

BLACK BANS ON INDONESIA NOW.

East Timor is now under attack from a self styled "Anti-Communist Army", operating from Indonesian bases, utilising Indonesian arms and Indonesian troops and protected by six Indonesian naval vessels, including landing craft.

The Indonesian navy, patrolling coastal waters within East Timor's maritime limits has twice landed troops on the East Timor coast. The fiction has been spread that the "Anti-Communist Army" is led by the Timor Democratic Union (UDT) but the facts are that the UDT did not have its present aims of integrating East Timor into Indonesia or its arms or so much as the ability to organise an army after its defeat by Revolutionary Front of East Timor (FRETILIN) until its leaders fled to Indonesia. The warfare, the conflict, the bloodshed, the violence now renewed in East Timor are the direct responsibility of the Indonesian Government.

From this cloaked invasion, this paper pretence of "civil war", this deliberate violation of East Timor sovereignty, Indonesia can now open any kind of attack on East Timor it pleases without the formality of a declaration of war or any further act of overt aggression. All Indonesia needs to do is increase the numbers of its troops pretending to be "Anti-Communist Timorese" and invade from the sea a few more towns to "protect refugees" and it can win control of most of lowland East Timor. The rest of the world's governments, including the "revolutionary" governments of the Soviet Union and China, have allowed Indonesia a free hand to take these first steps toward invasion. They will remain equally silent in the face of the second, third and fourth steps. There are names for aggression and this silence in the face of it: Imperialism and Stalinist betrayal.

FRETILIN has so far courageously fought the Indonesians and their collaborators. The soldiers of FRETILIN have courage, and they are fighting for their homes and their freedom. In such a cause, they will continue to fight well, as long as their arms and ammunition hold out. Politically, the leaders of FRETILIN are very far from showing the courage demonstrated by their supporters. Last week they cabled the Pope to intervene. A day later they proposed to — of all people — the Indonesian army to seal the border with Indonesian Timor. Only one description is possible of these ludicrous essays in "diplomacy". They show the total bankruptcy of the FRETILIN leadership — Leaders who cannot but see the total Portuguese inability to make the slightest resistance to Indonesian intrusions, but who refuse to declare their country independent and their party its government are selling out in advance the national independence their soldiers are dying for. The level of this cowardly leadership, afraid of nothing more than power and independence being placed in its own hands, was exemplified two weeks ago in Ramos Horta's announcement that after talks with Indonesia's Embassy in Canberra he was sure Indonesia would not invade East Timor. This was too much even for the CPA weekly TRIBUNE, which abandoned its accustomed servile publication of Horta's press statements to AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW.

Portugal has already succumbed to what is in effect an Indonesian ultimatum to restore an "orderly de-colonisation" — that is, protect the discredited UDT which had been thrown out of East Timor by almost the whole nation after 10 days — or allow Indonesia to take its place. Portugal cannot comply with Indonesia's demands, — though she has done her best — and cannot defend East Timor against Indonesian troops. It is doubtful whether even the FRETILIN leaders any longer believe that Portugal can play any role greater than an excuse for FRETILIN'S abdication of power, as their pathetic manifestoes to the "Australian people" strongly attack Portugal. They merely hope that if they show

their “moderation” by not taking power either the Pope will reward them with a miracle, or Australia may yet benevolently protect these nationalists in search of an imperialist overlord.

Not Indonesia, not Portugal, not Whitlam, nor the Pope offer East Timor any way out. Not governments but peoples, not the ruling classes but the workers and peasants can defend East Timor. Black bans, protest strikes and demonstrations must begin now before Indonesia pours more troops into East Timor in the guise of UDT guerillas or lands more paratroops at Dili to protect refugees. The Campaign for Independent (read “Portuguese”) East Timor, ready to stage marches at the drop of a hat for Australian “mediation” with Indonesia plans no demonstration this week against the first stage of Indonesian invasion. Such priorities are to be expected from an organisation whose main spokesperson, Denis Freney, defends the murders of Vietnamese Trotskyists by Ho Chi Minh’s government. The ‘Trotskyist’ left on the other hand simply plagiarise, naturally without acknowledgement, part of the position of the Committee for Solidarity with the East Timor Revolution attacking FRETILIN for complicity with Portuguese colonialism. Our position was first stated on September 4. Within a week the Socialist Labor League also decided there might be something wrong with a nationalist organisation supporting the perpetuation of Portuguese colonialism. Two weeks later the Socialist Workers League came round to this view as well. In time, the Spartacist League may also decide to criticise FRETILIN’s capitulations to Portuguese imperialism. More is required of these groupings, however, than the ability to quote from our leaflets. The SWL, for example, still has political confidence in FRETILIN’s leaders; no doubt the SWL like FRETILIN, relies on the Pope to keep Indonesia out of Timor. More, it demands, not from FRETILIN, which controls all East Timor, but from Portugal, a “grant” of independence. Revolutionaries ought to know that independence is taken by force, not given away by imperialism. Action is needed, not after, but before, Indonesia escalates the level of invasion. These groups can play an important role in accelerating the imposition of black bans on Indonesian shipping IMMEDIATELY and building actions around such labor initiatives. Let us demand action from them NOW.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR ACTION AGAINST INDONESIA NOW. INDEPENDENCE FOR EAST TIMOR THROUGH A WORKERS AND PEASANTS GOVERNMENT > MILITARY SUPPORT FOR FRETILIN