

THE FIGHT FOR NEW INDONESIA

Andre Vltchek



Pres. Jokowi

[dropcap]J[/dropcap]ust a few days have passed since your inauguration, Mr. President, and the people; at least a great number of the people in your country, are now expecting, even demanding a change, an immediate metamorphosis of the nation. They think that because you have become the President of Indonesia, their lives will improve soon, their fears will diminish, and their sorrows will disappear.

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For the first time in decades, the eyes of many poor Indonesian people are full of hope. They trust you, Mr. President. They feel optimism. Some of them now even dare to dream.

Hope... I was once told by a great South American writer and thinker, Eduardo Galeano, that, "Hope is often all that poor people have. To give them hope, and then take it away, is

worse than murdering them.”

Socialist governments were then beginning to emerge, all over South America – from Venezuela to Chile, from Argentina to Bolivia. This was Galeano’s message to them: “Comrades, watch out! Keep your promises. Do not play with the hopes of your people!”

South American leaders listened, and prevailed. They turned hopes into reality. They rolled up their sleeves and went to work on behalf of their nations. They forgot all about false pride and they learned how to serve their people, how to put them first, how to defend those who were until then, abandoned and helpless.

Mr. President, the country, the state, is only great if it serves one single purpose: to improve the lives of its people, and to improve the lives of people all over the world.



Medarka Palace: Indonesia’s presidential seat.

In the past I was extremely critical of you. I did not believe and frankly, I still do not believe that in Indonesia, people can get elected spontaneously, without pre-selection by the ‘elites’ – that corrupt bunch of collaborators who are actually the major problem that the country is facing.

All major political parties and mass media are owned by the

elites, and they serve their interests.

But now I feel that I have to yield to the hopes of those who believe in sudden and great transformations.

I have no right to tell the people that their hopes are meaningless. I will not say anything, at least for some time. After this letter, I will not express my opinion on the subject of Indonesian 'democracy' for at least some substantial amount of time.

I will make sure to give you some breathing space, hoping that others will do the same.

Deep inside I wish, sincerely, that my spontaneous mistrust of Indonesian politics will prove, at least partially, unjustified or exaggerated. I want to be shown that your supporters are correct, and that a man like you can actually get through that incredibly brutal and corrupt 'endorsement' system; that he can survive, and then dramatically improve the country.

I know that you do not have blood on your hands. You are one of the few who doesn't. I know that you know how deep the pain of your people is. I know that you care about them. That is enough for me, for now.

I disagree with you on many counts. Despite that, by this letter, I am endorsing you, Mr. President.

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I am offering you my support, in case it is needed.

I am offering you my help, for as long as you are willing to stand tall and defend those who are powerless, and to fight for the wretched – that is, for the majority, of your tormented nation.

I will be on your side for as long as you do not betray the

faith of your people.

Let me repeat: I want to be proven wrong. I want my previous analyses to be incorrect. I don't think that they are, but I want them to be.

I urge you: Stand tall, Mr. President! And fight for your scarred and cheated nation.



President Sukarno:
One of the pillars
of the 1960s "non-
aligned movement."
His departure from
power, instigated by
the West, opened the
floodgates to
neocolonial tyranny
and vassalage, which
endures to this day.

Do not listen to those who come from abroad with sweet but deceitful words on their lips. Their compliments are empty, compassionless, based only on self-interest. They have been robbing Indonesia for many decades, they broke her spine almost 50 years ago, and now they are telling her how

beautiful, free, tolerant and democratic she is. Don't listen; don't trust them. Indonesia is still in chains, in shackles, in pain! It is confused, mad from the pain it received and has inflicted. It is completely intolerant, because her leaders, her best sons and daughters were murdered, imprisoned, silenced.

What those outsiders are doing is like visiting a patient who is suffering from an extremely serious set of diseases; a patient who has lost almost all her hair, whose color of skin has changed, who has become almost blind, and then tell her, 'how beautiful, how lovely, how healthy, how desirable you are!'

To lie, to be ignorant, to disregard the pain of that lady named Indonesia, is not an act of love, Mr. President. The act of love would be the opposite: it would be to call an ambulance, immediately, and to carry her in your arms through the hospital doors. An act of love would be to force everyone inside the clinic to fight for her life: doctors, nurses, and technical staff. An act of love would be to stand by her when she is almost dying, when there seems to be almost no hope left; an act of love is to never surrender, to fight for her, for that lady called Indonesia; to fight for many long days and nights if needed, to fight with all your might, so she survives, and lives.

