

We The People
Program 98
Indonesian Facilitation



The Republic of Indonesia lies to our near north straddling the equator with a population of 238 million with Islam fundamental to their way of life. Other religions are tolerated to some extent but they are a small minority. This year a report from the Human Rights Watch warned that the Indonesian government, police and military are passively and sometimes actively condoning Muslim extremists with a recent uptick in religiously motivated violence with Islamic gangs regularly attacking Christian Churches. Indonesia has a small middle class with the vast majority living close to or below the poverty line. This gap between rich and poor is fertile ground for unrest and corruption just as in any country. The shrinking of the middle class is an early warning signal to a country that society is faltering just as it is in Australia.

In Indonesia the main wealth generator is oil and gas and without those resources the country would most likely fall into significant decay and no doubt that will happen as their fossil fuel supplies fall away. Now according to a number of sources and documents I have researched a peculiar system of Indonesian facilitation is ever present. Facilitators can be anyone who makes something happen and then takes a fee or kick back for the act and this is integrated into every part of life. In other words corruption is actually a way of life and facilitation is a euphemism for corruption. People at the community level do this to feed their families and survive while the armed forces participate having been given the mandate by the government to supplement their income. The government doesn't have the money or the will to pay their military personnel properly so they allow and encourage them the power and the flexibility to facilitate a better deal. Again this simply constitutes unbridled corruption and the whole of Indonesia is addicted to it from top to bottom.

I recently interviewed an expatriate Australian business man who worked there for 8 years and he also supports the claims of a corrupt society through so called facilitation. He said he once asked a high level co-worker if the Muslim faith believes in theft and the swift response was that it does not allow or condone stealing. The expat then asked why this so called facilitation or stealing is rife and why was it accepted and the answer was because it's a cultural thing and not a religious issue. In other words it appears to be a religion of convenience. So this is what underpins all transactions at every level of Indonesian society from poor to the rich and from Government to the military and judiciary and beyond.

So in my view it is this aberrated fractured society of marginalised poor and corrupt services including the courts which means we cannot rely on or trust the Indonesians to help us stop the illegal boat people coming into Australia. Its big business from the police to customs to banks and village folk. It's a thriving industry and many people wait on time payment to leave to come illegally to Australia. Their way of life is so very different to ours yet we pour money into their country as aid and who knows where it goes. While ever facilitation thrives and is endorsed by the Indonesian people and the government we will not be able to stop the boats. Put simply, most Indonesians are just focused on staying alive and do not care about Australia at all. No amount of joint military or police exercises will stop it as boat people are the latest money making industry for the country. As Alexander Downer said on a recent interview on 2GB in Sydney, these are Indonesian boats with Indonesian crews leaving from an Indonesian port and Australia is completely within its rights to turn them around and send them back. In my view and many others we simply need to take a strong stand with Indonesia and stop playing games. Really it's that simple and then we stop spending billions elsewhere and start to look after our own first. Surely that's reasonable and makes common sense. **Until Next time this is Kent Bayley**

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/indonesia-shrugs-at-rising-religious-violence-report-20130228-2f7pp.html> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption_in_Indonesia
<http://www.2gb.com/audioplayer/10285>