

Chapter Two:

Resistance

Introduction

West Papuan resistance to foreign rule has been expressed through armed struggle, strategies of cultural resistance, cooperative development endeavours and nonviolent struggle. The resistance implied in all of these has kept alive the hope of self-determination, defended land and identity, and been an outlet for West Papuans to express their aspirations. Since 1988, there has been an explicit commitment to nonviolence, which reached a new stage of intensity and openness during the ‘Papuan Spring’ between 1998 and 2000. From August 2000 the situation dramatically deteriorated, heralding Jakarta’s return to the repressive practices of the past. In the face of repression, however, nonviolent struggle in West Papua has enjoyed modest success. The name of the province has been changed to Papua and the Morning Star flag is now permitted to fly. There has also been a slow but steady increase in international awareness at all levels in society about the plight of West Papua. This chapter will briefly discuss the history of nonviolent struggle in West Papua, explore the failure of armed struggle and pose some challenges the nonviolent struggle faces.

Armed struggle in West Papua

In the face of overwhelming adversity, the armed wing of the OPM, the OPM/TPN, has resisted the might and superior firepower of the Indonesian military. During the period from the 1960s to 1998 it was the principal organisation of West Papuan resistance to Indonesian rule. Small disparate groups of OPM/TPN operating in the rugged interior of West Papua, often armed with little more than traditional weapons – spears, bows and arrows – but benefiting from an intimate knowledge of the terrain and supported by popular sympathy, have waged a protracted guerrilla war characterised by flag-raising, sporadic attacks on TNI outposts, ambush of TNI units, sabotage and hostage taking.¹ While a number of attempts have been made to unify the OPM, it has continued to exist as a decentralised political and military network of resistance groups. Simultaneously, ‘being OPM’ is also a source of West Papuan identity for large numbers of West Papuans who are not active in the armed struggle.² Recently, popular resistance by the OPM/TPN has been transformed from a low-level armed struggle in the jungles and mountains to open nonviolent popular urban resistance.³ The OPM has intentionally developed a political wing committed to nonviolence and formed links with civil society, particularly students and tribal groups.⁴ Some West Papuans claim

¹ Osborne, *Indonesia’s Secret War*.

² The international officer for the Presidium, for instance, Mr Franzalbert Joku, said that the OPM is ‘a slogan’ (Personal communication with Franzalbert Joku, May 2001); To some extent this perspective was also confirmed in conversation with someone who recently visited West Papua (Personal communication with an AWP member, April 2002).

³ Interview with participant 04, December 2001 and participant 07, September 2001.

⁴ Interview with participant 04, December 2001 and participant 07, September 2001.

that the OPM/TPN has adopted a policy of only using violence as a last resort, as a means of defence.⁵ They claim that recent attacks on civilians and security forces are incidents engineered by the TNI to justify repression.⁶ Whilst a lack of independent investigation, communication problems and the decentralised nature of the armed struggle make it difficult to ascertain the truth of these claims, other OPM/TPN leaders remain prepared to launch military offensives.⁷

Introducing nonviolence⁸

Nonviolent action is a highly ethical and extremely effective way of bringing about personal and social change. Nonviolence aims to transform the patterns of relations and structures that create and sustain conflict. It is first and foremost action, not passive. Combining unyielding resistance with genuine respect and regard for all people, nonviolence excludes retaliation or flight and comes out of a deep longing for personal wholeness, human reconciliation and ecological sustainability. Nonviolence has existed across cultures, religions and epochs.⁹ Nonviolence does not assume that one's opponent will be nonviolent, but endeavours to transform conflict through relentless and peaceful persistence in the face of repression. Nonviolent action is certainly not limited to peaceful dialogue, but is action intended to create the conditions for a problem-solving dialogue for peace with justice.

Nonviolent struggle in West Papua: A brief history¹⁰

West Papua has a rich history of nonviolent social change, which has not been well documented. During colonial times nonviolent action (against both the Dutch and Japanese) included tax resistance, strikes to resist forced labour, religious movements with political aspirations, defiance of bans on traditional dances and singing, and cooperative economic development.¹¹ At one stage, during 1938 – 1943, *Angganitha Bin Damai* (Angganitha Woman of

⁵ For instance Rex Rumakiek, *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001; Interview with participant 01, July and October 2001.

