

observers, want economic and social justice, but are fundamentally *Indonesian* in their nature and outlook, and have not purchased the fool's gold of independence. The problem lies primarily outside of Aceh, and outside of Indonesia, in the policy planning centers of the BAC nations. Even UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has now adopted British Prime Minister Tony Blair's "end of sovereignty" campaign. President Clinton told President Wahid, during the newly elected President's first visit to the United States in November, that the United States supports Indonesia's territorial integrity. It would be a more believable pledge, if President Clinton would fire Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, whose pretensions as "super-cop" for the BAC oligarchy are a threat to peace and sovereignty in every corner of the globe.

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## 'Free Aceh' is another British narco-terrorist outfit

by Michael O. Billington

London's role as the controller of nearly every major terrorist capability in the world, long documented by *EIR*,<sup>1</sup> has recently emerged as a subject of official protests against London, by nations in Africa, Asia, and even Europe—including, especially, Russia. The story behind the Free Aceh Movement, the separatist movement in the Indonesian province of Aceh in Northern Sumatra, intersects all the normal channels—from the 1950s Anglo-American attempted dismemberment of Indonesia, to the British-owned "Islamic" terror apparatus, to the London-based world narcotics and gun-running networks.

### British indirect control

The Dutch East India Company took over the East Indies islands during the 17th century, but the northern part of Sumatra, Aceh, remained generally independent. When the British established Penang and Singapore as trading ports in the 19th century, Aceh's various regional leaders established trading ties for the British East India Company, providing about half of the world's pepper. The British took over direct rule of the East Indies between 1811 and 1816, but found it more

1. "England's Lizard Queen Is the Mother of International Terrorism," *EIR*, Nov. 28, 1997.

convenient to allow the Dutch to regain control under broad, British direction of all the colonial empires (Dutch, French, and Portuguese) in Asia thereafter. The 1824 Anglo-Dutch Treaty of London made Sumatra part of the Dutch East Indies, except for an independent Aceh, which remained under British "free trade" domination. In the 1871 Treaty of Sumatra, however, London granted the Dutch a green light to take control of Aceh. This led to 40 years of colonial warfare before Acehnese resistance was crushed by the Dutch. The leader of the popular resistance to the Dutch takeover, Tungku Chik diTiro, is claimed as a relative by the current leader of the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or GAM), Hasan diTiro.

But the 1871 treaty still assured the British unfettered trading rights in Sumatra, and the existing British relations with Aceh's regional leaders were maintained.

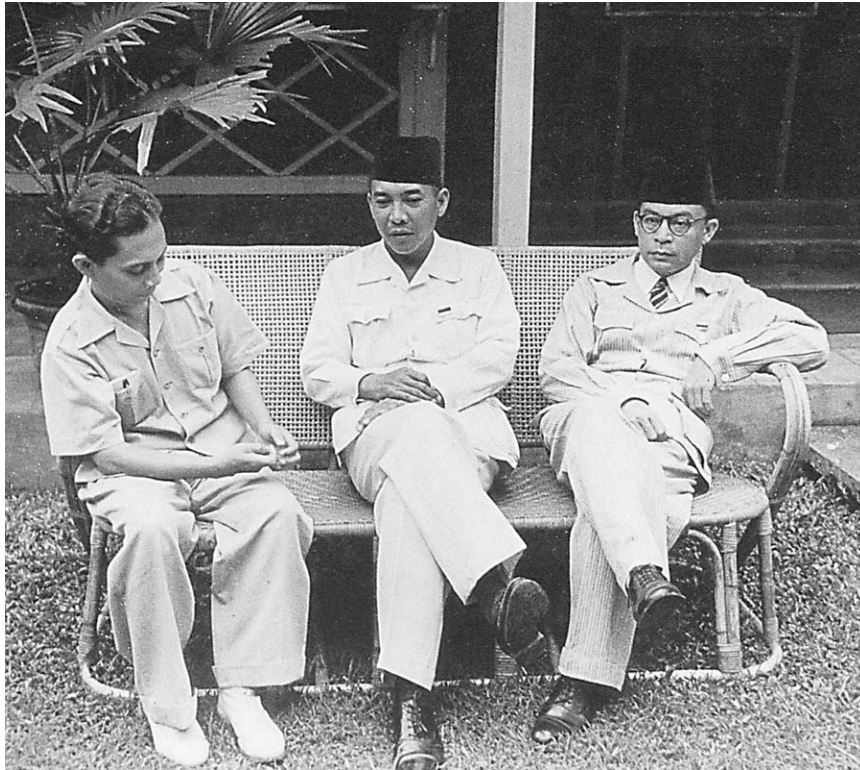
Like the rest of Indonesia, the Acehnese generally welcomed the Japanese in 1942 as liberators from the Dutch. After the war, the Acehnese were enthusiastic participants in the nationalist resistance to the Dutch recolonization—in fact, the Dutch did not even try to reoccupy Aceh itself. Aceh became a major source of funds for the nationalists through smuggling with the British in Penang and Singapore—a typical British "merchant" lever in working both sides of the colonial war in Indonesia. In fact, the British promoted the Islamic-educated elite in Aceh, who differed somewhat from the Dutch-educated intelligentsia around national leaders Sukarno and Hatta.

