Papua had gone to many countries to get support, including the United States, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. President Megawati broached the issue of international pro-separatist groups during a visit of Australian Prime Minister John Howard in February. A few months later Howard offered to investigate all aid agencies working in Indonesia using Australian government funding.

In late 2002, the national news featured I Made Pastika, named *Time*’s Asian Newsmaker of the Year for his outstanding performance in finding the alleged perpetrators behind the Bali bombing. Not mentioned was his role as head of the police investigation into the killing of two American citizens and one Indonesian during an ambush near Timika of buses transporting schoolchildren of the Freeport international school on 31 August 2002. The investigation established convincingly that the shooting was the work of TNI Special Forces (Kopassus), and that it appeared to be related to their recent struggle with Freeport over alleged stealing of company property and demands for a financial increase of the security deal. With Pastika busy heading the investi-

gation into the Bali bombing, Papua lost an unusually daring head of police and there was a risk that the spotlight would come off the terrorist actions of Kopassus.

Nevertheless, Indonesia came under pressure from the United States because of the Timika ambush. In mid-January 2003, Nancy Spier, whose husband Rich Spier was killed during the ambush, lobbied US administration and congressional representatives to halt the International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding. Spier claims there is evidence that the Indonesian military was behind the ambush. Congress had first voted to restrict IMET funds for Indonesia in response to the 12 November 1991 Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor. All military ties were severed in September 1999 as the Indonesian military and its militia proxies razed East Timor following its pro-independence vote. Spier's campaign contributed positively to the discussion and the decision to suspend the funding for the training. Further information emerged in March about one of the possible motivations for TNI involvement in the ambush—to pressure the mining company to keep up protection payments to the military. A leaked report prepared for Freeport shareholders revealed that the company had paid over US\$11 million to the army over the last two years as part of this extortion racket. Previously the company had admitted to making a one-off payment of US\$37 million to establish a military base camp but denied making regular payments.

US legislators were obviously concerned about being seen to be

completely indifferent to the possible murder of two US citizens. On 16 July, the House of Representatives amended the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for 2004–2005 to bar IMET funding for Indonesia until it is certified that Indonesia is taking effective measures to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the Freeport murders. In late 2003, the US Congress approved US\$4 million for the Indonesian military for counterterrorist training. Early in 2004 there was talk about a joint police and military inquiry into the Timika ambush, which would be conducted in cooperation with the FBI. However, during the FBI's initial efforts to investigate, TNI officials would not let soldiers in Papua be interviewed without superiors present or permit the FBI to conduct forensic tests on evidence. It was only after Washington linked military assistance to cooperation that the FBI was allowed to bring home some evidence for analysis. It was widely discussed in international media that by focusing primarily on terrorism the United States is progressively committing a political blunder in Indonesia. It is much more important to assist the Indonesian government and Indonesian civil society in building democratic institutions, as well as revitalizing the economy and the educational system.

This year saw both the departure and the full-swing return of Kopassus. Kopassus withdrew from Papua after investigations revealed that twelve Kopassus members were behind the brutal assassination of Papuan leader Theys Hiyo Eluay in November 2001. At the farewell ceremony in late February, the TNI provincial chief, Major

General Mahidin Simbolon, stated that the team would not be replaced, considering the stable security situation in Papua. The trial of Kopassus members in relation to the killing of Eluay began on 3 January. Right after the beginning of the trial, military commander General Endriartono Sutarto maintained that a separatist group in Papua had been struggling to establish a public perception that the military was involved in a series of violent acts. On the same occasion, Indonesian National Police Chief General Da'i Bachtiar said that the police had always been impeded by gunshots during investigation of violent crime scenes in Papua. In April, the military court in Jakarta found seven Kopassus soldiers guilty of involvement in the death of Eluay and imposed relatively light prison sentences ranging from two to three-and-a-half years. These light sentences sent the message to the people of Papua that it is still very hard for them to receive justice.

