



## **Introduction for teachers**

and of the Morning Star is a film about the western half of the island of New Guinea—variously known in recent times as Netherlands or Dutch New Guinea, West Papua, Irian Jaya, West Irian, and finally Papua. The area will be referred to as West Papua in this study guide as that is the name by which the indigenous people refer to it.

It is a wild and extraordinary place, with tropical jungles, snow-clad mountains, rich plains, majestic rainforests and swampy lowlands. It is rich in oil and minerals, and the USA-owned Freeport mine is one of the largest gold and copper mines in the world. West Papua is also a land of many tribes, with over 250



languages spoken.

Yet, despite its wild beauty and rich culture, it remains strangely forgotten.

Narrated by Rachel Griffiths, *Land of the Morning Star* reveals the turbulent history of a troubled country, swept up in the power-play of international politics.

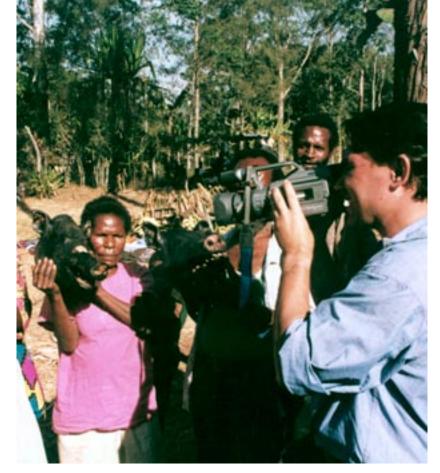
For centuries the world has jostled for this region. The indigenous people are Melanesians who have been there for 5,000 years. First outside contact was with the Muslims of Malacca (now part of Indonesia) who came in search of slaves and the prized feathers of birds of paradise. European spice traders staking out colonial territory followed them. By the mid-1800s the Dutch had secured their claim.

Then the Japanese invaded during the Second World War, followed by a massive counter-invasion by American and some Australian forces. The Dutch returned to prepare West Papua for independence, but by the 1960s President Sukarno had made the area the 26th province of Indonesia. Today, if the process of transmigration of Indonesian farmers to areas of West Papua continues, the indigenous Melanesian people are set to become a minority in their own land.

Through eyewitness accounts and rare archival film, this fascinating documentary paints a picture that is

PAGE 1: A WARRIOR FROM THE AUWYU TRIBE OF THE LOWLAND REGIONS OF WEST PAPUA, WHO WERE TRADITIONALLY HEADHUNTERS, 1958 (Photo by Dick Dragt © Dick Dragt) • THIS PAGE (FROM TOP): MEMBERS OF A HIGHLAND TRIBE FROM BALIEM RIVER, 1600 METRES ABOVE SEA LEVEL. MEN OF THE HIGHLAND TRIBES TRADITIONALLY WEAR PENIS GOURDS (photographed by Patrol Officer Dick Dragt in 1976 © Dick Dragt); PAPUANS AT THE ACT OF FREE CHOICE VOTE, BIAK ISLAND, 1969. (Photo by Hugh Lunn) • OPPOSITE: A WARRIOR FROM THE AUWYU TRIBE, WEARING A NECKLACE OF PIG'S TEETH (photographed in West Papua in 1958 by Patrol Officer Dick Dragt)





intimate in detail but epic in scope. It is a sweeping saga of colonial ambitions, cold war sellouts and fervent nationalism, which highlights the role of players such as Australia and the UN at crucial points.

In bringing the history of the area to the present day, the film raises questions of 'civics and citizenship': Do the people of West Papua have the right to independence, or is West Papua a legitimate part of Indonesia? What ought to be Australia's role in this area—to support the Indonesian claim to Papua against the claims of the indigenous Papuans, or to support that claim to independence, with the resultant diplomatic dangers that implies for Australia's relations with its largest and most powerful neighbour?

These are great moral and political questions, the answers to which tell us much about the state of Australian democracy today.

### Classroom strategies

This guide suggests that the film can be used in class in four stages:

 Students carry out the simulation exercise that introduces them to the various concepts dealt with in the film. If students work through this situation involving the key elements dealt with in the film, but in a 'stripped down' and neutral context, they will be better able to understand the main issues raised in *Land of the Morning Star*.

- They then watch the film in segments using the time code, and discussing the context and documentary film analysis questions at each stage.
- They continually refer back to the simulation and apply the new specific content material to it, discussing and amending their previous choices where appropriate.
- 4. They address the final question: What should Australia do?

