

# SAIGON REPORTS THIEU CAPTURING 95% OF THE VOTES

One-Man Election Marked  
by a Near-Record Turnout  
and Intensified Shelling

## FEW PROTESTS STAGED

**OCT 4 1971**  
Only a Small Percentage of  
Ballots Are Mutilated to  
Register Opposition

**NYTimes**

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Oct. 3—President Nguyen Van Thieu won his four-year term today in a one-candidate election marked by scattered protests, terrorism, intensified enemy shelling and apparently one of the largest voter turnouts in recent Vietnamese history.

Early returns from the Government's Election Information Center showed that only a small fraction of the voters voted against Mr. Thieu by mutilating or throwing away their ballots before dropping the envelopes into the ballot boxes. These conditions were set by Mr. Thieu in the absence of any other presidential candidates.

### Support Strong in Delta

Official figures from 16 cities and provinces reported that some 95 per cent of the voters cast regular ballots regarded by the President as "votes of confidence." One of the largest demonstrations of support — 99.6 per cent — came in the delta province of Bac Lieu, where the President's cousin is province chief.

The final returns from the 33 remaining provinces and cities will probably be known today. The percentage trend is not likely to be reversed.

President Thieu, who voted in the morning in downtown Saigon, had said that he would resign if more than 50 per cent of the ballots were cast invalid. The question appeared academic by evening.

The preliminary returns also showed that more than 80 per cent of South Vietnam's seven million eligible voters cast ballots despite a dozen enemy shellings, including attacks in Saigon and four provincial capitals. The attack on Saigon, the first in 10 months, killed three and wounded five.

### Turnout Larger Than in 1967

If the present voting trend continues, the reported turnout would be larger than the 79 per cent that voted in the lower-house elections in August. In the 1967 presidential elections, when Mr. Thieu defeated 10 rivals, 83 per cent of those eligible voted.

Among those who refused to vote today in line with the boycott demanded by various anti-Government groups, were Gen. Duong Van Minh and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, the two potential challengers who pulled out of the race in mid-

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August, charging Mr. Thieu with election-rigging.

Mr. Ky, who attacked the President as a dictator and called for his downfall, will remain Vice President until Oct. 31, when Mr. Thieu and his new Vice President, Tran Van Hung, the 70-year-old former Premier, will be inaugurated.

President Thieu, who won with 35 per cent of the vote four years ago, had wanted to limit his opponents this time so that he could become a majority President. But now, many observers feel, his victory in an unopposed election has undercut his legitimacy for the next four years.

The South Vietnamese military command, meanwhile, reported 52 enemy attacks in the 24 hours before the polls opened at 7 A.M., the highest level in about six months. Most of the attacks on cities and hamlets involved fewer than six rockets.

The American military command also disclosed stepped-up enemy attacks, reporting eight shellings of American units. The only casualties occurred at Tay Ninh, northwest of Saigon, where eight mortar shells fell on an artillery unit.

As enemy gunners continued small-scale attacks in the morning, anti-Government protesters were also busy, particularly in Danang, where a demonstration turned into violence. About two dozen persons, including several policemen, were reported wounded.

Even in Danang, where anti-Thieu feeling runs deep, Government reported that out of about 76 per cent of voters, only about 40 per cent of voters cast valid ballots.

In Saigon, the street