⁶ Some West Papuans speaking at the *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001.

⁷ See for instance Kabar-Irian, 'Irian Jaya hard-liners threaten guerrilla warfare', http://www.campeace.org/Wparchive/hard_liners.htm accessed 23rd January 2002; Paul Kingsnorth., 'They walk on the leaves of trees', *New Internationalist* 344, April 2002: pp. 25-26. Examples include taking two Belgium filmmakers hostage in June 2001 and attacks on logging companies and security forces in Manokwari and Illaga.

⁸ Chapter three will explore the theory of nonviolence in greater depth.

⁹ See for example Bruce Bonata., *Peaceful Peoples: An Annotated Bibliography*, Metuchen (New Jersey), Scarecrow Press, 1993; Leslie E. Sponsel and Thomas Gregor (eds.), *The Anthropology of Peace and Nonviolence*, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994; Signe Howell and Roy Willis, (eds.), *Societies at Peace: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Routledge, 1989.

¹⁰ See Table 2.1 for examples of nonviolent action in West Papua.

¹¹ Kamma, *Koreri*; Sharp, *The Morning Star in Papua Barat*; Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound*.

Peace) lead a 30,000 strong nonviolent uprising against colonialism.¹² Nonviolent resistance continued under Indonesian rule.¹³

During the 1970s the Indonesian military re-launched a renewed massive and brutal military offensive against the people of the highlands. The experience has formed an indelible imprint on the collective memory of the people. *Memoria passionis*, the memory of suffering, has become a potent force for change. Suffering has strengthened indigenous identity and traditions, and galvanised people's commitment to resisting Indonesian ideology and behaviour.¹⁴ At the same time resistance to Indonesian rule is not only rooted in the shared experience of suffering, but springs from a distinct identity and popular consciousness of historical injustice.

In 1980, six courageous West Papuan women, led by Prisila Jakadewa raised the flag outside the governor's office in Port Numbay/Jayapura.¹⁵ This is one example of numerous flag-raising, a popular expression of resistance and identity. Cultural resistance in West Papua was further popularised by the West Papuan anthropologist, Arnold Ap, before he was murdered by the Indonesian military in 1984. Ap and his popular group, *Mambesak*, revitalised traditional songs and dances from different cultural and linguistic groups, helping strengthen a national identity. His performances and recordings inspire the struggle. 'Songs', proclaims one West Papuan, 'are the last bullets of resistance.... Listening to them makes me not afraid to die.'¹⁶

In late 1980s, the West Papuan intellectual and international lawyer, Dr. Thomas Wanggai, who studied Gandhi and the nonviolent struggle in South Africa, developed an explicit nonviolent strategy for change. Aware of the political and strategic deficiencies of armed struggle, Dr. Wainggai advocated people-centred development based on West Papuans distinct identity as Melanesians. This vision was also integrated with a strategy of principled nonviolent resistance, influenced by indigenous traditions and the gospel imperative to love.¹⁷ In December 1988, after an open flag raising ceremony at the Port Numbay/Jayapura soccer stadium, Dr. Wanggai was arrested, sentenced to 20 years in jail and along with his Japanese wife and a number of supporters, imprisoned. In 1996 he died in jail. Around the same time, Jacob Rumbiak, a former guerrilla fighter and contemporary of Thomas Wanggai, started promoting nonviolent struggle amongst his

¹² Kamma, *Koreri*, pp. 157-168; Sharp, *The Morning Star in Papua Barat*, xv; Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound*, pp. 148-152.

¹³ There is very little in the literature explicitly written about nonviolence in West Papua in general, but particularly so in relation to the period from 1961 through to the 1998.

¹⁴ Theo van den Broek ofm and J Budi Hernawan ofm., *Memoria Passionis di Papua*, Jakarta, LSPP, 2001; Benny Giay, *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001.

¹⁵ Benny Giay, 'Against Indonesia: West Papuan strategies of resistance against Indonesian political and cultural aggression in the 1980s', in Benedict R. O'G. Anderson (ed.), *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia*, New York, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2001: 133. This act was one of many flag-raising, the most prominent from of nonviolent resistance to Indonesian rule.

¹⁶ Interview with participant 01, January 2001.

