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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ADS-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 MCE-00 SY-05 SYE-00
DCT-02 ANAE-00 A-02 ACDA-12 AID-07 CA-01 CCO-00
OC-06 OES-09 OMB-01 OPR-02 SR-04 USSS-00 FBOE-00
TRSE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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**FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6337
INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE.**

AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CURACAO PRIORITY
DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

OCT 17 1980

REVIEWED by RH2 DATE _____

RELEASE DECLASSIFY
 EXTEND DECLASSIFY in PART
 DLEN Non-responsive info.

WOL, EO or PA exemptions _____
TS authority to:
 CLASSIFY as _____, OADR
 DOWNGRADE TS to S or C. OADR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 0815

PANAMA FOR SALG

E.O. 12065: GDS 05/06/86 (OSTRANDER, NANCY) OR-M
TAGS: PINS, PORS, PINT, PGOV, MILI, AEMR, NS
SUBJECT: SURINAME PM ANNOUNCES FOILED COUNTERCOUP; CITY QUIET

REF: (A) PARAMARIBO 0810, (B) STATE 118996 (NOTAL)

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1. (C) - ENTIRE TEXT.

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2. MINISTER PRESIDENT CHIN A SEN APPEARED BRIEFLY ON TV LAST NIGHT (MAY 5) TO SAY THAT, AS PROMISED WHEN HE TOOK OFFICE, HE WISHED KEEP PEOPLE OF SURINAME INFORMED OF IMPORTANT MATTERS. "THANKS TO WATCHFULNESS AND HEROISM OF NATIONAL MILITARY COUNCIL," (NMC), ATTEMPTED COUNTERCOUP LATE LAST WEEK WAS DISCOVERED AND FOILED. PM GAVE NO DETAILS, EXCEPT TO SAY (A) ONE PERSON KILLED -- NOT IDENTIFIED -- (B) A CACHE OF WEAPONS AND ARMS HAD BEEN DISCOVERED AND SEIZED, (C) "A NUMBER OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING SOME PARLIAMENTARIANS," HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN FOR QUESTIONING, AND (D) DETAILS DISCOVERED REVEALED THAT "PERSONS OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY" HAD PLANNED THE COUP. HE DID NOT RPT NOT MAKE EXPECTED ANNOUNCEMENT OF MARTIAL LAW, THOUGH (SEE BELOW) HEIGHTENED SECURITY MEASURES NOW IN EFFECT APPEAR TO AMOUNT TO THE SAME THING. IN ANY EVENT, CITY AND COUNTRY SEEM QUIET AND APPEAR LIKELY TO REMAIN SO.

3. CHIN A SEN CLOSED HIS SPEECH BY NOTING THAT MINISTRIES OF JUSTICE, DEFENSE AND POLICE "IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH NMC" WOULD CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE AND RIGOROUSLY PURSUE ALL SUBVERSIVE AND COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY FORCES. HE AGAIN LAUDED HEROIC EFFORTS OF NMC, THANKS TO WHICH "THE STATE IS ON LONGER IN DANGER AND YOUR PEACE AND FREEDOM ARE GUARANTEED."

4. CHIN A SEN SPEECH WAS FOLLOWED BY TWO BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS ORDERING ALL THOSE ALREADY CALLED UP FOR MILITARY SERVICE TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY ON PAIN SIX MONTHS IMPRISONMENT, AND ANNOUNCED NEW DRAFT CALL FOR ALL MALES BORN IN 1961. COMMENT: IN PRACTICE ONLY ABOUT 10-15 PERCENT OF THOSE CALLED EARLIER ACTUALLY WERE DRAFTED. HENCE NEW CALLS, WHICH COVER THOSE WHO RECEIVED NOTICES BACK THROUGH 1977, PRESAGES LARGE INCREASE IN SIZE OF ARMY, WHICH AT PRESENT SEEMS POORLY PREPARED FOR
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IT. END COMMENT). LAST NIGHT AND THIS MORNING TROOPS IN BATTLE DRESS AND HELMETS HAVE BEEN OBSERVED THROUGHOUT TOWN, THOUGH THIS APPEARS MORE FOR SHOW THAN DEFENSE SINCE NO RPT NO DEFENSIVE POSITIONS OR OTHER REAL SECURITY MEASURES HAVE BEEN OBSERVED.

