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# TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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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 REFERENCES IN 18750  
PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (26 JANUARY 1962) **RETAIN OR DESTROY**  
APPRAISAL 3 **TAYLOR** **KAYSEN** **BEK** **R. JOHNSON** FIELD REPORT NO. FVS 7006

THIS IS **UNEVALUATED** INFORMATION. SOURCE ORIGIN IS DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE **A VIETNAMESE NATIONAL ARMY OFFICER (FVS-8999) 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-8999** 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 **LY** 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 AN

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CLASSIFICATION - DISSEMINATION CONTROLS



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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 FORCED TO SIGN A DECLARATION OF LOYALTY TO DIEM. (FIELD COMMENT)

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.

IN CASE THE COUP WERE SUCCESSFUL, THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE OF THREE GENERAL OFFICERS WOULD DIRECT EVERYDAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS WITH THE HELP OF TECHNICAL ADVISORS AND ALL 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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IN 18750

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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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