¹⁷ Interview, with participant 04, December 2001.

students at Cendrawasih University. In December 1989, after being listed as 'subversive' by the military, Jacob and three others took refuge in the PNG consulate in Port Numbay/Jayapura. After negotiations failed, Rumbiak was arrested and sentenced to 17 years prison.¹⁸

There has also been widespread resistance to global capital, particularly around the Freeport gold and copper mine. When the U.S company established itself in West Papua in 1967, two years before the question of West Papua's sovereignty was 'resolved', the highland Amungme people positioned traditional taboo sticks around Freeport's base camp to prevent and contain the operation. Since then, nonviolent actions have included public demonstrations, sit-ins and flag raisings.¹⁹ When the company dismissed the Amungme's right to supply fruit and vegetables to Freeport employees, Amungme cut up vegetables and spread them on the airstrip at Timika and lit a huge bonfire, closing the runway for several days, preventing both Freeport as well as the Indonesian military from using the airport.²⁰ There have also been nonviolent actions to resist logging companies, for example by the Moi,²¹ and recent nonviolent occupations of BPs Bintuni Bay base camp by traditional landowners, angry that BP had reneged on an earlier agreement to consult with them.²²

After the fall of Suharto in 1998, the struggle that many West Papuans call 'a struggle with love and peace'²³ entered a new phase of openness and intensity. Following the July 6th Biak Massacre in 1998,²⁴ Church leaders established FORERI (Forum for Reconciliation in Irian Jaya). After FORERI persuaded Papua's parliamentary representative, Abdul Gafur, to organise a meeting with then Indonesian president Habibie, a group of West Papuans flew to Jakarta to meet Habibie to discuss the prospects of a national dialogue.²⁵ On arriving at the Presidential palace, Thom Beanal

¹⁸ In 1999, after serving ten years, many of which were in solitary confinement, Jacob Rumbiak was released to house arrest. From here he escaped to East Timor to assist the East Timorese with their historic referendum. After narrowly cheating death in the TNI orchestrated post-ballot violence, Rumbiak fled to Australia on the same plane as Bishop Belo. He now lives in Melbourne where he continues to advocate nonviolent struggle for self-determination. Jacob Rumbiak is committed to building understanding between ordinary Indonesians and West Papuans with the hope of 'cleaning-up Indonesia's reputation as a coloniser'. For more on Jacob Rumbiak's story see Tom Hyland, 'A Guerrilla's Story', *The Age*, Thursday 7th September 2000.

¹⁹ Abrash, 'The Amungme, Kamoro and Freeport'.

²⁰ Agung Rulianto, 'Goldman winner' (originally published in Tempo Magazine, 1-7 May 2001), *Inside Indonesia* July/September No. 67, 2001: 14. The Amungme and WALHI (Friends of the Earth – Indonesia) have also initiated several court actions.

²¹ AWWA., *West Papua Information Kit – revised 1998: with focus on Freeport*, Sydney, Australian West Papua Association, 1997: 17.

²² ELS-HAM., 'Local Landowners occupy BP base camp in Bintuni Bay, Papua', 15th May 2002.

²³ Interview with participant 01, July 2001; Personal communication with a journalist and solidarity activist who travelled to West Papua this year (2002).

²⁴ Captain Andrew Plunkett, an Australian Defence Force intelligence officer who served with INTERFET in East Timor, claims the massacre was a 'dress rehearsal' for TNI organised militia violence in East Timor and that the Australian government 'buried' a 'crucial intelligence report' into the incident for fear of 'offending Indonesia' (Andrew West, 'Our silence on massacre 'encouraged Timor killing', *Sun-Herald*, 3rd June 2001).

