

Indonesian Military, Militias continue to burn villages as they withdraw from East Timor

by Doug Struck
The Washington Post

DILI, East Timor -- The Indonesian military and pro-government militias continue to systematically burn villages and towns as they withdraw from East Timor, officials said Sunday, as concern grew that U.N.-sponsored peacekeeping forces and international relief organizations are moving too slowly to impose order outside the capital.

One week after the arrival of the Australian-led peacekeeping mission, it has yet to expand its presence much beyond two landing places, and humanitarian organizations have reached only a few areas of the countryside.

They have not begun to get significant relief to the vast majority of the population, or to the hundreds of thousands of displaced people who fled rampaging militias following a U.N.-sponsored referendum Aug. 30 that indicated overwhelming support for East Timor's independence from Indonesia.

The cost of that deliberate pace began to emerge Sunday, as observers on some of the first low-level flights over regions east and west of Dili reported that withdrawing Indonesian troops or militias, who oppose East Timor's independence, are torching more of the countryside.

"The burning is still going on. It is systematic," said Sanjay Sojwal, a World Vision aid official who was on a helicopter flight to the eastern tip of the island. He said he saw a depopulated countryside and a succession of towns completely destroyed.

"They had burned the towns -- there weren't even shells of buildings standing. And then they had moved out to the villages, which were still burning," Sojwal said. "Nothing prepared me for that destruction."

Officials on a U.N. flight to the west found similar destruction. "It's clearly a slash and burn policy," said David Wimhurst, a U.N. spokesman.

The peacekeeping troops have made no move to stop the militia ac-

tivities outside of Dili. Rather than fanning out across the territory after their arrival on Sept. 20, the forces have taken a cautious, incremental approach to deployment that reduces the chances of casualties to peacekeeping troops.

"They need to step up the tempo," said a British military source. "They should be moving more quickly and authoritatively. They have a siege mentality, and they are inexperienced at this."

The multinational force under the command of Australian Maj. Gen. Peter Cosgrove is restrained by its relatively small size. He has only about

peacekeepers have not yet taken control of the access roads that lead to the nearby mountains where thousands of refugees are living on roots and meager vegetables.

The forces also have secured a beachhead in Baukau, 70 miles to the east, but have not yet moved beyond the port and airport. No troops have moved into the interior of East Timor.

Cosgrove describes his approach as "methodical." His plan so far is to take over small areas with large forces to dissuade any resistance.

Most aid organizations have been content to follow the military strat-

threatening condition, as some reports from East Timor had suggested. However, many are hungry and subsisting on a poor diet. They have little medical care, which has claimed some of the weakest among them.

"The cemetery has a fresh grave for a little baby," said the Rev. Ricardo DaSilva, a Roman Catholic priest with the displaced people in the mountaintop area of Dare, 10 miles from Dili. "Why a baby? Because she has no good food."

But most are surviving, and some relief agencies say it might be best to try to feed them in the countryside rather than encourage them to return to destroyed homes.

"We have to get help up there to them, and slow the pace of return to Dili," said Symeon Antoulas, the director of the Red Cross in East Timor. "If they all came down at once to Dili, it would exacerbate the problems of food, water and shelter."

Relief agencies say their biggest task may be trying to re-knit East Timor's society.

"The media is focusing on physical needs -- food, water and shelter. That is important, but there are also psychological stresses of security and what happened to their families," Antoulas said. "We need to start coming to grips with the problems of tracing relatives."

Huge numbers of families are splintered in East Timor because the men, fearing they would be killed, fled to the hills, and their families were then taken to western Timor hundreds of miles away, where they are in camps controlled by the militias. Few have returned, and it remains unclear if they are free to leave the camps, or how they would get back.

"The aim of the operation in west Timor would be to get to the point that the people can really choose where they want to go," Monod said.

egy, and say they cannot operate in areas not yet occupied by the peace-keeping forces.

"We don't want to take the risk of going by road. We don't want any more security incidents. We've had enough of that," said Jean-Michel Monod, the Asia director of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has seen some of its people attacked.

Aid organizations also say the humanitarian crisis is not as acute as feared. Instead of needing immediate food aid to arrest mass starvation, the largest aid groups say they have found their tasks will be more lengthy and complex. They must reunite splintered families, resettle an uprooted population, repair flattened towns and villages and rebuild the economy.

The displaced people reached so far by aid workers are not in a life-

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3,000 troops on the ground and will have fewer than 8,000 when the force is fully deployed.

