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East Asia Review

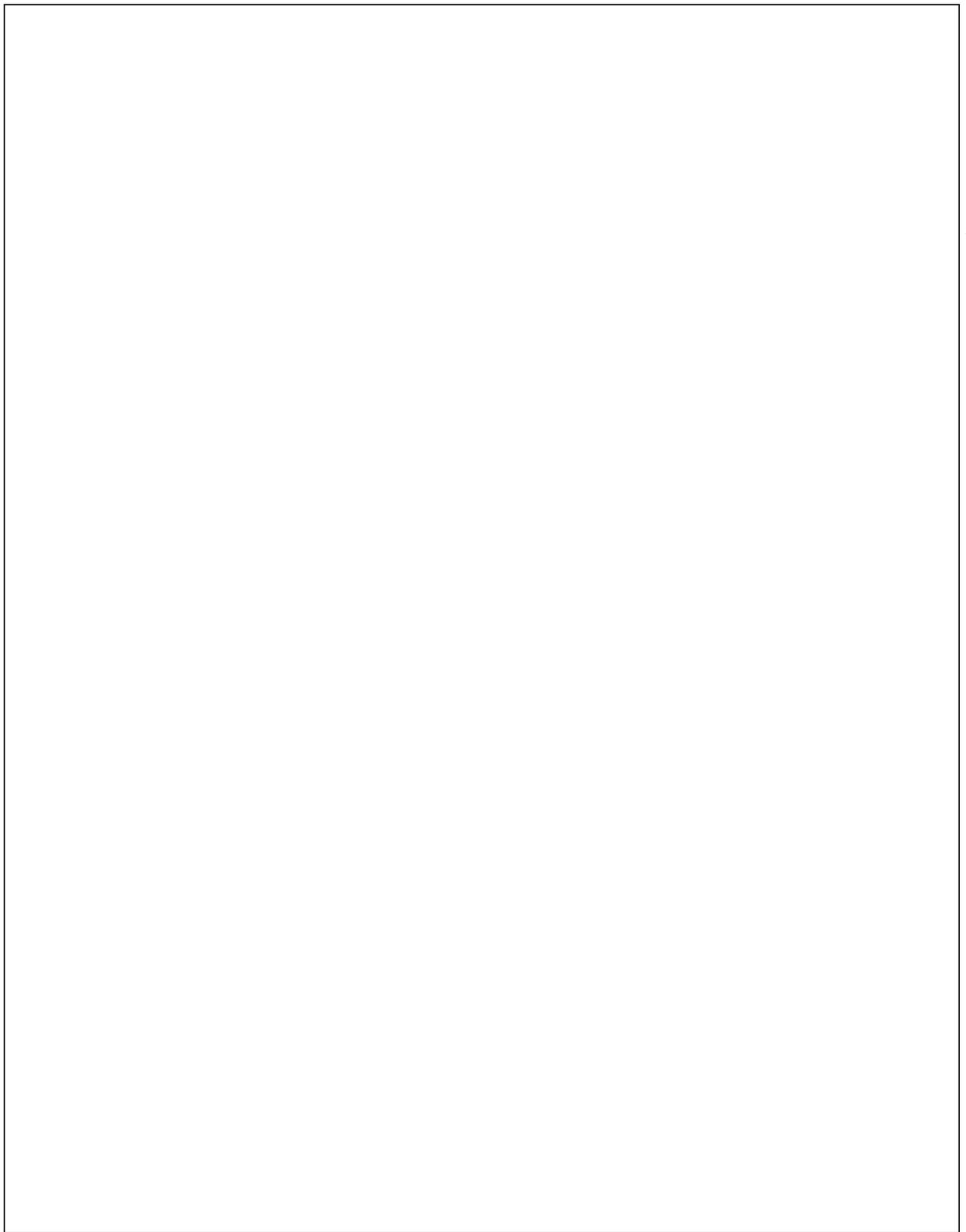
18 July 1979

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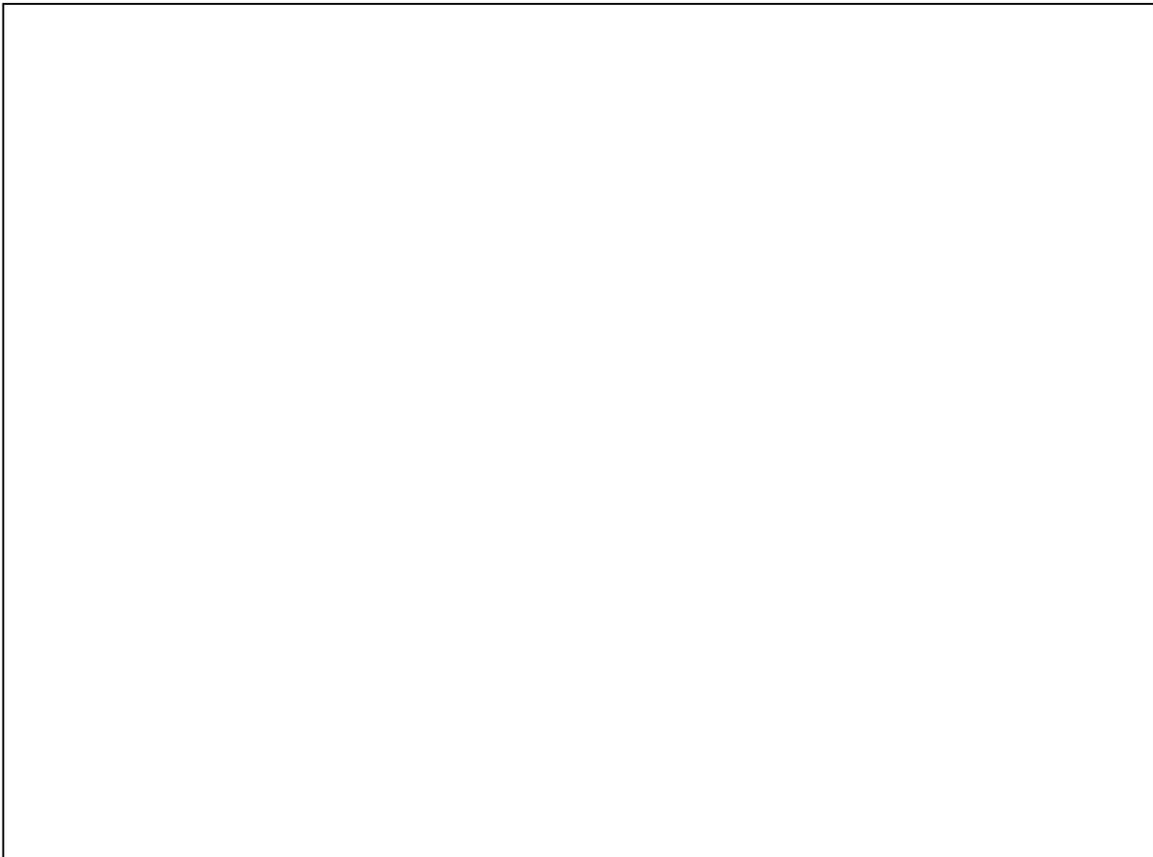
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EAST ASIA REVIEW

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Indonesia's newest province, East Timor, is inching toward economic recovery after three and a half years of warfare and uneasy assimilation into the republic. [Redacted]

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East Timor: The Other Refugees [REDACTED]