In the early 1950s, many among the Aceh Islamic elite joined with the Indonesian-wide Darul Islam movement, centered in Java, in a revolt aimed at establishing Indonesia as an Islamic Republic. Darul Islam never called for independence for any part of Indonesia, but for a united, Islamic nation. Several years of conflict in Aceh concluded in agreements with Jakarta establishing a degree of autonomy for Aceh over religion, customary law, and education. This autonomy relationship functioned peacefully until the mid-1970s. Meanwhile, many of Aceh's regional leaders joined enthusiastically in the national butchery of the Indonesian Communist Party members and supporters following the U.S.- and British-orchestrated overthrow of Sukarno, and the establishment of the New Order under General Suharto in 1965 and 1966.

### Free Aceh

Hasan diTiro, a graduate of Columbia University in New York, with a law degree from Plano University in Texas, was working at the Indonesian mission to the UN in New York in 1953, when the Darul Islam revolt broke out. He quit his position and appointed himself the Darul Islam ambassador to the UN. With the settlement of the Darul Islam revolt, diTiro stayed in the United States and started a business.

DiTiro began collaborating with U.S. intelligence on a plot to balkanize Indonesia. It was a plan that went back to British Adm. Louis Mountbatten, head of the Southeast Asia Command during World War II, and his political adviser, Sir



*Indonesian founding fathers Sjahrir, Sukarno, and Hatta in 1946. Indonesia is a nation with 17,000 islands, and multiple ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences among its 200 million people. As its first President, Sukarno fought colonialist efforts to encourage “self-determination,” insisting, rather, that the nation must provide for each citizen to participate in national and international affairs.*

Esler Dening, to divide Indonesia up into colonial spheres of influence after the war, in order to maintain European colonial control. The plan was revived by U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and his brother Allen Dulles in 1957, who worked closely with the British in arming and supporting separatist movements in Sumatra and in Sulawesi against the supposedly “communist-leaning” government of President Sukarno.<sup>2</sup>

DiTiro, in the United States, began publishing tracts promoting independence for all the outer islands—not just Aceh. He argued that Indonesia was “not a natural geopolitical entity,” but was “still an unliquidated colonial empire with Javanese replacing Dutchmen as emperors.” Indonesia, he said, should have been broken up into several states immediately after World War II. DiTiro became a close friend and collaborator of Gen. Edward Lansdale, who was involved in the covert war against Sukarno in the 1950s, before running U.S. counterinsurgency operations in the Philippines and Vietnam.

The 1957-58 subversion of Indonesia failed, and diTiro left the United States for Sweden. He reappeared in 1976,

2. Michael O. Billington, “Britain’s Cold War Against FDR’s Grand Design: The East Asian Theater, 1943-63,” *EIR*, Oct. 15, 1999.

when he returned to Aceh to found the Free Aceh Movement, composed of a few hundred intellectuals and others, who launched a revolt. Free Aceh was not Islamic in nature, and did not win the support of many Islamic leaders.

Aceh itself was enjoying a burst of development at that time. Natural gas was discovered in 1971, with production and refinement beginning in 1976. One report from Human Rights Watch says that Hasan diTiro bid for a contract to build a pipeline for Mobil Oil, but lost the bid. Other local businessmen who felt that they were not getting their share of the new wealth, gave support to the Free Aceh Movement. Nonetheless, the late 1970s and 1980s saw rapid population growth, new industry, new schools, universities, electricity, and other infrastructure growth, due to the “resource boom.” Green Revolution agricultural policies were implemented to make Aceh one of the leading rice producers in the region.

DiTiro’s movement targeted “outsiders” from Java for “exploiting” Aceh—for destroying the old culture based on agriculture and fishing, and for bringing in pollution, prostitution, and so forth. The revolt enjoyed little support, and diTiro fled in 1979.

### **Training in Libya**

In 1987, several hundred Acehnese went to Libya for guerrilla warfare training. DiTiro had befriended Col. Muammar Qaddafi, and became the chairman of the political committee of Qaddafi’s “Mathaba Against Imperialism, Racism, Zionism, and Fascism,” set up in 1985 to provide support to “liberation movements” in various parts of the world. DiTiro claimed to have connections with other armed groups in the South Pacific, and within other parts of Indonesia. He approached East Timor’s Fretilin spokesman José Ramos Horta for an alliance, but was reportedly turned down.

