

SERI

SOCIO-POLITICAL NOTES

NO. 6

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

**SITUATION IN PAPUA
END OF THE YEAR 2003**

R E F L E C T I O N

BY

THEO VAN DEN BROEK OFM

**SEKRETARIAT KEADILAN & PERDAMAIAN
KEUSKUPAN JAYAPURA
JAYAPURA**

NOVEMBER 2003

Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian / Office for Justice and Peace	
KEUSKUPAN JAYAPURA	DIOCESE OF JAYAPURA
KOTAK POS 1379	Tel: +62 - 967 - 534993
JAYAPURA 9901	Fax: +62 - 967 - 534993
INDONESIA	E-mail: sekkp@jayapura.wasantara.net.id

THE SITUATION IN PAPUA

END OF THE YEAR 2003

A REFLECTION

As we come close to the threshold entering the year 2004, let us look back on what has happened in Papua during the year 2003. What could we note as the most determining events, and in what direction are these developments pointing? In his address on commemorating that Mr. J. P. Solossa and Mr. C. Karma have been leading Papua for three years, Monsignor Leo Laba Ladjar said: "The leadership is not only dizzy facing a society that is drunk on chaotic democracy. They are also dizzy seven times over in facing a Central Government, which (...) obviously is often lacking wisdom"¹. This utterance motivates us to uncover whatever forms the background of the conclusion of the bishop.

Reflecting on the year 2003, there are two essential developments which are most interesting:

[1] the atmosphere around the division of the province and [2] the state of security. Therefore, we shall depart from these two points in our short analysis at the end of this year.

THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND THE SPLITTING
--

For anyone who lived in Papua during the year 2003, one thing was surely printed into memory, namely the process of dividing the province which was started with the publication of the Presidential Decree Nr. 1/2003. This decree came as a shock to us all because it just

¹ Address at the remembrance of three years leadership of Mr. J.P. Solossa M.Si and veterinarian Constan Karma as Governor and Vice-Governor, as well as commemorating two years of Special Autonomy of the Province of Papua, by Leo Laba Ladjar OFM, Bishop of the Diocese of Jayapura, held on behalf of religious and social dignitaries, on

dropped down out of the blue. This was not expected, since the question of dividing the province (at present and in the future) was already dealt with neatly in the Law on the Special Autonomy of Papua Nr. 21/2001. Launching the Presidential Decree Nr. 1, together with the declaration of a new province by a 'new candidate governor', Bram Atururi, in the West of the province of Papua, caused many not to understand anymore what was really going on. Also the explanation of the Central Government which was very confusing did not help to understand this 'sudden' policy.

As from the very beginning there were widespread protests against the intention and implementation of forming a new province in the Western part of the Papua province. Some government representatives (supported by legal experts with unquestionable credibility) have stated that everything was not legal. Rather should the Presidential Decree Nr. 1 be abrogated and a process of judicial review be initiated. Even from among the cabinet there were voices questioning the publication of this Presidential Decree Nr. 1. Nevertheless, we witnessed that in fact everything was just going through. Though evaluated as not legal, the process of forming a new province went on for almost a year, and is obviously supported by strong persons in the central government². Whatever the protest, one does not pay any attention to it. That's a bitter reality. As if the question of one division is not enough, a similar effort was launched in the central part of the province of Papua, in Timika. In fact, the way the province in the central part of Papua was prepared was not very much different from the Western part. While taking the contents of the Presidential Decree Nr. 1/2003 as the prime legitimization (in fact the correct legitimization lies in UU No.45/1999, while the Inpres No.1 only orders the accelerated implementation of that law), everything happened rather secretly; there were efforts to gain support, including members of the local parliament (DPR-D),- except for the vice Chairperson -, by gathering signatures under a statement of support, which was handed out to them at their respective homes. Even though the local population made it clear that it won't agree with the implementation of this new province, the Chairman of the local parliament of Timika, Andreas Anggaibak, went on insisting on proclaiming this province. While most of the members of the DPR-D became worried and started covering up their support, the regent (Bupati) and other elements of the ruling elite kept completely silent, or just let it happen. Who had the courage to support this single fighter, and oppose the 'resistance of the people'? The same question came up when Bram Atururi started his activities in Manokwari! The answer is really not easy, though there is a strong indication that in both cases the National Intelligence Agency (BIN) played a big role³.

November 23, 2003.

