

The Reasons For Thieu's Visit to U.S.

Saigon

Officials at the presidential palace confirmed yesterday that the principal purpose of President Nguyen Van Thieu's trip to the U.S. is to obtain, directly from President Nixon, minimal assurances for the survival of a non-Communist South Vietnam.

Thieu, in the view of these officials, first wants assurance that the U.S. will intervene with air raids in the event of a full-scale North Vietnamese offensive such as that of a year ago. He also will seek a guarantee of a level of economic assistance adequate for reconstruction and maintenance of this war-ravaged country.

Opposition politicians add that a third purpose to Thieu's visit is the desire for a public reaffirmation of American support, not only for South Vietnam, but also for Nguyen Van Thieu.

Opponents interpret Thieu's actions in recent days as an effort to embellish his public image to make it easier for Mr. Nixon to supply the backing Thieu seeks.

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