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Two Versions of the Crisis in Vietnam: One Lays Plot to Nhu, Other to Army

Sources in Saigon Say Military Did Not Order Attacks—Washington's Reports Indicate Diem Yielded to Officers

The confused situation in South Vietnam was reflected yesterday in conflicting versions of the role played by the army high command in the Saigon regime's attacks this week against the Buddhists.

A dispatch from Saigon quoted reliable sources there as having said that the drive had been planned and executed in its initial stage without the knowledge of the army. But information received in Washington pictured South Vietnam's army commanders as having put pressure on President Ngo Dinh Diem to persuade him to act.

Plan Said to Be Nhu's

By DAVID HALBERSTAM

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Aug. 22—

Highly reliable sources here said today that the decision to attack Buddhist pagodas and declare martial law in South Vietnam was planned and executed by Ngo Dinh Nhu, the President's brother, without the knowledge of the army.

These sources said that the Vietnamese Army had not seized power and that army commanders had been presented with a fait accompli.

Mr. Nhu is the chief adviser of President Ngo Dinh Diem. He is also head of the secret police, or special forces, which were said to have been his mili-

Kennedy Weighs Policy

By TAD SZULO

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22—

The United States Government believes that a group of Vietnamese Army commanders convinced President Ngo Dinh Diem that he should order a crackdown on the Buddhists and proclaim martial law.

High Administration sources said tonight that the situation in South Vietnam was vastly confused. They said this was probably only the opening chapter in a major power struggle.

The foremost factor emerging at this time from what the Government told of information flowing in from Saigon seemed to be the dominant position of the military.