## **Curriculum Links**

Land of the Morning Star is an exploration of the history of the western half of New Guinea. At first sight this may not seem to be a subject that has an obvious place in the curriculum. However, a study of the film can help students explore a variety of significant historical concepts, as well as the issue of Australia's role as a regional and global citizen today. We, as a nation, are proud of our recent involve-

ment in East Timor, Bougainville and the Solomon Islands—but how should we respond to the situation in West Papua? Does our role as a regional neighbour override a government's responsibility to put the nation's welfare and interests first? In raising these issues, Land of the Morning Star has relevance for students of:

- Australian Studies
- Discovering Democracy
- Civics and Citizenship
- Politics
- Australian History
- Studies of Society and Environment
- Religious Studies

And for students at middle and senior secondary levels, the program addresses a variety of key concepts, including:

- imperialism and colonialism
- nationalism
- self-determination
- national self-interest
- diplomacy and regional/ international citizenship.

### A simulation: What do we do about Apupa and Sonedinia?

Welcome to this special meeting of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs advisory group.

Our task is to make a recommendation about what Australia's policy should be towards the Sonedinian province of Apupa. (See diagram 01)

Most of the indigenous people in Apupa want independence from Sonedinia. Sonedinia is determined that Apupa is a necessary part of the nation. It may allow Apupa greater self-governing powers, but it will never allow independence.

And what about Australia? Sonedinia is a great and powerful neighbour, and we have important trade and defence links with it. Sonedinia is, however, culturally very different from Australia, and any disagreements can quickly become major conflicts between us.

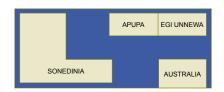


MAP: ADMINISTRATIVE DIMSIONS (POLITICAL) US CIA 2002 WWW.LIB.UTEXAS.EDU/MAPS/MIDDLE\_EAST\_AND\_ASIA/INDONESIA\_ADM\_2002.JPG MIDDLE: AUWYU WARRIORS ON THE DIGUEL RIVER, WEST PAPUA, 1958 (Photo by Dick Dragt) © Dick Dragt) CSUPERVISING INDONESIAN OFFICIALS AT THE ACT OF FREE CHOICE VOTE, BIAK ISLAND, 1969 (Photo by Hugh Lunn)

We have few direct ties or connections with Apupa, but we do tend to pride ourselves on a commitment to human rights and freedoms, and see ourselves as an influential force for good in the region.

**Your task** is to decide which of these alternatives you think Australia should support:

- A Support Apupan independence from Sonedinia in theory.
- B Support Apupan independence from Sonedinia in practice by supplying help.
- C Support Sonedinia's continuing control of Apupa as part of Sonedinia.







- D Support Sonedinia's continuing control of Apupa as part of Sonedinia only if it grants selfgovernment powers to Apupa.
- E Stay neutral and do not support either Apupan independence or Sonedinia's claim on it as part of Sonedinia.

Before asking you to make this decision, we need to look at some important events that have occurred over time between the places, and that may influence your final opinion.

