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FM AMEMBASSY DJAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7317
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
/USUN NEW YORK 174
AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L DJAKARTA 8977

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y

SUBJ: THE STAKES IN WEST IRAN' "CT OF FREE CHOICE"

REF: STATE 216459

1. "CT OF FREE CHOICE" IN WEST IRIAN MAY WELL BE MOST IMPORTANT POLITICAL ISSUE IN INDONESIA DURING COMING YEAR. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT USEFUL, EVEN AT POSSIBLE RISK OF REPETITION, TO REVIEW EXACTLY WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THIS ACTION AND WHAT IS AT STAKE FOR SUHARTO GOVERNMENT.

2. AS DEPT AWARE, INDONESIA FACES DILEMMA IN DECIDING HOW TO EXECUTE 1962 AGREEMENT. GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO CARRY OUT SOME TYPE OF "CT OF FREE CHOICE," AND FONMIN MALIK IN PARTICULAR HAS BEEN IN FOREFRONT PLEDGING TO WORLD THAT GOI WILL HONOR ITS OBLIGATIONS. HE HAS CONTINUED TO TAKE THIS LINE DESPITE CONSTANT OPPOSITION IN DJAKARTA PRESS FROM TRADITIONALIST MOSLEMS AND FROM RADICAL NATIONALISTS AND LEFTIST ELEMENTS SUCH AS NAVY' NEWSPAPER EL BAHAR. WE BELIEVE MALIK' VIEWS WILL CARRY THE DAY AND THAT GOVERNMENT WILL HONESTLY SEEK TO DEVISE SOME MEANINGFUL WAY TO CONDUCT ASCERTAINMENT WHICH WILL NOT INVOLVE REAL RISKS OF LOSS OF WEST IRIAN.

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3. RETENTION OF WEST IRIAN AS FULL-LEDGED INDONESIAN PROVINCE IS A POLITICAL NECESSITY FOR SUHARTO GOVERNMENT AND FOR ADAM MALIK. SUHARTO HIMSELF WAS MILITARY COMMANDER OF "RIKORA" CAMPAIGN WHICH INDONESIANS BELIEVE BROUGHT WEST IRIAN TO INDONESIA, AND MOST INDONESIANS, DESPITE VARYING POLITICAL ATTITUDES, REGARD THAT VICTORY AS FINAL STAGE OF STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. EVEN THOSE INDONESIANS WHO REGARD WEST IRIAN AS MIXED BLESSING WHICH BRINGS MORE PROBLEMS THAN BENEFITS BELIEVE THAT LOSS OF TERRITORY THROUGH "ACT OF FREE CHOICE" WOULD UNDERMINE MALIK AND DEAL SERIOUS BLOW TO INDONESIA' POLITICAL STABILITY. POLITICAL MOSLEMS AND JINGOISTS, WHO ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PRESENT GOVERNMENT BUT LACK FIRM ISSUES ON WHICH TO ATTACK IT, WOULD USE LOSS OF WEST IRIAN AS BASIS FOR ALL-OUT ATTACK ON SUHARTO ADMINISTRATION AND MODERATES WHO ARE NOW SETTING INDONESIAN POLICY. THEY COULD SET IN MOTION TRENDS WHICH WOULD UNSEAT THIS GOVERNMENT. AT VERY LEAST THEY WOULD CREATE SITUATION WHICH WOULD FORCE ARMY TO USE REPRESSION AGAINST THEM AND POSSIBLY SPARK VICIOUS CYCLE LEADING TO OUTRIGHT MILITARY REGIME.

4. FACED WITH THIS PROBLEM, MALIK AND OTHERS ARE SEARCHING FOR WAY TO SATISFY REQUIREMENTS OF 1962 AGREEMENT WITHOUT UNDULY AGITATING DOMESTIC POLITICAL OPPOSITION. MALIK' PROPOSAL TO SETTLE WEST IRIAN' FUTURE THROUGH PARTLY-LECTED, PARTLY-PPPOINTED "APUAN COUNCIL" (JAKARTA 8592) IS VIRTUALLY ONLY IDEA YET ADVANCED WHICH SHOWS PROMISE OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS.

5. NEW YORK AGREEMENT' WORDING ON MEANS OF CONDUCTING "CT OF FREE CHOICE" APPEARS PROVIDE ONLY INDRECT ROLE FOR SYG REPRESENTATIVE RATHER THAN "UPERVISORY ROLE" MENTIONED IN SOME RECENT DOCUMENTS. NY AGREEMENT PROVIDES ONLY THAT SYG "DVISE, ASSIST AND PARTICIPATE" (MB. ORTIZ SANZ USED THESE EXACT WORDS ON HIS ARRIVAL IN DJAKARTA AUG 12 -DJAKARTA 8836). AS FOR MODALITIES OF "CT", NY AGREEMENT STIPULATES ONLY THAT ALL ADULT PAPUAN NON-ALIEN RESIDENTS "AVE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN ACCORD WITH INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE" AND LEAVES CHOICE OF MEANS ENTIRELY TO GOI.