²⁵ Abdul Gafur's initial response was that Indonesia had liberated West Papua and that Indonesia was helping develop the province. Members of FORERI realised that the talks were not getting anywhere. They decided to prepare two photo's. The first photo was entitled, 'The success of development in Papua' and had a picture of a KOPASSUS soldier

– Amungme elder and leader of the ‘Team 100’ – declared that West Papuans wanted independence. Habibie was stunned and the space for dialogue about West Papuan concerns closed.²⁶

In the window of opportunity that *reformasi* (democratic reform) created, West Papuans successfully challenged the dual function of the military: the military’s involvement in politics and society. In 1999, West Papuans in the Fak-Fak and Nabire regencies held nonviolent demonstrations for several days to insist that a Papuan civilian was appointed to the office of the regional head of government. The demonstrations achieved this objective.²⁷

The call for ‘peaceful dialogue’ was taken up again in both the ‘*Mubes*’ (*Musyawahar Besar* – Large consultation) in Port Numbay/Jayapura in February 2000 and again in the *Kongres Rakyat Papua II* (Second Papuan People’s Congress) in May/June 2000. At the *Mubes* the Papuan Council (*Dewan Papua* – DP) was elected along with the executive, the Papuan Council Presidium (*Presidium Dewan Papua* - PDP). The composition of the DP and PDP was confirmed at the second congress and Theys Eluay was elected Chairperson with Thom Beanal as vice-chairperson. The second congress was supported financially by the then President, Abdurrahman Wahid. The Papuan Council broadly reflects West Papuan society and includes representatives from traditional tribal groups, youth, women, Churches and religious organisations (including indigenous West Papuan Islamic organisations) and political organisations as well as Indonesian settlers and transmigrants who support independence for West Papua. The PDP stated West Papuans’ non-negotiable desire for independence and called for a process to ‘rectify history’ and investigate the basis for West Papua’s incorporation with Indonesia.²⁸

Both the *Mubes* and congress electrified the West Papuan population and for the first time since integration, created a united and legitimate national organisation. Both events were attended by thousands of people. Over 20,000 attended the second congress including large numbers of highlanders in traditional dress who walked over 300km to be present at the event. Delegates then returned to their own communities to ‘socialise’ the results of the *Mubes* and congress. From August 2000, however, the ‘Papuan Spring’ ended as five PDP members were arrested and the TNI began to clamp down on popular expressions of the people’s aspirations.²⁹ On the 11th of

killing an elderly West Papuan man. The second photo was entitled, ‘Sustainable development in West Papua’ and included a picture of a child being abused by the Indonesian military. These two photo’s had a significant impact on Abdul Gafur. He admitted there was a problem and agreed to arrange a meeting with Habibie (Yohanis Bonay, *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001).

²⁶ Bonay, *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001.

²⁷ Giay, ‘Against Indonesia’, 130.

²⁸ *Presidium Dewan Papua*, Papuan Congress Resolution 4th June 2000., www.koteka.net/ppc.htm, accessed 5th January 2002.

²⁹ ICG, ‘Ending Repression in Irian Jaya’; *Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian* (Office for Justice and Peace - SKP), *Recent Developments in Papua: Papua Congress II 29 May – 4 June 2000 and situation Pasca-caongress*, SKP Port Numbay/Jayapura, January 2001.

November 2001, Theys Eluay was assassinated.³⁰ Since then NGOs, Presidium members, Protestant and Catholic Churches and West Papuan Islamic organisations, have renewed their call for a creation of a 'zone of peace' in West Papua; a unilateral withdrawal of all non-local security forces.³¹ In this climate of repression, the People's Consultative Assembly, Indonesia's national parliament (MPR), granted Papua Special Autonomy, meeting several important West Papuan demands including permission to fly the Morning Star and renaming the province from Irian Jaya to Papua.

³⁰ For a West Papuan account of the assassination and state sponsored terrorism in West Papua see Sem Karoba and Hans L. Gebze., *Papua Menggugat 11th November 2001: Hari Kematian Demokrasi, HAM dan Perjuangan Damai di Tanah Papua?*, Yogyakarta, Galang Press, 2002.

³¹ Kurniawan Hari, 'Papuan leaders want troops withdrawn', *The Jakarta Post*, 7th June 2002.