"I know that you do not have blood on your hands. You are one of the few who doesn't. I know that you know how deep the pain of your people is. I know that you care about them. That is enough for me, for now."

Love is never based on lies, Mr. President, never on deceptions. Love is based on truth and compassion, on

sympathy, and determined decision to understand.

It is time to love Indonesia differently, by honest love, not by false tributes: "You are pale, you are scarred, your veins and your wounds are open, and they are refusing to heal. Dirt and puss covers your body. It is a terrible sight. But you will not be abandoned, because you are loved. You will be fought for. You are loved not because of some idiotic and empty nationalism; you are loved mainly because you consist of hundreds of millions of human lives. You cannot be allowed to fall, because if you do, those multitudes will fall with you."

But to save Indonesia, action has to be taken immediately, because the damage is too great. The surgery or a series of them has to be performed. Terrible parasites must be expelled from her body. Those that have been poisoning her for many years, have to be pushed back. True enemies have to be defined and challenged.

You came in at a crucial time. You were selected to lead the struggle, or at least this is what those tens of millions of your followers, many of whom are poor, really believe.

No matter how you came to power, Mr. President, you are now here, in the spotlight. But that is not enough: now you have to lead. You are obliged to lead. You have no right to maneuver and play it 'both ways'. You are only the third President of Indonesia who has the heart and decency to move this colossus forward. The first one was Ahmed Sukarno. The second was 'Gus Dur', my friend Abdurrahman Wahid.

Some time ago I wrote that you entered Jakarta as a governor, 'riding on a wooden horse'. Things changed: this time you were given a great horse and impenetrable armor, as well as the sharpest and the best ever crafted *kris* that is now shining in your hand. You look good in the saddle, and people are cheering. There is no looking back. Now you are obliged to move forward, to charge, to rescue your country.

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Have you ever noticed the sadness in the eyes of your people, Mr. President?

Have you seen that exhausted, helpless, humiliated look on the faces of those that live in the villages and the cities? That expression of people who have only worries but no bright future, who can count on nothing public, who have to buy, to purchase every little thing, because their state does not provide for them.

Have you seen those once stunning but now horrifying islands – Sumatra, Bangka, Kalimantan – logged out, covered by black toxic chemicals, with hardly anything natural left, with entire species that have disappeared, with people dying from cancer and running for their lives across the border to Malaysia. Have you, Mr. President? This is your land and those are your people. The corporate media may hide it, Western propaganda may hide it, but all of that is the truth. I could supply you with thousands of images that I have collected, and with hours of footage: from West Timor to Aceh, from Pontianak to River Musi, from Sumba to Batam.

Have you ever visited the urban slums, Mr. President? Have you visited the villages? Actually I know you have. I hope you are going to speak out about what you saw, instead of continuing with that outrageous lie of your predecessor, who claimed that only some 18% of the Indonesian people are actually poor, while it is clear even with unopened eyes, that the great majority of people in your country are living in misery. And even the rich, even those who are corrupting and stealing, with all their horrible kitschy mansions and European cars, are still living below the lowest basic standards of countries like Korea, Japan, or even South Africa – they are breathing terrible air, using toxic water, and are surrounded by polluted cities with almost no culture.

Are you finally going to admit how many people really live in your country, Mr. President? We both know that it is not 238 million, not even 245 million, but well over 300 million. Writing my book "Indonesia – Archipelago of Fear", I worked with several top international statisticians who claim that the Indonesian government hides, as the Pakistani one does, the true number of its citizens, which is already much higher than 300 million. Why? Because those 'unaccounted for un-people', do not have to be given any, even the most basic, services. They do not spoil that illusion about 'a country that is growing, improving and becoming a normal nation', to use the language of some individuals at ANU.

Have you ever noticed that Indonesia has already collapsed, Mr. President? That many of its indicators are now on the level of those of East and West African nations, far from most of the indicators of Pacific Asia? I have lived and worked for many years in both Africa and Asia, and I can testify that such analyses are absolutely correct.

