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CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

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IN

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2. COLONEL THAO SAID THAT THE COUP D'ETAT GROUP TO WHICH HE BELONGS IS PLANNING CAREFULLY AND MOVING CAUTIOUSLY TOWARD A COUP SINCE THEY WISH TO BE REASONABLY CERTAIN OF SUCCESS. HE STATED THAT THE GROUP WILL TAKE ACTION WHEN THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF UNITS IS ACHIEVED. HE CLAIMED THAT THE MOVEMENT OF MILITARY UNITS TO SUPPORT AN ATTEMPTED COUP WAS GOING FAIRLY WELL AND THAT THE GROUP WAS NOW TRYING TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE ARMORED UNITS IN SAIGON, WHICH WOULD MAKE A SUCCESSFUL COUP MUCH EASIER TO ATTAIN AND WOULD CAUSE LESS BLOODSHED.

3. THAO REMARKED THAT THE DEPARTURE OF TRAN KIM TUYEN, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE, FROM SOUTH VIETNAM WILL PROBABLY HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE TUYEN GROUP COUP D'ETAT PLANNING, BUT MIGHT PROVE BENEFICIAL TO THAO'S GROUP AS NGO DINH NHU MIGHT RELAX IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ONE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM'S MOST DANGEROUS ENEMIES IS OUT OF THE WAY.

4. THAO MAINTAINED THAT THE GENERALS OF THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARE UNDEPENDABLE; THEY CLAIM THAT THEY ARE AWAITING A POSITIVE INDICATION THAT THE NGO FAMILY IS PLACING PRESERVATION OF THEIR OWN PERSONAL POWER ABOVE THAT OF THE COUNTRY, AND/OR POSITIVE PROOF THAT NHU IS DEALING WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. THAO REMARKED THAT THESE ARE MERELY EXCUSES AND THAT THE GENERALS ARE AFRAID OF LOSING PRIVILEGED POSITIONS.

5. THAO REMARKED THAT, IN HIS OPINION, NHU MIGHT THINK THAT HE CAN MAKE A DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND END UP BY TRICKING THEM. THAO CLAIMED, HOWEVER, THAT IF NHU ACTUALLY BELIEVES SUCH A THING, HE IS VERY MUCH MISTAKEN. THAO STATED THAT

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NHU COMPARED WELL WITH HIGH-RANKING COMMUNISTS, BUT THAT HE MAKES UNILATERAL DECISIONS WHILE THE COMMUNISTS MAKE DECISIONS ONLY AFTER DISCUSSIONS, THUS PRECLUDING SERIOUS ERRORS. THAO SAID THAT, WHEN SPEAKING WITH NHU, HE HAS OFTEN FELT THAT HE WAS SPEAKING WITH A COMMUNIST SINCE NHU IS ALSO DEVIOUS, DISRESPECTFUL OF LEGALITY, AND WILL DO ANYTHING TO FURTHER HIS OWN GOALS.

6. THAO COMMENTED THAT NHU RECENTLY TOLD THAI LANG NGHIEM, A CLOSE FRIEND OF NHU, THAT HE WAS GOING TO DO SOMETHING SOON THAT WOULD BE VERY SURPRISING, BUT THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO DIVULGE WHAT HE HAS IN MIND. THAO HAD NO IDEA WHAT NHU HAD IN MIND, BUT SPECULATED THAT IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO DO WITH NORTH VIETNAM.

7. FIELD DISSEM. STATE USMACV CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PACFLT.

END OF MESSAGE

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