### **Introduction for students**

This hypothetical situation is in fact



	EXPLANATION AND DECISION	YOUR CHOICES
1	The people who make up Sonedinia today are mainly Asian in origin. The people who first settled Apupa are Melanesian in origin, and have a very different culture and religion from that of Sonedinia.	A. Yes. It is OK.     B. No. These differences are divisive and fundamental.
	You decide: Is it OK for people of different racial and cultural characteristics, and who are geographically separate, to be brought together as a new nation?	<b>C.</b> Only if the indigenous people of Apupa agree to it.
2	Before European colonization of the area, the area that is now Sonedinia was known by a different name. The people who ruled that area knew about Apupa, and sometimes sent people there to capture people as slaves and to gather taxes. They never actually controlled or ruled over the area.	<ul><li>A. Yes. This is sufficient control to justify a long-standing historical claim to the area.</li><li>B. No. These contacts do not show control of the area.</li></ul>
	The modern Sonedinian government claim that this historical contact shows that Apupa has always been part of Sonedinia.	<b>C.</b> You need more information to decide.
	You decide: Is this a good argument to support the modern Sonedinian claim to Apupa?	
3	From the 1500s the Dutch used force to gain control of Sonedinia (which they called the Dutch East Indies), and traded the exotic spices available there.  They claimed Apupa as part of their new colony and set up an administra-	<b>A.</b> Yes. This shows sufficient control for Apupa to be considered part of the Dutch East Indies.
	tion there. There were many parts of Apupa, especially the wild and rugged interior areas, where they had little contact, but a Governor was in charge of the whole area.	<b>B.</b> No. This does not show sufficient control for Apupa to be considered a Dutch colony.
	You decide: Can you call Apupa a Dutch colony?	
4	During the Second World War, Japan invaded the Dutch East Indies. In 1942	A. Dutch.
	the Japanese took over Apupa. In 1944 the Allies, mainly Americans and Australians, invaded and defeated the Japanese. The Dutch wanted to move back in control after the defeat of the Japanese, but the Sonedinians now wanted their independence from the Dutch. In 1949 they gained this, claiming that all the area previously controlled by the Dutch was now the Republic of Sonedinia. The Dutch agreed to pass control of all the area except Apupa to Sonedinia. Sonedinia claimed Apupa as well.	<ul><li>B. Sonedinia.</li><li>C. Let the Apupan people decide what they want to do.</li></ul>
	You decide: Who now controlled Apupa?	
5	The Dutch retained control of Apupa and promised that they would help the Apupans move towards independence by 1970.	<b>A.</b> Yes. The people were not sufficiently educated to exercise a democratic vote.
	In 1962 Sonedinian troops invaded the area, and came into conflict with the Dutch. The United States, which wanted to keep Sonedinia as an ally, persuaded both sides to accept an agreement—Apupa would be looked after	They used a consensus system that was a traditional and appropriate one for a Sonedinian system.
	by the United Nations, then Sonedinian officials would take over the administration of the area, but would allow the Apupans to vote on an 'Act of Choice' about whether they would become independent or be part of Sonedinia.	<b>B.</b> No. The system did not reflect a fair and independent expression of what the people wanted.
	In 1969 the vote took place. It was not 'one person one vote', but involved a series of meetings to gain consensus. Finally, 1,025 chosen representatives voted unanimously to remain part of Sonedinia. Critics of the process claim that these representatives were intimidated, and were unable to vote independently.	
	You decide: Could you consider this vote a fair and legally binding one that showed what the people of Apupa wanted to happen to their country?	

Apupa has a small population and much of the land is remote and inaccessible—but part is suitable for farming and development. The Sonedinian government began a process of transmigration—moving people from overcrowded parts of Sonedinia to Apupa. The transmigration settlements are always created so that the migrants outnumber the locals, and disrupt their traditional patterns of settlement and way of life. The new settlers are different ethnically and culturally from the indigenous people and have a different religion. They have taken much of the traditional land from the indigenous people to create the new small farms and are growing far more food than was produced previously.

You decide: Is transmigration an appropriate and acceptable policy for Apupa?

- transmigration is a way of developing the land, at the same time reducing overcrowding in other parts and helping people develop themselves economically. B. No. It is a process that takes land and
  - resources from the local people, takes away their power, and creates social tensions between the newcomers and the old residents.

A. Yes. The Apupans are Sonedinian, and

Under Sonedinian control most mineral resources, including gold and copper from the Freeport mine, go to the transnational owners and the Sonedinian government—very little is retained in Apupa. There is also environmental damage caused from the dumping of mining waste and the area's rainforests, relied upon by the locals, are being destroyed at a great rate.

You decide: Should the local resources be used for the benefit of the locals, or for the nation as a whole?

- A. They should be used for the local people.
- B. They should be used for the nation as a whole.
- C. The local economy should receive a great share of the benefits, but part should go to the national government.
- Many local Apupans who oppose Sonedinian rule and want independence are members of a resistance group called OFP. They consider themselves freedom fighters and disrupt Sonedinian rule. Many Sonedinian troops have committed crimes and human rights abuses against Apupan people, particularly against OFP members, but often indiscriminately. They consider the OFP and all who support it criminals and traitors. The Sonedinian government and migrants consider the OFP terrorists and criminals.

You decide: Is it justified for Apupans to resist the Sonedinian occupation and rule of Apupa by force?

- A. Yes. They are legitimately resisting an invader.
- B. No. They are criminally refusing to accept the legal reality that Apupa is part of Sonedinia.
- C. Opposition is allowable, as long as there is no violence.
- In 2001 the Sonedinian government passed a law allowing Apupa to have more self-government. It increased the resources available for development in Apupa. So, increasingly Apupa could make decisions for itself, but it remains part of Sonedinia. Sonedinia will never grant independence because this would set a precedent that could be copied by several other parts of Sonedinia, and would also mean that the wealth of Apupa will not be available to the Sonedinian economy.