5. IN ADDITION TO DOW JONES REPORT SUMMARIZED IN REF 5, WE UNDERSTAND AFP WIRE ALSO CARRIED LENGTHY REPORT ON "SURINAME COUNTERCOUP" LAST NIGHT. DUTCH OVERSEAS SERVICE FROM THE NETHERLANDS YESTERDAY AFTERNOON ALSO CARRIED LONG REPORT STATING THAT MAY 1 AND 2 AN ADVANCE GROUP OF SOME 30-50 MEN HAD CROSSED MAROWIJNE (MARONI) RIVER FROM FRENCH GUIANA, ATTEMPTED TO CAPTURE ALBINA. IF ATTEMPT HAD BEEN

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SUCCESSFUL, SAID REPORT, REMAINDER OF FORCE -- SOME 300 MEN, BELGIAN MERCENARIES, DUTCH, EXPATRIATE SURINAMERS, VENEZUELAN AND SOUTH MOLUCCANS -- WOULD HAVE CROSSED RIVER, MARCHED ON PARAMARIBO WHILE AT SAME TIME PLANES FROM VENEZUELA WOULD HAVE BOMBED MILITARY BARRACKS IN PARAMARIBO. COUNTERCOUP, ACCORDING THIS DUTCH RADIO REPORT, HAD BEEN PLANNED BY A FORMER DUTCH ARMY NCO AND FINANCED BY FORMER GOS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE KASANTAROENO (WHO FLED COUNTRY ON FEB. 25), WHO HAD PUT UP 300,000 GULDERS. REPORT SAID COUNTERCOUP PLANNERS HAD COMRADES INSIDE MEMRE BOEKOE KAZERNE HERE BUT SOME OF THESE INFORMED NMC OF PLOT. MORNING PAPERS CARRIED LITTLE MORE THAN CHIN A SEN SPEECH PLUS REPRINT, FROM DUTCH NEWSPAPER NRC/HANDELSBLAD, OF ABOVE INFORMATION. COUP LEADER WAS IDENTIFIED AS FRITS O R M S K E R K, "ADJUTANT UNDER OFFICER" (I.E., WARRANT OFFICER). FROM OTHER SOURCES WE LEARN THAT ORMSKERK, 56, WAS FORMER DUTCH PARATROOPER WHO LEFT DUTCH ARMY AT END WORLD WAR II, WENT TO INDONESIA, THEN LATER JOINED DUTCH FORCES IN SURINAME. AT INDEPENDENCE HERE IN 1975 HE REPORTEDLY RETIRED, RETURNED TO NETHERLANDS.

6. ONE OTHER NOTE IS THAT VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR TO SURINAME LEFT ON VACATION LATE LAST MONTH, SAYING THAT "THERE WILL BE A COUNTERCOUP HERE WITHIN A MONTH" AND THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO BE HERE FOR THE EVENT. WHETHER THIS INDICATES SOME FOREKNOWLEDGE, OR SIMPLY A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF LATIN EXCITABILITY, WE ARE UNABLE TO TELL.

7. WE WILL CONTINUE REPORT SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS BUT FOR PRESENT
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SEE LITTLE LIKELIHOOD ANY SERIOUS DISRUPTION OF BUSINESS AS USUAL HERE.

8. FOR DEPARTMENT: BECAUSE OF PRESS CONTROLS HERE WE ARE UNLIKELY TO HEAR OF REPORTS SUCH AS THOSE CARRIED BY AFP OR DJ, WOULD APPRECIATE ANYTHING DEPARTMENT MIGHT DO TO FEED US ESSENTIALS OF SUCH REPORTING THROUGH REALIZE WORLD PRESS PROBABLY CARRIES VERY LITTLE ON SURINAME NORMALLY. GREATLY APPRECIATE S/S-O'S EFFORTS TO KEEP ON TOP OF SITUATION THROUGHOUT YESTERDAY EVENING.
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