On 4 April, the military command post Kodim 1702 in the central highland district of Jayawijaya was attacked by what the military quickly reported to be a group of OPM rebels. Some ten people seized twenty-nine M-16 machine guns, pistols, and a significant amount of ammunition. Two soldiers and one of the attackers died during the attack. Within a few days, Brimob (the mobile brigade of the police) and Kopassus troops from military headquarters in Jakarta were sent to Wamena for intensive military investigation. The raid of the Kodim office provided a clear excuse for Kopassus to return to Papua. Soon after the return of Kopassus, senior

TNI officials admitted publicly that soldiers may have been involved in the attack on the Kodim armory. Even so, the military response to the Kodim ambush was harsh. After a few days, the military commander for Papua, Brigadier General Nurdin Zainal, announced that the operation would continue until all the missing weapons were found. Within five days they recovered nineteen weapons, but the operation continued. Toward the end of April, nine staff members of the military office in Wamena were transferred to the Kodam in Jayapura in connection with their involvement in the incident. So far, excessive verdicts have been passed on the "OPM" weapon thieves and thirteen "OPM leaders" in Wamena who were suddenly arrested and some of them were secretly transferred to the court in Jakarta. The Jayapura-based military command alleged that only a few houses had been burned during the operation because they were used as hiding places for OPM members.

An ad hoc team called Coalition, consisting of NGO workers and people from religious organizations, was set up to monitor the case and to provide legal aid to the arrested. They encountered great difficulties in getting access to the region and in being able to visit and talk to the detained. In late May, the military in Wamena managed to intimidate seven witnesses to withdraw incriminating statements they have made in their testimony to the Coalition. At the same time, two members of the Coalition were interrogated by the military without having been charged. Nevertheless, in the months following the attack on the Kodim armory, the

Coalition was able to confirm a spate of communications about burning of tens of houses; destruction of villages (most notably the village of Kwiya-wagi in the Kuyawage district); rape of women; indiscriminate killing of men; and over a thousand people seeking refuge in Tiom, Ilaga, and Mulia. Moreover, the Coalition's lobby toward the Indonesian Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) and regular calls from leaders of religious groups in Papua resulted in the formation of an investigative team in mid-July that was scheduled to commence its investigations in August. It took until January 2004 before it was officially announced that a Komnas HAM team would begin to probe human rights violations in Papua.

Over the course of the year, it became increasingly difficult for human rights and legal aid organizations to conduct their work freely, in an atmosphere of ongoing harassment and intimidation. On 29 December 2002, the *Jakarta Post* reported that unidentified men shot four women, including Elsie Rumbiak Bonay, the wife of Joanis G Bonay, director of the Papua-based Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy (ELSHAM). The shooting happened near an immigration post close to the Indonesia–Papua New Guinea border. The police failed to hold an on-site investigation after gunmen fired at a joint police-military convoy heading for the site of the shooting. Two military personnel were wounded in the attack. National newspapers reported that the head of the Kodam believed that Mathias Wenda, a prominent OPM member, was responsible for the shootings. ELSHAM speculated that

the attack against Bonay's wife might be related to the human rights group's recent accusation that the military was behind the August 2002 Freeport ambush. In June 2003, the new TNI military commander, Major General Nurdin Zainal (who replaced Brigadier General Simbolon, reassigned to the army's command in Jakarta because of his links to the Timika attack) proceeded with a lawsuit against ELSHAM regarding the organization's initial findings in its investigation into the Timika shooting. Since then, ELSHAM workers, legal aid activists, and their relatives have increasingly received threats in connection with their statements to the media regarding the Timika and Eluay cases.

The behavior of the military led to tensions and stress among local communities, and throughout the year, many people were forced to surrender as OPM members. These surrenders were then reported by the military as the results of their persuasive approach. While the 2002 Freeport shooting appears to be related to concerns over the security deal between Kopassus and the mine, the Wamena case highlights the perverse cooperation between elements of the Free Papua Movement and the security forces. The regional command structures of Kopassus have seemingly unlimited power to terrorize local communities.

