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# Nixon Rejects Proposal to Cut Off Aid to Thieu

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 16 — President Nixon conceded today that the United States would have preferred to see a contested presidential election in South Vietnam on Oct. 3, but he rejected Congressional suggestions that American aid be cut off because of the one-man race.

If the United States were to apply the standards that some had suggested be applied to South Vietnam, he said, "we would have to cut off aid to two-thirds of the nations of the world."

Instead of applying sanctions against Saigon, Mr. Nixon said, "the United States should continue to keep its eye on the main objective." That, he said, was to end the American involvement "just as soon as that is consistent with our over-all goals, which is a South Vietnam able to defend itself

against a communist take-over . . . and the release of our prisoners of war."

The President also told reporters in an impromptu news conference that Ellsworth Bunker, the American Ambassador to South Vietnam, had worked "diligently" to bring about a contested presidential election, and then, failing that, to convert the Oct. 3 balloting into "at least a vote of confidence in the President." [Question 7, Page 27.]

### Diem's Ouster Cited

Mr. Nixon was responding to a question about a proposal made last Friday by Senator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, that the United States should use its leverage now to overthrow Thieu," Mr. Nixon said, "I would remend all concerned that the way we got into Vietnam was through overthrowing Diem and the complicity in the murder of Diem . . ."

This was the first time an American President had conceded publicly that the United States had played a focal role in deposing the late South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem, who was overthrown and murdered on Nov. 1, 1963.