

Moreover, in the Indonesian context, there are alternative recipients of our policy attention who, via their pluralist inclinations, could perhaps salve our policy conscience while providing a longer-term basis for a regional 'special relationship'. In recent years, for example, a range of dissenting groups have emerged made up of NGO activists, students, Islamic leaders, disaffected former government figures and increasing numbers of workers and Labour activists. The establishment of *Forum Demokrasi*, bringing together religious and community leaders has also provided impetus to a growing opposition movement in Indonesia, while the emergence of Megawati Sukarnoputri and Amien Rais have provided important figureheads for the urban middle classes and the moderate Islamic community more generally.

None of this suggests that Indonesia is on the verge of transition to (Western-style) democratic government. It suggests, rather, that the Suharto led government is increasingly unable to contain pluralistic forces within Indonesian society and that Australia needs to be strategically astute as to the future implications of any changes that might eventuate. Unfortunately, Australian foreign policy appears effectively blind to this situation while others, in particular the United States, pursue a "two boats" approach to Indonesia which includes an expansion of links with opposition groups and an active engagement with other than the ruling state hierarchy. Meanwhile, Australia's ambassador to Indonesia explicitly rejects such a course of action in favour of a rigid status-quo doctrine based on the order imperative and support for traditional elites.⁹⁰

The short-term practical reorientation of policy sketched out above is based on a flexible, pragmatic approach to contemporary circumstance which, I suggest, is more consistent with a notion of critical realism in Australian foreign policy than is the wobbly synthesis of traditional and 'new' thinking which has effectively embedded in place the Westphalian model into the 1990s. It is also more consistent with the English School/International Society perspective touched on earlier which, for all its lingering Westphalian preferences, offers most to an Australian realist community seeking to understand and engage with a changing world. A change of analytical and political attitude is required if this perspective is to begin to fulfil its potential in the Australian IR context, but in such changed attitudinal circumstances at least two critically constructive themes might be added to the current lexicon of reality. The first, that the global 'art of the possible' can never be a static nor immutable category. The second, that historical contingency, as a global fact of life, provides the

⁹⁰See L. Williams, "Australia Stands by Suharto, Says Envoy" in *Sydney Morning Herald* April 18, 1997:8