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McGovern Blasts Nixon Viet Policy

Saigon

Senator George S. McGovern ended a three-day visit to South Vietnam today by declaring that President Nixon's Vietnamization policy is a "glaring failure" and urging an end to all military aid and support for the Thieu government.

The senator said at a news conference that the chance Mr. Nixon had promised the South Vietnamese "to decide their own future now turns out to be a tightly controlled one-man charade."

He said that Congress and the President should "seize" on the one-man candidacy of Thieu in the October 3 presidential voting "as the final justification for ending our military operations here."

PRISONERS

The American prisoners of war, McGovern continued, will not be released until the United States agrees to a full withdrawal of U.S. forces and an end of bombing operations by a set date.

McGovern, a South Dakota Democrat, said he would support economic aid to South Vietnam but he would oppose any military aid to the Thieu regime because it is "not representative of the people."

Thieu told him yesterday, the senator said, that he would step down if the U.S. Congress drastically cut the aid needed to continue the war.

STATEMENT

Thieu expressed the same view yesterday to more than 400 of his supporters from the provinces. According to presidential palace sources, Thieu told the gathering of provincial councillors that he would leave office "if it turned out that he was the obstacle to getting the aid from the U.S. for fighting the Communists."

The sources said a similar message has been passed by the president to his generals.

In the half-hour talk with McGovern at the presidential palace yesterday, Thieu said that South Vietnam would need U.S. air power and logistical support for an indefinite period.

NEEDS

According to those present, Thieu said that, in his view, American ground combat missions could come to a complete halt sometime next year. But the president added that a residual force of some size would be required because of the need for helicopter, tactical air and other support.

McGovern said this morning that, while the residual American force might seem attractive to some, "it will only continue the evils of the present system while exposing the remaining Americans to increasing hazards, anti-Americanism, and the prevention of either a peaceful settlement or a self-determined future for Vietnam."

"Vietnamization is a bandage on a malignant cancer that is disrupting Vietnamese society, demoralizing the American Army and weakening America both at home and around the world," the senator said.

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