

Thieu's 'Government of Unity'

New Cabinet in South

Saigon

President Nguyen Van Thieu announced a new cabinet yesterday, but there was increasing evidence that his government is virtually paralyzed.

Thieu described the new cabinet as a "war government of unity." But it does not include any members of the now broad opposition to Thieu, and the new premier, Nguyen Ba Can, has been distinguished chiefly for his loyalty to Thieu.

The most important result of the cabinet reshuffle, in fact, seemed to be that

Thieu succeeded in ousting the former premier, General Tran Thien Khiem, the only man in the government who was a real rival to the president.

Can, the new premier, is a civilian associated with the Vietnamese labor movement and is considered a bland, powerless man.

Several knowledgeable Vietnamese officials expressed pessimism that Can could revive morale in the Saigon administration, which has been thrown into confusion by the Communists' takeover of the northern two-thirds of the country.

Some government offices have virtually stopped working, the officials reported, while others have proceeded as if there were no crisis.

An officer who works with the deputy premier for economic development said he had been ordered to spend his time processing plans to build a new duty-free shop at Tan Son Nhut airport.

Another said he had been told to mail letters chastizing officials in Da Nang who had left their posts when the city was abandoned to the Communists without a fight on March 30.

"It is hopeless, no one is

doing anything, and they don't realize how critical the situation is," a young American-trained economist said.

"I suggested we have general mobilization," he continued, "and draft all the young men who sit around Saigon's coffee shops and force the rich to contribute money so we can buy more ammunition and guns from the United States. But everyone in the office was shocked. They warned me that the rich people would hire someone to kill me if I tried that."

The government's only at-

offered an American friend \$2000 if he would marry his daughter and get her to safety in the United States.

A Saigon military spokesman disclosed that the Joint

General Staff had set up a belated investigation into the army's abandonment of the central highlands and almost all of the coast north of Saigon.

So far none of the senior generals responsible for the

rout — the commanders of Military Regions One and Two and the leaders of six infantry divisions — has been punished.

Although Thieu said in a speech yesterday morning at the presidential palace that the new cabinet was a "war government," it is a more civilian cabinet than its predecessor.

Nineteen of the ministers in the 30-man cabinet are new, but none of them come from the opposition, and none have important political bases of their own.

Perhaps the biggest change, apart from the new premier, is the appointment of retired Lieutenant General Tran Van Don as minister of defense, succeeding Khiem, who held that job as well as the post of premier. Don, who was one of the leaders of the 1963 coup against President Ngo Dinh Diem, is a close associate of Thieu.

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tempt at mobilization was an order closing all bars and nightclubs and banning frivolous entertainments, such as nighttime tennis and water skiing. But most bars remain open, and Saigon's coffee shops are still full of draft-age young men in fashionable open-necked shirts and bell-bottom pants.

Instead of rallying to the government's support, most members of Saigon's privileged class seem to be devoting their energy to trying to flee.

The American, French here have been jammed for and Canadian embassies two weeks with rich Vietnamese trying to obtain visas. One Vietnamese colonel