

# West People

## Action Update

Nº 00 30p

The Network Newsletter of support groups for the Liberation Army of the Free West Papua Movement

### From the Jungles and Mountains of West Papua: Greetings from the Liberation Army of the Free West Papua Movement (TPN/OPM)

Dear all, supporters of West Papua,  
We would like to thank you all in Britain and Europe for your understanding and support on the cause of West Papua struggle.

For the first time ever, we, the people in the jungle, have the chance now to communicate directly to outside world, to share what we are doing and why. We hope the communication will continue until West Papua is free.

We hereby present a brief history, basic principle and future hope for the struggle so that we have an understanding of what and why we are fighting for West Papua.

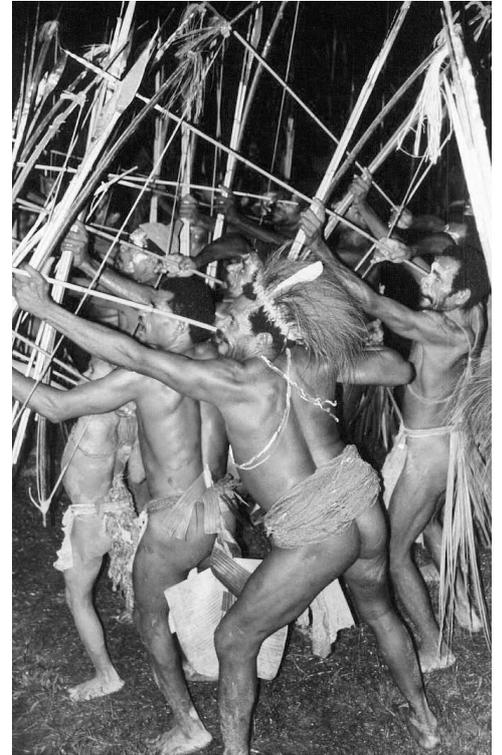
We would like to thank them the OPM

Support Groups throughout the UK and Europe. In particular, we thank you for the actions taken on October 4, 1999 in support of our cause.

We have our common enemy, and we need to work together, throughout the world, to fight against it, to destroy it, to make it disappear from this planet earth. We can only make it happen if we are united. The unity of all people in the world will make it happen.

Yi Wa o!  
Just Leave Us, Please.

(cont'd page 2)



### Bristol Double-whammy

As part of the national day of action on 4th October, in solidarity with the Free Papua Movement (OPM), activists from across the SouthWest occupied both offices of Rio Tinto in Bristol. Rio Tinto is the largest mining company in the world, supporting oppressive regimes in return for military protection of their profitable operations. In West Papua, together with the brutal Indonesian military they have inflicted massive environmental devastation and human suffering. However in the face of corporate and state violence the people of West Papua have fought back.

The aims of the action in Bristol were to disrupt the business of the company, to expose their abuses and show solidarity with the OPM, and take action with activists from other areas. It was successful on all counts. Just before 9am, 12 suited activists walked past security (busy dealing with diversionary "drunks") and occupied the Mining and Exploration offices on the 7th floor. Police arrived very quickly in

5 cars and 3 vans, trashing a door and office equipment while clearing activists out. After an hour people left with no arrests to join the picket outside. Police confiscated a d-lock from one occupier and banners after a banner drop from a nearby footbridge. After a break for lunch and getting the d-lock back from the cop shop, the well-dressed rabble visited the second offices (central registration) for more of the same. The d-lock was put to good use as two women locked on to each other and a filing cabinet. In another office files were well shuffled, and next door a man barricaded himself in and got down to some useful office work. Three were arrested and held overnight for Breach of the Peace. All the time outside leaflets were given out and the buiding transformed with banners.

People involved felt very positive about the first regional action in the South West, with lots of useful lessons and good experience of working together. The SWARM (South West Active Resistance Movement) is alive.

### An Arco Infiltration

The oil giant ARCO are involved in the exploration and development of Benoui Bay off West Papua and give economic and political support to the murderous Indonesian regime.