The roads, the ports, airports, railways, and telecommunications/Internet – they are all in a grotesque state, Mr. President. Tens of millions of Indonesians have no access to electricity, while a great majority lives without access to basic sanitation. The quality of water is worse than in India, or even Bangladesh. All Indonesian cities are gone, offering nothing that urban centers worldwide are supposed to provide: cosmopolitan culture, modern, efficient and cheap public transportation, wide sidewalks, great public areas including parks, countless public libraries, and elegant architecture that is there to serve the people. Jakarta has been, on several occasions, voted the worst city in Asia Pacific, but the polls did not obviously include other urban horrors like Surabaya, Denpasar and Medan.

Have you ever thought about the fact that the fourth most populous country on earth does not have one single thinker or great artist that is recognizable all over the world? Not a

single one, Mr. President; not since the former prisoner of conscience, and my dear friend Pramoedya Ananta Toer, passed away. And he passed away outraged and bitter, disgusted with what his Indonesia, his once beloved country, had become. "Indonesians have no culture", he declared in his last book "Exile", which he co-authored with me: "Now they only have a culture of thieves... they do not create, they do not produce... The entire island of Java is just a marketplace – *pasar*. It is so shameful!"

Where are those great Indonesian scientists, writers, and philosophers? Why isn't there even at least one of them standing tall in the middle of a country of more than 300 million? China has an entire army of them, and so do countries like India, Brazil, South Africa, and even poor Nigeria! Every major developing nation counts on a great number of exceptional personalities that are making their countries distinct, who are moving them forward; personalities who think about the welfare of their people, so why not Indonesia?

Mr. President, it is obvious, it is clear, that something has gone terribly wrong.

You are surely aware that when Indonesian people who at least have some money, get sick, they immediately cross to Malaysia or Singapore, where medical care is cheaper and incomparably better. People who can afford it go abroad to shop, because much poorer Indonesia bizarrely has much higher prices for everything, from material goods to food, than its neighbors – Malaysia and Singapore. Indonesians also go abroad when they want to learn, and to educate their children.

Which naturally, creates a great paradox. Can children and young people really learn how to save their country, by going through the indoctrination drill in Europe and in the United States; the parts of the world that have been plundering and derailing this archipelago for decades and centuries? Or will these young people return to Indonesia, after being

conditioned to serve the neo-colonial masters, while grabbing in the process all they can from their impoverished and terribly-educated majority? And even those Indonesian professors that teach at the most prestigious Indonesian universities – they are themselves programmed by the neo-con and neo-liberal dogmas, and by the ridiculous perceptions that preach about the superiority of Western concepts (like Western-style democracy) and culture.

“Have you seen those once stunning but now horrifying islands – Sumatra, Bangka, Kalimantan – logged out, covered by black toxic chemicals, with hardly anything natural left, with entire species that have disappeared, with people dying from cancer and running for their lives across the border to Malaysia.”

The horrible Indonesian corruption and heartlessness towards the poor majority, has its roots in the colonial era. Then and now, the so-called local ‘aristocracy’ and ‘elites’ served the colonial masters. They basically collaborated with the invaders, committing treason, while stuffing first their pockets, then their coffers and bank accounts, all with happy nods of approval emanating from the Netherlands. The roots of corruption are almost always in colonialism. Nothing has changed. Now Indonesian collaborators are ruining the country, plundering natural resources, all on behalf of foreign multi-nationals and the Western global regime.



Mining for tin in the beautiful Bangka islands. The metal is used in the production of smartphones. (Friends of the Earth/ Bangka Tin Mining Site. Photo source: © M. Kelley)

'The biggest economy of Southeast Asia', the Western mass media writes. Of course, with 300 million people it is the biggest, but how low is it on per capita basis? What does this country produce, Mr. President? It only assembles pathetic old models of cars dumped from abroad, and some electronics, as well as apparels. What else? The Indonesian economy is totally uncompetitive, and it is based on the absolute plunder of natural resources and on unnaturally high global commodity prices. In the near future, what is Indonesia going to eat; soon, there will be nothing more to cut and to extract? What is Java going to do, when it will not be able to live off its oil, trees and the mines in Aceh, Papua and Kalimantan, anymore?

But nobody seems to be thinking in advance. Naturally, there are no socialist five-year plans like those of China, no 'central planning', as those plans actually exist in order for

the countries to develop and to move forwards, definitely not in order for a few members of the elite to steal from the nation. In Indonesia, it is a 'grab all that you can, while you can' economy. It is the most capitalist country I have ever seen, anywhere in the world, and in the long term, an absolute economic and social failure.