Protest and Persuasion	Noncooperation	Nonviolent Intervention	The disruptive class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising the Morning star flag (including women only) Sewing flags Wearing flags Raising the West Melanesian flag Declaring independence and re-reading of texts proclaiming independence Composing and singing traditional songs and hymns Wearing traditional dress Singing the West Papuan national anthem – <i>Hai Tanahku Papua</i> Indigenous religious movements with political intentions Oral story telling about suffering and resistance Petitions Public statements Letters to the authorities, papers and solidarity groups Deputations and official dialogue with the Indonesian government Dialogue with members of the TNI and police Reporting of human rights violations Using the U.N. machinery to raise concerns about violations of political and human rights Meetings Traditional dancing Discussions Church services and prayer meetings Fasting Celebrating significant dates in West Papua’s history Distributing pamphlets and leaflets Socialising of information and activities in rural areas Making airstrips unusable Marches Long marches/walks Demonstrating whilst running and dancing Waiting and camping outside jails where activists are imprisoned Marking traditional land— (such as the use of taboo sticks to restrict Freeport by the Amungme) Returning honours from the Indonesian government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refusing to speak or use <i>Bahasa Indonesia</i> in the company of Indonesians. Refusing to learn or speak Dutch. Refusing to eat Indonesian food Tax resistance Strikes Student strikes Refusing to work Going slow at work Making mistakes at work Rejecting Indonesian culture, thinking and ideology Exile (in countries other than Papua New Guinea) Taking refugee in Papua New Guinea Boycotting Indonesian independence day Traditional custodians refusing to recognise and stop at checkpoints established by transnational mining companies on their own land Hunger strikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing the <i>Dewan Papua</i> and <i>Presidium Dewan Papua</i> Growing and eating Papuan food Establishing Papuan cooperatives (<i>koperasi</i> – Bahasa Indonesia) to promote development and defend Papuan identity Establishing development and human rights organisations such as Mama Yosepha’s HAMAK based in Timika Promoting indigenous beliefs and identities Producing and distributing newsletters Rectifying the history of West Papua and producing pocket books about West Papua’s history Promoting West Papuan history in elementary schools right up to college Developing traditional dance and music groups like Arnold Ap’s <i>Mambesak</i> Courses on human rights and participative and interactive training of local human rights monitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interrupting meetings Occupations of Parliament, universities, government offices and of areas used by multinational companies (such as BP’s base camp in Saengga, Bintuni Bay) Blockades of roads Planting traditional taboo sticks and using other traditional methods to prohibit trespass on traditional lands by resource extraction companies Seizing forestry equipment Seeking asylum – embassy invasions Surrounding buildings (where meetings are being held such as the <i>Mubes</i>) in order to hold representatives accountable. Surrounding and escorting representatives of the international community or independent investigators to meetings organised by the Presidium rather than official meetings organised by the Provincial government. Confiscating the TNI’s supply of alcohol

Table 2.1 Types of nonviolent action undertaken by West Papuans. Based on Sharps typology of nonviolent action (*The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part Two: Methods of Nonviolent Action*, Boston, Porter Seargent, 1973). Examples have been collected from interviews with West Papuans and a reading of the literature.

The failure of armed struggle to bring about self-determination in West Papua

On many levels the armed struggle led by the OPM has been heroic. To paraphrase Gandhi, it is better for a person to use violence to fight injustice than do nothing.³² However, there is another way: nonviolence. Nonviolence has already proved successful in the face of Indonesian aggression in West Papua. Nonviolence is not only a more ethical form of resistance than armed struggle, it can also be more effective. Nonetheless, it is vital that people understand the ethical and strategic problems of violence in order to choose nonviolence from a position of strength.

Ethical problems with violence. At the most basic level conflict cannot be resolved by killing people. ‘Violence is grossly dysfunctional’ says Robert Burrowes. ‘It cannot resolve conflict or satisfy human needs. And whenever it has been used in the service of major political goals it has led to suffering and death, often on a massive scale.’³³ Violence also violates the sanctity and dignity of human beings. As John Rumbiak says, ‘we want to campaign and educate people that taking up arms sacrifices human rights.’³⁴

The strategic shortcomings of violence. At the level of strategy, continues Rumbiak:

We want to make it very clear to the political activists that the values that they are fighting for, and the enemy they are fighting against are two very different things. This has to be very clear otherwise the Papuans are going to repeat the same problems. We learn from our colonial masters. Look at the Indonesians. Three hundred and fifty years learning from the Dutch. They colonized their own people. That is what is going on.³⁵