On October 4th their offices in Guilford were invaded by a dozen besuited Brighton people who went almost totally unnoticed by staff for up to half an hour. During this time they walked around the finance department, reading and re-organising files, losing keys to locked filing cabinets, having creative fun with computers and distributing hundreds of flyers into files, handbags and outgoing mail.

When people eventually left, the fire alarm to the

three floored building mysteriously went off. Two people were chased by security for a mile across town before making a cheeky getaway in a taxicab. The workers had the chance to wonder what the fuck was going on for an hour on full wages; the company lost hundreds of worker hours and they'll be discovering our flyers for years to come!

### Right Attitude, Wrong Target

British Gas Plc is known to be behind a number of gas exploration projects in West Papua. As a result Manchester activists invaded a British gas regional office, only to find out that British Gas Trading is NOT British Gas!!! It's Centrica, completely separate from BG plc who does the exploration/exploitation. Same directors as used to be with British Gas before demerger two years ago. Ever since both companies have traded under the same name despite being separate.

As the Manchester activists said at the time "Would have been good to have known this beforehand, before being told such by smug managers." Nevertheless having demerged so recently both companies' holdings are partly built on west papuan blood. The group intends to do more actions in future, if they're given better information, that is (sorry says inadequate corporate researcher!).



Around 1511, some Portuguese sailors found a big island north of Australia. It never occurred to them that it might already have a name, so they called it New Guinea. They wandered off shortly afterwards, as explorers will. In 1700 the Dutch arrived, and they weren't as laid back. They invaded and started plundering. The Germans and the British dived in at about the same time, and that's how it came to be divided up.

After this it all gets pretty boring, with old gits getting obsessed with lines on maps, until 1969, when the OPM (Free Papua Movement) started kickin up shit. This was a reaction to the 1963 invasion of West Papua by Indonesia, which stopped the independence process. Indonesia promised to give independence, but of course this was bollocks. They killed some 300,000 people at east, and are still killing anyone who opposes them, with help from the West, particularly the US and Britain. Despite this mass murder, tribal people continue to resist the destruction of their homeland, race and cultures.



# A Message from the Mountains and Jungles of West Papua.

(cont'd from page 1)

The Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merderka - OPM) was established in 1962 after a very long battle against the colonial powers that started in Biak Island, centuries before. Its founder, Seth Roemkorem is the person whom all people in West Papua pay tribute to. He had great courage for his people, and he sacrificed his life for the cause. On July 1st, 1970, the OPM announced its existence and resistance. The day was declared for West Papua and it is always a day for us forever.

The OPM members are the people of West Papua. We cannot draw the line between the people and the

OPM. After the struggle started in Manokwari, it spread to Biak, Jayapura (capital of Irian Jaya) and other regions like Nabire, Merauke and finally Jayawijaya (in the highlands).

In the first 10 years, the bird's head and Biak became the strongholds of the OPM. However, Indonesia has successfully cracked down by burning the villages and gardens and killing the people. Several flag raisings occurred and the response from Indonesia has been as usual, execution.

West Papua has lost many of its potential figures. After Seth Roemkorem was slaughtered, Arnold Ap (a musician and anthropologist) was dumped into the Pacific Sea after being shot at night on the beach in Jayapura in 1984.

Over the last decades, the highlanders (who for the most were only 'contacted' by the outside world in the 1960s) saw that the modern world is mad. They joined the OPM and have been fighting ever since. Some tribes hold strong in their struggles and the government cannot do anything to destroy them. We are in the jungles, we are in towns, we are at the colleges, we are in the churches, in the government offices, and we can be easily found everywhere (except by Indonesians!). In other words, the stronghold of the OPM is all over the island. We have started fighting, we are still fighting and we will never give up fighting.

The OPM supporters are now openly demanding for their self-determination. Some met the former Indonesian President in a National Dialogue facilitated by the church. The result is that majority people in West Papua, either who were originally from Java, Bali, Sumatra, Borneo, Sulawesi, and Molucas are joining together and saying, "Go away Indonesia!"