Toward the end of 2003, Papua-based newspapers speculated extensively about another strategy pursued by the military to exert control over Papua, reminiscent of the dynamics of the violence that victimized major parts of East Timorese society for

decades. After some two years of unrest in Papua over the establishment of the Laskar Jihad militia in the towns of Sorong and Fak-fak, further rumors circulated about the military helping to establish bases for militias. These were provoked by the reports that a former East Timor militia leader, Eurico Guterres, planned to set up a nationalist youth group called Front Pembela Merah Putih (Red and White Defenders Front) in Timika, and news about the appointment of a new chief of police for Papua, Timbul Silaen, who had been police chief in East Timor during 1998–1999. Guterres worked alongside Silaen in East Timor and was convicted of committing crimes against humanity in East Timor. He has been sentenced to ten years but is not yet imprisoned, as his appeal is pending. Silaen was accused but cleared of a range of crimes in East Timor.

The proliferation of militias is nothing new in Indonesia. The New Order regime under President Suharto made systematic use of civilian militias. While it may have been a standard counterinsurgency tactic, the result was deeper polarization of society in troubled areas, and less accountability on the part of the government. Youth paramilitary groups including Pemuda Pancasila and Banteng Pemuda (the latter is now headed by Guterres and is affiliated with Megawati's PDI Perjuangan, or "Democratic Party of Struggle") were formed to mobilize against political opposition on behalf of the ruling party, Golkar. These groups set a precedent for the proliferation of militias after Suharto fell. The problem is

that previously they all answered to Suharto and Golkar; now they answer to a host of different officials and entities at all levels of society.

It is unclear whether the Front Pembela Merah Putih is set up to control the direct presidential election on 5 July 2004 and the election for legislators on 5 April. However, the buildup to the elections will likely be used by the military as an excuse to increase its vigilance in areas that it can present to Jakarta as vulnerable to disruption by rebels. There are numerous tensions that can be triggered into conflict, perhaps the most vulnerable being the widespread opposition to pemekaran. People opposed to this administrative fragmentation are generally politically apathetic or support Golkar, while the supporters of pemekaran, including immigrants, business people, and certain bureaucratic elites, support Megawati's PDI Perjuangan or various Muslim parties. By late 2003, the friction had increased markedly between the Papuan Regional General Elections Commission (KPUD) and the General Elections Commission in Jakarta (KPU) about the appointment of a secretary to the KPUD provincial chapter in West Irian Jaya to verify legislative candidates in the newly formed province. The government of Papua in Jayapura has accused the KPU of being infected with government interests, as acting governor Atururi has required all legislative candidates to accept the new province of West Irian Jaya, even though the province is not mentioned in the Election Law.

The majority of people in Papua are generally not interested in the

elections. They sense the interference of the central government and see that it has no political commitment to solve the prolonged conflict with Papua. In both national and provincial newspapers, critical observers have noted that the elections could turn violent in Papua if political parties supporting pemekaran are defeated. This could provide a convenient legitimization for the military to flex its muscles, which in all probability will lead to violations of human rights, most likely in the highland region of Jayawijaya and locations along the border with Papua New Guinea. In any case, the disconnect between Papua and Jakarta will widen. Government leaders and national policymakers increasingly tend to rely on information they receive from intelligence reports produced by a variety of sources with questionable interests, generally conveying an exaggerated picture of what is happening in Papua.

The unrelenting position of the Indonesian government with respect to carrying Otsus into effect; the pressing ahead with the formation of two new provinces; and the scarcely legitimate and disproportionate military operation in Wamena all bluntly signal the government's inclination toward foolhardiness, violence, intimidation, and injustice. Not surprisingly, many Papuans feel that the previous Suharto-led New Order regime has made a comeback and is again frustrating their often moderate aspirations. The difference from five years ago is that corruption and nepotism are now decentralized, with numerous Papuan leaders playing a part in a system that effectively rewards people

who seek opportunities to redeem past grievances for cash.

This year was characterized by increasing military aggression, a further crippling of the provincial government, and an avalanche of astonishment among the people of Papua about Jakarta's lack of consideration for the concerns of the people and its ignorance of the reasons behind Papuan resentment. Ironically, certain elements in Jakarta who claim to be defending the territorial integrity of the Indonesian Republic, by their actions actually strengthen the secessionist movement, both national and international. Developments in 2003 have again shown that Jakarta's conduct toward Papua falls woefully short of the standards Papuans are entitled to expect from a government that claims to follow the Pancasila-established principles of democracy and pluralism. This bodes ill for the still viable social basis in Papua that supports a peaceful solution through dialogue and increased sovereignty.

JAAP TIMMER

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