Malcolm Fraser said he was leaving for Indonesia on Tuesday, February 9th, for one week. The purpose of the visit was to speak to as many leading Indonesians as possible in both the civil and military fields. He said he was undertaking this trip on his own initiative because of a growing and increasing concern at the direction of Indonesian policies. Therefore, he wanted to make his own assessment first hand of the feelings, motives and objectives of the Indonesian leaders.

In particular, he said he wanted to make some examination of the course that Indonesian leadership would take after President Soekarno. Australia cannot ignore the fact that over the last several years the anti-communist or Moslem political parties have been largely suppressed while the communist party has grown from a few thousand members to three million. Only recently an attempt by the anti-communist forces to form some kind of united position was thwarted by the President himself.

We must add two other factors to this growth of the communist party. Firstly, Indonesia's international forces have been isolating her from the West and drawing her inevitably closer to Peking and, secondly, it would appear that General Nasution, reputedly avowed anti-communist, has not the power and prestige that he once had. There is some suggestion that officers sympathetic to him have been appointed to other posts and that officers perhaps more sympathetic to the communist cause are taking their place. If this is so, an army that the West once believed to be firmly anti-communist might well find itself in a frame of mind in which it would come to agreement with the communists in Indonesia over future Indonesian leadership. If this is correct only some unforeseen event can prevent Indonesia becoming a communist nation.

Even though confrontation itself may make it impossible to maintain the friendly relations that we would like with Indonesia the problems of living alongside this country would be intensified under current leadership. Australia may have to learn to live alongside a communist country. This, in itself, will require skill and leadership, resolution and determination from Australia.

Malcolm Fraser said he wanted to make his own judgment on these and other matters in Indonesia.
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Trip to Indonesia

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5 February 1965

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