## Basic Principles

The Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merderka - OPM) was originally established as a response to colonial powers that do not put human being as human being on their colonialism policies, but rather natural resources and wealth; and making humans as objects of their exploitation. This is a huge contrast to the value inherited by almost every tribal people in the world. In one side, the value for profit or wealth is above all. That is why most of the world governments always justify their environmentally exploitative work with environmental assessment reports. They even justify the deaths of tribal people as the costs for development by their human rights organizations. The main thing in their minds is PROFIT, PROFIT and PROFIT.

On the contrary, the tribal way of living is always in harmony to all beings. Tribal life is harmonious to other beings on this planet. Even though some argue that there have been wars among tribes in West Papua, we can argue that the number of deaths in tribal wars and now is interesting to notice. Almost 300,000 people of West Papua have lost their lives during the Indonesian occupation since 1962 (i.e., just in about 35

years). In the same period, almost all of the forests in the island have lost their life because of being cut and taken away and also some dried out due to modern chemical waste in the mining areas. At the same time, some of the mountains in the highlands have become valleys (due to mining operation). Some of the water becomes poisonous to all living creatures. Our Sago trees have been cut down and turned into settlements for foreigners. Some lands have been taken away for "developments."

Are these all helpful? If so, in what ways? We have been living in the island for thousands of years and we had kept the resources very well. However, only in less than 50 years, almost all have gone now. How can it be justified that modern life is better than tribal life?

The struggle to free West Papua is not to take away one government and then replace it with a new government. We do not want to administer ourselves the capitalists "profit-making". It is a struggle between modern society and tribal people. It is a struggle between an ecologically friendly, harmonious life and an environmentally exploitative one. It is a struggle between making profits and disregarding all the rest, with keeping all things and beings as they are and living in harmony with them.

It is a challenge for all governments of modern society, either to repeat their previous misconduct by wiping out tribal people like what had happened in Africa, America, and Australia, or to repent from it and to redeem their reputation, at least in New Guinea Island.

The OPM is just for that purpose, just to prove how the world civilization is behaving towards tribal people on this earth, particularly in this 21st century.

It is important to make clear here that the OPM is not structured hierarchically as the organization of state armies are. The OPM is the people and it is led by at least three Regional Commanders: The North, South and Central/ Highlands. Each commander acts independently and separately as a unit. They only communicate when acting, not to consult but to inform.

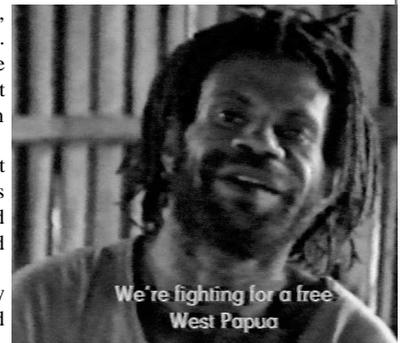
"Flag raisings", "independent movements" and such have become burning songs lately in West Papua. People do not care if they get shot anymore. It seems like freedom is there already on their hands. Then people might ask, "Do they want a nation state called West Papua?" The answer is of course, "Nein!" We instead want to be left alone as we have been and as we are. It does not matter if we are regarded as primitives. It does not bother us if we are seen as cannibals. It is of course, okay for us if we are just with penis gourds and illiterate. It is our life, and it is our business. And we want to live just as we are, forever. We want to be battling among ourselves and it is fine. It does not destroy as much as modern community is doing. We do not want outsiders to devalue our identity and our culture. We do not want foreigners to see us as less than human being. We do not want others to regard us as useless and then sell us to capitalists. We are humans and we are fighting back against exploitation.

