

HANOI AIDE TERMED KEY MAN IN SAIGON

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U.S. Intelligence Experts Say Pham Hung Emerges as Leader in South

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WASHINGTON, May 19—North Vietnam's fourth-ranking Politburo member, who for the last eight years secretly coordinated activities against Saigon, was reported today to have emerged as the apparent political leader in South Vietnam following the Communist takeover.

The prominence given the public appearance of the Politburo member, Pham Hung, last week at celebrations marking the Communist victory was regarded by the American intelligence community as a sign that Hanoi probably plans to direct developments in South Vietnam closely.

For the moment, however, the prevailing view of American specialists is that a separate South Vietnamese government will be permitted to exist and establish diplomatic relations around the world under Hanoi's guidance.

Mr. Hung was born in what is now South Vietnam, moved north in the nineteen-fifties, and held a number of top jobs, including First Deputy Premier in Hanoi, before going underground in 1967 and assuming command secretly of the Central Office for South Vietnam, which directed the political and military war effort against Saigon.

Mr. Hung was never publicly identified by Hanoi as the head of operations in South Vietnam, but American analysts said they learned of his job through Communist defectors, captured documents and intercepted messages.

When former President Richard M. Nixon ordered American troops into Cambodia in the spring of 1970, he said then that he hoped the forces would destroy the headquarters, then believed to be in

Continued on Page 10, Column 4

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

Cambodia near Tay Ninh Province of South Vietnam.

But intelligence analysts never believed there was a permanent headquarters. They said that it moved around constantly.

In recent years, Mr. Hung was believed to have had his headquarters on the Vietnamese side of the border.

There was general surprise in the intelligence community when Hanoi and Saigon, in official reports last Thursday, publicly put Mr. Hung at the top of the list of South Vietnamese officials welcoming a North Vietnamese delegation to Saigon for the celebrations.

Titles Are Listed

Mr. Hung was identified in the Communist accounts of the event as a "member of the Vietnam Workers party Central Committee Political Bureau and secretary of the South Vietnam party organization."

The Vietnam Workers party is the Communist party of Hanoi. It was referred to during the long war as having "the major guidance role" in the revolution. But before the fall of Saigon Hanoi always insisted that the struggle in South Vietnam was led by the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the National Liberation Front.

Both these organizations were usually called the "Vietcong" in the West.

In listing Mr. Hung, the Communist reports ranked him ahead of Nguyen Huu Tho, the head of the National Liberation Front, and Huynh Tan Phat, president of the Provisional Revolutionary Government. In Communist countries, the order of precedence is usually meant to indicate the political ranking of party members and others.

Other Leaders Named

In addition to Mr. Hung, the Communist accounts also listed the name of Nguyen Van Linh, who was identified as the deputy secretary of the South Vietnam party organization. Mr. Linh, who was also known as Muoi Ut, was believed to be a member of the North Vietnamese party Central Committee, and was Mr. Hung's deputy in charge of political work.

Mr. Hung's military deputy, Lieut. Gen. Tran Van Tra, has already emerged as head of the Saigon area Military Administrative Committee.

Another Hanoi official who was publicly identified last week was Vo Chi Cong, listed as a member of the Hanoi party Central Committee, and the chief political officer in Da Nang.

He was listed by the Saigon radio as "secretary of the Zone



Pham Hung of Hanoi has attained political prominence in Saigon.

5 Vietnam Workers party committee."

Zone 5 is the way Hanoi has traditionally described the Da Nang area, indicating to American analysts that, politically, Hanoi is directing affairs in the old way, although formally Da Nang is still part of South Vietnam.

Joined Ho Chi Minh

Mr. Hung, 62 years old, was born in Vinh Long Province in 1912. According to a United States Government biography, Mr. Hung joined the "Revolutionary Youth League" of the late Ho Chi Minh in the nineteen-twenties and in 1930 was a founding member of the Indochinese Communist party.

In 1931, he was sentenced to death by the French but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on the island of Poulo Condore, now known as Son Island. He was freed in August, 1945, joined the Vietminh forces, and became a member of the military command in the south.

After the Geneva peace conference in 1954 split Vietnam in half, Mr. Hung became head of the cease-fire committee in South Vietnam and in 1955 head of the Vietminh liaison mission in Saigon.

To Hanoi in 1955

He moved to Hanoi in 1955 and joined the party Politburo in 1957. In 1960 he became First Deputy Premier to his old compatriot, Pham Van Dong. In 1967 he replaced Gen. Nguyen Chi Thanh as head of operations in the South after General Thanh died.

It is generally assumed in the intelligence community here that Hanoi plans to unite North and South Vietnam eventually. But, for the moment, because of the different economies and life-styles in the two Vietnams, it has chosen to go slow on unification.