You decide: Does this solve the problem of many Apupans who want independence?

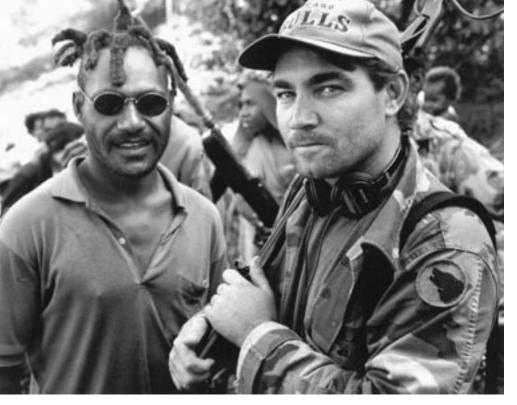
- A. Yes. They have a lot of independence now, and are still Apupan, while also being Sonedinian.
- **B.** No. Self-government is not independence and Apupa is still ethnically, culturally and geographically separate and independent of the rest of Sonedinia.

You now have to decide what you think Australia's position towards the issue should be. Australia is a supporter of freedom and democracy, and believes in self-determination for nations. On the other hand, Sonedinia is a powerful and important neighbour, and we need to have excellent trade, military and diplomatic relations with it. If Australia supports Apupan independence this will be seen as an anti-Sonedinian policy.

You decide: Which policy option should Australia support?

10

- A. Support Apupan independence from Sonedinia in theory.
- **B.** Support Apupan independence from Sonedinia in practice by supplying help.
- C. Support Sonedinia's continuing control of Apupa as part of Sonedinia.
- D. Support Sonedinia's continuing control of Apupa as part of Sonedinia only if it grants substantial human rights protection and self-government powers to Apupa.
- E. Stay neutral and do not support either Apupan independence or Sonedinia's claim on it as part of Sonedinia.



ABOVE: DIRECTOR MARK WORTH (RIGHT) FILMING IN THE NEW GUINEA HIGHLANDS PHOTO BY BEN BOHANE COPYRIGHT BEN BOHANE

based on the situation between Indonesia ('Sonedinia') and West Papua ('Apupa'—called Papua on the map on page 5), the western half of the island of New Guinea.

You can explore this situation in more detail in the documentary *Land of the Morning Star.* 

You will recognize the above situations in the film. As you look at each aspect, answer the questions that will help you gather more information, and those that will help you analyse the film as a documentary, and then look again at the decisions you have made. You may want to change some, or you may decide that you are still happy with the actions you have chosen.

At the end you will be asked to consider two final questions:

- Is the film a fair and reasonable presentation of the situation between Papua and Indonesia?
- What do you think Australia's policy should be towards Papua?
   (Note that the western half of New Guinea has been variously known in recent times as Netherlands New Guinea, West

Papua, Irian Jaya, West Irian, and finally Papua. It is referred to as 'West Papua' in this study guide, as that is the name used by the indigenous people.)

## Exploring Land of the Morning Star

(see diagram 04)

(https://newint.org/features/2002/04/05/facts/)

### 1

# SETTING THE SCENE (00:00 – 02:05)

The program opens with the raising of the West Papuan 'Morning Star' flag at a ceremony in December 1999. This was the first time since 1962 that the West Papuan flag and anthem had been able to be publicly acknowledged by West Papuans.

Interpreting the narrative

The focus in the opening segment is on the flag.

1.1 Why are flags powerful symbols? What does the Morning Star flag mean to the Papuans?

Analysing the film as a documentary

The purpose of the rest of the film is to explain this initial image. Look below at how it does this. Watch this sequence (up to the opening title) with the sound turned off.

1.2 What impressions do you receive from the images?

Now look at the same scene with the sound on.

- 1.3 How does the narration influence your reactions?
- 1.4 How does the choice of images affect you?
- 1.5 A documentary can be 'partisan'—that is, openly declaring that it reflects a particular point of view—or 'impartial—claiming that it is a neutral presentation of the situation. Which of these does Land of the Morning Star seem to be?

#### 2

# THE ORIGINS OF THE PAPUAN PEOPLE AND EARLY CONTACTS (02:05 – 04:00)

This section of the film shows the early history of West Papua, including different influences on its development.

