

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARAMA 01510 141916Z  
ACTION ARA-16**RELEASE IN FULL**INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-10 CIAE-00 EB-08  
DODE-00 H-01 IO-15 NEA-06 NSC-01 NSAE-00 COME-00  
HA-06 L-03 LAB-04 PM-09 PA-01 STR-14 SIL-01  
SSN-02 ICAE-00 SP-02 SPRS-02 /112 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO  
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INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUEC O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 1510  
E.O. 12065: GDS 07/14/88 (LA ROCHE, RICHARD R.) OR-M  
TAGS: ELAB PINS PINT US  
SUBJ: RECENT EVENTS IN SURINAMEREF: A) PARAMARIBO 1297; B) PARAMARIBO 1467;  
C) PARAMARIBO 1343

1. (U) SUMMARY: DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE SURINAME TEACHERS FEDERATION (FOLS) HAD LED TO THE OUSTER OF FOLS CHAIRMAN HENDRICK SYLVESTER. A NEW FOLS BOARD HAS RESUMED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CONCERNING A NEW TEACHERS LABOR AGREEMENT. THE 12:00 TO 4:00 A.M. CURFEW WHICH HAS BEEN IN EFFECT VIRTUALLY CONTINUOUSLY SINCE THE FEBRUARY 25, 1980 COUP WAS CANCELLED ON JULY 1, 1982. AS A COMPENSATORY SECURITY MEASURE, THE AREA AROUND THE MAIN ARMY BASE, MEMRE BOEKOE KASERNE, IS NOW SEALED OFF TO TRAFFIC FROM 12:00 UNTIL 4:00 A.M. MINISTER GLENN SANKATSING WILL ATTEND THE NAM EMERGENCY SESSION IN CYPRUS ON THE LEBANESE CRISIS. REPORTEDLY, THE GOS CONDEMNS ISRAELI AGGRESSION. A CUBAN DELEGATION IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN SURINAME ON JULY 14. THE COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION AND THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) TEACHERS FACE LABOR PROBLEMS: THE DISSIDENT TEACHERS UNION LEADERS, WHO HAD SOUGHT TO UNSEAT SURINAME TEACHERS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARAMA 01510 141916Z

FEDERATION (FOLS) CHAIRMAN H. SYLVESTER FOR HIS SOFT APPROACH IN RECENT NEGOTIATIONS ON A NEW LABOR AGREEMENT WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MINOV) (SEE REF A) FINALLY SUCCEEDED LAST WEEK. AT A FOLS COUNCIL MEETING ON JULY 9, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE SYLVESTER BOARD MANDATE WOULD BE WITHDRAWN AND AN INTERIM BOARD WAS AUTHORIZED TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW COLLECTIVE LABOR AGREEMENT WITH MINOV. INITIAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN MINOV AND FOLS HAVE DISCLOSED THAT THERE REMAIN SERIOUS DIFFERENCES (ONE EXAMPLE IS THE FOLS DEMAND THAT SALARY INCREASES BE RETROACTIVE TO JANUARY 1, 1981, WHILE MINOV HAS

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Reviewer**

OFFERED RETROACTIVITY TO OCTOBER 1, 1981). IN ORDER TO BRING SOME PRESSURE TO BEAR ON MINOV TO MAKE CONCESSIONS, SELECTIVE LABOR ACTIONS (SICKOUTS AND EARLY SCHOOL CLOSINGS) ARE NOW BEING INITIATED. A 10:00 A.M. WALKOUT ON JULY 14 IS ALSO PLANNED. AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, THE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE.

3. (C) COMMENT: MINISTER OF EDUCATION RUSLAND AND MINISTER OF FINANCE NEIJHORST HAVE SOUGHT TO CONVINCING THE FOLS TO MODERATE ITS DEMANDS BY EXPLAINING THE ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS UNDER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MUST WORK (REDUCED REVENUE FROM BAUXITE, RICE, ETC.). WE EXPECT THAT A COMPROMISE WILL EVENTUALLY BE WORKED OUT, ALTHOUGH NOT BEFORE SOME MINOR STRIKE ACTION. IT DOES NOT APPEAR AT THIS TIME THAT THE TEACHER'S ISSUE WILL BE A CATALYST FOR WIDESPREAD LABOR UNREST, ALTHOUGH GOS ACCEPTANCE OF FOLS DEMANDS COULD MOTIVATE OTHER CIVIL SERVANTS TO ESCALATE THEIR DEMANDS DURING RENEGOTIATION OF CONTRACTS THIS SUMMER, THAT COULD LEAD TO A POSSIBLY EXPLOSIVE GOVERNMENT-LABOR CONFRONTATION.

