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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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CLASSIFICATION - DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

NOFORN/CONTINUED CONTROL

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO. TDCS-3/500,097

SUBJECT COMMENTS OF TRAN VAN LY ON THE DESIRABILITY, PROBLEMS AND CONSEQUENCES OF A COUP D'ETAT

DATE DISTR. 28 JANUARY 1962

PRECEDENCE ROUTINE

DATE OF INFO. 25 JANUARY 1962

- TAYLOR
- RAYSEN
- BELK
- R. JOHNSON

REFERENCES IN 18750

RETAIN OR DESTROY

PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (26 JANUARY 1962)

FIELD REPORT NO. FVS 7006

APPRAISAL

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE ADVIETNAMESE NATIONAL ARMY OFFICER WORKING AT THE GENERAL STAFF HEADQUARTERS, FROM TRAN VAN LY.

ON 25 JANUARY 1962, TRAN VAN LY, OPPOSITION LEADER IMPRISONED FROM NOVEMBER 1960 TO FEBRUARY 1961 FOLLOWING THE ATTEMPTED COUP OF 1960, SAID THAT CERTAIN GENERAL OFFICERS HAVE CONSULTED WITH HIM ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ATTEMPTING A COUP D'ETAT. (FIELD COMMENT. (TDCS-3/500,042). FVS-6999/BY THE SAME SOURCE REPORTED HIM AS POLITICAL ADVISOR TO GENERAL NGHIEM. SUCH A COUP WOULD BE TO PREVENT THE COUNTRY FROM FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS (VC). LY SAID THAT HE WAS IN AGREEMENT WITH THESE GENERALS IN PRINCIPLE ON THE NECESSITY FOR A COUP D'ETAT, BUT WAS WORRIED BOTH ABOUT THE METHOD TO BE EMPLOYED AND THE CONSEQUENCES. LY WAS AWARE THAT CERTAIN POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS WISHED TO MOUNT A

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A COUP WITH THE SUPPORT OF MILITARY ELEMENTS. HOWEVER, THESE GROUPS WERE TOO DIVIDED TO BE SUCCESSFUL. LY BELIEVED THE ONLY SUCCESSFUL COUP WOULD BE ONE MOUNTED BY THE ARMY ITSELF. (FIELD COMMENT.

TRAN VAN LY WAS A MEMBER OF THE "CARAVELLE" OPPOSITION GROUP.

(cs-3/474,755)

ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE OF FVS-5908/HE WAS MOVING TOWARD A NEUTRALIST POSITION IN 1960 AND WAS DISAPPOINTED OVER CONTINUED SUPPORT TO DIEM BY THE U.S. A BRITISH OFFICIAL SERVICE REPORTED

THAT WHEN HE WAS RELEASED FROM PRISON ON 8 FEBRUARY 1961, HE WAS SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRESIDENT FORCED TO SIGN A DECLARATION OF LOYALTY TO DIEM.)

SPEAKING IN GENERAL TERMS, LY SAID THAT IN SETTING UP SUCH A COUP TWO THINGS WERE IMPORTANT: TO AVOID BLOODSHED, AND TO ORGANIZE AS SMALL A FORCE AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER NOT TO ALLOW THE

PLAN OF ACTION TO BE EXPLOITED BY THE VC. LY'S SOLUTION WOULD BE

TO HAVE THE GENERAL OFFICERS DECLARE THE WHOLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM TO BE IN A STATE OF SETGE. THE TROOPS WOULD THEN BE FORBIDDEN

TO MOVE WITHOUT AN EXPRESS ORDER FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE AND ALL ROADS LEADING TO SAIGON WOULD BE GUARDED.

II. IN CASE THE COUP WERE SUCCESSFUL, A REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE OF THREE GENERAL OFFICERS WOULD DIRECT EVERYDAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

WITH THE HELP OF TECHNICAL ADVISORS AND SENIORS THE SECRETARIES OF STATE, WHO WOULD HAVE REMAINED AT THEIR POSTS. DURING THIS PERIOD

THE PEOPLE WOULD BE ABLE TO CHOOSE THE HEAD OF THE STATE.

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5. (FIELD COMMENT. LY TALKED TO SOURCE IN GENERAL TERMS. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THIS WAS BECAUSE OF RETICENCE ON LY'S PART IN RESPECT TO SOURCE, OR WHETHER LY IS NOT IN FACT INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED PLANNING OF GENERAL NGHIEM.)

6. FIELD DISEM. STATE MAAG USOM CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

END OF MESSAGE

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