

# Secret Unit Said to Be Saigon Power

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, June 3—On Phan Than Gian Street, a few blocks from the former residence of United States ambassadors, there is a large house with a small red and yellow sign in the entryway. The address is 174, but the sign says "X-428."

The main door is locked. On a side door there is a warning: "Access to this building is prohibited to all who have no business here."

The house, which once belonged to a financial adviser to the former President of South Vietnam, Nguyen Van Thieu, is the headquarters of the Intellectual Action Committee, an organization that is never mentioned in the official Saigon newspaper, *Giai Phong*. However, it seems to have important powers.

Though it functions in the strictest secrecy, the committee is known to head several subcommittees, and these are said to control the numerous people's associations that have been springing up in all fields since the Communist take-over on April 30.

There are, for example, associations of doctors, pharmacists, university professors, writers and artists. Communications between the subcommittees that oversee them re-

portedly must be made through the committee itself.

This mysterious organization is believed to formulate the policies that are carried out by Saigon's Military Administrative Committee, under the leadership of Lieut. Gen. Tran Van Tra.

According to Saigonese who have dealt directly with X-428 contact must first be made through intermediaries who occupy a small room in the headquarters of the People's Association of Professors. It is impossible to learn the name of the person who greets visitors at the house on Phan Than Gian Street.

The vocabulary used to describe the various people's organizations is precise, so it is still difficult to speak of a government. But it is clear that the subdivisions of the Military Administrative Committee in Saigon — health, education, trade, internal security—are slowly taking charge. Orders from the Bureau of Internal Security are carried out on local levels by revolutionary people's committees.

Other cities are governed by similar committees.

After having spent time reassuring the population about the change in rule, those in power are still trying to mobilize it. They do not pursue members of the former South Vietnamese Army or Government who, contrary to orders, have not reported to the new authorities, but neighbors are encouraged to turn in those who do not obey.

Many here are convinced that the revolutionaries want to shatter Saigon by lowering the standard of living of its inhabitants. Faced with daily problems, the population is already losing some of its easy-going ways.

Hundreds of thousands of household heads are unemployed in Saigon and its suburbs. Only about half of the 120,000 public employees estimated to be in the capital have been able to go back to work.

Nothing has apparently been planned for the majority of the members of the former administration who have not been rehired.

The 100,000 former soldiers believed to be in the metropolitan area find themselves penniless. However, pilots, technicians and doctors have already become part of the victorious army.

Finally, most factories and businesses are closed—many since March. Since the publication of a communiqué signed by General Tran, the unemployed in the private sector know only that one day they will receive compensation determined by the owners and union and government representatives.

The Military Administrative Committee wants to empty the capital of refugees living without regular resources. Committees for special aid were established in each zone to carry out this operation. On surrounding roads hundreds of trucks and buses are picking up displaced people who want to go home.