Mr. President, those who are stealing from the Indonesian nation are hiding behind Western propaganda, manufactured in order to sustain similar regimes all over the world. Naturally, the West supports the Indonesian system. It is clear why: it serves the corporations in Europe, US and Australia, while the great majority of Indonesian people do not benefit from the system at all, at the same time as the nation's wealth is evaporating at an enormous speed.

Now there are also nationalistic slogans. Their outbursts are full of 'love'. 'Damn, I love Indonesia!' reads a banner hanging from the balcony of a mall in the city of Surabaya.

Cheap nationalism is on the rise. What do the nationalists really love? Do they love those endless slums and the terrible quality of life? Or do they love the fact that almost all the natural resources are gone, that the cities are being ruined by corruption and therefore by the lack of urban planning; that in many villages children are running barefoot, while showing clear signs of malnutrition? Or do they love the fact that Indonesia has already drifted away from the rest of Southeast Asia, so now they can have her fully to themselves; they can violate her far away from inquisitive and outraged eyes?

Mr. President, the outrageous quality of the Indonesian mass media, all of it owned by business interests, is one of the reasons why almost all citizens of the country are living in absolute isolation and with no diversity of opinions. As if Chinese, Venezuelan, Cuban, Russian, South African, and Vietnamese concepts would not exist. As if the entire Latin

America have not won, recently, great peaceful revolutions, turning from Western neo-colonies to proud nations that are feverishly building societies and states that have only one goal – to serve their people.

The Indonesian media does not educate. There is almost nothing public in the country, and the media is no exception. It exists to 'entertain', to brainwash, and to keep the intellectual bar at the lowest possible level.

The culture, the arts – some of the most powerful vehicles in the construction of new and better societies in such places like Latin America or China – are, in Indonesia, unable and unwilling to stand tall, lead and inspire the nation, intellectually. Instead they regurgitate never-ending cheap pop junk: from horror films to run of the mill pop tunes. It is obvious who is benefiting from this lobotomizing of the Indonesian public. Clearly, if art and culture were to teach citizens to think, they would not tolerate such an outrageously brutal and failed regime.

The Indonesian citizens, Mr. President, are constantly told that they live in a democracy. The proof of it, is in the great number of political parties, and the flow of quotes that is constantly supplied. 'This or that businessman or politician from the United States, Australia or Europe said so...' Of course they say so, repeatedly, because for them, Indonesia is the perfect country, which, through her own corrupt elites, is stealing from herself, and instead of feeding her own undernourished children, is supporting and feeding her rich colonial and neo-colonial masters!

But what is democracy, Mr. President? The definition of it, its translation from Greek is, 'the rule of the people'. It does not say 'a multi-party Western-style political system'.

Are Indonesian people really ruling in their own land?

They aren't and they don't think they are, Mr. President. I

asked them on Dieng Plateau and in Alor, in Aceh and Bali, in the slums of Jakarta, Medan and Surabaya, in Kupang, Ende, Pontianak, and in the remote villages on the river Musi.

The people are not ruling in Indonesia, and they know they are not, and they are not even expecting to rule. But they believe that they are living in a true 'democracy', because they are being told that they are, although they have never tried to figure out what that 'democracy' really is, what does it mean. And as their mass media and education system are there to just mainly keep them as far as possible from knowledge, the majority of them have no clue that a different world is possible, and that there are many new and better systems: Venezuela, Cuba, China, South Africa, Chile, Brazil, even Malaysia.

I kept asking all over the country, whether the votes of the people, makes any difference, and most of the votes replied resolutely: 'no'. Women spoke about their husbands or fathers ordering them how to vote. Villagers informed me about vote-buying, a common practice perpetrated by all major and minor political parties. People have become cynical: they know that this entire 'democratic charade' has nothing to do with their lives. Politicians are not competing on their ideals and ideas of how to improve society and the lives of the citizens. They are simply looking for a rubberstamp, to legitimize what has already decided by the elites in some backrooms in Jakarta.

For the Empire, for the West, this is of course the best type of 'democracy', as the system is fully controlled by local corrupt officials and elites, who, in turn, are subservient to the economic and geopolitical goals of Washington, London or Canberra. Pepe Escobar recently wrote: "As ace economist Theotonio dos Santos stressed, the decadence of the West is still exerting substantial influence over the Global South via their extensive network of collaborators."