## Ambros Aminin, OPM Regional Commander.

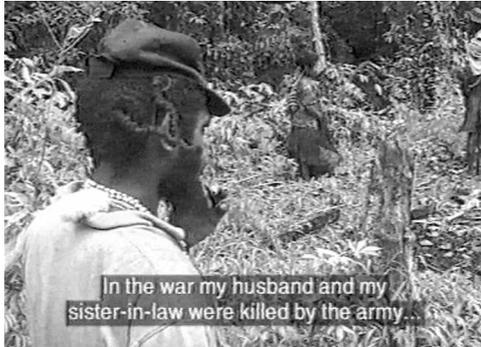
“ We are fighting to free West Papua from modern civilisation, nothing else. The most important thing is to free West Papua. With this motivation, we stay in the jungle, even though we face a lot of problems and obstacles. The important thing is to get freedom for West Papua. This is the story of why we are fighting in the forest or why I myself joined the OPM.

I am a native Papuan, and I have the right to live on this land. But other people who have no right on this land come and take over this land, while the native is forced out from our own land and chased into the jungle. This is my own nation and my own land. Why should I be chased from my own land?

I will die. My next generation with my hair, my colour of skin, my language, my culture, my arts and dance that characterise this land all will disappear forever. The Papua land, the one of the most beautiful lands on this earth. This land is our heritage, the Papuans, with its population of about 1 million people. It is the western part of the second biggest island on this earth, lies on the north of Australia. Four centuries ago, we Papuans enjoyed what is called "freedom". Then came the colonialism era, starting with the colonialism of the British, then the Dutch, (Japan), and now the Indonesians. These have caused us to loose our freedom. We want to destroy the Indonesian neo-colonialism. To force Indonesia to return to their home country and leave us free from them, and we will live in our own land called West Papua. ”



We're fighting for a free West Papua



In the war my husband and my sister-in-law were killed by the army...



...and they burned the houses.



So now I've been suffering because of all this.



So I must get my freedom from the Indonesians. I have to keep fighting.



And look, my babies I took with me when they were small - now they're growing up.

We need to stop exploitation of natural resources by multinational corporations. We need to stop exploitation of tribal people in West Papua. We need to stop the religious organizations, governments, and NGOs/Aid Organizations to destroy the culture of people in West Papua.

On our web page <http://www.eco-action.org/opm/> you will read some views about our struggle from some of our fighters. You can send your advice and views as well to [opmsg@eco-action.org](mailto:opmsg@eco-action.org) so that we can promote collaboration in our struggle.

We would like to ask "the people" in the West as individuals, not as government officials or business executives. We would like to confront the whole modern civilization to support the struggle of people in West Papua as tribal people.

1. Put pressure on the governments who claim to hold ethical foreign policy but still sell arms to Indonesia.
2. Put pressure on the Java regime.
3. Put pressure on the corporations who are destroying us and our lands.
4. Support the people who are fighting in the jungles
5. We all need to work together against our "Common Enemy"

Message Ends...



“ We have always been with the OPM. We are not afraid. Our children are small so they do not understand our struggle. But as they grow up, they will also follow the OPM. ”

## News from West Papua

After the political and military defeat in East Timor, Indonesia is now acting brutally against any views that threaten the integrity of the Indonesian state. The Current President of Indonesia, Mr. Abdulrahman Wahid (alias Gus Dur) and his vice president Ms Megawati Sukarnoputri have said that their position is united with the people. However, they have made their political view clear - they will crush any struggle that expresses cultural identity. It was Megawati Sukarnoputri who strongly criticised Habibie's approval of a democratic referendum in East Timor this year. She shares the 'same mind' as her deceased father 'Sukarno' who was the first Indonesian dictator.

Many incidents of resistance and state brutality have

occurred in West Papua that cannot be reported because of the isolation of the area. Exploitation of natural resources and the people continues, justified as economic development.

There have been a number of Papuan flag-raising and demonstrations in both West Papua and Jakarta. In Jayapura, the capital of W.Papua, over a thousand participated. The people are demanding that the government listens to and accommodate the aspiration of Papuans to self-determination. In response, some have been killed, some are in prison and others have been severely injured.

Here are some incidents that occurred recently in West Papua.

On **February 26, 1999**, the "100 Team" from West Papua went to Jakarta and met Mr President and his armed commanders and demanded to regain independence of West Papua which was taken away by Indonesia.

