

## Soldiers describe how two Britons were shot in back

By David Watts

Confirmation that two television journalists executed in East Timor were Britons, has brought calls for action from members of Parliament.

Mr Geoffrey Edge, Labour M P for Aldridge-Brownhills, will today put down a question to Mr Callaghan, the Foreign Secretary, asking what his attitude is to the killings.

So far, there has been no direct diplomatic contact between the Foreign Office and Jakarta over allegations that the men were shot in the back by Indonesian troops at Balibo last October 18.

The two men were Mr Brian Peters, aged 29, a cameraman originally from Bristol, and Mr Malcolm Rennie, aged 26, from the Glasgow area, both working for Channel Nine television in Sydney.

Mr José Ramos Horta, Foreign Minister of the Fretilin independence movement, who visited London last week, said he was with the Britons the night before they were killed together with three Australian television crewmen.

Mr Horta gave this account to *The Times*: "I drove them in an old lorry to Balibo, and we went in a patrol near the Indonesian position. They filmed warships shelling our positions. The next day before leaving for Dili, I told Brian Peters, 'It is better that you leave this place because in the next few hours the Indonesians are going to launch a heavy attack'.

"The warships had their guns trained on our position, and a helicopter was overhead. But they said they wanted to film the action. So we left some soldiers with them.

"When those soldiers arrived in Dili later they told me the newsmen put up their hands when the Indonesians arrived and came out of their house shouting 'Australia'. The first to be shot was Brian Peters. One of the eyewitnesses said the Indonesians told them to face the wall, and then they just shot them.

"The next day Radio Kupang, the Indonesian Government radio, said: 'We taught a lesson to the Australian Communist journalists. If more come they will find the same fate'. It was no accident. They were just executed and Radio Kupang was making a big thing out of it."

Last night, a spokesman for the Indonesian Embassy in London said of the killings: "We heard only that there was a fight between Fretilin and some of the other parties, and that they were caught in the crossfire. No Indonesian volunteers were there when they were killed."

MPs' concern over the killings is increased by the fact that Indonesia receives more British aid than any other non-Commonwealth country. The value of the aid has been rising steadily, with a total of just over £6m in 1972 and a total of about £11m planned for 1975-76.