The extensive network of collaborators... Those grotesquely

overpriced fashion-chain boutiques at mass-produced shopping malls, those slightly outdated luxury models of European cars at triple the price of what they'd go for in the United States, those pathetic Disneyland-style wedding cake mansions, those packed wide-body jets bringing vulgarly behaved moneyed families from Jakarta and Surabaya to Singapore and Hong Kong, where they own their condominiums built from the sweat and blood of Indonesian people – all of this only serves that group of modern-day collaborators. And the collaborators are insecure, edgy, arrogant, and ready to commit any crime in order to maintain their 'privileges' and control over, as we determined, the defenseless and miserably poor majority of the country.

These people would be facing a firing squad in China or lengthy prison sentences in Chile or Brazil. In Indonesia, they are facing doubled backs and servile smiles.

That is wrong, Mr. President; that is very, very wrong!

As long as respect is shown to brigands and thieves, there can be absolutely no positive change; there can be no end to corruption.

With such a state of things, everything is twisted and perverted: logic and morals, even things like culture and family values.

Indonesia's past is perverted and twisted as well, Mr. President. And it is a well known fact that without facing the past, bravely and determinedly, there can be no decent future for any country. The horrible hidden past will never go away and the crimes against humanity will come back to haunt a nation that has committed them and then refused to repent, and to put those individuals responsible, on trial.

Mr. President, there was no 'Communist putsch' in 1965, no 'PKI coup'. That is a well known fact, by now, all over the world. Anyone who wants to know the truth can easily find it

online, from the declassified files of the US Department of State and the CIA. The coup was conducted against the progressive President Sukarno, and the intellectual-progressive forces of Indonesia, including the PKI, teachers, and artists – basically against all thinking people. It was perpetrated by the Indonesian armed forces that had committed treason, and sided with Western imperialist nations. Religious cadres joined the slaughter – an orgy of terror, rape and mass murder. According to your predecessor's father-in-law, Mr. President, the military proudly murdered 3 million people, in a country that had barely 100 million inhabitants in 1965.

Indonesian culture was also murdered. Traditional art forms were humiliated, film studios closed down, thinkers and writers and teachers hunted down, killed, tortured, raped, sent to prisons or to the Buru concentration camp.

That was the first genocide Mr. President. What followed was the second one, also endorsed and admired by the West – that in East Timor. There, around 30% of the people lost their lives, when TNI went on a murderous rampage. 30% of the people, Mr. President, and nobody has really been punished. And you and your opponent have people, who served in occupied East Timor, in your teams.

And the third genocide, the ongoing one – that in Papua! The same tactics are being used, same rapes, same intimidation, and the same mass murder. At least 150,000 people have been exterminated, and this is a gross under-estimation.

There are no protests, and no mass movement in your country, to stop the slaughter. The issue is not discussed in the Indonesian mass media. It is taboo. In that 'vibrant democracy', nobody dares, or nobody cares, which is just simply shocking.

Do you think, Mr. President, that this is a healthy state of affairs; this silence, this mass ignorance, denial,

indifference and lack of compassion?

This is also corruption, Mr. President. This is moral corruption. If someone can tolerate, even overlook some 3.5 million people that were slaughtered in cold blood in his or her country, don't you think that it is only logical that he would also 'forgive' the almost total deforestation, the plunder of natural resources, the disappearance of the species, ruined rivers and coastline, the massive theft by the elites?

When I recently wrote about the 'horror zoo of Surabaya' where more than 50% of the animals have vanished, I was not shocked at all. I simply saw it as a logical continuation of the culture of impunity and a chronic lack of compassion. When a priest in Surabaya told me that local prostitutes are forced into sex at the age of 6 or 7, and at 11 they are thrown onto the street because they are 'too old', I immediately saw a direct link to the horrors of 1965 and East Timor.

It will never go away, Mr. President: 1965, Aceh, East Timor, and Papua... Have you read what happened in all those places? I experienced East Timor, Aceh and Papua.

In committing those crimes, Mr. President, Indonesia proved that it is unwell. If you love her, try to cure her. Denying what has been happening will lead to an even more terrible future.

