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85

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Possible Sukarno Trip Abroad

1. In the past several days there have been a number of suggestions that President Sukarno is planning to leave the country--perhaps as early as this Friday.

2. Rumors are rife in Hong Kong that Sukarno will soon be going abroad. A party of Indonesians consisting of Sukarno's personal pilot and five physicians arrived there on 2 November.

In addition, the US Embassy in Djakarta believes that certain remarks of the President on 6 November "offer the slight suggestion" that he may be planning to leave the country.

3. If Sukarno is indeed planning a trip abroad with Indonesian affairs in their present state, political repercussions are almost certain. He may feel it wise to leave the country for a period while "the dust settles" (this is a tactic he has employed before), or he may feel that he no longer controls events in Indonesia and that he can best rally support from some place of temporary exile. We believe a primarily political motivation somewhat unconvincing, however, since Sukarno's prestige at home is still high and he has considerable room to maneuver. Furthermore, it seems likely that he would wish to remain

14
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close to events as they unfold in Indonesia's present unsettled situation. The state of Sukarno's health would be a more likely explanation of a trip abroad at this point. He is known to be a sick man in need of an operation, and it may be that he feels he cannot postpone medical treatment while the political situation slowly evolves at home.

4. Should Sukarno leave the country, the hand of the army would almost certainly be strengthened. The military's pressure on the PKI would continue and probably increase. Army newspapers, which have been somewhat muzzled in the past few days, would resume a full publication schedule.

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Above all, the position of Foreign Minister Subandrio would be further undermined, and he would probably be forced from office. However, a radical change directly affecting Sukarno's position as head of state--or even his ability to reassert himself at a later date--would be unlikely, particularly in the short run.

5. In any event, the evidence suggesting that Sukarno will be leaving the country is rather tenuous. We are by no means certain that a trip is indeed in the offing.

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