

Reagan Hails Thieu Win

A Sign of 'Fantastic Progress'

Saigon

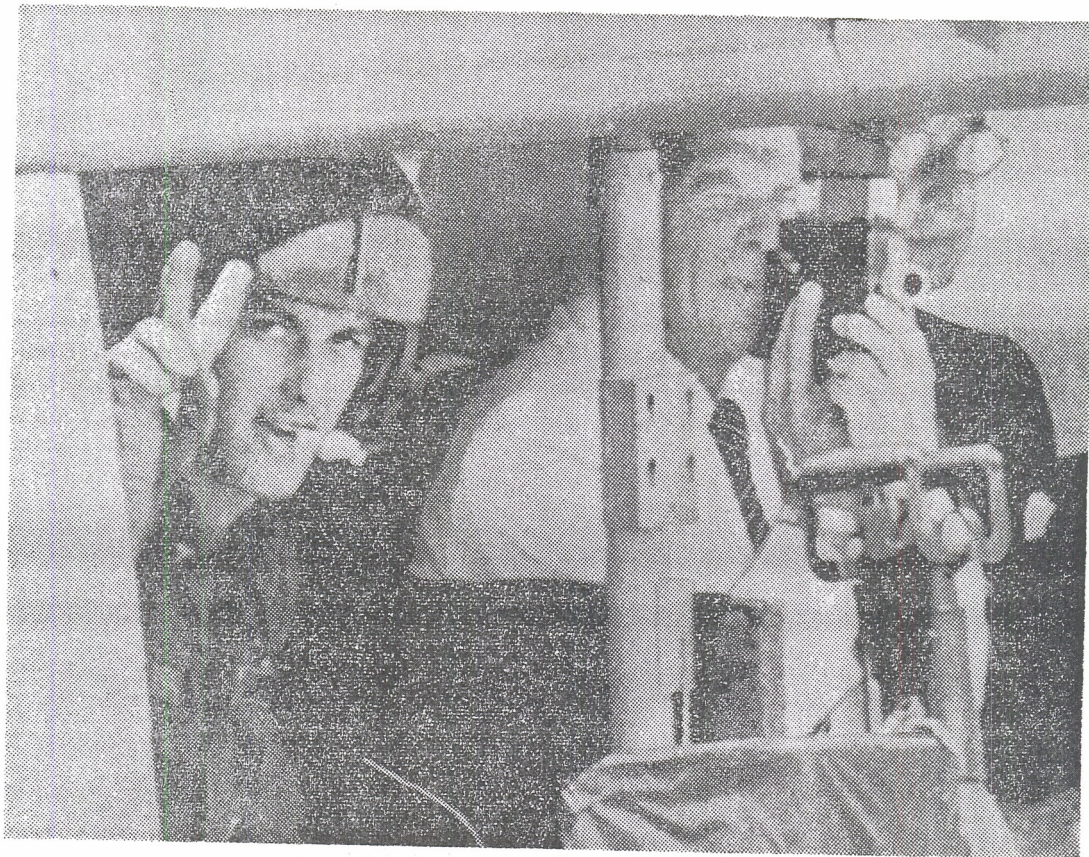
Governor Ronald Reagan of California, on a brief three-hour visit yesterday to South Vietnam, delivered a personal message from President Nixon to President Nguyen Van Thieu congratulating him on his re-election.

Reagan, who is on a 16-day, six-nation Asian tour as a special presidential emissary, said that Thieu's victory, in which he won 94 per cent of the vote running unopposed, was a sign of the "fantastic progress" that South Vietnam has made in the last 15 years.

Speaking at a news conference at Tan Son Nhut airport after a luncheon meeting with Thieu, the California Republican said he had delivered a personal letter from Mr. Nixon to the South Vietnamese leader and had conveyed Mr. Nixon's assurances "that there will be no change in the course of our policies with other nations."

"I am unable to understand why so many people in our country, especially the communications media, are so charged up by this one-man election," Reagan said.

The governor said he



UPI Telephoto

Governor Reagan was on the other side of the camera in a U.S. helicopter in South Vietnam, when a copter gunner flipped a two-finger peace sign which Reagan did not see.

thought Thieu's victory was much like that of George Washington who had also run unopposed in his first presidential campaign.

In response to a question, Reagan said he did not think that the one-man election invalidates America's goals in fighting in Vietnam. "From

all I've seen and heard here the reasons Americans have died here are still valid. On our side we are fighting for freedom and the dignity of man, not totalitarianism."

Security precautions for Reagan and his 22-member party, which included his wife Nancy and their 14-

year-old son Ronald Jr., were unusually tight.

Reagan had previously visited Taiwan to attend Nationalist China's October 10 national day, Singapore and Bangkok. From Saigon he is flying to Seoul, South Korea and then to Japan.

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