The original documents are located in Box 13, folder "Indochina - Refugees: General (3)" of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Presis

MAY 1, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

today in rejecting assistance to the refugees from South Vietnam.

This action does not reflect the values we cherish as a nation of immigrants. It is not worthy of a people which has lived by the philosophy symbolized in the Statue of Liberty. It reflects fear and misunderstanding, rather than charity and compassion.

The Poes

Despite the House vote, 2 believe that in this tragic situation the American people want their country to be guided by the inscription on the Statue of Liberty:

which begins

"Give me your tired, your poor Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

After World War II, the United States offered a new life to 1,400,000 displaced persons. The generosity of the American people showed again following the Hungarian uprising of 1956 when more than 50,000 Hungarian refugees fled here for sanctuary. And we welcomed more than a half million Cubans fleeing tyranny in their country.

Now, other refugees have fled from the Communist take-over in Vietnam. These refugees chose freedom. They do not ask that we be their keepers but only, ______ for a time, that we be their helpers.

Some members of the House of Representatives apparently voted against the legislation to assist the refugees because of a section relating to evacuation from South Vietnam. The evacuation is complete.

urges the members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate to approve quickly <u>new</u> legislation providing humanitarian assistance to the South Vietnamese refugees. To do otherwise would be a repudiation of the finest principles and traditions of America.

RALO

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am saddened and disappointed by the action of the House of Representatives today in rejecting assistance to the refugees from South Vietnam.

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believe

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Now thousands of refugees have fled from the Communist take-over in Vietnam. These refugees seek a new life of liberty in America. They chose freedom. They do not ask that we be their keepers but only, for a time, that we be their helpers.

Some members of the House of Representatives apparently voted against assisting the refugees because of a section in the bill authorizing evacuation from South Vietnam. The evacuation is complete, and I have assured Congress in writing that no further evacuation will be undertaken.

I urge the House of Representatives and the Senate to approve quickly new legislation providing humanitarian assistance to the South Vietnamese refugees.

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(Friedman)PT

May 1, 1975

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT I am saddined and desappointed by Line the action by the House of Representatives today in rejecting assistance to the refugees from South Vietnam. the real production this action does not reflect the values Worthy of a people which has lived by the philosophy the Statue of Liberty and misunderstanding rather than courage and compassion. Despite the House vote, I all have faith that people want their country t to keep its open door and open heart. This is in keeping with America's religious heritage as well as our finest traditions as a Nation. The history of interior is the history of The men and/who came to this country helped to create new jobs/ and grow more food and build our cities, They joined in developing the American society that we prize so highly.

There are no original Americans. Even the American Indians -

are said by historians to have come from Asia. au actions shand le gulde The Inscription on The Statue of Liberty remains a symbol whose name is "Mother Viendent mits of Exiles" and "from whose upraised beacon-hand glows world-wide welcome." Let that light continue to shine. TOTAL Who can forget the action of the United States after World War II the UN, red States if offering a new life to one million four hundred thousand displaced shoued again following persons the generosity of the American people the generosity of the American people the Sy the Hungarian When morether 50,000 uprising in 1956 when 19709 Hungarian refugees fled here for sanctuary?

(MORE)

It is said that if a person is to hold his head high, he or she

must be given the opportunity to make a contribution to this life. I am sure that those who come here wish to make a contribution to America. Theydo not ask that we be their keepers, but only -- for a time -- that we be their helpers.

I believe that the greatest use of Mfe is to do something that will outlast us. The memories of Vietnam and Cambodia will fade from our minds. But this is a new day for this relatively small number of homeless refugees from Southeast Asia. Let them make their contribution to America. Let it be said that the American revolution was also fought for those who, of their own free will, chose freedom.

In this spirit, I ask the House to reconsider its action.

Now, thousands all rebegies have bled The community takeover in U. N. These gees seek the away in the offer the in America. They have breedan.

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

5/01/75

JACK

Max Friedersdorf said to tell you that the humanitarian aid letter to the Speaker of the House will be delivered at 9:00 AM.

JUDY



F.Y.I. not for announcement our elecue

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

April 30, 1975

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In view of the urgent need for funds to pay for humanitarian assistance and transportation of refugees from South Vietnam, I request that the House of Representatives act quickly to approve the Conference Report on H. R. 6096, the Vietnam Humanitarian Assistance and Evacuation Act of 1975. In making this request, I am aware that sections 4 through 9 of H. R. 6096 have been overtaken by events and have no further utility. Nevertheless, the enactment of the bill as recommended by the Conference Report is the most expeditious method of obtaining funds which are now desperately needed for the care and transportation of homeless refugees.

