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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 1492

E.O. 12065: GDS 07/12/88 (LA ROCHE, RICHARD R.) OR-M
TAGS: ELAB PINT NS
SUBJ: MEETING WITH LABOR LEADER CYRIL DAAL

REF: A) PARAMARIBO 1446; B) STATE 177534

1. (C) - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: ON JULY 7, EMBOFF MET WITH LABOR LEADER CYRIL DAAL TO SHARE USG ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SITUATION HERE. DAAL EXPRESSED HIS OWN PESSIMISTIC VIEWS CONCERNING RECENT EVENTS AND SURINAME'S SHORT-TERM FUTURE, ALTHOUGH HE SAID HE STILL HOPES THAT MAJOR HORB CAN BE THE KEY TO A RETURN TO MODERATE RULE. EMBOFF ALSO COMMENTED ON DAAL'S RECENT SPEECH (REF A) IN WHICH HE OPENLY CRITICIZED ARMY COMMANDER BOUTERSE. DAAL REPLIED, WITH OBVIOUS SATISFACTION, THAT THE SPEECH HAD SHAKEN A FEW PEOPLE UP. END SUMMARY.

3. OVER A LONG PRIVATE LUNCH ON JULY 7, EMBOFF AND LABOR FEDERATION "DE MOEDERBOND" CHAIRMAN CYRIL DAAL DISCUSSED RECENT CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL EVENTS AND POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE NEAR FUTURE. EMBOFF EXPRESSED USG CONCERN OVER EXPANDED SURINAME-GRENADA-CUBA TIES AND OVER THE APPARENT LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD A RETURN TO A TRADITIONAL DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT OR THE ADOPTION OF A CONSTITUTION GUARANTEEING BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS. DAAL AGREED WITH THESE CONCERNS AND SAID THAT HE IS NOW MORE PESSIMISTIC THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE FEBRUARY 25, 1980 COUP. HE SAID THAT BOUTERSE AND HIS LEFTIST ADVISORS WERE RUINING THE COUNTRY BY ATTEMPTING TO IMPLEMENT SOCIALIST THEORY AND THROUGH JUST PLAIN MISMANAGEMENT. UNFORTUNATELY, HE SAW

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior Reviewer

LITTLE HOPE OF BOUTERSE'S BEING SUPPLANTED OR PERSUADED TO ALTER HIS POLITICAL STRATEGY AT THIS TIME.

4. ACCORDING TO DAAL, HE HAD HOPED TO FORGE A LABOR COALITION CAPABLE OF TOPPLING BOUTERSE. THE KEY FIGURE IN SUCH A COALITION, BESIDES DAAL, WOULD BE C-47 CHAIRMAN FRED DERBY. DAAL HAS ATTEMPTED TO PERSUADE DERBY TO JOIN HIM "IN THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY" FOR SOME TIME, BUT DERBY HAS EQUIVOCATED. DAAL NOW BELIEVES THAT DERBY IS AFRAID THAT IF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IS REINSTALLED, HE (DERBY) WILL BE UNABLE TO WIN A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE, WHEREAS THERE IS STILL A CHANCE THAT BOUTERSE WILL ADOPT HIM AS A MAIN ADVISOR. FROM DAAL'S STANDPOINT, THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS THING WOULD BE FOR BOUTERSE TO CONSCIOUSLY OR INADVERTENTLY OFFEND DERBY, THUS DRIVING HIM INTO THE OPPOSITION. UNLESS SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENS, DAAL SEES THE LABOR MOVEMENT IMPOTENT TO ACT AGAINST THE MILITARY UNTIL THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WORSENS YET MORE AND THE RANK AND FILE FEEL THE PINCH SERIOUSLY.

5. DAAL AGREED THAT CLOSER RELATIONS WITH GRENADA AND CUBA ARE DANGEROUS AND HE CALLED BOUTERSE'S CONTACTS ILLOGICAL. WHAT, HE ASKED, CAN GRENADA OFFER SURINAME? SURINAME IS MUCH MORE DEVELOPED AND GRENADA PRODUCES NOTHING THAT SURINAME NEEDS. NOR CAN THE CUBANS OFFER ANY ASSISTANCE WHICH HASN'T BEEN AVAIL-
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ABLE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, PRIMARILY HOLLAND. ALL GRENADA AND CUBA HAVE TO OFFER IS AN IDEOLOGY WHICH BOUTERSE MIGHT FIND ATTRACTIVE BUT WHICH THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE HERE REJECT. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT BOUTERSE IS NOT BEING TRUTHFUL ABOUT HIS DEALINGS WITH THOSE COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT HE HAD RELIABLE INFORMATION THAT DURING HIS GRENADIAN "VACATION," BOUTERSE TRAVELLED TO CUBA, A FACT THAT HAS NOT BEEN DISCLOSED. HE HAD ALSO HEARD THE RUMOR THAT BOUTERSE HAD TAKEN A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY TO GRENADA, BUT DID NOT KNOW FOR WHAT PURPOSE.

