



LT. GEN. DANG VAN QUANG
... flies to Montreal

CIA Reported To Aid Viet Emigre's Exit

By Douglas Watson

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The Central Intelligence Agency pressed hard to obtain the speedy release from a refugee camp of Lt. Gen. Dang Van Quang, who was one of South Vietnam's most powerful officials and widely accused of being one of its most corrupt, U.S. government sources said yesterday.

Quang, special assistant for military and security affairs to former South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu and suspected of being a major heroin trafficker, flew from Ft. Chaffee, Ark., to Montreal on May 16.

Quang left the refugee camp after telling U.S. officials that his life had been threatened by other Vietnamese refugees there and after he was moved to a restricted area to protect him from them, a base spokesman said.

A CIA spokesman denied that the agency had arranged Quang's comparatively quick exit after an 11-day stay at Ft. Chaffee, where more than 23,000 Vietnamese remain.

"Obviously the guys (in CIA) knew he was in the country," the CIA spokesman added about Quang,

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who had overseen activities of South Vietnam's equivalent of the CIA and worked closely with the U.S. intelligence agency.

The Drug Enforcement Administration took no action to block Quang's admission to the United States despite extensive allegations that Quang was involved in drug smuggling and was a "bagman" for the Thieu regime. The chunky, 45-year-old, three-star general was a former classmate of President Thieu and one of his closest advisers.

A DEA spokesman said this week that the evidence the agency, which had a four-agent office in Saigon, had on Quang was insufficient for prosecution but that its information has been referred to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, which could bar Quang's re-entry into this country.

Ambassador L. Dean Brown, head of the U.S. government's Interagency Task Force supervising the processing of Vietnamese refugees in this country, declined to comment directly on allegations that his organization was pressed by the CIA to get Quang out of Ft. Chaffee in a hurry. Brown did say, however, that Quang and other former high South Vietnamese officials have been given no special treatment at the refugee camps and no expedited departures.

"Various U.S. government agencies have approached the Interagency Task Force on several occasions regarding individual refugees. . . . The Interagency Task Force has made it clear to all government departments and agencies that it would accord no special privileges—and it has not done so," Brown said.

A Ft. Chaffee spokesman said Quang arrived there on May 5 with eight other former high South Vietnamese officials. Among them were Tran Van Don, an ex-deputy premier, and Ngo Dzu, another former three-star gen-

eral who, like Quang, was accused of being involved in the narcotics traffic.

Pham Do Dung, a 39-year-old Vietnamese refugee who was at Ft. Chaffee last week and now is living in New York City with relatives, said that after being threatened by various refugees, Quang stayed entirely in his barracks quarters surrounded by his close associates.

Dung said that a group of outraged refugees discussed a proposal to demand that Quang pay reparations from his suspected war profits to his fellow countrymen, but did not actually make the demand.

A U.S. government source said that Quang telephoned from Ft. Chaffee to a high-level CIA official here to plead for quick release from the camp. At least one high-level CIA official then called the Interagency Task Force on Quang's behalf, sources said.

Asked whether Quang was on the CIA payroll or had met with CIA agents after arriving at Ft. Chaffee, a CIA-spokesman said, "We're not going to discuss any connection, whether formal or informal."

As President Thieu's special assistant for military and security affairs since 1967, Quang oversaw activities of South Vietnam's Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) and its military intelligence unit, the Military Security Service (MSS). In these capacities, Quang worked closely with CIA officials in Saigon and presumably knows about CIA activities there.

Dung said that Quang, who was in an adjoining barracks at Ft. Chaffee, complained bitterly to a cousin of Dung's about having been left behind when President Thieu fled South Vietnam and, as a result, being treated as just another refugee.

The base spokesman said that Quang was moved to the base hospital last week for his own protection, but otherwise got no special

treatment. No violence against Quang occurred, the base spokesman said.

A Canadian immigration official said that on Thursday Quang appeared at a routine hearing in Montreal and applied to become a permanent immigrant in that country, a status already granted his wife, who apparently had arrived there from the refugee camp at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The Canadian official said that Quang was entitled to enter Canada because three of his six children had been going to school in Montreal. Canada is accepting all Vietnamese refugees with relatives there plus an additional 3,000. Quang was among the first eight refugees to leave Ft. Chaffee, the base spokesman said.

Jerry N. Jensen, deputy administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, said that though the DEA has "a definite interest" in Quang, it neither assisted nor tried to prevent Quang's departure in Canada.

A DEA spokesman said that so far DEA has checked the names of 25,000 Vietnamese refugees in a search for drug suspects and come up with "40 possibles," but that Quang's name was not among them.

In 1965 Quang succeeded Thieu as military commander of South Vietnam's IV Corps area, the Mekong Delta, but was removed the next year after being accused of corruption. In 1967 he became President Thieu's special assistant.

One State Department official who was stationed in Saigon described Quang this week as "perhaps the epitome of everything that was wrong in South Vietnam."

Another State Department official said, "Quang always was about No. 1 on the list of venal personalities who must be gotten rid of if the country were to be saved."

In 1970 several South Vietnamese senators publicly

accused Quang of being one of their government's most corrupt officials. Two of the senators were subsequently threatened.

Alfred W. McCoy in "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia" charged that through his power over South Vietnamese intelligence and military units, Quang controlled a large portion of the heroin traffic there.

In 1971 NBC TV quoted "extremely reliable sources" as saying that Quang was "the biggest pusher" of heroin in South Vietnam.

Gary Porter of the Indochina Resource Center here said that during the 1960s a high Saigon police official told him Quang "controlled the whole machinery of corruption and smuggling for Thieu."

Stephen B. Young, a former employee of the Agency for International Development who in the early 1970s investigated corruption in South Vietnam, said a Vietnamese general told him Quang headed a major heroin smuggling operation that utilized the untouchable status of the country's intelligence agencies. Young charged this week that his efforts to document the allegations had been blocked by a CIA official.

The Chicago Tribune reported a year ago from Saigon, "There has long been an assumption that Quang was the 'bagman' for the presidential palace, particularly since he was removed eight years ago as commander of the fourth military region covering the rice-rich Mekong Delta region after the American embassy objected strenuously to his practices."

"Whatever else Quang may do for Thieu in his capacity as presidential military adviser, it is not believed that he wastes much time on narrowly military affairs," the Chicago newspaper added, quoting a U.S. military officer as saying, "They'd have lost the war years ago if they had counted on him (Quang)."

A State Department file on Quang also includes

charges of corruption against his wife, who was suspected of operating houses of prostitution and extorting payoffs from province chiefs.

A spokeswoman for the Interagency Task Force said this week that there 4,520 Vietnamese refugees aboard ships in the western Pacific, 60,800 at restaging sites in the Pacific, and 46,252 at three refugee camps in the United States. She said 18,432 have been processed out of the refugee camps, including 1,544 who have gone to other countries mostly to Canada.

Quang could not be reached for comment.

Tran Min Chau, one of more than 1,000 Vietnamese now living in Montreal, said yesterday that though most of the Vietnamese there supported the Thieu government, Quang is not likely to be warmly accepted by his countrymen there.

Unlike many of them, however, Quang is not believed to have any financial worries. A Canadian immigration official said of the Quang family, "I gather they are not exactly suffering from poverty."