² This support has been expressed very clearly in the recent official nomination of Bram Atururi as the acting Governor of the West Irian Jaya Province which took place at the office of the Ministry of Domestic Affairs in Jakarta on November 14th, 2003.

³ When Atururi started his activities in Manokwari (January 2003) he carried with him a 'letter of nomination' signed by Hendropriyono, head of BIN.

We all know that the proclamation of the new province in Timika eventually caused quite a lot of victims because of the skirmishes between the pro and contra groups (5 persons died). There was also a range of mysterious attacks aimed at a number of motorcycle-taxi drivers (2 persons died). What was the real aim behind these attacks? Triggering off a horizontal conflict, as most of the motorcycle-taxi drivers are migrants from other parts of Indonesia? Who is responsible for these bloody deeds? And why has it been allowed to happen? Questions like these come up in the minds of the observers.

The chaos marking all the attempts of dividing the province, mentioned above here, has not only raised questions which lack answers, but also has a number of very important effects. It is determining the social atmosphere in Papua at present and in the future .

[1] One of the effects is the **loss of trust of the community towards all elements of the government**, on the levels of the Regency (Kabupaten), the Province and the Center. Once again society feels ignored, yes betrayed because that which has already been decided in the official law of the Special Autonomy (Otsus) is not heeded. Once again a promise is not fulfilled.

[2] Another determining effect is that the **implementation of the Special Autonomy got stuck**. This shutdown is caused by the policy of the Central Government which trespasses against the contents of law Nr. 21/2001 (Otsus), and which until now has rejected to acknowledge the formation of the Papua Peoples Council (MRP), which is one of the key elements in the process of implementing the Papuan laws. It is difficult not to get the impression that the process of division was partially started on purpose in order to hamper the implementation of the law, the contents of which – according to some influential people in the Central Government – already gives too much leeway to the people of Papua to separate themselves from the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. That's why some voices on the level of the Central Government wish to change the law (Otsus) substantially. According to the latest information, this process has already been started. One gets the strong impression that the spirit and the goal of the Otsus, as it had been set up by the Papuan leaders, has in fact been doomed to death by the Central Government.

[3] The process of splitting up the province has caused **competition among the elite in Papua**; apparently there are a number of different agendas which often are linked to personal ambitions. The result is that the solidarity among the leaders in Papua is no longer clear, so that the people feel that they have no leadership anymore. The divisions on the level of the leadership paralyze the effectiveness of the work of the provincial government, as well as all institutions linked to it. Occasionally there is a private opinion of a civil servant, but it doesn't convince, so that nobody cares to listen. The Central Government hardly pays attention and just carries on with its own strategy. Lately one often hears civil servants on the provincial

level in Papua saying: “we wait for the decision from the Center”. Just as if they don’t have any strength left to carry on the struggle; as if the civil authorities feel that they don’t have any competence anymore to run the Province of Papua; while the people feel that they have been abandoned by their ‘shepherds’.

[4] The competition on the level of the (high) officials also causes **division on the level of normal society**. Every fraction which is either pro or contra gathers its supporters. Apparently they always find some, so that in the end society as such is divided. The fundamental argument in the effort of embracing the people is ‘later there will be a lot of money; right now Jayapura eats it all up’. It is clear that the dynamics of attracting ‘supporters’ among the people is not based on healthy discussion, its not based on correct and critical information, but on emotions or the disappointments of the people who turn out to be easily influenced to receive these offers. Of course this can mislead normal citizens, and in Timika it eventually led to many casualties. It brought the society into a horizontal conflict.

In short, the atmosphere of the disorderly division has an extraordinary impact on the life of the community in Papua during this past year. Overall, the impact is a negative one, because it breaks down more that it builds up. It is no exaggeration when the Bishop of Jayapura states that “society is drunk on chaotic democracy”, while the leadership in Papua is “dizzy seven times over in facing the policy of the Central Government”.

THE STATE OF SECURITY

The second reality that stood out very much during this year is the coming up of violence, especially in the region of the Central Mountains. On April 4, the arsenal of the military post (Kodim) in Wamena was broken into. This incident apparently became the starting point of a military operation that caused many victims (some people died, others were detained, maltreated, had to flee, felt afraid, intimidated, etc.). Obviously, breaking into an arsenal cannot be accepted, and strict action, taken after a critical and objective investigation, would be a proper step to take. But astonishingly, a military operation was immediately launched, as if it was already clear who broke in and where they were.