Interpreting the narrative

- 2.1 Describe the nature of the country.
- 2.2 What impression of the Papuans does the film give?
- 2.3 The Indonesian government today argues that the contacts with Macassans described in the film show that Indonesia has long had a controlling interest in West Papua, that it has traditionally been a part of what is now Indonesia. What was the nature of those contacts?

Analysing the film as a documentary

2.4 What are the predominant im-

- ages of Papuans?
- 2.5 How might this influence your attitude towards them?
- 2.6 Does the way the filmmakers describe the contacts with Macassans support or weaken the Indonesian claim?

Reviewing the simulation

2.7 Look back at situations 1 and 2 in the simulation. Would you change your answers?

2

## PERIOD OF DUTCH COLONIZATION (04:00 – 06:00)

The film shows the involvement of the Dutch as a colonizing power in West Papua.

Interpreting the narrative

There are two key elements in colonization: the imperial power gets benefits from the new land, and it imposes control over it.

- 3.1 Why did the Dutch claim Netherlands New Guinea as a colony?
- 3.2 How did it impose controls on it?

Analysing the film as a documentary

Look at the footage related to Dutch colonialism up to the Second World War.

- 3.3 What impression of colonialism does it give?
- 3.4 Do you think this would be an accurate image?
- 3.5 What were the reactions of the colonized people to it?
- 3.6 How do we know their opinions?

The filmmakers seem to support every point in the narrative with matching archival footage.

3.7 How might that have shaped or influenced the narrative of the film?

3.8 Discuss some possible strengths and weaknesses in this approach to documentary filmmaking.

Reviewing the simulation

3.9 Look back at situation 3 in the simulation. Would you change your answers?

4

# THE SECOND WORLD WAR (06:00 – 11:50)

This part of the film focuses on the invasion by the Japanese, the West Papuans' reactions to it, and the liberation by American troops. It considers the impact of the war experience on the West Papuans' awareness of their identity and independence.

Interpreting the narrative

- 4.1 Why did the Japanese invade in the Second World War?
- 4.2 How did the local Papuans accept them?
- 4.3 Why did the Allies take the area back?
- 4.4 What impacts did this have on the local people?

Analysing the film as a documentary

The predominant images here are of Japanese occupation, then American occupation.

- 4.5 Look at the Japanese period. What is the message that is given?
- 4.6 How do the filmmakers put across this message? Look at the images, the narrative and the interview shown.

Look at the American occupation period.

- 4.7 What is the message that is given?
- 4.8 How do the filmmakers put across this message?

5

# INDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE (11:50 – 15:00)

After the Second World War nationalist leaders in Dutch New Guinea now claimed independence from their former colonial masters, and created the new nation of Indonesia—comprising all the islands that had been part of the former Dutch East Indies. These were ethnically, culturally and geographically very different areas, bound together only by the fact that they had all been part of the former Dutch colony. Indonesia was therefore a political identity, rather than a geographical, ethnic or cultural one.

Interpreting the narrative

- 5.1 What was the basis of the Indonesian claim to West Papua?
- 5.2 What was the Dutch claim to keeping it?
- 5.3 The local people were not consulted—why not?
- 5.4 How does the adoption of the Morning Star show a growing desire for independence?
- 5.5 Indonesia is made up of a set of separate islands, cultures and languages. Do you think that the fact that West Papua did not share any cultural or linguistic traits with Indonesia weaken Indonesia's claim to it?
- 5.6 What is the meaning of the term 'Sabang to Merauke'?
- 5.7 Indonesia was created in rejection of Dutch colonialism and was created out of all the Dutch territory. How might that make West Papua an important symbol to Indonesian nationalists?

Analysing the film as a documentary

5.8 The Indonesian claim to West Papua is based on a sense of nationalism. How is Indonesian nationalism represented in the film in words and images?

Interpreting the narrative

change your answers?

9

# THE DUTCH RETURN (15:00 – 20:15)

We see in this section the Dutch return to control of West Papua after the war, and its move to prepare West Papua for independence.

Interpreting the narrative

- 6.1 The Dutch claimed a continuing control over West Papua. Why?
- 6.2 Do you think this was justified?
- 6.3 How did they start to prepare West Papua for independence?

Analysing the film as a documentary

- 6.4 What image of the Dutch return is presented?
- 6.5 How is this conveyed? In particular, consider the Dutch government film footage that is shown and the images it creates.

