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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 CIAE-00
EB-08 DODE-00 H-01 NSC-01 NSAE-00 COME-00 HA-08
L-03 LAB-04 PM-09 PA-01 STR-14 SIL-01 USIE-00
SP-02 SPRS-01 /102 W
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P 161913Z NOV 82
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9227
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARAMARIBO 2376

E.O. 12356: DECL: 11/16/02
TAGS: PINT, PINS, NS
SUBJ: INITIAL PHASE OF TALKS BETWEEN GOS AND LABOR GROUPS
ON NEW DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES: BOUTERSE STILL IN CHARGE

REF: A) PARAMARIBO 2268, B) PARAMARIBO 2243

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: RESULTS OF EARLY ROUNDS OF TALKS BETWEEN GOS
AND LABOR FEDERATIONS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DEMOCRATIC
STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN INCONCLUSIVE. NO AGREEMENT HAS BEEN
REACHED ON WHICH OF SEVERAL SETS OF PROPOSALS CAN SERVE
AS STARTING POINT FOR NEGOTIATIONS. PRESENT DISCUSSIONS
ARE LIMITED TO DEFINING "FUNCTIONAL GROUPS", IMPORTANT BE-
CAUSE THESE WILL PARTICIPATE IN FURTHER TALKS AND MAY
ULTIMATELY PROVIDE MEMBERSHIP OF PLANNED NATIONAL
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ASSEMBLY. GOVERNMENT SIDE APPEARS TO HOLD FIRM INI-
TIATIVE AND ADVANTAGE IN ALL TALKS, PARTICULARLY AS TWO
LARGEST LABOR FEDERATIONS THEMSELVES HAVE DIFFERENT
VIEWS ON HOW TALKS SHOULD PROCEED AS WELL AS ON
ISSUE OF WHICH "FUNCTIONAL GROUPS" ARE TO BE
RECOGNIZED. ARMY COMMANDER BOUTERSE, WHO HAS OFFERED
ONLY VAGUE OUTLINE OF GOS OBJECTIVES IN TALKS, MAY AS
TACTIC INTEND TO USE CONFUSED STATE OF OPPOSITION TO
BUY TIME TO CONSOLIDATE EARLIER-INSTALLED "REVOLUTIONARY"
INSTITUTIONS. (END SUMMARY)

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior Reviewer

3. DURING PAST WEEK THERE HAS BEEN SERIES OF TALKS BETWEEN GOS AND LABOR FEDERATION HEADS, AND BETWEEN LABOR LEADERS AND THEIR POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN FOUR SETS OF PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY TWO OPPOSING SIDES AS STARTING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION ON RETURN TO DEMOCRACY AND CREATION OF NEW DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES, NONE OF THESE HAS YET BEEN SUBJECT OF SYSTEMATIC DISCUSSION. DURING ONLY MEETING WHICH CAME CLOSE TO NEGOTIATING SESSION, WHICH TOOK PLACE NOVEMBER 10 AND INVOLVED POLICY CENTER MEMBERS AND HEADS OF FOUR LABOR FEDERATIONS (C-47, CLO, PWO, MOEDERBOND) AND FARMERS' UNION (FAL), TALK WAS LIMITED TO ATTEMPT TO DEFINE WHAT "FUNCTIONAL GROUP" IS. THIS DEFINITION HAS IMPORTANCE IN THAT CERTAIN OF THESE GROUPS ARE TO BE PARTICIPANTS AT FUTURE SUBSTANTIVE TALKS AND IT IS LIKELY THAT THESE GROUPS WILL, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, PROVIDE MEMBERSHIP OF YET-TO-BE-CREATED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THIS BODY IS EXPECTED TO ACT FIRST AS CONSULTATIVE BODY, MAY LATER PERFORM AS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, AND COULD FINALLY BECOME HIGHEST LEGISLATIVE ORGAN IN THE COUNTRY.

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4. ACCOUNTS OF TALKS' PROGRESS SUGGEST THAT GOVERNMENT SIDE RETAINS INITIATIVE. THIS APPEARS TRUE IN SPITE OF FACT ACTUAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN GOS AND GROUPS WHICH URGED RETURN TO REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY WERE FORCED BY LABOR ACTIONS, SPECIFICALLY, MOEDERBOND FEDERATION MEMBER UNIONS' LIMITED STRIKES AT TIME OF FEDERATION HEAD CYRILL DAAL'S ARREST AT END OF OCTOBER. GOS STOLE DAAL'S THUNDER BY REVEALING IT HAD BEEN DELIBERATING INTERNALLY OVER NEW DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES FOR SOME TIME AND HAD, IN FACT, ALREADY SCHEDULED ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLAN FOR "DEMOCRATIZATION" IN MID-NOVEMBER (SEE SEPTTEL ON BOUTERSE NOVEMBER 15 SPEECH). IN PRESENT TALKS, GOVERNMENT SIDE HAS ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE IN THAT OPPOSITION IS DIVIDED BOTH OVER QUESTION OF WHAT PLAN TO BACK AND OVER WHICH

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"FUNCTIONAL GROUPS" SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED. MOEDERBOND
FEDERATION AIMS FOR EARLY ELECTIONS TO NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY WHICH COULD THEN CARRY OUT SEVERAL ROLES
PLANNED FOR IT. PLAN ADVOCATED BY C-47 AND OTHER
LABOR FEDERATIONS INCLUDES TIMETABLE OF SORTS BUT
DOES NOT STRESS EARLY ELECTIONS. PROPONENTS OF THESE
PLANS ALSO DISAGREE ON WHICH GROUPS SHOULD PARTICIPATE
IN FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS AND BE PART OF NATIONAL AS-
SEMBLY. MOEDERBOND FAVORS TRADITIONAL GROUPS (BAR
ASSOCIATION, DOCTORS, PRIVATE MEDIA, COMBINED CHURCHES,

