

# Defector's Story Of Red 'Advisers'

## Saigon

Soviet, Chinese, Cuban, North Korean and French "military strategists" are advising Communist-led forces fighting in South Vietnam, a high-ranking defector from Hanoi said yesterday.

He said the Frenchmen are former prisoners of war from the French Indochina conflict who were not repatriated under the 1954 Geneva accords.

The defector is Dr. Dang Tan, a former official in North Vietnam's Defense Ministry sent to South Vietnam as "minister of public health" in a proposed revolutionary government.



AP Wirephoto

**DR. DANG TAN**  
He got fed up

## ADVISERS

He said he personally saw foreign Communist advisers at rest stations on the Ho Chi Minh trail when he traveled south through Laos in 1967.

In the next two years, while he was establishing a guerrilla hospital in South Vietnam's Pleiku province, Tan said, he saw "four or five groups of foreign military strategists, each numbering three to five men."

They always carried arms, usually wore black pajama-type uniforms and were invariably accompanied by "large security forces" of North Vietnamese soldiers, he said.

Tan, 42, spoke through an interpreter in his first interview since his defection on Sept. 26, 1969. He later appeared at a news conference. It was not explained why he had been kept under wraps by Saigon for more than 1½ years.

## REPORTS

Tan's revelations could help to explain recurring reports of Caucasians seen fighting with Viet Cong and North Vietnamese units. These never have been proved conclusively because United States and South Vietnamese forces have never found any Caucasian bodies among enemy dead.

Asked if some of the foreign advisers might have been American prisoners of war, Tan replied: "No. Hanoi propaganda says American GIs are fighting with the VC-NVA but I have never seen this with my own eyes.

"The men I saw were Russians, Chinese, Cubans, North Koreans and French. They came south to study the battlefields, to study the situation and see how they could help. I have seen them deep in South Vietnamese territory. I have heard them speaking their foreign languages."

Tan spent two years in jun-

gles of the central highlands, treating civilians in "liberated" villages and setting up a hospital for Viet Cong and North Vietnamese wounded. He said he saw "much fighting" and treated "many victims of American bombing."

Tan attributed his defection to gradual disillusionment — "No one reason but a lot of little reasons over a long period of time. I just began to feel Communism was outdated, not a suitable system of government for a country."

On Sept. 3, 1969, Ho Chi Minh died. Tan defected three weeks later.

"I realized he was the only great leader we had," Tan said.

Tan said he hopes to be reunited one day with his wife and two daughters, although his defection probably subjected them to some kind of reprisals.

"My wife would have denounced me by now," he said. "It is something she would have to do. The party requires it. But I still love my family. After all, I am just a man."

Associated Press