

LEGISLATIVE UNIT IN SAIGON ACCUSE THIEU OF RIGGING

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Charges Many Irregularities in Upcoming Assembly and Presidential Elections

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Aug. 27—A South Vietnamese legislative committee accuses the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu today of numerous instances of election rigging.

The committee, consisting of senators and deputies, asserted in an interim report that it had evidence of irregularities and rigging in connection with this Sunday's lower house election and the presidential election scheduled for Oct. 3.

It declared that its findings, together with a "secret document" purportedly containing Government orders to rig the elections, represented "a record of our bitter experience with elections in this dark period of our country." This controversial document was made public by Duong Van Minh, retired general, in withdrawing from the Presidential race last week.

The legislative panel, known as the National Assembly Committee on Election Fraud, cited several cases in which opposition candidates for the lower house and their supporters were arrested, allegedly without

pretense. The report said that after the committee had learned of the arrests and protested to the Government, most of those arrested were released.

[Senator Vu Van Mau, the committee chairman, said the President and his supporters tried to monopolize or hoard the endorsements needed by other presidential candidates to qualify for the ballot, The Associated Press reported. The senator noted that Mr. Thieu was required to get only 40 signatures from members of the National Assembly or 100 from members of provincial or city councils, but that he obtained the backing of 87 deputies, 15 senators and 452 councilmen.]

Thieu Still Planning Election

In addition to General Minh, Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky has also dropped out of the presidential race on the ground that it is rigged in the President's favor. However, his name is still scheduled to appear on the ballot.

Mr. Thieu, although he has made no public statements on the situation, is reported to be determined to go ahead with the presidential election despite the absence of any real opponent and despite pressure from the United States to come up with a compromise that might persuade Mr. Ky to reverse his refusal to campaign.

Mr. Ky is reported to believe that public outrage over the election fraud issue will eventually force the President to yield. The Vice President has suggested that both he and Mr. Thieu resign and that an interim government be set up to

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make new arrangements for a presidential election.

In its report, the legislative committee said that the document made public by General Minh was authentic. Such a statement had not previously been officially made.

South Vietnam's Premier, Gen. Tran Thiem Khiem, has denied that President Thieu has issued the instructions that the document contains, but he has not specifically denied the paper's authenticity.

Document Considered Genuine

The United States Embassy has not officially stated its position on the matter, but several officials there have said privately that they are personally satisfied that it is genuine.

The document, which was transcribed by General Minh's staff and mimeographed, purports to contain secret instructions from President Thieu to the province chiefs and other officials on ways to promote his own candidacy and those of pro-Government deputies. It also calls for the discouragement of opposition representatives through threats, arrests and exile.

The document opens by telling the province chiefs that they will be responsible for getting out the pro-Government vote in both elections.

Each of South Vietnam's 44 province chiefs are senior army officers and are appointed by President Thieu. Their loyalty to the President and their unchallenged authority over all facets of life in their respective provinces make them the foundation of the president's political apparatus in the countryside.

Listing ways of moving against those backing opposition candidates, the document distributed by General Minh's office says:

"If they are civil servants, they can be transferred out of

their districts. If they elected village or hamlet chiefs, they should be attacked and discredited by other village council members and officials. In general, their dossiers should be checked to see if there are any instances of improper or illegal behavior in their past, so that we can use this evidence to persuade them to work for us, or, if they refuse, to arrest them.

The paper ends with an exhortation to the pro-Thieu officials to make themselves as popular as possible during the election period.

"It would be highly advisable for us to carry out social welfare projects during the elections time, such as well digging, road building, and so forth," the document states.

The legislative committee concluded its report by noting that the document distributed by General Minh and its own list of alleged election abuses "are enough to give us an early glimpse of the probable outcome of the upcoming elections."

The committee is scheduled to issue its full and final report after the October voting.

Series of Charge Listed

SAIGON, Aug. 27 (AP)—In its report today, the legislative committee charged that an army major had advised his men to vote for incumbent speaker of the lower house Sunday.

The committee asserted that in Danang, five opposition candidates were effectively barred from radio campaigning and that another opposition candidate was stoned by a group organized by a captain in the army's political warfare section.

The report said that in Binh-tuy Province a candidate bribed the province chief to get Government support and that in Vinhbinh Province a village councilman was dismissed because he supported an opposition candidate.