From **March 1999**, Across West Papua the people started establishing posts/centres at which they could distribute information about the political situation and act as places for discussion. The Regional commander of the police banned the activities but the Tribal Leaders rejected the ban and asked the commander to ban Mr President's response in the meeting of February 26: "Go back and reflect on your demand for independence!"

On **July 26, 1999**, a video entitled "Blood on the Cross" by Mark Davis was released, which exposed the complicit role of the British SAS and the International Committee of Red Cross. In the video, one of the OPM/TPN leaders re-declared war against Indonesian government and the giant Freeport MacMoRan, Inc.

**September 2, 1999**, at 11:00 local time Indonesian police destroyed a Papuan Post at Jl. Nikolas Kabes, in Kaimana, Fak-Fak Regency. The police disconnected the phone and electricity cables.

**September 11**, at 03:00 am the Indonesian police took Yulianus Werfete who was staffing a village post/centre. However, many people surrounded the police station and demanded that he was released. Faced with the mass action the police had to release him.

**September 21 and 29, 1999.** Members of the OPM Political organisation in West Papua, the FORERI in the village of Kaimana, (Fak-Fak region) were summoned by the police and interrogated about the activities of FORERI.

**September 24, 1999.** The Jakarta Post (9/26/99) reported one Papuan was shot to death by Indonesian police. Two others were seriously injured and are in hospital. The articles says,

"Hospital sources in Manokwari confirmed that John Wamafma, 30, a farmer, died of bullet wounds.

## Resources

### West Papua Action Update

This! It is intended to be a quarterly newsletter, but future events may necessitate more or less frequent publication. For this reason subs are for a number of issues, rather than a period of time. A five-issue sub is **£1.50 + postage (Inland £1.25, EU £2.00, Worldwide £5.50)** If you want copies to distribute, get in touch with us.

### West Papua Video Compilation (3hrs)

Three films covering the history of the West Papuan struggle with interview with OPM fighters in the Bush. Amazing footage that shows how the tribal people live and resist in the wild forests and mountains. One film concentrates on the recent British hostage situation and exposes the involvement of UK based mercenaries, the SAS and the Red Cross in the massacres that followed. Both shocking and inspiring. **£3 + postage (Inland £1.00, EU £2.00 Worldwide £3.00)**

### Rumble in the Jungle: Fighting For Freedom in West Papua (22 pp)

An interview with a representative of the OPM. The interview covers: Papuan traditional culture, the impact of the Indonesian occupation, multinational mining scum, the OPM and resistance to Indonesian rule, women in the struggle, West Papua after Suharto and what the future holds. A reprint from the radical ecological journal Do or Die. **£0.60 + postage (Inland 30p, EU 40p, Worldwide £1.10)**

### Forgive them for they do not know what they are doing! (52 pp)

says Former President of Indonesia and a West Papuan tribesman replies: "I cannot forgive 'you' and 'them' because they have killed my father in front of my two eyes!" This booklet challenges the modern community and Indonesia as its miniature, saying, "As long as profit is above humanity, we cannot forgive all the time!" **£1.20 + postage (Inland 40p, EU 80p Worldwide £2.00)**

### West Papua Corporate Factsheet

An up-to-date list of the companies, institutions and individuals who continue to destroy West Papua. Are one of the companies responsible near you? Find out and take action. **£0.30 + postage (Inland 30p, EU 40p Worldwide £1.10)**

### E-mail News List and Website.

There is a low-volume news list. Send a message to [opmsg@eco-action.org](mailto:opmsg@eco-action.org) asking to go on the opm news list. The web address is <http://www.eco-action.org/opm/>

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'Forgive them for...' (pamphlet)	-		
West Papua Corporate Fact Sheet	-		
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		Total	

Send this form with a blank postal order to the address on the back page. Contact us if you want to give a large donation.



Two others -- Abraham Mambraku, 30, and Markus Kambu, 18 -- are being treated in intensive care. Manokwari military police chief Lt. Asmil Umar pledged that if there was evidence that the deaths were caused by "improper police procedure" those responsible would be held accountable. However, he underlined that there must be solid evidence, including witnesses, if the allegations are to be followed up. Several community leaders on Saturday expressed their disgust to the Jayapura governor and called for the dismissal of Manokwari district police chief Lt. Col. RE Hutabarat. "The people's aspirations deserve to be heard," Governor Freddy Numberi said.