The pattern of a sweeping action applied by the army (TNI) is not a strange pattern anymore in Papua; the same pattern was used during the Abepura incident in 2000, as well as in the Wasior incident (2001). Moreover, in order to carry out this military operation, troops already present at the location immediately were complemented by troops from outside Papua, including special forces (Kopassus) which – officially – had just moved out of Papua in February 2003.

This military operation was questioned among others by a number of NGOs, religious leaders, and traditional leaders. It was questioned that there had not yet been an investigation

about this incident, while the target-groups of the military action seem to have been determined geographically already. This was not based on an accurate investigation, knowing who the persons were, who broke into the arsenal. Questions were also raised about the easiness of accusing the OPM/TPN as the one stealing the weapons, without differentiating between whoever was really involved and who not. The result was that the whole society in that region became the target of the military operation. Everybody could become a victim, whether guilty or not.

A number of questions formulated in a detailed report by a Combined Human Rights Team (Tim Gabungan Kemanusiaan) – which, among other things, undertook an investigation on request of the religious leaders in Papua – was disparaged by the security forces as not being true. The operation was just continued. However, the report eventually motivated the National Commission for Human Rights (KomNasHAM) to interfere. After its visit (September 2003), KomNasHAM reported the findings of its investigation to the Head of State (November 2003), and it was decided that the ‘Wamena Case’ be reinvestigated by KomNasHAM. The reason for this was a strong indication of basic human rights abuses by the army (TNI) in this case.

Of course the above mentioned military operation has made the local community feeling nervous and uneasy, not only around Wamena, but including anybody wishing to actively struggle for the realization of ‘Papua, a Land of Peace’, and truthfully uphold the law. In this state we were once again shocked by two acts of extraordinarily horrifying violence: [1] one in Paniai, sub-district of Sugapa, Ugimba (November 3, 2003), which caused 5 casualties, and [2] Jayawijaya, sub-district of Bolakme, Yalengga (November 5, 2003), which demanded 10 human lives. In Ugimba five carpenters were murdered or wounded in a way that it caused their death; it happened just like that. In Yalengga 10 persons were shot dead because they were suspected of involvement in separatist activities. In both cases we are faced with cold blooded killing; in Ugimba by a group of unknown identity; in Yalengga by the army (TNI). The announcement in the newspaper Cenderawasih Pos (CePos) about the two cases, especially from Yalengga, including the photos, are very horrifying. Even the Jakarta Post (November 7, 2003) in its section on opinions, under the title “Life is cheap in Indonesia”, cannot control its anger against the army (TNI). A photo in Indonesia Pos shows four soldiers “treating the corpse of an OPM fighter like an animal, which was hunted down and shot dead”.

What do citizens of Papua feel when being faced with such disturbing violence? Of course they feel struck and unsafe. One feels unprotected and tends to just keep quiet. Or one supports the military operations. This applies to civil servants, who don’t help society to feel more calm. Gradually normal citizens begin to experience that their safety is no longer guaranteed, and this feeling increases in the face of a number of other happenings that add towards determining the present social atmosphere:

[1] One of the happenings determining the social atmosphere in Papua is the **formation of the Red and White Defense Front** (Front Pembela Merah Putih or FPMP) in Timika (Radar Timika, November, 12, 2003). It is common knowledge that this organization is led by Eurico Gutteres, a leading person in the Indonesian nationalist militia, which is responsible for a lot of the former deadly violence in Timor Leste a few years ago. The people of Timika tried to protest against the formation of the FPMP, but they did not succeed in stopping it. Meeting at the office of the local military commander (Koramil) in Timika, the leadership of the FPMP Timika-branch was decided on and published in the Radar Timika. In the aftermath of the 'civil war', which broke out around the proclamation of the new province, the formation of the FPMP has disturbed society, because it is not clear what kind of activities will be carried out by this organization. However, everybody knows the viciousness of the nationalism in the style of Enrico Gutteres.

