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Trustee for Ky Draws Hate Mail

By Michael Grieg

The trustee who invited former South Vietnam Premier Nguyen Cao Ky to apply for the \$46,000-a-year job as a Northern California college system superintendent has been deluged with hate mail and telephoned death threats.

"I've never witnessed such an incredible outpouring of hate," Robert Lynch, a trustee of the Los Rios Community College District, said yesterday in a telephone interview from his law office in Sacramento.

But Lynch is holding to his view that "a man of considerable command and experience" in running a country would do well in administering the campus needs of some 30,000 students.

As a divorce lawyer, used to dealing with feelings of hostility, the 43-year-old trustee said he understood the reaction set off by his letter informing Ky that the superintendent's job will be vacant in August.

"I see guilt behind this form of racism directed at Ky and the other refugees," he said. "It's guilt that has turned into hatred and aggression."

"We created these people, built them up, financed them and encouraged them. Then we left them, and it left us with deep guilt."

Lynch, one of seven trustees who feels each board member has a right to canvas whatever administrative talent is available, said he has not heard yet from Ky, who he expects will give

the offer serious consideration.

"It's a job that should interest anybody with that kind of ability."

The trustee, who extended the invitation on his own without telling the rest of the board, said Ky had obviously excellent qualifications for handling such matters as personnel problems and the logistics of campus goods and services.

Ky has dealt with even greater challenges, according to Lynch.

"For one thing, Ky has flown in combat, exhibited great personal bravery and is willing to do what few have done," he said.

Lynch said that a number of callers have attacked his having anything to do with someone like Ky, who has been quoted as admiring Adolf Hitler.

"I believe Ky said he was misquoted," said Lynch. "As someone whose own hero is John F. Kennedy, I'd be dismayed to learn that Ky actually said that."

In any case, if Ky turns down the invitation, Lynch wouldn't be all that disappointed.

"Before I got in touch with the vice marshal, nobody knew the job was available," he noted. "We've had tremendous publicity as a result. Now we're getting lots of applications."

Ky is not at Camp Pendleton being processed for entry into the United States.