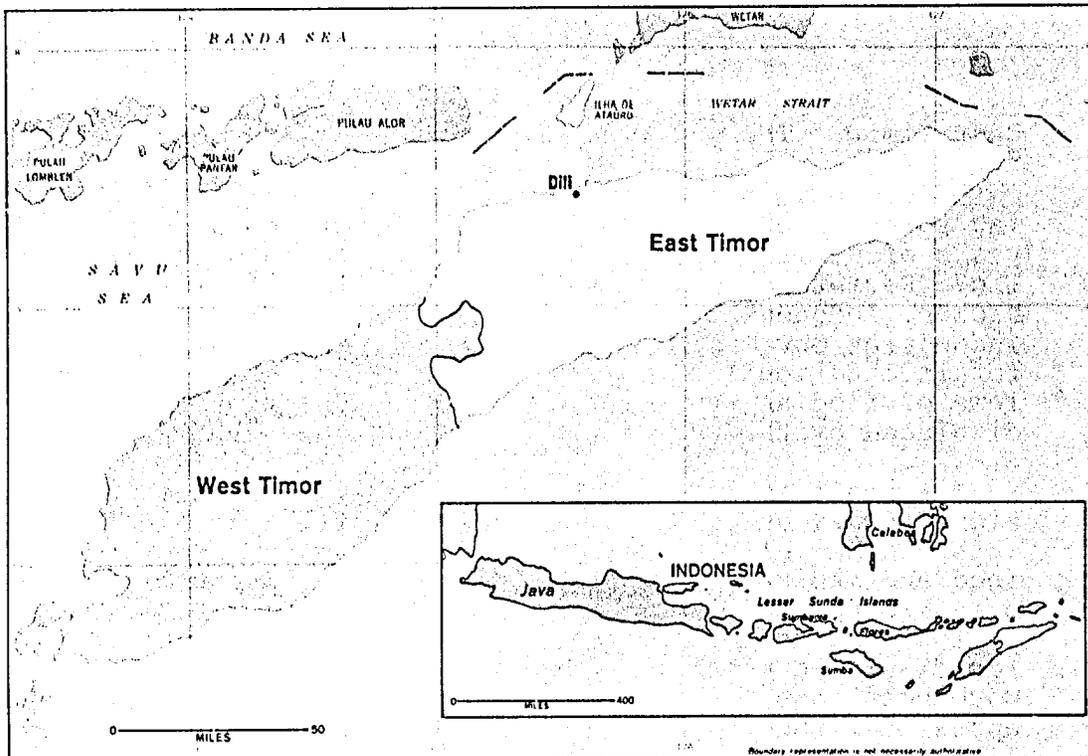
Indonesia's newest province, East Timor, is inching toward economic recovery after three and a half years of warfare and uneasy assimilation into the republic. Resistance from FRETILIN guerrillas is almost broken, Indonesian troop withdrawals continue, and the Indonesian Government has relaxed enough to call quietly for international relief to settle the outstanding problems of food and resettlement for thousands of Timorese displaced by the war. [REDACTED]

A small emergency loan was quietly negotiated and signed on 29 June by US disaster aid officials and the Catholic Relief Services for the provision of emergency food and medical supplies to East Timor. The \$671,000 grant, supplemented by some \$300,000 worth of PL480 Title II food, marks the beginning of international assistance for displaced mountain people of East Timor. The US Government has also answered an International Red Cross appeal for special funds by granting an immediate \$1 million toward an eventual \$4.5 million program of medical and paramedical aid. [REDACTED]

Both programs are considered a major breakthrough in encouraging the Indonesian Government to widen international access to East Timor for the supply of emergency relief. The two programs will certainly lead to some international presence in the closed province, and further assistance is likely. [REDACTED]

A Portuguese colony for 400 years, Timor has always been a deficit area. The Indonesian invasion and unexpectedly strong FRETILIN resistance from 1976 to 1979 so severely dislocated the economy that today there is serious under production of traditional food crops and famine conditions prevail in much of the province. Probably half of East Timor's population of some 600,000 has been uprooted by the civil war and subsequent Indonesian invasion. [REDACTED]

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Indonesian Army sources say that around 200,000 refugees are now huddled in "receiving centers" spotted around the island. These people, most of whom are sick, barely clothed, and semistarved, will later be transferred to some 150 "resettlement centers," according to the Indonesians. They will not be allowed to return to their mountain homes. The government plans to give them land, agricultural tools, and housebuilding materials, plus lessons for the young in the Indonesian language and state philosophy. Jakarta has earmarked \$25 million for rehabilitation for fiscal 1979-80, but social and administrative services are embryonic.

The Indonesian "special military command" began winding down its operations in East Timor after Operation Death Blow in December 1978--in which FRETILIN commander Nicolao Lobato was captured and executed. By the spring of 1979, pacification was successful enough

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that East Timor was integrated as a regular KOREM (battalion division) command. Reportedly about 15,000 regular troops remain in East Timor conducting small search and destroy missions, which are encountering only minimal resistance. [redacted]

Additional battalions and local police forces work on rehabilitation and the construction of infrastructure in the countryside. East Timor has only 15 kilometers of paved roads and, by all accounts from both foreign and Indonesian official visitors, contains the poorest terrain in Indonesia. [redacted]

Indonesia has compounded its problems in East Timor by its reluctance to let foreign observers and assistance enter the province during the past two years. The resulting propaganda campaign mounted by exiled Timorese still fighting for an "independent" Timor has led to Third World criticism of Indonesian tactics and to five resolutions of censure in the United Nations. Various radical Third World countries recognize only the exile government, and most Western nations have only grudgingly accorded de facto recognition to Indonesian incorporation of East Timor. West Timor has been part of Indonesia since independence. [redacted]

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