4. (C) CURFEW LIFTED: AS PART OF THE "EMANCIPATION DAY" CELEBRATION ON JULY 1, ARMY COMMANDER DESIRE BOUTERSE ANNOUNCED THAT THE 12-4 A.M. CURFEW HAD BEEN LIFTED. A CURFEW WAS INITIALLY INSTITUTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE FEBRUARY 25, 1980  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03      PARAMA 01510 141916Z

COUP AND CONTINUED UNTIL FEBRUARY 25, 1982 WHEN IT WAS DISCONTINUED ON THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE "REVOLUTION." JUST OVER TWO WEEKS LATER, A SMALL BAND OF MEN, LED BY EX-MILITARY MAN RAMBOCUS, STAGED A COUP ATTEMPT WHICH FAILED AND THE CURFEW WAS REINSTALLED. ALTHOUGH THE CURFEW HAS ONCE AGAIN BEEN DROPPED, BOUTERSE HAS TAKEN STEPS TO AVOID A RECURRENCE OF THE RAMBOCUS AFFAIR WHICH HE BLAMES IN PART ON THE FREEDOM OF DISSIDENTS TO MOVE FREELY AFTER DARK WITH NO CONTROLS IN EFFECT. NOW THE ROADS AROUND THE MAIN ARMY BARRACKS ARE BLOCKED OFF FROM 12-4 A.M., AND THE CAMP MORE SECURELY GUARDED.

5. (U) MINISTER SANKATSING TO NAM MEETING IN CYPRUS: DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MINISTER OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS) GLENN SANKATSING DEPARTED SURINAME ON JULY 13 TO ATTEND THE NAM EMERGENCY SESSION IN CYPRUS. ACCORDING TO A SURINAME NEWS AGENCY PRESS RELEASE, THE GOS HAD SENT A REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MEETING IN RESPONSE TO THE NAM CHAIRMAN'S CALL "TO DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH THE LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN PEOPLES WHO HAVE SUFFERED UNDER ISRAELI AGGRESSION.

6. (C) COMMENT: SANKATSING IS A MEMBER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S PARTY (RVP) AND ONE OF THE MOST RADICAL MEMBERS IN THE PRESENT CABINET. THE GOS HAS CONDEMNED THE ISRAELI ACTIVITY IN LEBANON AND SANKATSING WILL LIKELY SUPPORT MOTIONS CENSURING ISRAEL AND ADVOCATING PALESTINIAN RIGHTS.

7. (C) MORE CUBAN VISITORS: ACCORDING TO MFA ACTING PROTOCOL CHIEF WALTER GREAVES (PROTECT), A CUBAN "CULTURAL" DELEGATION

WILL ARRIVE IN SURINAME ON JULY 14. GREAVES WAS ANNOYED THAT HE HAD BEEN GIVEN VIRTUALLY ONE DAY'S NOTICE OF THE VISIT WHICH HE WAS EXPECTED TO "COORDINATE." HE HAD NO INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PURPOSE AND DETAILS OF THE VISIT. NOTHING HAS APPEARED IN THE NEWS MEDIA ABOUT THE VISIT. ON JULY 14, SURINAME AIRWAYS MANAGING DIRECTOR ATTA MUNGRA (PROTECT) TOLD EMBOFF THAT CUBANA AIRLINES HAD PRESENTLY SENT A REPRESENTATIVE TO PARAMARIBO TO MAKE A SURVEY IN CONNECTION WITH THE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CUBANA SERVICE TO SURINAME AND A CUBANA

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PARAMA 01510 141916Z

AIRLINES OFFICE. AS IN THE CASE OF THE CULTURAL DELEGATION, NO NEWS OF THE VISIT OR PROSPECT OF A CUBANA SERVICE HAS APPEARED IN THE PRESS. COMMENT: A SIMILAR APPROACH BY CUBANA WAS TURNED DOWN LAST YEAR DUE, AT LEAST IN PART, TO MUNGRA'S OBJECTIONS WHICH WERE BASED CHIEFLY ON COMMERCIAL GROUNDS. END COMMENT. LA ROCHE

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