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TO IMMEDIATE F.C.O. TELNO. 375 OF MODUK (DI2-FOB) CANBERRA LISBON S NEW YORK

RECEIVED IN
4 OCTOBER 75
REGISTRY No. 75
SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR UKMIS
- 6 OCT 1975
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PORTUGUESE TIMOR

1.

HE REPORTED THAT GENERAL SURONO AND ALL THREE CHIEFS OF STAFF TOGETHER WITH COMMANDER OF NATIONAL STRATEGIC COMMAND WERE THERE. C130 AIRCRAFT OF INDONESIAN AIRFORCE WERE POSITIONED ON LITTLE USED NAVAL AIRFIELD AND WERE DUE THIS AFTERNOON TO LIFT 507 BRIGADE (AIR LANDING) REINFORCED WITH HEAVY EQUIPMENT PLUS ONE PARACHUTE BATTALION TO ATAMBUA ON THE BORDER OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR. NAVAL FORCES OFF DILI NOW COMPRISE AT LEAST TWO RIGA CLASS DESTROYERS, TWO SUBMARINES AND SUPPORT SHIPS. AT LEAST ONE COMMANDO BATTALION IS EMBARKED. FOUR INDONESIAN MIG 17 AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN POSITIONED AT AIRFIELD REMBIGA (AMPENAN), LOMBOK, WITH UNKNOWN NUMBER OF INDONESIAN SABRES. THESE ARE THUS WITHIN STRIKING RANGE TO PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT OVER PORTUGUESE TIMOR. KODAM 16 HAS ESTABLISHED A FORWARD COMMAND POST AT ATAMBUA BUT BELIEVES THAT HANKAM ARE RESERVING COMMAND TO THEMSELVES.

2. WHEN I SAW GEN ALI MURTOPO THIS MORNING THE SUBJECT OF TIMOR CAME UP IN OUR CONVERSATION AND I MENTIONED THE HOPE THAT THE FUTURE OF THE COLONY COULD BE DECIDED BY SELF-DETERMINATION AND THAT AS A RESULT OF FRETILIN'S REPORTED EXCESSES THE MASS OF THE POPULATION WOULD DECIDE THAT INTEGRATION WITH INDONESIA MIGHT BE IN THE TERRITORY'S BEST INTERESTS; AND I STRESSED THE DANGERS OF OVERT ARMED INTERVENTION PARTICULARLY SO FAR AS INDONESIA'S POSITION IN THE U.N. AND WITH PUBLIC OPINION IN THE WEST WAS CONCERNED. GEN MURTOPO SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS, AS HAD BEEN OFTEN STATED, FULLY CONVINCED OF THE IMPORTANCE OF

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/SELF-DETERMINATION:

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SELF-DETERMINATION: AND HE GAVE ME NO INDICATION THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD CHANGED HIS PERSONAL ATTITUDE IN TIMOR.

3. NEVERTHELESS THE MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN PARAGRAPH 1 SUGGEST THAT THE MILITARY ARE PREPARING FOR EARLY OVERT ACTION. MY DEFENCE ATTACHE BELIEVES IT UNLIKELY THAT THESE LARGE LATEST MOVEMENTS WOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE UNLESS HANKAM BELIEVED THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD AUTHORISE EARLY ACTION. THEY CANNOT LONG MAINTAIN SUCH LARGE FORCES SO FAR FORWARD WITHOUT SERIOUS LOGISTIC PROBLEMS

4. OCT 5 IS BEING CELEBRATED AS THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDONESIAN ARMED FORCES AND OCT 6 AND 7 ARE THE ANNUAL FEAST DAYS MARKING THE END OF RAMADAN. TO MY MIND IT DOES NOT FIT IN WITH THE PRESIDENT'S CAUTION AND LACK OF PANACHE TO CHOOSE THIS TIME TO INVADE PORTUGUESE TIMOR. I INCLINE TO THE BELIEF THEREFORE THAT HE HAS NOT YET CHANGED HIS MIND BUT THAT THE HAWKS IN HANKAM EXPECT FURTHER INCIDENTS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS WHICH WILL FINALLY PERSUADE HIM TO.

FORD

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