As I stated yesterday, the evacuation has been completed. The Congress may be assured that I do not intend to send the armed forces of the United States back into Vietnamese territory.

Approximately 70,000 evacuees are now located on various safe haven islands, on U.S. Navy vessels and on civilian vessels. These individuals are being cared for by agencies of the United States Government while being processed through a system established to relocate them in the United States and in other countries.

Although the specific cost of activities related to the evacuation cannot be fixed at this point, it is estimated that direct U.S. expenditures to care for and process these evacuees, and contributions to international

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organizations and private voluntary agencies to assist in this effort, will exceed \$400,000,000. Available funds already appropriated to provide aid to Vietnam will be reprogrammed and utilized to the maximum extent possible. But the additional authority of \$327,000,000 will be required to fully meet immediate needs.

The authority of this legislation, followed by appropriations as soon as possible, is necessary to continue this operation, to integrate the evacuees into the United States and other countries and to permit consideration of further humanitarian assistance which may be consistent with the provisions of H. R. 6096 and American policy objectives.

I urge the immediate enactment of H.R. 6096.

Sincerely,

Kenly R. And

The Honorable Carl Albert Speaker of the House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515



NOTICE

May 2, 1975

At the suggestion of Ron Nessen I have established a coordinating point within the Vietnam Task Force to handle inquiries on resettlement and camps.

This point of contact will be Elinor Green who can be reached on 632-9380. She will have a small staff.

Miss Green will remain in touch with DOD, using the DOD representatives on the Task Force primarily. She will also concert with Mr. Wilson's Resettlement Task Force and ORM.

Distribution: EA - Mr. Miller PRS - Mr. Anderson Mr. James Wilson AID - Mr. Gardiner H - Mr. McCloskey Miss Green DOD Representatives



2 May 1975

Preliminary Estimates of Transport, Temporary Care, and Resettlement Costs (150,000 Evacuees in Staging Areas, of which 130,000 to be resettled in U.S. and 20,000 in Third. Countries)

1. Daily Maintenance

\$ 185,000,000

\$15 per person per day for 30 days
(150,000 people) at staging areas,
\$15 per person per day for 60 days
(130,000 people) at processing
centers. Includes food, utilities,
medical care, etc.

2. Airlift

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\$530 per person (130,000 people) from staging areas to processing centers,plus air supply of materials estimated at \$30 million.

Resettlement Costs Estimated at \$600 per person to be provided to voluntary agencies which will transport and administer resettlement, 130,000 people in U.S.

4. Subsequent Welfare and Medical (HEW) 125,000,000 Welfare and Social Services \$50,000,000 Medicaid 30,000,000 Bilingual and Vocational Training 30,000,000 • Public Health 15;000,000

5. Movement of Added 20,000 Refugees to Third 20,000,000 Countries for Resettlement (State/ORM) Estimated at \$1,000 each to cover transport and program administration.

NEW APPROPRIATION NEEDED

<u>\$ 507,000,000</u>



2 May 1975

Preliminary Estimates of Evacuation Costs (150,000 Evacuees from South Vietnam to Staging Areas)

1. Sealift Contract shipping for evacuation

2. Airlift \$300 p

\$300 per person to staging areas (110,000 people)

3. Facilities

.\$20 million for establishment of staging areas, \$15 million to open processing centers.

Total Requirement

98,000,000

Less Amount Provided from IPR Funds under Presidential Determination (614[a] Waiver)

APPROPRIATION NEEDED

\$ 98,000,000

35,000,000

30,000,000

33,000,000

\$

\$

Previous Refugee Emigrations

Displaced Persons	1945-1952	450,000
Eastern Europeans	1953-1956	189,000
Hungarians	1956-1957	30,701
Cubans	1959-Present	675,000
	•	•

- 5 -

TOTAL

1,344,701

REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

Q. Now that the Congress has defeated the legislation for \$327 Million in refugee assistance, what does the President propose to do in the way of new legislation?

A. As you are aware, the President was dismayed at the failure of Congress to pass urgently needed legislation for immediate refugee care and resettlement funds. He attaches high importance to the necessary approval of these funds and calls upon the Congress to act promptly. The President will be working with Congress to ensure that legislation for refugee care and resettlement is provided.

