



AP Wirephoto

A Buddhist monk held a defaced portrait of President Thieu aloft during the protests

SFChronicle *POWS* OCT 21 1974

Protesters Battle Saigon Police

Saigon

Police clashed yesterday in downtown Saigon with about 1000 demonstrators demanding peace and the resignation of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

Protestors rushed onto the grounds of the National Assembly tearing down police barricades and overturning two guard boxes. A Special Branch police jeep was burned.

The Special Branch is commonly called the secret police.

Two South Vietnamese war veterans cut themselves with straight razors in imitation of a hara-kiri ceremony in front of Saigon police headquarters, but they were not believed to have been badly wounded.

Witnesses said the violence was triggered off by a Special Branch officer who hit a young student demonstrator in the eye with his fist.

The demonstrators, a veterans group protesting corruption and a Buddhist anti-war group, carried signs demanding that Thieu implement the 1973 Paris cease-fire agreement and resign.

Despite pushing and shoving between police and demonstrators, no serious injuries were reported and riot police remained in their barracks. They have been called out only twice during the two-month-old anti-Thieu campaign.

United Press