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# Former Viet General, Driver

## Refugee, 50, Feels His Age

By Janis Johnson

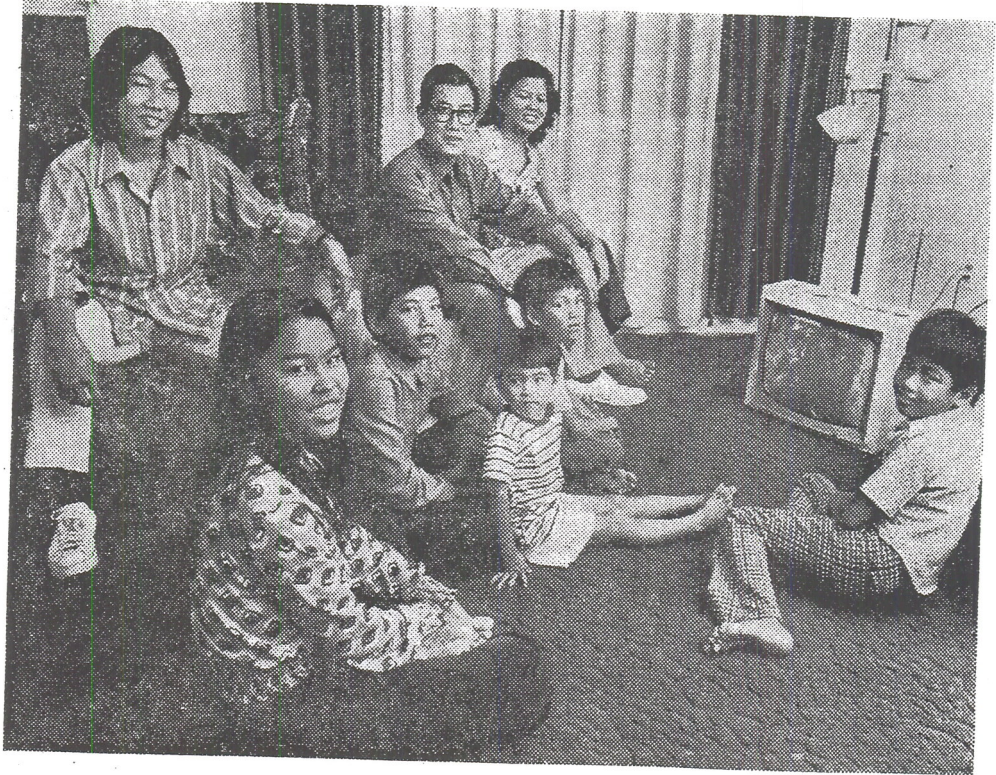
Washington Post Staff Writer

The one-story home near the end of Birchdale Road in Dale City contains amenities common to many middle-American households. There are wall-to-wall carpeting, a television and a washer and dryer. Three bicycles rest on the rear patio.

Arriving home from work each night to the three-bedroom bungalow is a tired, worried man. Huynh Van Trong, who fled to the United States four months ago from Vietnam, is trying to survive in a new society in which his expenses are higher than his income.

"I worry and feel very bad," said Trong. "For myself, I can live anyway. But for my children, I want them to live good. My daughter, she's a young girl, she has to go to school. But she also has to work, because her daddy don't make too much money. And my wife, she did not work in Vietnam. But here she has to. I worry very much, and I go outside and just sit."

Trong, his wife and six children from 21 to 4 years of age are being assisted in their resettlement in Northern Virginia by Holy Family Catholic Church in Dale



By James A. Parcell—The Washington Post

Vietnamese refugee Huynh Van Trong relaxes with his family in their Dale City home. The local Holy Family Catholic Church is helping the Trongs resettle.

City. The parishioners found them a house and agreed to pay the \$230 monthly rent for a year. The church members furnished the house and clothed Trong's family, who possessed nothing when they arrived here on Memo-

rial Day. Now Trong's closets and cupboards are overflowing.

A friend of Trong's sold him a 14-year-old Chevrolet for \$1.

The refugees received \$300 each for resettlement

from the Catholic Diocese of Arlington and more financial aid from Holy Family church. Trong, his wife and their two oldest children work, together earnings less