Violence only reinforces the structure and culture of militarism. On a purely pragmatic level armed struggle has little chance against the superior strength of the TNI. In fact, it shifts the struggle to where Indonesia is strongest. Strategically speaking, however, Indonesia’s power to maintain the occupation of West Papua does not come from its military capability alone. It is sustained by popular support inside Indonesia and internationally. Therefore, the struggle should be directed at altering the will and undermining the power of those who continue to support the occupation, something that is far more likely to be achieved by nonviolence.; this is because nonviolence combines human psychology and political power to cause the repression of the opponent to rebound whilst simultaneously creating third-party support. Simultaneously it lays the foundation for the new society and promotes human reconciliation in the midst of the struggle. Another significant shortcoming of armed struggle in West Papua is that the cost is

³² Mohandas K. Gandhi, *All Men are Brothers*, Ahmedabad, Navijivan Publishing House, 1960:135

³³ Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense*, 239.

³⁴ Tok Blong Pasifik, ‘The John Rumbiak Interview’, West Papua: Survival or Extermination?, *Tok Blong Pasifik* special issue Vol. 55, No. 2, October 2001:18.

³⁵ Tok Blong Pasifik, ‘The John Rumbiak Interview’, 18.

disproportionately paid by the civilian population.³⁶ At the same time armed struggle decreases participation by favouring fit young men. It could be said that militarism of West Papuan society also increases the likelihood of gender based violence within West Papuan society.

While it is possible that armed struggle in West Papua could continue indefinitely due to the inaccessible terrain, tribal affinities and popular support for the cause, the purpose of armed struggle is to ultimately find a political solution to the problem. In West Papua, however, the armed struggle appears to be isolated politically from the PDP and PD who are searching for a solution through nonviolent means. Consequently, if the armed struggle suffers substantial losses or is isolated politically, those groups that wage armed struggle will be left with little political muscle and increasing feelings of frustration. Given this, it is imperative that linkages are made with the OPM/TPN (a fine line between avoiding isolating the OPM/TPN and contaminating the nonviolent struggle) and that if possible they are supported to develop greater capacity for civilian-based resistance including implementing a programme of sustainable development that meets the needs of the people.

Finally, in the current international political climate, groups that advocate and use violence to achieve political ends will find that international support for their cause will diminish. It will also be more likely that they will be subjected to increased repression. Moreover, a resumption of armed struggle would strengthen the hand of Jakarta by enabling them to brand West Papuan independence groups who use violence as terrorists, a process that would allow the TNI to increase its use of force against West Papuans and alienate potential third-party support.

Challenges for the nonviolent struggle in West Papua

There are significant challenges for nonviolent struggle in West Papua. These include the following:

Repression. The suffering of people in West Papua has been immense. Whilst no-one knows exactly how many West Papuans have died, killings by the Indonesian military have been on such a scale as to threaten the very survival of the West Papuan people.³⁷ One purpose of repression is to stop the struggle for self-determination, whether that struggle uses violence or nonviolence. Therefore, it is vital that activists find ways to undermine the power of violence by continuing to find ways to persist with nonviolent action. In sharp contrast to Aceh where violence

³⁶ See for example Giay., 'Against Indonesia', 132; ACFOA (Australian Council for Overseas Aid), *Trouble at Freeport: Eyewitness accounts of West Papuan resistance to the Freeport-McMoRan mine in Irian Jaya, Indonesia and military repression: June 1994 – February 1995*: 1, Deakin ACT, ACFOA, 1995; Four Corners., *Blood on the Cross*, ABC, c1999.

³⁷ Budiardjo and Liong, *West Papua: The Obliteration of A People*.

from both the armed struggle (GAM) and the TNI has entrenched a cycle of violence that routinely claims the life of up to 20-30 people each week, West Papuans have managed to avoid provocation.

As one West Papuan comments:

They killed Theys Eluay, but there was no war. They tried to arrest Papuan leaders, but still Papuans want nonviolent movement. Then they started spreading rumours. And these are still ineffective. We want peace, security and stability in West Papua we want Indonesia to stop its state terrorism.³⁸

Repression follows effective dissent. To maintain the effectiveness of the nonviolent struggle continued discipline is essential. Embracing a path of nonviolent resistance does not mean that nonviolent activists will be immunised from state terror. The assassination of Theys Eluay and murder of countless other West Papuan activists is testimony to that. Nonetheless, it is clear from the historical record that it is likely that there will be substantially less casualties if people choose nonviolent struggle over violence.³⁹ This does not mean, of course, that nonviolent action will not result in heavy casualties.⁴⁰ One thing is certain. Life under any ruthless regime will involve suffering, whether people resist or not or whether they resist violently or nonviolently.

