

Sen. Jackson's Warning On the Vietnam Election

Washington

President Nixon was warned in a confidential letter from Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem-Wash.) of "tragic repercussions" for the United States if a contested presidential election is not held in South Vietnam, it was disclosed yesterday.

The failure to have such an election, Jackson wrote, "is bound to erode remaining congressional support here for an orderly winding down of the Vietnam conflict, with tragic repercussions to the United States in Vietnam and around the world."

Jackson began his letter to Mr. Nixon by saying that "My profound concern over election developments in South Vietnam prompts me to stress the importance of your personal influence in finding a way of giving the South Vietnamese people a choice in their presidential election."

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Jackson said the letter, intended as a private communication was hand-delivered to the White House on Wednesday. He said he decided to make the letter public because Mr. Nixon, at a press conference on Thursday, distorted Jackson's suggestion that the United States use additional leverage on President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam to assure a contested election.

White House Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said the Jackson letter had not reached the President at the time he held his press conference Thursday. There was no other White House comment.

Thieu is running unopposed in an election scheduled for October 3, and Mr. Nixon indicated that, after trying to arrange a fair and contested election, the United States

General Duong Van Minh and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky.

Jackson said the administration "should stop pretending to be helpless" in the deteriorating political situation in Saigon and that the United States still has sufficient influence to transform the one-man election into a meaningful contest.

But at his press conference Mr. Nixon implied that Jackson was in reality suggesting that the United States use its leverage to overthrow Thieu. He said that America's deep involvement in Vietnam stems from its complicity in the coup against President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963.

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