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As stated earlier, I don't believe that you were elected 'democratically', Mr. President. To get where you are now, both you and your adversary, had to be checked, and re-checked by the elites. You had to be 'approved' by the true rulers of the Indonesian nation, which is definitely not an elected body, nothing that has climbed up through any sort of 'democratic processes'. These individuals had to be convinced that no matter who was be elected, he or she would never dare

to go against their interests, and he would not 'rock the boat' and challenge the main direction in which the country is moving.

Of course the same system, the same regime, exists in the United States and in several other countries that have control over Indonesia and her elites, ever since 1965. The same system exists in some other poor and not so poor countries, where treasonous elites sold their men, women and children to foreign interests: Uganda and Kenya, Honduras and Paraguay, Bahrain and the Philippines.

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In the history of our planet, it has been proven again and again that even a small group of brave and honest people, even one powerful and courageous man or woman, can change the course of their country.

Before Chavez, Venezuela, rich in natural resources, was also a virtual colony of the West. Chavez stood against the regime and against the entire Western empire. He fought and he transformed his nation. He battled and he won. He had fallen or they cut him down from abroad, but he managed to transform Venezuela, South America and the world. He never surrendered. He never betrayed his people. It is because he loved Venezuela, and he loved Latin America!

A true patriot is also an internationalist. He loves humanity as much as he loves his people. By fighting for and defending his men, women and children, he also struggles for the oppressed people all over the world. Chavez fought in Venezuela, but his battle was also for those living in misery in Asuncion, Kampala, Manila, or Jakarta.

Do you know how our South American revolutions began, Mr. President? When poor people, like those in Bolivia, said 'enough!': 'do not dare to privatize water, electricity and other essentials! This is our country. We are not going to be

slaves of business people and foreign corporations!’

And it is not only the men who have been fighting. Look at Brazil and Argentina, look at Chile. Great nations governed by great women: former guerilla fighters, women who were during their own, ‘Suharto-style dictatorships’, imprisoned, tortured, and, or exiled.

In Latin America, those who committed crimes similar to those committed in Indonesia (although on much smaller scale) are now in jail. Monuments and enormous museums are, in Santiago de Chile and Buenos Aires, commemorating those who died in the hands of fascist regimes.

That is why, our countries are moving forward at an incredible pace. That is why corruption rates are falling. Now there are thousands of Europeans trying to migrate to South America, again, searching for jobs and better lives!

One man can change history, Mr. President. But he has to be brave, compassionate and he has to love his people. He has to be ready to fight and die for them, if necessary. No riches, no privileges could bring such joy as the joy of working on behalf of the people, by being their true servant.

You were given a tremendous historic chance, Mr. President! You can now change, improve the destiny of the fourth most populous nation on earth. Nothing else matters now, and nothing else should: you do not have and should not have anything else on your mind: no personal interests, and not even your family.

Your interest should be only this: improving your country and the world. Your family is those 300 million men, women and children, who could fall or rise, depending on the actions that you will take in the next few years. Those 300 millions human lives are your family – and they should all be equal in your eyes!

It is a tremendous responsibility, but you wanted it, and it was given to you.

Would you choose to fight, I will always be near you, even as I continue physically to fight in many other parts of our planet.

It is one struggle only, right now: for a better world, for its people, and for the survival of our planet.

Forward, 'President Jokowi!' Or as we say: '*Victoria o muerte!*', 'Victory or death!'

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About the author

Andre Vltchek is a novelist, filmmaker and investigative journalist. He covered wars and conflicts in dozens of countries. The result is his latest book: "Fighting Against Western Imperialism". 'Pluto' published his discussion with Noam Chomsky: On Western Terrorism. His critically acclaimed political novel Point of No Return is re-edited and available. Oceania is his book on Western imperialism in the South Pacific. His provocative book about post-Suharto Indonesia and the market-fundamentalist model is called "Indonesia – The Archipelago of Fear". His feature documentary, "Rwanda Gambit" is about Rwandan history and the plunder of DR Congo. After living for many years in Latin America and Oceania, Vltchek presently resides and works in East Asia and Africa. He can be reached through his website or his Twitter.

APPENDIX

Watch Indonesian forest devastation at the hands of various extractive industries, a fact that spells death and extinction for some precious remaining species, including tigers, orangutans, and a variety of reptiles and flora. The problem, as Andre Vltchek reminds us, is that the plunder of Indonesia is extensive and acute throughout the archipelago.

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