

Colonial Edge

Your country looks so rich
I think I'll take
whatever I need to make me richer
and my big overseas friends
will have no objection
as they're hooked on the same habit
and don't want to be weaned off
their attraction to gold, oil, copper,
your land and labour, fish and trees.

The UN says you can object
but you're too small to make a difference
and just remember, several years ago
you'd have been called primitive
which means you were not as civilized
as the cultivated exploiters
even though their greed
is beyond your understanding.

So the land you say is yours
may never even smell independence
despite our mouthing the principles
of self determination
which we only recite at week-ends
'cos on weekdays
your country looks so rich.

*A tribute to John (Otto) Ondawame
resistance fighter for his West Papuan people
on the launch of his book, One People One Soul.*

Sydney, July 7th 2010