



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF WEST PAPUA

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF WEST PAPUA: MEDIA STATEMENT, 13 SEPT 2015

“Australia is the only country in the world that has actively fostered a military dictatorship on its doorstep”
Lieutenant Colonel Lance Collins (ret) *Great power relationships and small nations*

WEST PAPUA FORUM

**BOARDROOM, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF WEST PAPUA
838 COLLINS ST, DOCKLANDS, VICTORIA
SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2015: 12—3PM**

For his presentation to the West Papua Rent Collective on 13 September 2013, Lieutenant Colonel Lance Collins (ret) draws on experience as Senior Intelligence Officer for the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) in 1999, and with the 3rd US Army Headquarters in Kuwait in 1998.

INTERFET was a multinational peacekeeping force, led by Australia, which oversaw the withdrawal of the Indonesian Army from East Timor after its ‘scorched earth’ response to a United Nations referendum (including the assassination of 1,400 East Timorese civilians, the displacement of 271,000 to West Timor, and the razing of most of the territory’s infrastructure).

Collins emerged from East Timor alleging a culture of cover-up, bullying and recrimination in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and a pro-Jakarta lobby in the Defense Intelligence Organization (DIO). His claim ignited military and intelligence inquiries, reviews, rebuttals and denials. Eventually, in 2005, the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security admitted that his fundamental assertion was correct.

Reflecting on Indonesia’s occupation of East Timor and West Papua, Collins maintains that our national security is still endangered by a pro-Jakarta lobby in Canberra, and that “Australia is the only country in the world that has actively fostered a military dictatorship on its doorstep.”

Since leaving the ADF in 2005, Collins has co-authored *Plunging Point: intelligence failures cover-ups and consequences* (HarperCollins 2005); is progressing a dissertation *Convincing Canberra: How other countries achieve their foreign policy goals with Canberra* (Deakin University), and has written an historical novel *A Dowry for the Sultan* (a story of religious bigotry, and a massacre averted by a weave of courage, daring, and love).

His address on 13 September co-incides with the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in Port Moresby, which has agreed to consult Indonesia about a PIF fact-finding mission to West Papua. This year PIF considerations were generated by a process initiated by new Secretary-General Meg Taylor, who chaired the World Bank’s Ombudsmen Office (1999—2014). She has instilled the Forum with an inclusive, accountable, data-driven agenda, and the proposals for West Papua—fact-finding mission; listing on UN Decolonization Committee; Observer Status—were deduced from 30 submissions by Pacific Civil Society Organizations.

During the Forum, the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands re-iterated the commitment he made during the Melanesian Spearhead Group in Honiara to list West Papua on the UN Decolonization Committee.

INQUIRIES

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