Cosgrove has moved slowly to allow the departure of the main force of the Indonesian army, whose reaction to the arrival of the foreign soldiers had been uncertain. He has done nothing to try to block the reported flight of thousands of the military's surrogates, the militias, into neighboring western Timor.

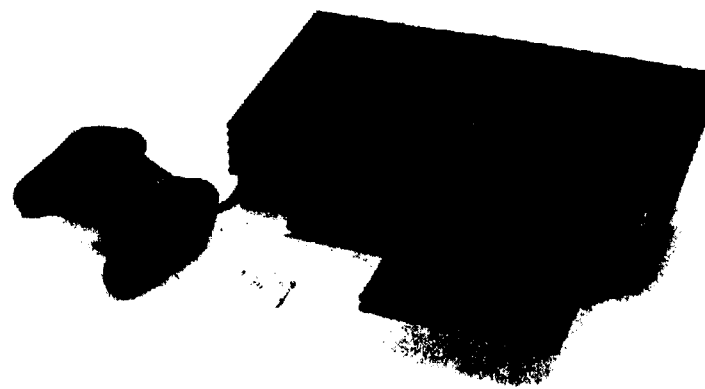
"He's probably operating on instructions: Don't have casualties to his forces to avoid problems at home, and don't have a lot of Indonesians dead to avoid offending the rest of Asia," an international aid official said.

So far, the multinational force has not fired a shot, and there have been no military casualties. But it was not until the fourth day after their arrival that Cosgrove's forces appeared in the center of Dili, the capital, and the

PlayStation2 premieres in Tokyo

by Adam Pavlacka
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San Jose State University
TMS Campus

processor. Although PlayStation games will run on the PlayStation2, they will not be enhanced in any way. New accessories announced for the PlayStation2 include a new Dual



CPE PHOTO

In horizontal form, the PlayStation2 could easily blend in with a cabinet full of home theater equipment. The only thing missing is a remote control.

The Tokyo Game Show is a game player's fantasy. Held annually in Tokyo, Japan, the game show is typically used for major product announcements and unveilings by the major game producers. Sometimes, though, the news is so big a company just can't wait for the show to start, so they hold their own event. Early this week Sony Computer Entertainment did just that when the company held a press conference officially announcing the PlayStation2. Currently scheduled for a Mar. 4, 2000 release in Japan, and a Fall 2000 release in Europe and North America, the PlayStation2 has the game industry buzzing. The price for the Japanese launch is 39,800 yen, or approximately \$370, and it includes the system, one controller, a memory card and a demo disc. Current industry speculation expects the North American release to street between \$300 - \$350.

The biggest news regarding the PlayStation2 is DVD compatibility. It has been known since the initial tech demos that the PlayStation2 would utilize DVD-ROM as a standard storage medium. What was not known, until now, was whether or not the PlayStation2 could play DVD Video. The short answer is yes.

Equipped with a plethora of A/V features, the PlayStation2 promises to become the centerpiece of every college student's home entertainment center. The unit has a multi-A/V out port, which will accommodate various video formats such as RF, composite and S-Video. Standard audio outs will be provided, as well as a digital out for Dolby Digital (AC3) and DTS support.

In addition to DVD movies, the PlayStation2 will also be able to play music CDs, PlayStation game CDs and PlayStation2 game CDs. Controllers and accessories designed for the current PlayStation should also work with the PlayStation2. The backward compatibility is possible because the original PlayStation CPU is used in the PlayStation2 as an I/O (input/output)

Shock2 analog controller and an 8-megabyte memory card. The Dual Shock2 is different from the standard Dual Shock in that every button (with the exception of the start and select buttons) on the Dual Shock2 will be analog, or touch sensitive. This means that the PlayStation2 will be able to sense the difference between a hard smack and a light touch on one of the buttons. The high capacity memory card is approximately 64 times larger than the standard PlayStation memory card. The memory card also provides digital security measures through a technology called "MagicGate."

This will allow the system to be used for future e-commerce applications. Additionally, the PlayStation2 has USB and i.Link (FireWire/IEEE 1394) connectors which should allow for easy connection of standard peripherals such as a keyboard and mouse.

Currently there is no Internet support out-of-the-box for the PlayStation2. The system does have a standard PCMCIA slot on the back, which can accept a standard PC Card modem, but Sony is keeping mum on any browser plans. Sony has not announced any plans for an Internet browser and neither have any third parties, although that may change in the days ahead. Representatives of Sony said that the company is focusing on broadband network connectivity such as cable modems, but no specifics were announced.