6. DAAL SAID THAT THE GRENADA TRIP AND BOUTERSE'S MOVES TO IMPROVE TIES WITH THAT COUNTRY AND CUBA HAD ANNOYED DEPUTY ARMY COMMANDER (ALSO DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE POLICY CENTER) ROY HORB. THIS RIFT WAS WIDENED BY THE ARMY COMMANDER'S DECISION TO CREATE A "PEOPLE'S MILITIA," AGAINST HORB'S ADVICE. DAAL SAID THAT HORB'S FORMER "UNQUESTIONABLE" LOYALTY TO BOUTERSE COULD NOW BE QUESTIONED, AND HE EXPECTS A CONFRONTATION TO DEVELOP BETWEEN THE ARMY'S TWO STRONGMEN. HORB IS DEFINITELY DAAL'S CHOICE AS LEADER SINCE HE IS VIEWED AS MUCH MORE MODERATE, AND DAAL MAINTAINS CONTACT WITH HIM THROUGH ANDRE HAAKMAT (FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER).

7. EMBOFF COMMENTED THAT DAAL'S JULY 3 SPEECH HAD BEEN OPENLY CRITICAL OF BOUTERSE (INCLUDING ATTACKING THE GRENADA VACATION) AND ASKED IF THERE HAD BEEN A RESPONSE FROM THE ARMY COMMANDER OR HIS REPRESENTATIVES. DAAL LAUGHED AND SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT MANY OF BOUTERSE'S ADVISORS WERE INCENSED BY THE SPEECH,

BUT HE HAD NOT YET BEEN REPRIMANDED. HE FEELS BOUTERSE IS AFRAID TO CONFRONT HIM PUBLICLY ON THESE ISSUES BUT MIGHT SEND A PRIVATE WARNING. DAAL SAID THAT HE HAD LEVELED THE CRITICISM AT BOUTERSE BECAUSE THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE MUST BE OPENED TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THIS COUNTRY. HE HAD ARRANGED FOR THE TEXT TO BE PUBLISHED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF "DE WARE TIJD," SURINAME'S LARGEST DAILY NEWSPAPER, NOT ONLY TO GET MAXIMUM EXPOSURE BUT ALSO TO ACT AS A SORT OF TEST CASE. IF THE PAPER WAS NOT REPRIMANDED FOR PRINTING THE SPEECH, OTHER CRITICAL

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ARTICLES WOULD BE PLACED TO GENERATE A DIALOGUE ABOUT GOVERNMENT PRACTICES.

8. COMMENT: EMBASSY SHARES DAAL'S DOUBTS REGARDING THE NEAR-TERM POSSIBILITIES FOR EITHER BOUTERSE'S REMOVAL OR HIS VOLUNTARILY ALTERING HIS LEFTIST COURSE. WITH THE LABOR MOVEMENT STILL DIVIDED, THERE IS EFFECTIVELY NO OPPOSITION TO BOUTERSE IN BEING WHICH COULD CHALLENGE HIS POLITICAL DIRECTION. DAAL HAS BEEN COURAGEOUS IN HIS READINESS TO CRITICIZE BOUTERSE PUBLICLY AND HE MAY BE RIGHT IN BELIEVING THAT HIS BEST PROTECTION AGAINST REPRISAL IS HIS WIDE FOLLOWING, HIS POPULARITY EVEN OUTSIDE HIS LABOR GROUP, AND HIS REPUTATION FOR HONESTY AND UPRIGHTNESS. DAAL'S HOPES FOR HORB'S EMERGENCE AS EITHER A SERIOUS BALANCING ELEMENT WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP OR EVEN AS AN ALTERNATE LEADER SEEM PRECARIOUS. THIS DISCUSSION LEAVES THE IMPRESSION THAT DAAL IS LEFT WITH VERY LITTLE MORE THAN HOPE FOR CHANGE WITH ALL HIS "ACTION" OPTIONS BLOCKED FOR THE TIME BEING. LA ROCHE

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