[2] The impression exists that the freedom of speech is limited more and more. In a relatively short time-span, a joined instruction by the Governor, the military leader (Pangdam), the police chief (Kapolda) and the chief attorney **prohibited all kinds of celebrations connected to November 10/11** (murder of Theys Eluay) **and December 1** (historical day of Papua). Most amazingly (and this made the people really feel "dizzy seven times over"), the **Minister for Internal Affairs** (Mendagri), Hari Sabarno reacted to this prohibition with the following statement: "Now it is not the age to prohibit, but don't give too much weight to the will of a part of the people of Papua" (Harian Suara Pembaruan, November 11, 2003). In short, he said: **go ahead, but don't overdo it**. This was followed on November 11 by a warning of the chief attorney in Papua to **withdraw the book on Theys from circulation**. This book (written by Dr. Benny Giay), which just came out on October 25, 2003, tells about the sad things that happened on November 10/11, 2001. The book is forbidden for the following reasons: 1) it can disturb society, and 2) it can stimulate a negative perception about the government. One or two days afterwards (November 13), the **memorial board for Theys in Entrop was pulled down** by the security forces. The reason was that the text on the board was considered "as containing sentences with a bad connotation" (CePos November 14, 2003).

[3] In the meantime the police keeps on speaking about the "**rice cake operation**" (operasi ketupat)⁴ during Ramadhan, which will be followed by the "candle operation" ('operasi lilin') during Christmas. These are sweepings and meant to increase security. The purpose is never explained, while the news from the head of police (Kapolda), that during Idul Fitri 4000 personnel (CePos, November 18) will be deployed for security, makes the impression as if Jayapura is in an explosive state. The same policy is obviously applied for the other cities as well, especially around December 1, 2003. In Sorong, the troops of the

⁴ *Ketupat* is a rice cake boiled in a packet of plaited young coconut leaves. In Eastern Indonesia,

special forces (Kostrad) are setting up their tents in front of the “Maranatha” church of the Protestant Church of Papua (GKI). From here they want to secure the safety of the city. The atmosphere of ‘suspicion’ was again stimulated by the news from the Center, where the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces (KSAD), General Ryamizard Ryacudu, asked everyone to watch out for the security situation in Papua, because foreign elements start to ‘play their games’. “We must be aware, because they will undermine and stir up (‘mengobok-obok’) Papua and then separate it” (Media Indonesia, November 27, 2003). As important is the additional remark of a member of a Parliamentary Commission (DPR), Tasril Ananta Baharuddin (in Media Indonesia November 17, 2003), who said that the latest mode of intervention of the foreign elements is through research institutes or civil society organizations (LSM), which undertake activities under the pretence of democracy, human rights and environmental conservation. With such statements it can be foreseen that almost all critical utterances made by organizations will be interpreted by certain sides as ‘supporting the separatist movement’. Of course, the room for any institution, which takes a critical, civilian stance monitoring the development in Papua, will be closed progressively.

however, it has an ambivalent meaning. It can also mean a punching fist. (U. H.).

BACK TO A SILENT COMMUNITY TIRED OF STRUGGLING

If we look back at the development during the past 5 years, we can differentiate between a number of stages. The picture is more or less as follows:

[1] **resurgence stage:** in 1998 Papuan community started to break out of their decade long silence. Motivated by the developments on the national level, also the Papuans started to demand renewal (**reformasi**). Long hidden aspirations of the citizens were expressed, the climax being the meeting with President Habibie in February 1999.

[2] **internal organization stage:** after the meeting with President Habibie, Papuans started gathering in a mass movement. During two grand meetings an organization was added to the movement. The first of these meetings was held in Sentani, namely the Great Conference (Musyawarah Besar) in Februari 2000; the other was held in Jayapura, namely the 2nd Papua Congress (Kongres Papua II) in May 2000. Through these two meetings, the aspiratory movement became organized and a dialogue relationship with the Government (President Abdurrahman Wahid) was pioneered. Apparently, the President was quite open to the dialogue asked for by the representatives of the Papuan community.

[3] **stage of confrontation between two approaches:** after the 2nd Papua Congress (June 2000), voices were raised at the Central Government demanding the movement in Papua to be abolished, if necessary by the use of violence. Bloody incidents happened in Abepura, Wamena, Merauke (December 2000). The **approach of violence** reached its climax in the killing of Theys Eluay (November 2001). In the meantime President Abdurrahman Wahid had to step down and be replaced by Megawati Sukarnoputri (July 2001).

This approach of violence was answered by the effort to enhance an **approach for peace**. Even though the community was very depressed because of the bloody incidents, it could still be asked by a number of trusted organizations to follow the course of peace and open dialogue. In this framework two points were developed very actively: 1) to fill the slogan "Papua Land of Peace" with meaning, and 2) to formulate a concept of the Special Autonomy for Papua.