See TRONG, D2, Col. 1

# Both Face Money Problems

## Army Staff Chief Now Maitre d'

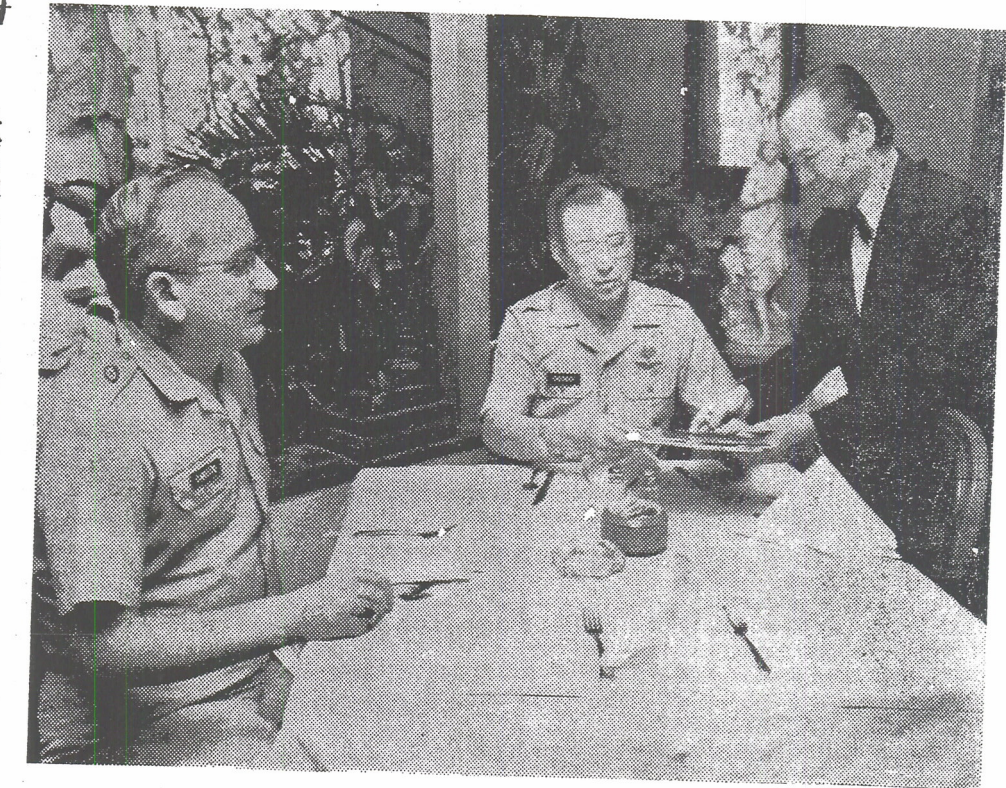
YORKTOWN, Va., Sept. 13—The small Vietnamese man in a new, black tuxedo waved his hand at the crowd in the restaurant lobby. "Groups of threes and fours, this side please," he asked in a soft voice that seemed to beg more than command.

Giving orders would hardly be a new chore for Dong Van Khuyen, the new maitre d' at Nick's Seafood Pavilion in this small Tidewater town between Williamsburg and Newport News.

A year ago Khuyen (pronounced "Quinn") was a three-star general and the chief of staff of South Vietnam's army, with 1.1 million men under his command. Today, he is a \$180-a-week waiter, working six days a week, often ten hours a day, leading hundreds of tourists to their tables rather than thousands of troops in battle.

"For me, it is no comedown; any job is a good job," Khuyen said the other day after climbing a hill behind the restaurant to the small, aging wooden house where he now lives with his wife and seven children.

Khuyen, who was whisked



By J. T. McClenny

Former chief of South Vietnam's army, maitre d' Dong Van Khuyen attends Lt. T. C. Christie (left) and Col. J. R. Salcedo at a seafood restaurant in Yorktown, Va.

out of Saigon in April on one of the last American helicopters to leave the capital before its fall to the Communists, said he is resigned to building a new life can rebels successfully

ended their fight against the British.

Although he conceded that his work may seem tedious and boring for a man who once ran an army, Khuyen said it is work, and it helps blot out the bitter-

ness of having to leave his homeland and his ailing father in Vietnam.

"I am 48 and, for me, I don't care," he said. "My work is for my children."

See GENERAL, D2, Col. 1

# Viet Army Staff Chief Happy as Maitre d'

GENERAL, From D1

For nearly half his life, Khyuen's work was the army of Vietnam. Drafted by the French in 1951 he rose slowly through the ranks as a logistics officer, assuming overall command of the army only 18 months before the country's collapse.

The memory of those days is still painful for Khuyen, of his ailing father, who was stricken with cancer of the larynx. His father urged him to think of his children's future and dangers he would face at the hands of the Vietcong.

Khuyen, who was called "the killer" by Vietcong radio, hardly seems awesome at 5 feet, 2 inches tall. He has to weave and dodge among taller, yellow-jacketed waiters and Greek-costumed waitresses in the ornately decorated restaurant, which is filled with statues of Greek gods and goddesses and hung with religious paintings.

"He is first class," said Mary Mathews, who runs the restaurant with her 68-year-old husband Nick. They both immigrated themselves from Greece when they were youngsters. Since succeeding in business here, they have acquired reputations as Yorktown philanthropists.

