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KY BACK IN SAIGON; SILENT ON 'THREAT'

Controversy Persists Over
His Remarks About Thieu

Special to the New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Sept. 6—Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky returned to Saigon last night from the Central Highlands of Nhatrang after a weekend of controversy about his threats against President Nguyen Van Thieu during an informal news conference Friday.

He had nothing to say to clear up the confusion that resulted after he denied the remarks, including such statements as "I'm going to destroy Thieu and all his clique, and if I were to give my life by destroying Thieu, then I will do it."

Mr. Thieu will be running as the sole candidate in the presidential election Oct. 3. Mr. Ky tried to run but was disqualified Aug. 5 under an electoral measure passed by the legislature at Mr. Thieu's insistence.

The other serious contender, Lieut. Gen. Duong Van Minh, withdrew Aug. 20 because he said, President Thieu was rigging the election. At the President's request the Supreme Court found a way to reinstate Mr. Ky, but he too declined to run.

Effort To Bluff Discarded

Mr. Ky apparently made his remarks to try to bluff Mr. Thieu into stepping down—as the Vice President proposed when he declined to run.

Mr. Thieu announced Thursday that the election would go on as scheduled and that he would regard it as a plebiscite. He is expected to announce later this week how the people may vote on his policies.

The United States Ambassador, Ellsworth Bunker, who met with Mr. Ky and General Minh to try to persuade them to run so that the election would be contested in the Western democratic manner, conferred with President Thieu for an hour this afternoon.

Vice President Ky, in his informal meeting with Western reporters Friday, said: "The unrest of the people and the armed forces is greater now than it has ever been. The powder keg is bigger now than it was even in 1963, but we don't have the fuse—yet." In 1963 President Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown in a coup d'état.

Three Recent Immolations

Three members of one of South Vietnam's largest and potentially most rebellious groups, the disabled war veterans, have immolated themselves in the last month in protest against the exclusion of Mr. Ky from the presidential race. The most recent occurred in Nhatrang while he was there.

The Vice President attended the funerals of the two other victims, in Danang and Saigon, attracting large crowds. His close aides have said that his strategy will be "to let the popular forces have their way"—by which they make it clear they mean riots.

Mr. Ky said Friday that he was journeying to Nhatrang to confer with the commander of the Central Highlands military region, Lieut. Gen. Ngo Dzu, but the general was away. General Dzu, accused by an American legislator of a role in the narcotics traffic here, was promoted two days ago by President Thieu, apparently in a move to pacify the military and keep them out of plots.