Reviewing the simulation

6.6 Look back at situation 5 in the simulation. Would you change your answers?

7

# AN INDONESIAN PROVINCE (20:15 – 38:30)

This section of the film details how Indonesia came to see West Papua as an essential part of their nationalist development. In 1962 Indonesian forces invaded West Papua to take control from the Dutch. The Dutch and local forces successfully resisted the invasion, but when Indonesia turned to Russia for support, Cold War fears led the USA government to force the Dutch to accept Indonesia's claim. Indonesia's claim to West Papua was confirmed by the New York Agreement of 1962 (with the indigenous West Papuans having no say in the agreement reached) and then confirmed by a controversial Act of Self-Determination in 1969.

7.1 Why did the United States eventually support Indonesia's claim to West Papua?

- 7.2 What was the attitude of the West Papuans to the agreement?
- 7.3 How convincing is the 1969 vote?
- 7.4 What was Australia's attitude to and involvement in this process?

Analysing the film as a documentary

- 7.5 What is the attitude of the film-makers to the Indonesian claim to and process for integrating West Papua as part of the Indonesian nation? Discuss how they depict the process and impart their attitude to the viewer.
- 7.6 Does the viewer get a fair presentation of both points of view on the issue?

8

## INDONESIAN DEVELOPMENT OF WEST PAPUA (38:30 – 43: 00)

This section of the film shows several ways in which the Indonesian government has maintained its control over West Papua.

Interpreting the narrative

- 8.1 Explain each of these elements of the process and its impacts:
  - Transmigration from Java
  - Land development by migrants
  - Cultural conflicts with the indigenous highland people
  - Human rights issues
  - Exploitation of West Papua's resources

How is this presented?

Reviewing the simulation

8.2 Look back at situations 6-7 in the simulation. Would you

WEST PAPUA TODAY (43:00 – 54:00)

The film considers the resistance to the Indonesian presence by West Papuan organizations. It also outlines the brief moment under the presidency of Abdulrahman Wahid when he allowed the meeting of the Second Papuan People's Congress in 2000, when Chief Theys Eluay declared that West Papua was an independent state and not part of Indonesia.

Interpreting the narrative

- 9.1 What are some different forms of resistance? (eg. armed resistance, non-violent resistance, diplomatic efforts) Discuss the effectiveness of each type identified.
- 9.2 Chief Theys Eluay declared in the Second Papuan People's Congress that 'Papua has never been part of Indonesia'. What happened to Eluay?
- 9.3 Why was this significant for the West Papuan independence movement?

Analysing the film as a documentary

- 9.4 Look at the footage of the Second Papuan People's Congress. What messages are conveyed to you through the images, their editing and the narrative, about the attitudes of West Papuans and Indonesians to the gathering, and their responses to it?
- 9.5 Imagine that an Indonesian nationalist filmmaker was presenting a news item on this Congress. Which of the images might he or she choose, and how might they be treated to create a pro-nationalist message?
- 9.6 The film returns to the ceremony shown at the start.
  What added meaning does this ceremony now have for you?
- 9.7 Do you think the filmmakers

have been skilful in creating this response?

9.8 Do you think that the film has presented a sympathetic view of the West Papuan independence movement? Do you think the film also presents the Indonesian position fairly? Explain your reasons.

Reviewing the simulation

9.9 Look back at situations 8-9 in the simulation. Would you change your answers?

The film does not explicitly pose the question of what Australians' attitudes to West Papua should be, but it is an important question for Australians

- 9.10 Which of the five choices in stage 10 of the simulation has Australia adopted?
- 9.11 Why do you think we have adopted that policy?
- 9.12 Do you agree that this is the policy that Australia should adopt? Explain your reasons.
- 9.13 Do you see any parallels between the process that Indonesia has adopted towards West Papua and the process of colonization that occurred in Australia since 1788? (Students might also consider Australia's role in the history of the eastern part of the island, Papua New Guinea.) If you find that similarities exist, do you think they affect Australia's moral right to criticize Indonesia on this issue?

The most recent policy of the Indonesian government stresses autonomy (self-government) but not independence for West Papua.

You might like to follow any developments to see which of the possible futures of West Papua—independence, autonomy or suppression—is being realized.

### Resources

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West Papua Information Kit www.cs.utexas.edu/users/cline/ papua/core.htm

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Land of the Morning Star
A Film Australia National Interest
Program. Produced with the assistance of the Australian Broadcasting
Corporation.

Writer/Director: Mark Worth

Producer: Janet Bell

Executive Producer: Anna Grieve

**Duration**: 55 minutes

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