**October 16, 1999.** In reaction to the deaths and also in reaction to the Indonesian government's plan to divide the province into three provinces, people in Timika, in Jayapura and other regions did the demonstrations and asked the government of Irian Jaya to refuse the plan. The people's representative of West Papua conducted an emergency meeting and formally refused the division. However, the central government

is insisting to apply its decision. In the same month, five Papuan demonstrators were killed in Timika, West Papua.

In **September 1999**, a Papuan called Richi Nabaema, from Jl. Cenderawasih, Kaimana arrested, tortured and imprisoned. He was hit in the face with a gun-butt and a cigarette was burned into his face.

On **September 25 and 28, 1999**. A local person was tortured because he was accused by the police of fishing without a permit from the government. The people claim the natural resources are theirs but the Indonesian government always imposes rules and regulations that force them to always have permits from the government beforehand.

In **October 1999**. The Irian Jaya Institute for Human Right Studies and Advocacy in Irian Jaya reported human rights violations in Mapenduma. It said 8 people were killed by the involvement of the British SAS and the International Committee of Red Cross. It demands British, Dutch and the ICRC to investigate the violation against civilians.

**October 4, 1999** (AFP) - An Indonesian court in the easternmost province of Irian Jaya on Monday opened the trial of five men facing up to 20 years in jail for raising a separatist flag on July 1, a report said. Mauritz Wouw, 44, Zadrak Wouw, 43, Mesak Waipon, 44, Marthen Bay, 23 and Agustinus Waipon, 44, were accused of subversion, state prosecutor Syamsul Alam at the district court in Jayapura, the capital of Irian Jaya, the official Antara news agency said. They were charged with plotting to separate a region from Indonesia, Antara said.

**For up to date news from West Papua get on the OPM SG e-mail news list or check out our web page. See Resources on page 3 for details.**

## What is this Newsletter?

For many years people in the radical ecological/anarchist movement have been inspired by the tenacity of the W.Papuan tribal resistance against the destruction of the land and their assimilation into civilisation. In such a story, where the forces of monoculture and profit move against those of freedom and wildness, it is not our place to be passive spectators. We act in solidarity with the Papuans both because they are our brothers and sisters in struggle and because they are in many ways our elders. Anarchist tribal societies are in just as much danger of extinction as the species who share their wild homelands. If we are to rewild our land and each other we must learn from these endangered tribes the value and practice of freedom/ecological harmony.

This newsletter has been set up as a networking tool for those of us who want to take direct action. We realise that their enemies are our enemies and their future ours. The action update will cover news of solidarity actions and of events in W.Papua. We will print communiques from those fighting in the forest, giving them a voice in the belly of Leviathan. To get involved contact us, or better still the local group nearest to you. Down With the Empire, Up With the Spring! -OPM SG (Brighton)

**“ You have learned why the OPM is still fighting. It is the wish of our ancestors that we in the OPM never give up. Therefore, our struggle will always continue beneath the cover of our vast forest. ”**

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mancef@nematode.freeserve.co.uk  
**South-West**  
c/o Kebele, 14 Robertson Road, Bristol, BS5 6JY email: kebele@marsbard.com

**Other:**  
**Friends of People Close to Nature**  
33, Gould Close, Welham Green, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 7EB England  
rains@fpcn-global.org (no bullshit anti-development group with worldwide contacts).

**Chiapas Link**, Box 79, c/o Greenleaf Bookshop, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, UK email: chiapaslink@yahoo.com (Radical support group for the Zapatista Indigenous resistance in Mexico)  
**Delta**, Box Z, 13 Biddulph Street, Leicester LE2 1BH, UK Tel/fax: 0116 2709616 email: lynx@gn.apc.org (Radical support group for Indigenous resistance in Nigeria)  
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