ETC.) WHILE C-47 AND OTHERS PREFER SECTORAL MASS ORGANIZATIONS (YOUTH, WOMEN, INTELLECTUALS, ETC.) WHICH HAVE YET TO BE CREATED. LATTER POSITION, ALSO FAVORED BY GOS, HAS THUS FAR BEEN MORE EFFECTIVELY ARTICULATED AND PROMOTED, CHIEFLY BY C-47 CHAIRMAN, FRED DERBY. DAAL HAS BEEN NOTABLY SUBDUED SINCE NOVEMBER 2 ANNOUNCEMENT IN WHICH HE CALLED HIS STRIKING UNIONS BACK TO WORK.
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5. EVEN BEFORE TALKS BEGAN, ARMY COMMANDER AND PC CHAIRMAN BOUTERSE WORKED TO SHORE UP HIS POSITION AGAINST PRESSURES FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE. IN TWO APPEARANCES ON TELEVISION LAST WEEK (NOVEMBER 6, 9) MADE JOINTLY WITH PC VICE CHAIRMAN MAJOR ROY HORB, BOUTERSE WORKED TO DISPEL RUMORS THAT THERE WAS PERSONAL OR POLITICAL DISCORD BETWEEN HORB AND HIMSELF. IMPRESSION OF UNITY OF APPROACH ON PART OF TWO MILITARY LEADERS WAS FURTHER REINFORCED BY DEPARTURE OF ANDRE HAAKMAT, A MODERATE AND HORB'S PRINCIPAL POLITICAL ADVISOR, WHO WAS FIRED FOR ALLEGED DUPLICITY. ON NOVEMBER 9 BOUTERSE ANNOUNCED HORB'S "CABINET" WAS BEING MERGED WITH HIS OWN. HORB'S ABILITY TO DRAW UPON SEPARATE RESOURCES, DEVELOP ALTERNATE POLITICAL INITIATIVES AND ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF BOUTERSE WILL, THEREBY, BE SHARPLY CIRCUMSCRIBED.

6. BOUTERSE PRESENTED HIS CONCEPT OF "NEW DEMOCRACY" IN SPEECH TO LABOR FEDERATION HEADS ON NOVEMBER 10 (TRANSLATION POUCHED DEPARTMENT). IT PREDICTABLY RAISED SPECTRE OF "OLF POLITICAL ORDER" AND WARNED AGAINST ATTEMPTS FROM ANY QUARTER TO BRING ABOUT ITS RESTORATION (A STRAW MAN). IT THEN LISTED VAGUE "PEOPLE'S DEMANDS" WHICH HAD TO BE SATISFIED BY NEW STRUCTURES (CONSULTATION, PARTICIPATION, CONTROL, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND IMPETUS TO NATION-BUILDING.) THERE WERE NO CONCRETE MEASURES SET OUT WHICH MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS COMMITMENT BY GOS TO REAL CHANGE IN STRUCTURE OF POLITICAL POWER. THE MILITARY--FOR WHICH READ BOUTERSE-- CONTINUES TO RULE VIRTUALLY UNCHALLENGED.

7. COMMENT: BOUTERSE IS KEEPING HIS OPPOSITION OFF BALANCE -
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CERTAINLY MOEDERBOND'S DAAL, WHO WAS HIS MOST FORMIDABLE ADVERSARY, APPEARS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY NEUTRALIZED - IN EFFORT TO BUY TIME AND WORK AT CONSOLIDATION OF "REVOLUTIONARY" INSTITUTIONS WHICH EXIST IN EMBRYONIC

FORM AT BEST, SUCH AS PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES, YOUTH AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS. EACH OF THESE CREATURES OF HIS REVOLUTION IS HEADED BY CADRE OF LOYALISTS. BOUTERSE PROBABLY EXPECTS ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THESE CADRES WILL GIVE HIM EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER DELIBERATIONS LEADING TO NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND, INDEED, OVER ASSEMBLY ITSELF WHEN IT COMES INTO BEING.

8. TWO WEEKS AFTER CONFRONTATION WHICH POSED MOST SERIOUS THREAT TO HIS RULE SINCE MARCH 1982 COUP ATTEMPT, BOUTERSE APPEARS SAFELY IN CONTROL WITH HIS ADVERSARIES DISARMED, CONFUSED AND LEADERLESS. DAAL HAS LOST HIS RESIDENT INTELLECTUAL (HAAKMAT) AND THE POLITICAL TACTICIAN WHO GAVE IMPETUS TO HIS CAUSE. DERBY CONTINUES OPPORTUNISTIC MANEUVERING. OTHER NON-LABOR GROUPS WHICH SUPPORT TRADITIONAL DEMOCRACY CANNOT SUSTAIN OPPOSITION ON THEIR OWN. HORB, WHO SOME BELIEVED MIGHT LEND SUPPORT TO "DEMOCRATS," HAS REMAINED SILENT. AS OF MID-NOVEMBER, BOUTERSE HAS SURVIVED SERIOUS POLITICAL CHALLENGE AND EMERGED IN YET STRONGER POSITION.
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