Amb. L. Dean Brown is testifying this morning before the House Judiciary and International Law Subcommittee on the necessity of funds for refugees who we now estimate to number approximately 125,000 people.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MAY 5, 1975

REFUGEE MAIL COUNT

Over the past month the White House has received 7,600 pieces of mail on Vietnam Refugees. Of that total:

4,456 FAVOR 💽 U. S. ASSISTANCE

2,936 OPPOSE U.S. ASSISTANCE

199 SOMMENT, BUT NO OPINION



THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

May 5, 1975

CUMULATIVE OVER A 5 WEEK PERIOD --AID TO VIETNAM ORPHANS:

PRO - 4,214

CON - 2,421

COMMENT - 163

Washington, D.C. 20520

May 5, 1975

Mr. Chairman: During the last two weeks, as Viet Nam collapsed, the United States undertook a humanitarian mission of gigantic proportions. In response to the tragedy, the Administration acted with speed and determination. Specifically, we succeeded in evacuating about 40,000 Vietnamese through our airlift before the airport was closed. We also evacuated over 7,000 American citizens through fixed wing airlift and the final helicopter evacuation.

The number of Vietnamese has swelled beyond this number as a result of the thousands of Vietnamese picked up by our naval vessels in the South China Sea. We now estimate the total number of Vietnamese who have fled Viet Nam to be 125,000.

We have had to make some very rapid decisions on how to receive such a large flow of people. As Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay became congested during the initial phase, we quickly established staging areas in Guam and Wake. We also established three reception centers in the United States at Camp Pendleton, Camp Chaffee, and Eglin Air Force Base where the refugees could be moved from Guam for further processing.

Hablash

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A massive effort was required to put the staging areas and the processing centers into operation. Our military services responded magnificently to the emergency and quickly moved to make the facilities ready to receive the large flow of refugees. The civilian arms of government were also mobilized and teams of INS, HEW, STATE and AID were dispatched to the staging areas and the centers in the United States to assist in the effort. Also, and most importantly, the voluntary agencies have acted positively to the emergency. They are sending representatives to all of the centers in the United States.

After consulting with Congress and the President, the Attorney General on April 25 extended parole to four categories of Indochina war victims. These categories represented the best estimate of the evacuation problem which we could provide at the height of the crisis in Viet Nam. We could not then define with any precision the numbers of Vietnamese who would flee their country by their own means or would be stranded abroad.

Now that Viet Nam has fallen, we have a clearer understanding of the evacuation problem. It has four aspects:

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We planned an evacuation of certain specific categories of Vietnamese and estimated the total would not exceed 130,000. The plan was formalized in the Attorney General's parole after consultation with Congress. In fact, through our planned air and sealift evacuation, we succeeded in moving almost 55,000 Vietnamese. With the exception of a few, they appear after initial screening to fit the criteria specified by the Attorney General. They will be accepted into the United States unless any wish to emigrate to third countries or return to their native land.

- The second category includes those who received American assistance in their flight. Approximately 69,000 Vietnamese were picked up at sea by U.S. Vessels, or are presently sailing on Vietnamese vessels. These are men, women, and children without a country. The choice is to force them to return to the land they fled for fear of persecution, leave them at sea, or accept responsibility for them. We propose to accept responsibility for them.
- The third category includes approximately 3,000 Vietnamese and Cambodians who have, since the fall

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of their governments, fled to third countries, some of which are threatening to return them to Viet Nam or Cambodia. This category includes Vietnamese and Cambodians who fled using air and naval crafts furnished under U.S. military assistance programs -- valuable equipment we plan to reclaim. We propose to require that they seek asylum in these countries and, if refused, ask for resettlement assistance from the appropriate international organizations before considering them for parole on a case-by-case or class-by-class basis. With regard to Vietnamese citizens and some Cambodian military personnel who reached Thailand, we know they will not be able to stay. We are taking charge of them now.

- The outcome of the Viet Nam war has left other Vietnamese stranded in third countries. This last category includes Vietnamese diplomats and their families, students, ordinary travelers and businessmen. We do not know how many Vietnamese fall into this category but we believe many will be able to make arrangements to settle abroad. Others will enjoy the protection signatory powers of the United Nations protocol and convention on the status of

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refugees normally extend. Some -- and we do not yet know how many -- may not be able to find safehaven and may turn to the United States for help.' We intend to ask international organizations to take responsibility for them; only where we fail will we consider entry into the United States. As soon as we have a clearer estimate of the number involved we will communicate our findings to Congress.