The Libyan-trained troops launched a new revolt in 1989, far more deadly in nature than that of 1976. But, the character of this bloody and disastrous revolt had more to do with drugs than with noble-sounding appeals to national liberation.

### **Drug war**

In 1989, the Indonesian government launched a nationwide war on drugs. Among the targets of the campaign were many military officers who were involved in the drug trade. In Aceh alone, 47 military officers were dismissed on disciplinary grounds, and thousands of tons of marijuana were

captured and destroyed. Sumatran marijuana from Aceh was world-famous both for quality and quantity, and Aceh was reported to be the largest source of the drug in all of Asia. One report describes areas of Aceh in which 90% of the inhabitants grew marijuana, depicting this as “fairly representative of that throughout Aceh.”<sup>3</sup>

Several leaders of the 1976-79 Free Aceh Movement had fled into the jungles, supporting themselves in the 1980s through the marijuana trade. When the government’s war on drugs in 1989 busted up the drug mafia and its military collaborators, many of them joined up with the Free Aceh “rebels.” Like the narco-terrorist organizations which have taken over much of the nation of Colombia, the Free Aceh leaders deny their connection to the drug mafia, claiming that “ordinary farmers” have no choice but to turn to drug production to survive.

Indonesia’s report to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1991 on the Aceh rebellion said: “What happened in Aceh was that armed criminals spread terror and intimidation . . . after the local authorities took stringent measures to eradicate the cannabis cultivation.”

As a leading British-linked smuggling center, both historically and still today, Aceh is also a transshipment point for other drugs produced in Asia, feeding the catastrophic rates of heroin and amphetamine consumption throughout Indonesia.

### Atrocities on both sides

The 1989-92 Free Aceh revolt, with the drug mafias and the Libyan-trained guerrillas combined, was brutal. Civil authorities and others suspected as “government informers” were targeted for assassination by the rebels, as were all Javanese settlers, causing thousands of “outsiders” to flee. Village leaders were victimized as collaborators, and thousands of schools, bridges, and other infrastructure works were burned down. Nonetheless, local leaders, including the *ulama* religious leaders, generally opposed the rebellion, and many participated in efforts to organize villagers to resist the terrorists.

The government doubled its troop presence to 12,000, and increased the development budget for Aceh fourfold, making it the largest provincial budget in the country. The government’s “Integrated Territorial Activities Program” initiated broad-based construction of village facilities and infrastructure, trying to meet the economic grievances of the population.

However, it was also during this period—the late 1980s into the early 1990s, and continuing on a smaller scale thereafter—that the Indonesian army, especially the special forces, were unquestionably engaged in systematic terror and assassination, not only in Aceh, which, in 1990, was designated a “military operations zone” (*Daerah Operasi Militer*, or

DOM), but also in East Timor and elsewhere in the country. These acts of military terror have been acknowledged by the government, to a limited extent under Suharto, and more comprehensively under President B.J. Habibie, and by then-head of the Armed Forces, General Wiranto. It is believed that those elements of the special forces responsible for the atrocities were associated with Col. Prabowo Subianto, a son-in-law of Suharto’s, who was deputy commander of the special forces in East Timor before being sent to Aceh in 1991. He is also rumored to be responsible for the kidnapping and torture of student dissidents in 1998, and for orchestrating provocateurs who instigated riots in Jakarta, with the aim of justifying a military coup.

The terror began in the mid-1980s in Java and elsewhere with several thousand “mysterious killings”—people killed and often left in public places, as warnings to the population. Suharto’s memoirs, published in 1989, have the following astonishing passage: “The peace was disturbed. . . . We had to apply some *treatment*, to take some stern action. What kind of action? It had to be with violence. . . . But those who tried to resist, like it or not, had to be shot. . . . Some of the corpses were left just like that. This was for the purpose of shock therapy. . . . This was done so that the general public would understand that there was still someone capable of taking action to tackle the problem of criminality.”<sup>4</sup>

In Aceh, during 1990 until August 1998, the years it was designated a “military operations area,” about 2,000 people were reported killed. Reports of mass graves of “disappeared” persons have now been confirmed by General Wiranto. Human rights groups report figures nearly twice that. Corpses were dismembered and left in public places, heads posted on stakes.

The special forces created militias in the villages—estimated at as many as 60,000 altogether—comprised of youths who were given some training and joined the military in anti-Free Aceh operations in the countryside. Reports of the burning of houses, rapes, and other horrors are not refuted by the government, nor by the military, which is investigating.

While there were some trials of military officers during the Suharto regime—such as those responsible for the infamous Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor in 1991—in general, before Suharto was ousted, Prabowo and his circle were on a trajectory toward greater power, which led to Prabowo’s self-imposed exile. These networks still exist within the military, however, as is openly acknowledged by General Wiranto and others in the government.