The development of the concept "Papua Land of Peace" was pursued in a number of important meetings (among others the Conference for establishing a Peace Zone in September 2002 and the workshop on "Building a Culture of Peace" in November 2002). A special public demonstration was the "Procession of Peace" (September 21, 2002) in Jayapura, in which all important government officials, religious leaders and civil organizations took part. In the meantime, the Special Autonomy for Papua was spelled out by the intellectual leadership of Papua, handed over to the Central Government and became a law in October 2001. The contents of this Special Autonomy was understood as a "practical means" to realize the desire for Papua as a Land of Peace.

[4] **the stage of the division:** during 2001-2002, a difference of perception was sensed, especially concerning the Special Autonomy as a means to overcome the conflicts. The differences appeared in all circles and had the tendency to bring about pro and contra teams. This apparently hampered the progress of the initial implementation of the law on the Special Autonomy very much. An orderly process of implementation could not proceed.

The atmosphere became even more chaotic, because of a number of bloody incidents: in Wasior (2001), the murder of Theys (2001), Timika (2002) and Wutung (2002). Then some issues became seeds of fear: the rumor about the formation of the Red and White militias, the role of the TBO (assistant to operational forces), the activities of the paramilitary Jihad-fighters (Laskar Jihad), the men with masks, operation Matoa. It is no wonder that the community got increasingly confused and disturbed.

In the middle of this disturbance suddenly came the Presidential Decree Nr. 1/2003, which inflamed the atmosphere and forced the people once again to determine their attitude; this resulted in an increasing division in society. In addition to this there was violence, darkening the mood of the community since April 2003, and paralyzing society. Then there was not one voice left which could represent (or unite) the Papuan people as a whole: the government officials are divided among themselves, PDP cannot speak up because it is jammed between rejecting the official Special Autonomy (Otsus) and rejecting the Presidential Decree Nr. 1. Only the religious organizations can still speak, but their voice is a small one. The result is: the implementation of the Special Autonomy (Otsus) is totally blocked, which in turn means that the practical means are missing to solve a number of problems in Papua. The Provincial Government is split up, the people's representation shows little initiative, an afraid community doesn't know anymore what way to go. What is important: the Papuan community, including the officials, gradually feels surfeited in the face of all these happenings. They apparently submit to their fate, because nobody listens to them. Apathy and frustration is coming up in the community, so that people are easily influenced to join acts of violence. Is the violence in Paniai perhaps a warning sign in this sense? But also in normal places, like in the cities, there is violence. The criminality increases. Amidst this total paralysis the ones who want to "play a game" in Papua – and in this case we do not mean the foreign parties meant by the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces (KSAD –can move freely. Its true, we are living in a democracy, which is getting more and more chaotic.

FINAL NOTE

Reflecting on all the developments as we have analyzed them up here, it is not an exaggerated when bishop Leo Laba Ladjar OFM concludes that we are all dizzy seven times over. The worries of the religious leaders about these developments come out clearly in the following statement:

“we, the religious leaders, feel like spectators at a football match. We sit on the stand and watch how the players play on that field ... Some run with the ball individually, not minding their fellow players. Some just walk around casually, some even far off the field. There are some who kick the referee. Others stamp the trainer and force him to hand over all the money, so that they can quickly use it in the corners of the field. We just watch from the stand. We shout, reminding them to improve whatever goes wrong and to stick to the rules. Sometimes we loose patience and want to jump onto the field to join the game. But we can't. It is not our task. It is our task to shout, either to support or to reprimand or even to swear. But we feel that our voices are like the voice of the one crying in the desert. Our voices are swallowed by the sand and remain unheard, because the players are enjoying the feeling of chaotic democracy, of drunken power, drunk with projects and dirty money”.

This concrete analysis is very clear. It shows that Papua has developed in the direction of an atmosphere, where not the rules of the game (the law and respecting the basic human rights of every citizen), but private interests, the interests of a group or specific ideology determine the course of events. Is it true that we have shifted far away from the ‘state of law’ (negara hukum) to the ‘state of interest’ (negara kepentingan)? Who is not sad and worried in the face of such developments?

Jayapura, November 28, 2003

Theo van den Broek ofm
Director SKP Jayapura

Translation from the Indonesian original by Uwe Hummel
