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S. Vietnam 50

# TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SEE SANITIZED VERSION  
NLK-81-269, NLK-89-15+  
DOWNGRADED

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**SECRET**  
CLASSIFICATION - DISSEMINATION CONTROLS  
NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM  
NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY

COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM  
REPORT NO: TDCS DB-3/655,517

SUBJECT: COUP D'ETAT, PLAN OF NGO DINH NHU  
ON THE DATE: 12 JULY 1963

PRECEDENCE/PRIORITY: RUMPH

DATE OF INFO: 11-12 JULY 1963  
REFERENCES: 78592

PLACE & DATE ACQ: VIETNAM, SAIGON (12 JULY 1963)

APPRAISAL: SEE BELOW  
FIELD REPORT NO: FVS 9305

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

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

APPRAISAL: NGO DINH NHU IS PROBABLY PLANNING A COUP; HOWEVER, THE TIMING OF THE COUP ATTEMPT AND THE GENERALS WHO ARE SPECIFICALLY INVOLVED ARE UNKNOWN.

ON A CHANCE FOR SUCCESS, THE ARMY MUST SEIZE THE INITIATIVE

DECISION SUMMARY: NGO DINH NHU PROPOSED TO ARMY GENERAL OFFICERS

ON 11 JULY 1963 THAT THEY STAGE A COUP D'ETAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

POSSIBLE IN THIS COUP MUST BE STAGED OVERNIGHT AND THE ARMY SHOULD

SHOULD TURN OVER CONTROL TO CIVILIANS ON THE NEXT DAY

NGO DINH NHU TOLD A GROUP OF GENERAL OFFICERS ON 11

JULY 1963 THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS MAKING NO PROGRESS IN THE WAR

AGAINST THE VIET CONG OR IN OTHER PROGRAMS AND THAT THE GENERAL

OFFICERS MUST PROVIDE THE ACTION REQUIRED. THE GENERAL OFFICERS

HAVE BEEN CONTINUALLY HUMILIATED IN THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE AND IN

ORDER TO REGAIN POPULAR RESPECT THEY MUST ENGINEER A COUP D'ETAT

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GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

STATE/INR	DIA	ARMY/ACSI	NAVY	AIR	JCS	SECDEF	NSA	NIC	OCI	ONE	OCR	EXO
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OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE TO: DIRNSA (PROD WO)  
STATE (RCJ) (FOR HUGHES)  
JCS  
CNO (OP 922 Y 11)

AFSSO  
DIA/CTIC  
NIC  
DPI/ACSI  
WHITE HOUSE  
SIT ROOM

FORM 10-62

OBSOLETE PREVIOUS EDITIONS

(15-20)

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NHU SAID THAT HE WOULD SUPPORT THE COUP IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY.  
 NHU SAID THAT THE GENERAL OFFICERS MUST SUPPORT HIM.  
 NHU SAID THAT HE WAS NOT IN ACCORD WITH THE PRESIDENT OR WITH THE ADMINISTRATION IN GENERAL. ALTHOUGH MANY PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN HANDED TO HIM, HE HAS HAD NO REAL POWER TO FORCE THE PRESIDENT OR OTHERS TO MAKE DECISIONS OR TO TAKE NECESSARY ACTION. ONLY WITHIN THE PAST YEAR, IN FACT, HAS HE HAD ANY OFFICIAL POSITION. HE IS DIRECTOR OF THE STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM.  
 NHU SAID THAT THE ARRIVAL OF A NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR WOULD BRING ABOUT CHANGES AND THAT FAST ACTION WAS NECESSARY. IMMEDIATE DECISIONS MUST BE REACHED IF THE COUP IS TO OCCUR. THIS WAS THE ONLY CHANCE FOR SUCCESS. THE ARMY MUST SEIZE THE TROUBLE-MAKERS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BUDDHIST MOVEMENT MUST BE QUELLED. NHU QUALIFIED THIS STATEMENT BY ADDING THAT HE DID NOT MEAN THE BUDDHISTS PER SE BUT THE FIVE RING LEADERS, WHO WERE TO BE BLAMED BECAUSE THEY HAD USED THEIR RELIGION TO FURTHER THEIR OWN AMBITIONS AND DESIGNS.

5. NHU CONTINUED BY SAYING THAT THE COUP MUST BE STAGED OVERNIGHT; IT MUST BE LIGHTNING FAST AND PROBABLY ALL THAT WOULD BE NEEDED WOULD BE A SHOW OF FORCE. ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE GENERAL OFFICERS MUST TURN THE GOVERNMENT OVER TO CIVILIANS.