The Aceh rebellion was crushed by 1992, and although the Free Aceh demand for independence did not become a popular cause, the counterinsurgency tactics of the military did succeed in creating widespread rage against the New Order of Suharto, and calls for more autonomy and the withdrawal of the military.

3. Tim Kell, *The Roots of the Acehese Rebellion 1989-1992*, Publication #74, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1995.

4. From Geoffrey Robinson, “The Origin of Disorder in New Order Aceh,” *Indonesia*, #66, October 1998, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University.

Both B.J. Habibie, who became President when Suharto was forced to resign in 1998, and the new President, Abdurrahman Wahid, have taken measures to withdraw army forces from Aceh and to establish formal investigations into the criminal measures of the past. However, in addition to the relatively peaceful demonstrations calling for a referendum, violent provocations by Free Aceh forces have continued.

According to the Dow Jones-owned *Far Eastern Economic Review*, whose reporters know diTiro and the Free Aceh terrorists quite well, the weapons for the new Free Aceh operations came from the stockpiles of Cambodia's now-defunct Khmer Rouge, through Thailand and Malaysia—the same route earlier identified as a major arms trail for the Sri Lankan separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other terrorist networks in India and the Philippines. Australian scholar Herbert Feith, an Indonesia expert now teaching in Yogyakarta, emphasizes the similarities between diTiro's GAM and the Tamil Tigers, Peru's Shining Path, and the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), all extremely violent, with little popular support. What Feith does not mention is London's well-documented control over all these terrorist movements.

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* estimates the Free Aceh troop strength at about 800, more than in the early 1990s uprising. The press coverage of the Free Aceh has entirely blacked out its well-known drug connections, while reporting that diTiro has broken his ties with Libya. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* admits, however, through interviews with diTiro in Sweden and with other rebel leaders on the ground in Aceh, that their strategy is to create conditions to "justify international intervention," on the East Timor model. More than 100,000 villagers have been driven out of their homes by the Free Aceh, supposedly to escape the Indonesian military, and into one of 61 refugee sites set up in the north. The camps are either directly or indirectly run by the Free Aceh or their foreign sponsors among non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The army is trying to persuade the refugees to return home, but the Free Aceh prevents them from leaving the camps, while bringing in NGOs and the press to play up the "humanitarian crisis," entirely of their own making.

More than 300 people have been killed this year, including dozens of ambushed police and soldiers, and many civilians, including in several incidents in which the military opened fire on demonstrating crowds threatening to seize military or police buildings. The rebels have torched hundreds of buildings, including many schools.

Over the summer, Jakarta moved troops back into Aceh for a six-month operation aimed at ending the terrorist resurgence by January. However, the developments in East Timor led to the current ferment for a referendum, as we explained in the preceding article. The new government has again withdrawn the military and is attempting to negotiate a peaceful solution, granting autonomy, but preserving national unity and sovereignty.

## Italy's Romano Prodi, the puppet of the 'invisible government'

by Claudio Celani

**March 1978:** The chairman of the Christian Democratic Party, Aldo Moro, is being held prisoner by the Red Brigades, who have threatened to kill him. Rome is inundated by huge numbers of police and Army forces, who are searching night and day for the location in which Moro is being held prisoner. For some reason, somebody from the terrorist inner circle decides to reveal where the hideout is. In order not to betray the source, a person above suspicion, a respected professor, will be the "ambassador." The professor will report that, during a seance session, the word "Gradoli" was mentioned as the place where Moro's kidnappers are hiding him. There is a street with that name in Rome, but the police minister decides to deploy outside Rome, to the village of Gradoli. After several days, the police will find the real safehouse, on the Via Gradoli, Gradoli Street—empty. The terrorists have moved to a new safehouse. On May 9, they will release Moro's dead body. Twenty years later, no court has seriously challenged the professor's story.

**July 1993:** Italy is swept by the political tornado known as "Clean Hands." Hundreds of politicians and businessmen are arrested, on allegations of being part of an illegal party-financing system. Entire political parties disintegrate. The professor is interrogated by the Clean Hands super-prosecutor, because the professor has been chairman of the largest state conglomerate, which was the major conduit for political bribes. The super-prosecutor is known for using rough methods. He holds people in jail until they confess and hand over the names of other people. But, strangely enough, the professor goes free. He is not even indicted. One year later, the super-prosecutor decides to start a political career. A Parliament seat is open, and the super-prosecutor is elected. In 1996, he gets a ministerial job with the professor, who in the meantime has become head of the government. A few years later, in 1999, the professor, no longer head of government, founds a new political movement, together with the super-prosecutor who had investigated him. The movement runs on a populist platform, in opposition to all parties, and wins 10% in the European Parliament elections, the prelude to a march toward the conquest of power.

These two stories challenge the fantasy of the most audacious writer of political fiction; however, they are true. The name of the professor is Romano Prodi, currently chairman