

Magazine's Charge

Congressman and The Green Berets

New York

Time magazine said yesterday that Representative Mendel Rivers, a South Carolina Democrat and chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, forced President Nixon to order murder charges dropped against eight Green Berets.

Time, in the current issue, said Rivers threatened the White House by offering to let three of the accused men rebut the Army's charges against them before his committee.

That threat, plus Rivers' position as chief advocate of Mr. Nixon's ABM appropriations bill, convinced the President to order Secretary of the Army Stanley Resor to drop the charges, the magazine said.

Rivers, in Washington, said yesterday that he "never threatened anybody" with promises to call the Green Berets to testify. "I don't telegraph my punches," he said.

He refused to specifically deny Time's account as a whole, saying "I'm not commenting on the article. I haven't seen it yet."

He said it is no secret that he urged the Defense Department and the President to drop the charges. But he insisted he "did not threaten anybody by telling them what plans I might have had" for the committee.

MOCKERY

According to Time, Rivers said that if the Army went ahead with the court-



REP. MENDEL RIVERS
Pressure on White House

martial it would be "the greatest mockery since the trial of Christ."

According to Time, Rivers first summoned Resor and told him he would "not see the Army denigrated and downgraded before the world."

When Resor said he had to stand behind the U.S. Command in Vietnam, Rivers then went to Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard and Defense Secretary Melvin Laird.

They "seemed unhappy with Resor's stand," Time said, but were "unwilling to over-rule him." Rivers then asked to see Mr. Nixon, who refused but sent his congressional aide, Bryce Harlow.

After that meeting, "Nixon got the message," Time said.

United Press

U.S. Pays Widow In the Beret Case

Saigon

The United States government has paid \$6472 in compensation to the woman whose husband had been identified as the victim in the now closed Green Beret murder case, it was announced yesterday.

The payment to Mrs. Thai Khac Chuyen was made apparently to stifle possible criticism over the U.S. Government's handling of the case, which resulted in dismissal of murder charges against the former Green Beret commander in Vietnam and seven subordinates.

Yet the payment raised fresh questions in a case, that despite its official termination, continues to tantalize much of the world. One of the chief questions is: Why should the United States pay

compensation to next of kin of a man who had been an enemy?

Chuyen, ostensibly an interpreter for the Green Berets, reportedly had been killed for being a double agent. He reportedly had betrayed clandestine Green Beret operations in Cambodia that had resulted in death for both Americans and South Vietnamese.

A top U.S. spokesman said:

"We're dodging the issue (of what happened to Chuyen), and for a few lousy bucks it will help to soothe any ruffled feelings among the Vietnamese.

"It (the payment) is very generous by Vietnamese standards, but very little by U.S. standards. If they (the Vietnamese) are happy, we are happy."

Times-Post Service