IN RESPONSE TO A STATEMENT FROM MAJOR GENERAL NGUYEN NGOC LE, CHIEF OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, THAT SUCH AN ACTION REQUIRED

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MAJOR DECISIONS AND A PLAN, NHU SAID THAT HE AND HIS WIFE AND THE GENERAL OFFICERS WOULD HAVE THE REQUIRED PLAN. NHU COMMENTED THAT HE REALIZED THAT HIS WIFE WAS NOT LIKED BY MANY PEOPLE BUT THAT SHE HAD TRIED TO HELP IN THE FIGHT FOR VIETNAM AND THAT SHE HERSELF REALIZED THAT SHE HAD MANY SHORTCOMINGS.

6. GENERAL LE THEN SAID TO NHU: "YOU SAY THAT YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH THE GOVERNMENT BUT THE PEOPLE SAY THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED WITH ALL DECISIONS MADE". NHU REPEATED HIS COMMENTS ON LACK OF POWER, FAILURE TO HAVE HIS ADVICE ACCEPTED, AND HIS LACK OF OFFICIAL POSITION IN THE GOVERNMENT.

7. GENERAL LE COMMENTED ON 12 JULY THAT ALTHOUGH NHU MIGHT BE WILLING TO OVERTHROW THE DIEM GOVERNMENT, LE THOUGHT THAT THEY SHOULD PROCEED WITHOUT NHU, ADDING THAT ALL THAT THE NHUS WANTED TO DO WAS TO SAVE THEMSELVES. [REDACTED] COMMENT. [REDACTED] CHILDREN HAVE BEEN BROUGHT INTO SAIGON AND WERE UNDER HEAVY GUARD. THE NHUS ALSO HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN.)

8. BRIGADIER GENERAL PHAM XUAN CHIEU SAID ON 12 JULY THAT ANY COUP D'ETAT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY AND THAT ALL GENERAL OFFICERS SHOULD COOPERATE.

9. COLONEL LE QUAN VIEN SAID ON 12 JULY THAT HE HAD NOT ATTENDED THE 11 JULY MEETING BUT WAS AWARE THAT SOMETHING WAS

GOING ON, ADDING THAT NHU AGREED WITH DIEM THAT SOME CHANGES SHOULD

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ATTENDED THE 137000Z MEETING ON 10 APRIL 1975. SHE  
 BE MADE BEFORE AMBASSADOR DESIGNATE LODGE ARRIVED; NHU, HOWEVER,  
 WANTED TO GO FURTHER AND HAVE A COUP D'ETAT WITHOUT DELAY. NHU  
 VIEN SAID THAT THE FOLLOWING GENERAL OFFICERS WERE LEADERS IN THE  
 COUP PLANNING GROUP: BRIGADIER GENERAL TON THAT DINH, COMMANDING  
 GENERAL, III CORPS; COLONEL HUYNH VAN CAO, COMMANDER, IV CORPS;  
 BRIGADIER GENERAL NGUYEN VAN LA, COMMANDER, CAPITAL AREA; AND  
 BRIGADIER GENERAL NGUYEN KHANH, COMMANDING GENERAL, VI CORPS. NHU  
 VIEN MENTIONED ANOTHER GROUP THAT WOULD SUPPORT A COUP PLACING  
 PRESIDENT THO IN TEMPORARY CONTROL AS INCLUDING MAJOR GENERAL  
 DUONG VAN MINH, MILITARY ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT; BRIGADIER  
 GENERAL TRAN VAN DON, COMMANDER OF THE ARMY; AND TWO OTHERS. SHE  
 LACK OF OFFICIAL POSITION IN THE GOVERNMENT.

FIELD DISSEM. STATE (AMBASSADOR), USMACV (GENERAL HARKINS),  
 CONCERNED WITH ALL DECISIONS MADE. SHE REVERTED HIS COMMENTS  
 SHE HERSELF REALIZED THAT SHE HAD MANY SHORTCOMINGS  
 THAT SHE HAD TRIED TO HELP IN THE LIGHT FOR A LITTLE AND THAT  
 SHE REALIZED THAT HIS MILE WAS NOT TAKEN BY MANY PEOPLE BUT  
 THE GENERAL OFFICERS WOULD HAVE THE REPUTED BEAN. SHE COMMENTED  
 SHE SAID THAT HE WAS HIS MILE AND

END OF MESSAGE

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