

Open letter in response to attack on Papernas office involving members of the TNI

Wednesday 16 May 2007, by [Papernas](#) (Date first published: 14 May 2007).

The following is an open letter issued by the National Liberation Party of Unity (Papernas) following the March 13 attack on Papernas's regional office in the Central Sulawesi provincial capital of Palu. Translated by James Balowski.

An open letter to the leaders of the nation and higher state institutions:

1. President of the Republic of Indonesia
2. House of Representatives
3. Regional Representatives Council
4. Commander in Chief of the Indonesian Military
5. Chief of the Indonesian National Police
6. Minister for Defense and Security
7. Minister of Justice and Human Rights
8. Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia
9. Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia

On May 13 at 1am local time around 30 people, including members of the army (one of which was arrested — private first-class Makmur from the Raksatama 711 Infantry Battalion) attacked the South Sulawesi regional offices of the National Liberation Party of Unity (Papernas) in Palu City. At least three Papernas members were seriously injured and had to be treated in hospital.

This incident strengthens earlier suspicions of the significant involvement of elements from the

Indonesian military (TNI) in a series of attacks and acts of violence against Papernas: Surabaya (September 17, 2006), Yogyakarta (January 18-20, 2007/May 1, 2007), Batu-Malang Raya (March 4, 2007), Jakarta (March 29, 2007), Tuban, Sukoharjo, Tangerang and similar incidents in other parts of the country over this period.

Based on direct and indirect observations, as well as evidence gathered at the scene of the incident, it can be concluded that this involvement was systematic in nature. Meaning the TNI as an institution, which should be able to identify or be aware of the activities of its troops, at every level of its territorial structure, has acted in a way or taken steps that contract the spirit of democracy.

The commander of the 132/Tadulako Sub-District Military Command (Korem) has stated that these actions were not carried out upon his orders. But in view of the pattern of repeated attacks on the ground, we can emphatically state that there are significant and influential elements within the TNI that are seeking to take the TNI as an institution, directly or indirectly, back into the realm of practical politics. Moreover, the political role being played is one of terror, intimidation and violence against the Indonesian people themselves, in which the TNI is now caught up in a plot to sow disunity among the Indonesian people and the nation.

The problems facing the Indonesian nation at this time requires solutions that are democratic and that place the people as the highest holders of sovereignty. The people's efforts to organise and strengthen themselves, among other things through establishing political parties, must be fully guaranteed as a basic right, which must be respected by one and all. If just a single violation against these rights is permitted, then it will become a precedent for similar kinds of acts. Not just against Papernas, but against all democratic activities that are frowned upon by those with different interests. Because of this therefore, all elements of society must take a serious stand against these fascist tendencies.

Aside from this, for us, the organisation of the people's struggle within a united vehicle is urgently needed in order develop the country's political life, that up until now has been dominated

by a handful of people who clearly take no responsibility for the people, the nation or the state. Because of this, arbitrary actions, whether it be the attack that took place recently in Palu as well as the series of incidents that proceeded it, is a manipulation and an endeavor shift the people's attention away from the concrete problems they are facing. This is an attempt to revive the seeds of stupidity that were been planted by the New Order dictatorship of former President Suharto to create an atmosphere of fear, to prevent the people from struggling in a united vehicle to confront the economic and political interests of global corporations owned by the United States and associated countries (read imperialism).

Based on the views presented above, the Central Leadership Committee of Papernas states the following:

1. Because the latest attack against Papernas clearly involved the state apparatus, and indicates the institutional involvement of the tools of state power, we call on all higher state institutions (the President, the House of Representatives, the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court and the Regional Representatives Council) to openly declare their commitment to democracy, by affirming our right as Indonesian people and citizens to the freedom of association, assembly and expression as an endeavor to find a solution to the problems of this nation in a manner that is peaceful, transparent and democratic.

2. By taking a firm stand such as this, it will be followed by legal action being taken against the parties that have been utilised to attack, slander and falsely accuse Papernas. The police must arrest the perpetrators, uncover the real motives behind the attacks and reveal these to the people so as to turn this into a lesson for the our future democratic life together.

3. Because this crime comes within the domain of civil law, with regard to the latest incident in Palu, we are calling for the perpetrators to be indicted in a civil court in order to be able to seek an outcome that is just, transparent and in accordance with the principles of civil law.

4. We urge the TNI as an institution and its members of all ranks to consistently follow the doctrine of

Three Missions One Deed (the three wings of the military), that is to be free from involvement in politics and is not be provoked into falling into the errors of the past by acting in the name of safeguarding the state.

5. We have always called on all elements of this nation, the working class, peasants, students and the oppressed ordinary people to unite their ranks together with all democratic, nationalist and populist elements to confront all types of imperialist exploitation that brings suffering to and has the potential to destroy this nation. This also means therefore that we must shun efforts to sow disunity by parties that seek to continue to fool the nation, and in the end plunge the people into a never ending cycle of suffering and misery.

Raise the Three Banners of National Unity for the welfare of the people:

- Repudiate the foreign debt!
- Nationalise the mining industry!
- Build the national industry for the welfare of the people!

We have been a nation of coolies long enough! Rise up to be come an independent nation!

Jakarta, May 14, 2007

Agus Priyono, Papernas General Chairperson

Dominggus Oktavianus, Department of Political and Democratic Affairs

Copies sent to:

1. The ambassadors of friendly countries in at their respective embassies in Jakarta
2. Amnesty International
3. The United Nations Human Rights Commission
4. The National Human Rights Commission
5. Colleges in struggle in the political parties
6. Colleges in struggle in the mass organisations, trade unions, peasant organisations, student organisations, youth, non-government organizations

and so forth

7. All ordinary people that support this open letter

For more information on the Palu attack and previous attacks against Papernas visit

www.asia.pacific.action.org/southeastasia/indonesia/papernas/papernas.htm

and other articles on this section of ESSF website.