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AFTER MEETING WITH COUNCILLORS: President Nguyen Van Thieu, accompanied by a security man at left, leaves conference in Saigon. He declared that he would leave office if the U.S. drastically cut aid to South Vietnam because of his one-man candidacy.

Thieu Says He'd Quit if U.S. Slashed Aid

By ALVIN SHUSTER
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Sept. 15—President Nguyen Van Thieu told more than 400 of his supporters from the provinces today that he would step down if the United States Congress drastically cut economic and military aid to South Vietnam because of his unopposed candidacy in the Presidential elections.

According to sources in the Presidential Palace, Mr. Thieu told the gathering of provincial councilors that he would leave office "if it turned out that he was the obstacle to getting the aid from the United States for fighting the Communists." The sources said the same message has been passed by the President to his generals.

Mr. Thieu struck a similar note in a half-hour talk today with Senator George McGovern, a potential Democratic Presidential candidate and a long-

time critic of American involvement here. The President also told Mr. McGovern, who has been urging a pullout of all American forces by the end of this year, that South Vietnam would need American air power and logistic support for an indefinite period.

In his meeting with the provincial councilors who endorsed his candidacy, Mr. Thieu went beyond his weekend pledge to resign if he received less than 50 per cent of the vote next month. He said today that 50 per cent would not be enough and that he would hesitate about his decision if he received less than 60 per cent.

Hints at 80 Per Cent

"You must get at least 50 per cent of the total votes to say you are elected and you need a higher percentage to command enough prestige to rule," he said. "You need to be elected with 60, 70 or 80

per cent of the total votes to have enough prestige. I will set that percentage later."

The voters will have only the Thieu ballot on election day, Oct. 3, and they will be able to vote against him only by mutilating the ballot or by throwing it away and placing an empty envelope in the ballot box. Mr. Thieu said he would use the number of such invalid ballots to compute the percentage of his support.

There is no doubt in the minds of observers and diplomats here that Mr. Thieu's administrative and military apparatus would be efficient enough to provide any percentage acceptable to him.

Mr. Thieu's opponents have so far been urging anti-Government voters to stay at home rather than give the election an air of legitimacy by a big turnout. This strategy is expected to increase Thieu's percentage of votes cast.