Success will depend on four critical factors: Firstly, whether the struggle maintains a disciplined and explicit commitment to nonviolence. Secondly, whether the struggle develops and implements a strategic plan that directs sustained nonviolent action at the source of Indonesia's power. Thirdly, whether the repression of the opponent and the nonviolent resistance of activists, is made visible to an audience who will be motivated to act in solidarity with the resistance.⁴¹ And finally, whether, nonviolent activists persist, even in the face of repression.

*Mixed defence.*⁴² There is a view amongst some West Papuan advocates of nonviolence⁴³ and some proponents of armed struggle, that the movement for self-determination in West Papua could combine both armed struggle and nonviolence.⁴⁴ Petrus Tabuni, a district leader of the DP says that the approach adopted by the resistance will now be 'two-pronged'. 'We will use guerrilla tactics through the Free Papua Movement (OPM),⁴⁵ and dialogue with the central government

³⁸ John Barr, *The Future Could be Genocide: Reflections on Papua*, 10th June 2002.

³⁹ It is instructive to compare nonviolent resistance to the British in India with the violent Mau Mau resistance against the British in Kenya during the same period. In India, including the North West Frontier Province where the 'benign' British ruthlessly repressed the resolutely nonviolent Pathan's (see Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed*, pp. 103-124) some eight thousand people out of a population of 350 million died (see Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 100). Compare this to Kenya where the British killed 11,503 Kenyans out of a resistance movement of 100,000 (cited in Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense*, 239).

⁴⁰ See Gene Keyes, 'Heavy Casualties and Nonviolent Defense', *Philosophy and Social Action* 17 (3-4), July-December 1991, pp. 75-87.

⁴¹ Martin *et al*, 'Political Jiu-Jitsu against Indonesian Repression'.

⁴² Mixed defence is a term that refers to a combination of armed struggle and nonviolent resistance.

⁴³ Interview with participant 01, July 2001.

⁴⁴ On a positive note it this could be read as an encouraging sign that some members of the OPM/TPN may be open to exploring the potential of nonviolent struggle.

⁴⁵ To help counter-act inevitable misunderstanding about nonviolent struggle amongst members of the TPN it is important that nonviolence is seen not as an option for those that lack the courage to take up arms, but a superior way of

through the Papua Presidium', says Tabuni.⁴⁶ Whilst all liberation struggles have included elements of both violence and nonviolence in various concentrations, the view that nonviolent and armed struggle could be *combined into a unified grand strategy* of mixed defence is a dangerous one. In practice, one cancels out the other. A nonviolent movement linked with strategies using violence could easily be contaminated by violence.⁴⁷ At a more fundamental level a strategy of mixed defence plays into the hands of the TNI. Not only does it undermine the trust nurtured by a principled commitment to respect ones opponent and not to use violence against them, it also makes it easy for Jakarta to portray nonviolence as a ruse for violence, helping justify increased military repression and alienating third-party support.

Dialogue. At the moment, dialogue with Indonesia, says prominent West Papuan sociologist and theologian, Dr. Benny Giay, is 'like boiling a stone that will never cook'.⁴⁸ West Papuans want to talk about the history but Indonesians do not. Indonesians want West Papuans to bury the past though West Papuans cannot. As a result, the dialogue has reached an *impasse*. However, this does not mean that nonviolence has reached a dead-end. Dialogue, is but one element in the rich repertoire of nonviolence.⁴⁹ In situations like this, the purpose of nonviolent struggle is to re-create the conditions for dialogue. This could be achieved through campaigns of nonviolent action intended to alter Indonesia's resistance to talking about history and human rights and undermining their power to avoid talking about it.

