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OCFAS/CIG

CI# 285

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National Intelligence Daily

Wednesday
2 November 1983

~~Top Secret~~

OCFAS/NID 63-2571X

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[redacted]**USSR: Andropov's Health**

General Secretary Andropov, in a message to an international antiwar group published over the weekend, said he had been unable to meet with the group's representatives in Moscow on 21 October because of a cold. Andropov had met with the South Yemeni leader on 28 September but has not met with any other foreign visitors or been seen in public since mid-August. [redacted]

[redacted]

Comment: Failure by Andropov to appear next Monday at the parade commemorating the anniversary of the Revolution, or at least at the indoor ceremonies preceding it, probably would indicate that he is either seriously ill or recuperating from an illness. If Andropov has had several weeks of rest, the symptoms of his chronic cardiovascular problems should have been alleviated, but a severe cold or influenza could have set him back. He postponed a planned trip to Bulgaria, and a Warsaw Pact summit in Moscow reportedly was canceled—possibly due to the state of the Soviet leader's health.

[redacted]

PHILIPPINES: Marcos Clarifies Succession

President Marcos announced Monday that, in the event of his death or incapacitation, Prime Minister Cesar Virata would assume all presidential duties. Marcos promised to vest the Prime Minister legally with these powers, which presumably would alter the present constitutional provisions for succession. [redacted]

Comment: Marcos' announcement is an attempt to quiet opposition demands for the reinstatement of the vice presidency, as well as to reassure nervous international bankers about the prospects for stability. The constitution now calls for the 10-member Executive Committee, which Virata chairs, to head an interim government to oversee elections within 90 days. Without a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the authority of the Prime Minister, whom Marcos can replace, the change will not mean much. There are no signs yet, however, that Marcos plans to take the necessary legal steps to amend the constitution, which leaves the issue open to legal challenge. [redacted]

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