6. MALIK' SPECIAL ASSISTANT, SUDJARWO, UPON RETURNING

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RECENTLY FROM THE HAGUE AND NEW YORK, CLAIMED THAT ISSUE HAS ATTRACTED LITTLE ATTENTION IN UN CORRIDORS AND REPORTED TO HIS GOVERNMENT THAT U THANT AND OTHERS WITH WHOME HE HAD DISCUSSED PROBLEM SHOWED "UNDERSTANDING" ATTITUDE. THIS MAY WELL BE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC ASSESSMENT. WE DO KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT IN DJAKARTA AT LEAST, DUTCH FOR THEIR PART ARE THROWING UP NO SERIOUS OBSTACLES. DUTCH AMB. SCHIFF, RETURNING IMMINENTLY TO HAGUE AND ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITIES OF SEC GEN OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FULLY RECOGNIZES PROBLEMS WHICH INDONESIA FACES AND IS CONCERNED ONLY THAT "ACT OF FREE CHOICE", HOWEVER IT IS CARRIED OUT, NOT JEOPARDIZE GOOD DUTCH-INDONESIAN RELATIONS WHICH HE HAD WORKED SO HARD TO BUILD DURING PAST THREE YEARS. LIKE OTHERS IN DJAKARTA, HE SEES NO FUTURE FOR WEST IRIAN EXCEPT AS PART OF INDONESIAN REPUBLIC. IT WOULD BE UNVIABLE AS INDEPENDENT NATION AND IT WOULD BE INFEASIBLE FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, TO JOIN AREA TO ONE OF ITS OTHER NEIGHBORS EVEN IF THEY WANTED IT. (UDJARWO HAS MENTIONED TO US PRIVATELY THAT MALIK' PAPUAL COUNCIL IDEA WAS LARGELY INSPIRED BY SCHIFF AND THE DUTCH.)

7. WE FULLY SHARE VIEW THAT USG SHOULD NOT BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THIS ISSUE EITHER THROUGH ATTEMPTING TO PRESSURE INDONESIA OR HOLDING HANDS OF DUTCH. AT SAME TIME WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THROUGH POSSIBLE MISUNDERSTANDING OF REALITIES OF WEST IRIAN SITUATION OR OF 1962 AGREEMENT WE MIGHT BE DRAWN INTO SUPPORTING MORE "IMON PURE" PLEBISCITE THAN SITUATION WARRANTS. WE NOTE FROM PARA 3 REFTEL, THAT UN HAS NOT IN PAST BEEN RECEPTIVE TOWARD INDIRECT SYSTEM FOR DECIDING SUCH ISSUES. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC FOR ANY UN MEMBER WHO KNOWS SITUATION IN WEST IRIAN TO HOLD OUT FOR FREE AND DIRECT ELECTIONS. NOR SHOULD WE REFER TO UN "SUPERVISION" WHEN THIS NOT STIPULATED IN AGREEMENT.

8. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, WE ARE DEALING HERE ESSENTIALLY WITH STONE-AGE, ILLITERATE TRIBAL GROUPS WHOSE HORIZONS ARE STRICTLY LIMITED AND WHO WOULD BE UNABLE TO GRASP ALTERNATIVES INVOLVED IN FREE PLEBISCITE. FREE ELECTION AMONG GROUPS SUCH AS THIS WOULD BE MUCH MORE OF A FARCE THAN ANY RIGGED MECHANISM INDONESIA COULD DEVISE, AND ORTIZ SANZ HIMSELF SEEMS AWARE OF THIS. (IN LATTER CONNECTION, WE APPRECIATE USEFUL CONVERSATION WHICH JACK CATES OF USUN HAD WITH ORTIZ SANZ). NOR DO

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WE BELIEVE MALIK' "APUAN COUNCIL" SHOULD BE REJECTED
OUT OF HAND. NOT ONLY DOES THIS SEEM TO BE BEST WAY YET
SUGGESTED OUT OF DILEMMA FACING INDONESIANS AND DUTCH,
BUT IT HAS ADDED ADVANTAGES OF GIVING WEST IRIANS CHANCE
TO OFFER CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS ON FUTURE OF AREA (S
MALIK SEES IT, THEY WOULD NOT BE LIMITED MERELY TO VOTING
YES OR NO) AND ESTABLISHES CONTINUING ORGANIZATION THROUGH
WHICH THESE VIEWS CAN BE HEARD. AS WE SEE IT, THESE WOULD
BE NO SMALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
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