Constructive programme. By intentionally integrating what Gandhi called a 'constructive programme' (living models of decentralised self-management and self-reliance) into a strategy of resistance, West Papuans can begin to create the kind of society they would like to live in now.⁵⁰ Far from a retreat from active participation in the struggle, by creating new structures and values

struggling that requires great inner strength. Indeed the discipline, courage and organisation that characterise an army, are valuable skills essential for the success of nonviolence. Furthermore, indigenous people steeped in violence have been transformed into nonviolent soldiers before. For more on how the Pathan, indigenous people characterised by violence and a commitment to blood feuds, were transformed from armed fighters to a resolutely nonviolent army that helped liberate their homeland from the British see D. G. Tendulkar, *Khan Abdul Gaffer Khan: Faith is a Battle*, Varanasi, Sarvodaya Sahitya Prakashan, 1967; Eknath Easwaran, *Badshah Khan: A Man to Match his Mountains*, Tomales (California), Nilgiri Press, 1985; Mukulia Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed: Opposition and Memory in the North West Frontier*, Santa Fe (California), School of American Research Press, 2000.

⁴⁶ Kabar-Irian., 'Irian Jaya hard-liners threaten guerrilla warfare',

http://www.campeace.org/Wparchive/hard_liners.htm accessed 23rd January 2002; Don Greenlees, 'Papuan rebels look to future in fight for homeland', *The Australian*, 29th January 2002.

⁴⁷ For a discussion on mixed defence in Burma see Michael Beer, 'Violent and Nonviolent Struggle in Burma: Is a Unified Strategy Workable?', in Stephen Zunes, Lester R. Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher, (eds), *Nonviolent Social Movements*, Massachusetts and Oxford, Blackwell, 1999: pp. 174-184.

⁴⁸ Giay, *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001.

⁴⁹ Thomas Weber, 'Gandhian Philosophy, Conflict Resolution Theory and Practical Approaches to Negotiation', *Journal of Peace Research*, Volume 38, Number 4, July 2001: pp. 493-513.

⁵⁰ See for instance Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense*, pp. 204-206.

that address the needs of West Papuans and lay the foundations for a new society, West Papuans will also withdraw their consent and cooperation for institutional oppression. In doing so they also undermine the power of the occupation.

Vision. One shortcoming with the nonviolent struggle in West Papua is that there is no clear vision for West Papua. What is meant by independence and *merdeka*? What does it mean for the poorest and most disadvantaged in West Papua? Benny Giay believes this should be a project for West Papuans at all levels. ‘What kind of society do we want in fifty years from now? How do we get there?’⁵¹ John Rumbiak believes that whilst the identity and needs of West Papua’s 250 tribes are paramount, a new generation of non-Papuans now call West Papua home. Any vision for a New Papua, therefore will need to be inclusive.⁵² It is unrealistic to expect that peace, justice and ecological sustainability will automatically result from the removal of Indonesian rule. Even if the historical and political causes of conflict are resolved, certain aspects and legacies of the structural causes of conflict: militarism (the politics of violence), capitalism (the economics of exploitation), a racist education system, violence against women and a hierarchical and corrupt political system, to name a few, will no doubt remain regardless of the political future of the territory. West Papuans children’s children will benefit from serious thought given to these questions now.

Timeframe. It seems clear that the conflict in West Papua is deeply entrenched and that Indonesia’s will to retain West Papua at all costs is strong. Consequently, there needs to be a realistic strategic timeframe for change and preparation for protracted struggle. This equally applies to solidarity activists. An unrealistic strategic timeframe could contribute to increased feelings of frustration and result in a return to violence. Structural change will also require revolutionary patience. Challenging global capital in West Papua and developing alternative economic systems should be seen in a global context. Change in this regard is part of a global protracted struggle.

Strategy. Finally, the power and effectiveness of the nonviolent struggle in West Papua will be significantly enhanced by a nonviolent strategy. This discussion will be the subject of Part Two.

Conclusion

Despite the prevalence of significant challenges, nonviolent struggle has achieved modest success, far beyond any gains achieved by armed struggle. In the face of extremely ruthless

⁵¹ Giay, *West Papua Project*, 13th December 2001.

⁵² Tok Blong Pasifik., ‘The John Rumbiak Interview’, 18.

repression, West Papuans peacefully persists to resist neo-colonisation, militarism and exploitation. Part Two examines how a nonviolent strategy could maximise the effectiveness of the nonviolent struggle. Chapter three examines the theoretical basis for a nonviolent strategy. Chapter four demonstrates that to be effective, a nonviolent strategy for self-determination in West Papua must intentionally incorporate a program of solidarity action into a strategy for change.