

Foe of Corruption Carrying Grenades Gets to See Thieu

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Dec. 10—A South Vietnamese Army doctor, carrying four hand grenades and a copy of the Constitution of South Vietnam, succeeded in reaching President Nguyen Van Thieu today to complain about corruption in this country.

Maj. Pham Van Luong, who waited from 8 A.M. until 5 P.M. inside the parliament building, saw President Thieu for an hour. One of the hand grenades held by Major Luong while he sat on the steps had the pin partly pulled out.

It was a dramatic and surprisingly successful protest by the small, thin physician, who sipped lemon juice from bottles while he observed a fast. He is assigned to the South Vietnamese General Staff in Saigon.

Major Luong calls himself a member of the Ha Thuc Nhon group, a small nucleus of South Vietnamese determined to end the corruption they feel is poisoning their country and people. It is named for Capt. Ha Thuc Nhon, who was a physician known for eccentric habits, a fanatical contempt for corrupt officials and a passionate interest in improving life for his patients. He led a suicidal rebellion last summer.

Major Luong, who was a friend of Captain Nhon, said he was at a meeting in Saigon last night to mark the 100th day after the captain's death.

"Police came to break up our meeting," he said. "I told them 'Your law is applied against the poor and the weak, never against the rich and the powerful.' And suddenly I had an idea—I pulled out a grenade, taking half of the pin out, and ordered the police to get out. I did not mean to kill them. At midnight, I went to the National Assembly and started a hunger strike."

Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky talked briefly with the doctor, who squatted on the steps leading to Government offices.

"The Vice President asked me to come to lunch with him, but I refused and told him that I was fasting," Major Luong said. "When the Vice President heard my demands that six corrupt persons be executed by the Government, he said 'six is not enough.'"

Major Luong said the demands he made were his, not those of the anticorruption group. President Thieu's office did not disclose what was said at the meeting with Major Luong.