At this point there hasn't been much software shown for the PlayStation2, but 46 North American developers have officially signed on with the platform. This is in addition to the 27 European and 89 Japanese developers also on board. Games of note so far are Namco's Tekken Tag Tournament and a new Ridge Racer, Sony's Gran Turismo 2000 and Square's Bouncer. Expect more games to be announced over the next few days during the Tokyo Game Show.

Gore sharpens his game as Bradley challenge grows

by Ronald Brownstein
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON -- With all signs indicating a tightening race for the Democratic presidential nomination, Vice President Al Gore unveiled a more personal and emotional political pitch Saturday as he shared a stage with rival Bill Bradley for the first time in the campaign.

Using a wireless microphone -- a la Republican Elizabeth Dole -- and walking out from behind the podium, Gore delivered an unusually passionate speech to a gathering of the Democratic National Committee here. "I'm going to work my heart out to earn your vote," Gore declared at the outset of a 30-minute speech in which he spoke at length about his background, endorsed a long list of Democratic priorities and lashed out at GOP front-runner George W. Bush.

Bradley, speaking with reading glasses perched atop his nose, took a more measured approach. He

alternated lyrical descriptions of his family's small-town roots with earnest calls for campaign finance reform and new offensives to reduce the number of children in poverty and expand access to health insurance. Despite the nation's strong economy, he said, "Our job is not done."

Adding to the drama of the back-to-back appearances was a new Time/CNN poll that showed Bradley with a narrow lead over Gore in the critical first primary state of New Hampshire. Bradley's surprising early strength in the campaign has unnerved many Gore backers -- intensifying pressure on the Vice President to sharpen his performance.

Both men drew positive responses Saturday, but while most of Bradley's applause came from young supporters crowded into seats at the back of the room, Gore generated several sign-waving standing ovations from the actual DNC members in the front.

Forbes bashes Bush at California GOP convention

by Cathleen Decker
Los Angeles Times

ANAHEIM, Calif. -- Battered by electoral losses and beset by financial woes, California's Republican Party confronted more dissent Saturday as presidential candidate Steve Forbes bashed the party's front-runner, George W. Bush, and moderates staged a protest meeting across the street from the party's official convention here.

Speaking to reporters before he addressed party delegates at lunch, Forbes castigated Texas Gov. Bush for failing to speak out against recent moves by some of his supporters.

He specifically cited Michigan Gov. John Engler's decision not to back a school choice effort and Tennessee Gov. Don Sundquist's support for a tax hike. Forbes said both governors, who are senior allies of Bush, were snubbing Republican ideals.

"Leadership is not silence," Forbes declared. "It is not well-turned phrases or cliches or sound bites. Leadership ultimately comes from principled substance. That's what I'm offering."

Yet Forbes himself carefully calibrated his remarks at the convention. In front of reporters, he and his associates indicated that, as far as Bush was concerned, the gloves were off.

"The governor is using the Oscar De La Hoya approach," said Forbes campaign manager Ken Blackwell, referring to the recently dethroned boxer. "He's going to try to coast

through the last few rounds, and we're not going to allow him to do that."

But minutes later in front of the delegates -- many of whom sported Bush buttons -- Forbes pulled his punches. He did not mention Bush apart from an elliptical request that voters not "settle for politics as usual."

Forbes' earlier complaints were

bly meeting in Washington. On Saturday, Thompson said, he attended the Ryder Cup golf matches at the invitation of his close friend and team captain Ben Crenshaw.

For good measure, Forbes also took aim in an interview at perennial Republican presidential candidate Pat Buchanan, who is contemplating a third-party bid. This week, Buchanan came under fire from can-

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dismissed by Bush spokeswoman Margita Thompson.

"It is fine for some candidates to talk about things, but what is important is Gov. Bush has acted on Republican principles and delivered results, such as signing the two largest tax cuts in Texas history," she said.

The GOP front-runner did not attend the convention. He was invited to speak at Friday's dinner but had already committed to attend the Republican National Hispanic Assem-

blate John McCain for suggesting in a book that the United States need not have entered into World War II against Germany.

"World War II -- our participation in it -- was one of the finest moments in American history," Forbes said in the interview. "It was true evil. ... To think that Hitler bore no ill will to America is preposterous."

Forbes' drilling of Bush and Buchanan was only one indication of dissent at the party's convention.