

## Ky Proposal

# Thieu Refuses Election Delay

### Saigon

Aides of President Nguyen Van Thieu indicated yesterday that South Vietnam's presidential election will be held as scheduled this October despite Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky's angry withdrawal from the race.

President Thieu called a meeting of his closest advisers at the palace last night, one participant said the discussion centered on Ky, who has accused the President of engaging in "dishonest tricks aimed at organizing a rigged election."

After the meeting, U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker met with Thieu for an hour. The Ambassador has been engaged in a strenuous round of discussions with Thieu, Ky and other leading political figures for the past week, in an effort to avoid a one-man election.

One of Thieu's aides said the President "considered that nothing has been changed in the elections' by Ky's withdrawal. The aide said Thieu felt that the Vice President had "purposefully created the crisis."

He said Thieu also considers "absurd" the Vice President's proposal that they both resign while new elections were organized. He said it is "absolutely out of the question that he (Thieu) should embark on that political adventure, especially at

this moment of crisis. That would be irresponsible."

The Premier, General Tran Thieu Khiem, who is also Thieu's alternate running mate, announced he would take a leave of absence without pay lasting through election day. The election law requires non-elected officials and Army officers running in the elections to relinquish their offices during the campaign.

Ky said Bunker had tried as recently as Sunday afternoon to keep him in the race. He said he reached his decision to withdraw late Sunday night.

Ky's withdrawal came after the Supreme Court, in a startling reversal, put him back in the race and then closed the deadline for pulling out. As a result his name will appear on the October 3 ballot unless he is able to bring a suit to have it removed.

Ky said that if he could get back his campaign deposit of two million piasters about (\$7000) he would give it to the widow of the veteran who burned himself to death last week in protest of Ky's initial exclusion from the race.

The offer appeared calculated to win support from among the country's 200,000 disabled war veterans, who are growing increasingly anti-Thieu as war benefits and veterans' housing programs continue to lag.

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