

Minh Accuses Thieu Regime of 'Tyranny'

By JAMES M. MARKHAM

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Thursday, Feb. 6—Duong Van Minh, the titular leader of much of the non-Communist opposition, denounced the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu yesterday as "nothing but a tyranny."

At a gathering at his Saigon villa, attended by a broad cross-section of opposition leaders, the retired general attacked the regime for its sudden crackdown on the press, its closing of five newspapers and its reported arrest of 17 journalists as "Communist infiltrators."

"This is not only an act of arrogance and arbitrariness," the tall, soft-spoken politician said, "but also an act of contempt of the people, contempt of world opinion, an act of contempt toward all those who struggle for peace and who love peace and conciliation. By this action, the Government is now nothing but a tyranny."

The people can no longer react with words," he said. "The tyrannical Government has pushed the people into reaction by deeds."

Police Chief Promoted

As the general spoke, the Government was reported planning to display some of the arrested journalists with "proof" of their guilt at a news conference to be given by the commander of the national police, Maj. Gen. Nguyen Khac Binh. The police commander was promoted from brigadier general yesterday by Mr. Thieu.

At the reception at General Minh's villa, held annually to celebrate the Lunar New Year holiday, opposition leaders milled about and exchanged views on the tough course Mr. Thieu has apparently set.

Several noted that the President was fond of springing political surprises at the Tet holiday, when people are traditionally occupied with domestic concerns. Last year at Tet his

political lieutenants rammed through an amendment to the Constitution in the National Assembly permitting him to run for a third term next October.

Vo Long Trieu, publisher of the opposition daily Dai Dan Toc, reasoned that Mr. Thieu, knowing his crackdown would do him no good with the American Congress, must have "despaired" of getting the \$300-million in supplemental military aid that the Ford Administration has requested for South Vietnam.

"Now that he is no longer tied to the Americans," said Mr. Trieu, whose paper has not been closed, "he can do what he wants."

Senator Vu Van Mau, a courtly leader of the Buddhist opposition movement, predicted that Mr. Thieu is "going to follow Park Chung Hee," the South Korean President, and clamp down completely on his domestic opponents. This idea was expressed by many at the gathering, but it has been heard before. Mr. Thieu has always stopped short of all-out repression of his opponents.

The regime's assault on the press—and charges of Communists in its midst—followed the publication Sunday by nine newspapers of a new political "indictment" of Mr. Thieu penned by the Rev. Tran Huu Thanh, the conservative leader of the People's Anticorruption Movement.

Father Thanh, too, was among those who strolled in General Minh's orchid-hung garden. He said that he and other Roman Catholic priests would be organizing "talking newspaper" sessions in churches throughout the city, to fill the void left by the five banned newspapers. The priest and several others said they believed the Government was planning to start several pseudo-opposition newspapers after a new press law is enacted at the end of this month.