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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SECRET
(When Filled In)

CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS
NO FOREIGN DISSEM
NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY

SEE SAFETY 2ED
VERSION NOV-82-56

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO. TDCS DB-3/656,935

SUBJECT POSTPONEMENT OF HUYNH VAN LANG COUP
IN HOPE OF IMMEDIATE REFORMS

DATE DISTR. 28 SEPTEMBER 1963

PRECEDENCE PRIORITY

DATE OF INFO. 26 SEPTEMBER 1963

REFERENCES IN 28998

PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (26 SEPTEMBER 1963)

FIELD REPORT NO. FVS 9714

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

SOURCE

APPRAISAL: IT IS LIKELY THAT THE COUP ATTEMPT HAS BEEN POSTPONED; WHETHER OR NOT THE REASON GIVEN FOR THE POSTPONEMENT IS TRUE CANNOT BE JUDGED.

1. SUMMARY. HUYNH VAN LANG'S COUP GROUP DECIDED ON 26 SEPTEMBER 1963 TO POSTPONE ACTION UNTIL THE MCNAMARA/TAYLOR MISSION HAD DEPARTED, HOPING THAT PRESIDENT DIEM WOULD BE PERSUADED TO REFORM THE GOVERNMENT. SHOULD DIEM FAIL TO DO THIS, THE COUP ATTEMPT WOULD PROCEED.

2. ON 26 SEPTEMBER LIEUTENANT COLONEL PHAM NGOC THAO, STRATEGIC HAMLET INSPECTOR FOR NGO DINH NHU, MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

A. THE COUP GROUP HEADED BY LANG HAD POSTPONED COUP ACTION UNTIL THE MCNAMARA/TAYLOR MISSION HAD DEPARTED, HOPING THAT THE VISIT WOULD CAUSE DIEM TO REMOVE NGO DINH NHU AND

SECRET

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INSTITUTE REFORM MEASURES.

B. IF DIEM SHOULD TAKE THESE TWO STEPS, THE COUP GROUP, ALTHOUGH NOT COMPLETELY SATISFIED, WOULD CONSIDER SUCH ACTION PREFERABLE TO BLOODSHED AND SCHISM IN THE ARMY WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM A COUP.

C. SHOULD DIEM FAIL TO TAKE THESE STEPS, THE COUP WILL BE ATTEMPTED.

D. THE COUP GROUP HAS BEEN HAVING PROBLEMS BECAUSE NHU HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTING MONEY AMONG HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS. (FIELD COMMENT. SEE FVS-9712 (TDCS-3/560,375) FOR INFORMATION FROM THE SAME SOURCE ON THIS.)

E. BRIGADIER GENERAL TRAN THIEN KHIEM, CHIEF OF STAFF, JOINT GENERAL STAFF, SEEMS DETERMINED TO PROCEED WITH A COUP WHEN HIS WIFE IS NOT IN SAIGON. COMMENT. THAO SAID THAT KHIEM'S WIFE WAS RUNNING FOR THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FROM KIEN GIANG PROVINCE, THAT SHE WAS FULLY SATISFIED WITH HER PERSONAL SITUATION, AND THAT SHE EXERTED A CONSERVATIVE INFLUENCE ON KHIEM WHEN SHE WAS WITH HIM.)

3. FIELD DISSEM. STATE (AMBASSADOR LODGE), USMACV (GENERAL HARKINS) CINCPAC PACAF ARPAC PACFLT.

END OF MESSAGE

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