

# Genocide in timor

Business



Few people realize that genocide is happening all around them every day. Genocide is the mass killing of human beings based on a common quality, such as religion, race, or gender. The best-known occurrence of this is the Holocaust, when the Nazis murdered over 6 million people, mostly Jews. However, there are countless other examples of genocide all over the world and throughout history. One little-known episode occurred during the years of 1975 and 1976, when Indonesia invaded the small island of Timor in southeastern Asia.

The Indonesian soldiers expressed their control over the island by committing random acts of genocide on the local Chinese and Timorese communities. (Jones) This example demonstrates that the Holocaust was far from the end of genocide in the world. The most obvious difference between the Holocaust and the Timorese genocide is the scale of the deaths. The Nazis murdered around 6 million people, while the Indonesian soldiers killed only an estimated 200 thousand. This was mainly because while the Nazis were constantly searching for new ways to make the killing faster and more efficient, the massacres on Timor were random and spontaneous.

On the first day of the invasion of Timor, 150 native people were chosen at random and shot one at a time on a pier, while a crowd of several hundred was forced at gunpoint to count them out loud. In the cities of Dili and Suai, men and boys were shot in groups of fifty or more. The examples go on and on: in Lacluta, 400 people were killed, mostly women and children; in Aitana, a staggering 10 thousand people were murdered in a single day. (Jones) So while it is true that 200 thousand is a long way from 6 million, it is nonetheless an outrageous amount of lives lost for the sake of pointless

cruelty, and cannot be cast aside as a minor event. There are myriad accounts describing the cruelty of the Nazis.

In his Holocaust memoir *Night*, Elie Wiesel recounted when he first saw one of the Nazi crematoriums where Jews were burned alive. “ They were burning something. A lorry drew up at the pit and delivered its load--little children... Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.

” (Wiesel, 24-25) The Indonesians also found many creative ways to murder the people of Timor without giving them the privilege of a quick, painless death. In the city of Malim Luro, Indonesian soldiers ordered sixty people to lay flat on the ground. A few minutes later, the soldiers ran them over with a bulldozer, crushing them to death. They then used the same bulldozer to cover their corpses with dirt. All over Timor there are countless other examples: thousands of young males tortured and incarcerated, and young women raped and sexually tortured.

The Indonesians even forced native men to enlist in their army and fight against their fellow islanders. Nearly all of the male population between the ages of fifteen and fifty were forced into service. (Jones) The horrors of genocidal torture did not end with the Holocaust. It is believed that there was another episode of genocide on Timor in 1999. After the citizens voted for independence from Indonesia with an overwhelming majority, reports began coming in of men hacked to pieces with machetes, houses caught on fire (all men were pushed back into their houses to burn to death), and even the massacre of hundreds of people taking refuge in a church, most of whom

were women and young girls. The Indonesian government denies these claims, but there is too much evidence to ignore.

(Jones) One notices a pattern here: the Indonesians repeated their horrendous acts of genocide not long after their previous one ended. Perhaps this suggests that the same thing will happen with the Nazis. All over the world there are Neo-Nazis (“ new Nazis”) who practically worship Hitler and preach of the future Aryan race. Is it really so far-fetched that one day these new Nazis will rise up to spark a second Holocaust, resulting in the deaths of even more innocent people? America has to face the fact that genocide is far from over, and take action to stop it. If schools and parents teach their children about equality and tolerance, and educate them about genocidal horrors, both past and present, perhaps this will keep them from becoming Neo-Nazis. If we don’t want America to end up like Timor, a land uprooted and slaughtered by the horrors of genocide, we’ve got to stand up and start fighting.

We can’t wait for another 6 million to die before we start paying attention.

Works Cited Jones, Adam. “ Case Study: East Timor (1975-99.)” Gendercide Watch. 2/8/11.

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