

Thieu Said to Plan Cabinet Reshuffle

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, June 11 — President Nguyen Van Thieu, moving to strengthen his political position before the legislative and presidential elections here later this year, is planning some important changes in his Cabinet, according to informed sources in the presidential palace.

The changes will be the first of importance since the Cabinet was formed under Premier Tran Thien Khiem Sept. 1, 1969. By shifting or dismissing some ministers associated with his rival, Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, and others touched by scandal or other political liabilities, Mr. Thieu hopes to consolidate his strength.

The sources said that eight ministers and deputy ministers in the 30-member Cabinet would be replaced or reshuffled. Mr. Khiem, a former general who helped President Thieu consolidate his power against Mr. Ky after the last presidential elections in 1968, would remain as Premier. He is now also Minister of the Interior.

Press Accounts Censored

Rumors of impending changes have been circulating here for the last few days, and today, accounts of a Cabinet reshuffle were censored out of the local newspapers.

Mr. Thieu paid obeisance to leaders and followers of the Hoa Hao Buddhist sect in Chaudoc in the Mekong Delta yesterday. Only an hour before, Vice President Ky had been there to preside over a celebration. Both men would like

to have the allegiance of the sect.

Mr. Thieu was in Saigon today, meeting with the Cabinet. A parade and celebration in honor of Armed Forces Day June 19 has been in preparation for two months, and any announcement of changes is expected to be made before then.

A controversial election law, which imposes difficult qualification requirements for presidential candidates has yet to be signed by Mr. Thieu, although he has until next week to do so. He was said today to be "weighing all the possible implications of the bill" and sending out feelers to see how

his principal rival, Duong Van Minh, a retired general feels about it.

General Minh said on June 6 that the law was unconstitutional, but did not say whether he would run. Today, the United States Ambassador, Ellsworth Bunker, met with him for three hours at lunch.

According to embassy officials, it was the third opportunity that Mr. Bunker has taken to stress to the three possible candidates the American Government's wish to remain neutral in the coming elections.

There was no indication today of the content of their private conversation.