Nick Mathews, who once paid money out of his own pocket to keep the streetlights burning here when the city's utility bill got too high, agreed that Khuyen is doing an excellent job. "We've had thousands of maitre d's and he's good," Mathews said. "He's got brains and a good sense of responsibility."

Lt. Gen. Jack C. Fuson, commanding officer of nearby Ft. Eustis, had told Mathews of Khuyen's plight. The restaurateur both offered work and a rent-free house near the restaurant until Khuyen was able to pay some rent.

"It would have been so

easy to get him one of these advisory jobs, but they go so fast that then where would he be?" said Fuson, now a major general and deputy chief of staff for army logistics in Washington. "I looked around like crazy to find him a job. He had to start at the bottom and work his way up, and he agreed."

Khuyen's principal ties to his Vietnam years have been through American army officers like Fuson who helped him get his job here, gave him furnishings for his home and put \$500 in his bank account. His wages at the restaurant actually are well above the approximately \$100 a week he earned in Saigon as a general.

Khuyen could have had much more in those days, but he shunned life in government military quarters and drove around Saigon in a jeep. He neither drank nor smoked, and when he became the army's chief of staff he shocked his fellow generals by leading "an anti-corruption" campaign.

Khuyen left Vietnam wearing a pair of Military fatigues, his only remnant of the army he belonged to for 24 years. American authorities took those from him in Guam, where he was given civilian clothes.

His wife and family had left Saigon five days ahead of him and the family was reunited later at Camp Pendleton in California. They moved to Yorktown about 2 months ago and Khuyen worked in obscurity until a Norfolk newsman learned of his background.

Khuyen said he is content to remain a waiter here and has no immediate desire to move elsewhere. "I would be very happy here," he said.

But both Khuyen and his wife, who works parttime as a salad maker at the restaurant, said they would also like to return to Saigon. He shook his head and sighed, "it will be a long, long time."

# Church Aids Refugee, But Wages Go Quickly

**TRONG, From D1**

than \$500 a month. Most of that is spent on food or is quickly dissipated for insurance, taxes and other bills.

As Trong said ruefully, "the money does not rest in my pocket."

Trong desperately wants a full-time job to assure him an adequate income and eliminate the need for the women to work. He enjoys his job as a cook at Hardee's, but it is part-time and does not offer sufficient fringe benefits. For three hours each day he and his son do odd jobs at the church to supplement their income but the work is fatiguing because of their short, slight builds.

"For Americans, 50 years old is not too old. For Vietnamese, 50 years is old. I have lost weight, I am afraid of getting sick. If I have a job that is not too much hard labor and yet is

not too easy, then I can work for another 15 years and support my family," Trong explained.

"I am a man who likes to work. For 12 years I worked for Americans in Vietnam seven days a week," said Trong, who was a driver for American forces in Saigon. "In the United States there is not the same job for me. I had to refuse some jobs here, not because I'm lazy, but because they were very hard. . . . Right now, where I work, I don't have medical care. We applied to the social services department for medical care, but they haven't accepted us, or refused us either. So we wait."

In the Diocese of Arlington in Northern Virginia, 1,680 Vietnamese refugees, representing more than 300 families, have been resettled through the auspices of the United States Catholic Conference.

The conference, the largest of seven voluntary agencies assisting refugees, has placed 26,000 in four months. Their waiting list is 40,000.

Trong's family clearly is overwhelmed by the kindnesses of their fellow Catholics. "We don't have everything new," he said, proudly walking through his house, "but it feels like new. The people give and fix everything for me. It is just like an American home." He grinned.

"After we moved into our house, neighbors from the left and right came and brought me vegetables. The children came from all over," he said.

Still, he said, he feels tense and exhausted each day.

"I get up at 6 o'clock, go to the church and work until 10:30, go to Hardee's and get home at 3:30 or 4, take a rest for maybe 30 minutes. Then we have to eat dinner early." Some evenings he transports his wife, Suzanne, and daughter, Le, to work or the family to English classes.

Four of the children attend Prince William County schools.

"On Saturday we have the evening at home. I have time with my wife and children and teach English, probably for two hours. On Sunday, all the children are up at 8:30 or 9 and we prepare to go to church. Then everybody prepares for lunch. We rest a couple of hours, and in the evening we have one hour of English lessons for the children. Everybody goes to sleep early."

Trong insists that the rest of his family learn English as quickly as possible. One of his own initial battles was to qualify for a driver's license, and now that he possesses it, he is a happy man.

"The American way of life—it's difficult, but good," he said. "Now we want to be American citizens. We don't want to stay Vietnamese. We live here. We want to be Americans as soon as possible. Then me and my family get the same life as others here."

"My children, the last time I asked them, they said they don't want to go back to Vietnam," he added. "They are forgetting very soon Vietnam."