

# NEW FRONT SPLITS VIETNAM REFUGEES

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Many in California Mistrust

Anti-Red Group in Fear of

Reprisals in Homeland  
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SAN DIEGO, Feb. 29 — The emergence of a Vietnamese liberation front in exile, led by a former Vietnamese senator who was imprisoned in Saigon for plotting to overthrow the Thieu Government six weeks before the country's collapse, has produced sharp disagreement among refugees here.

Many of the 35,000 refugees settled in Southern California are distrustful of the newly formed Force of Renaissance for Vietnam, mainly out of fear of incurring reprisals against relatives still living in South Vietnam under control of the Communist Provisional Revolutionary Government.

The Force of Renaissance was organized to combat what one of its leaders called "rampant and unchallenged Communist propaganda" being spread among 132,000 refugees in the United States, and to give material assistance to more than 60,000 South Vietnamese troops that he said were continuing to wage guerrilla warfare in the conquered areas.

## Awaiting 'the Proper Time'

A spokesman, Nguyen Van Nghi, said that "when the proper time comes," the organization will recruit a volunteer expeditionary force made up of South Vietnamese veterans possessing special military skills and eager to return to their homeland to take up arms again against the Communists.

"Our operations will be international in scope, including the refugee volunteers who will be recruited not only in this country but in France, Japan, Canada, England and other countries," he said.

Mr. Nghi, a former high school principal in Nha Trang, said he lived under Communist rule for nine years before escaping to the South.

The group is still largely embryonic and willing to accept funds, he said, "from almost any source except the American intelligence agency from which we want no assistance of any kind." The liberation

movement's organizing body totals no more than about 200 refugees.

Its leader, at a headquarters in suburban Chula Vista near the Mexican border, is 44-year-old Pham Nam Sach who, as a Socialist Senator, was a close collaborator of President Ngo Dinh Diem before the latter's assassination in 1963.

## A Bitter Foe of Thieu

A bitter opponent of President Nguyen Van Thieu, Mr. Sach said he plotted President Thieu's overthrow with a group that included former Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky just before Saigon's fall last April 30 to the Communists.

The plot was uncovered and Mr. Sach was arrested and im-

prisoned, finally gaining his release when the chief of national police fled the country three days before South Vietnam's surrender. With his wife and two children Mr. Sach was evacuated by the United States Navy and is now an instructor in the Del Rey Vocational High School in Chula Vista.

Most vocal in opposing the new Force of Renaissance is the West Coast's largest refugee organization, the Vietnamese Alliance Association, which existed before the mass movement of refugees to this country. The alliance is urging its members and other Vietnamese to reject the new liberation front and to remain non-political.

Three smaller groups are supporting the liberation front here, the Vietnamese Association for Culture Preservation, the Vietnamese Community Foundation and the Vietnamese Catholic Committee.

The split among the refugees broke into the open during the Vietnamese Lunar New Year in January, when the Alliance Association refused to allow Mr. Sach to appear before several thousand people attending its celebration at the University of California here to read a militant manifesto drawn up by the Force of Renaissance.

## Rival Meeting Convened

The liberation front and its supporters then set up a rival meeting at St. Columba Roman Catholic Church.

"Our board of directors voted unanimously against any association with the Force of Renaissance because of the political implications," explained Christine Minh, wife of a San Diego doctor and an officer of the alliance.

One official of the Alliance Association said it was "a ridiculous delusion" to believe that South Vietnamese guerrillas, even with support of volunteers from overseas, could break Hanoi's hold on South Vietnam.

Mr. Sach said the immediate objective of the Force of Renaissance for Vietnam would be to mobilize world opinion in insisting that the forthcoming South Vietnamese elections, scheduled for April 25, be absolutely free in accordance with the 1973 Paris peace accord.

Reports that the Force of Renaissance was preparing to establish a camp in the mountains east of here for training a paramilitary force of Vietnamese volunteers was denied by Mr. Nghi.