

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

OUTGOING AMEMBASSY DJAKARTA

Poc 23-9

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Control: 1072A

Date: 10/23/65
1:45PM

ACTION TO: SECSTATE WASHINGTON 1168

INFO : AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 203

AMCONSUL SINGAPORE 181

1. "Thousands of progressive revolutionary workers" October 21 called for dissolution of PKI and its labor arm SOBSI, according to newspaper reports. Unions including SARBUMUSI, SOKSI, Kebu Pantjasila, GASBIINDO, Buruh Pantjasila, Kespekri, GOBSII, KBIM and KBKI visited GOI LabDept, delivered demands personally to LabMin Sutomo. When Min promised only to forward demands to President Sukarno disturbance followed. Angry unionists claimed: (a) SOBSI clearly behind abortive coup by 30 September Movement; (b) Banning union clearly LabMin's obligation; (c) LabDept itself contained elements of 30 September Movement which Sutomo had not yet purged. Armed forces called in to keep order but on their arrival demonstrators voluntarily disbanded.

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2. According usually reliable GOI LabDept source demonstration highlights following problem Sutomo faces due collapse PKI-sponsored coup and subsequent upsurge anti-communist sentiment among Indonesian people:

a. Labor's pressure will continue. Demonstrators warned Sutomo they would return in force after one week if demands not met.

b. Despite GOI requirement to purge rebel elements throughout government and probably specific instructions to ban SOBSI, Sutomo reluctant to do so because: (i) his dept under control SOBSI union of departmental officials; (ii) he holds cabinet post as result SOBSI support; (iii) his loyalty is to Subandrio whom source believes advised him to delay anti-SOBSI actions as long as possible.

3. Source knew of impending union demonstration and accompanied representative of unions to confer with Army's LabDept liaison officer Colonel Chaerul Basri.

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They told Basri of union's intention and added their belief LabDept must meet demands but would be unable to do so unless outside pressure were applied to counteract SOBSI control of departmental organization. Basri replied they should tell him no more or if "conditions changed" he would have to have them "picked up". Thoroughly chilled from this reception by Army officer whom they had felt loyal to Nasution and Army, source and companion sought to protect themselves and expose Basri by reporting incident to Brig. Gen. Sukendro (See Emb A-50) prominent anti-communist Army leader to whom they had access. Sukendro told them ~~not to~~ not to worry.

4. While SOBSI labor federation not itself banned nationally, key communist industrial unions have been temporarily frozen in all but oil industry (where action believed impending). SOBSI unions in railroads, plantations, postal and telecommunications, harbors, public works, public utilities and motor

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transport were ordered to cease all activities for present. (Not yet known how widely these directions being enforced.)

5. Improbable LabDept officials participated in coup; but their sentiments clear both from Sutomo's and Basri's reactions. Sukarno^{is} now attempting restore pre-coup status quo which strongly favored SOBSI, and in which anti-communist unions were being suppressed. Army (while not basically pro-labor) now appears moving country in opposite direction. Non-communist unions still too weak and fragmented to be independent political force, but SOBSI believed to have power potential to make Army's job harder. Therefore LabDept delay in hobbling SOBSI could hamper Army efforts. However, Sutomo an opportunistic bureaucrat and can be expected to fall in line with Army if pressure exerted within GOI and if unions continue popular clamor.

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