Based on the above four-part assessment of the evacuation problem, we are asking the Attorney General to extend parole on a contingency basis to an additional 20,000 individuals and liberalize the present limitations on categories. While we do not expect to extend parole to 150,000, we need to have the standby authority which a new determination would provide. Only in this way can we be equipped to care for those Vietnamese and Cambodians who are not able to find homes elsewhere.

We intend to press the international community to accept refugees and we have moved energetically to enlist its cooperation. Specifically we have been in frequent contact with the international agencies, principally the United Nations and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM). I am sorry to report that the UNHCR has not moved as rapidly as we would have wished but I assure you we will continue to press them to assume those responsibilities for which they are mandated. I would, however, like to extend my thanks to ICEM for the speed with which it has moved on this major humanitarian problem. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is sending a delegate to Guam to issue travel documents which will facilitate the movement of refugees to third countries.

For our own part, we launched a diplomatic initiative to bring our concerns on the plight of the Indochina refugees to governments around the world. We have asked for their help and an expression of willingness to accept some refugees into their lands. The reaction thus far is incomplete and mixed. We have received some preliminary positive responses from certain countries from nations in French speaking Africa, Europe and Latin America. Canada has publicly declared its willingness to take 3,000. France is receiving many who have special ties to that country. At this point, I cannot predict how many will find homes in third countries, but we will continue to make a maximum effort to bring our concern, which is humanitarian,

- 6 -

to the attention of the world community.

For those Vietnamese and Cambodians who do not find homes abroad, and are accepted into the United States, it is important that we provide them with the essential reception facilities, health care, clothing, education, vocational training and resettlement assistance which they require to settle quickly and become productive members of our society. We must also extend the same warmth of welcome hundreds of thousands of other refugees have received in the post-war period. We must avoid at all cost additional charges to financially hard-pressed state and local governments. We ought also to contribute to international resettlement efforts. The bill which the President is submitting this afternoon meets these requirements.

With regard to resettlement in the United States we are working closely with the nine voluntary agencies specializing in refugee relocation. Together we agree that the new arrivals should be dispersed as evenly as possible throughout the United States, avoiding in particular resettlement in economically hard-pressed areas. I am impressed by the competence, cooperation and ability of the voluntary agencies and believe they are capable of finding new homes and making new lives for the majority of those Vietnamese and Cambodians who come without American relatives or sponsors. We also have the full cooperation of HEW, DOD, Labor and Interior in studying alternative resettlement possibilities for those refugees voluntary agencies cannot help.

I am aware of the public concern over the reception of Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees in the United States at this time of economic difficulty. I am confident, however, of our ability to carry out a successful resettlement program. The numbers are not too large. More importantly, the Vietnamese and Cambodians arriving in America have suffered deeply and are deserving of our help and hospitality. It is America's tradition to respond rapidly and generously to peoples in need.

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We will soon be celebrating our 200th year as a Nation. We

will also be celebrating the $\frac{kind}{\sqrt{}}$ of Nation we have been, and -- I

fervently hope -- the kind of Nation we will continue to be.

From the first settler who set foot on this land nearly 400 years ago to the Vietnamese families which arrived today, we have been a nation of immigrants. Our national life is the richer for that fact. Even now, several hundred thousand immigrants routinely enter these United States every year.

Today, nearly all of us are the descendants of people who left the lands of their birth to seek a new life on this continent or we are immigrants ourselves. We are Ameri cans because earlier generations, or our own generation, found a welcome here, found jobs, built homes, raised families, and became productive members of their new communities. If we are grateful for the opportunities we found or inherited, our gratitude can take no richer form than compassion for the newcomers who seek a home or haven on our shores.

For 200 years, America's pride -- and America's strength -has been our record as the most open nation in the world: open to new ideas, to new challenges -- and to new citizens. We may be 200 years old as a nation, but we have remained young in spirit, essentially because we have been constantly rejuvenated from abroad.

After World War II, the United States offered a new life to 1,400,000 displaced persons. The generosity of the American people showed again following the Hungarian uprising of 1956 when more than 50,000 Hungarian refugees fled here for sanctuary. And we welcomed more than a half-million Cubans fleeing tyranny in their country.

I cannot, and I will not, believe that the majority of citizens of this much-blessed country could ignore that shining heritage or want to limit its continuity in the years to come. I urge each of you to join with me in reaching out to those refugees now arriving here who fled from Cambodia and Vietnam as those countries fell. They are intelligent, energetic and productive people who have long been associated with us and are in jeopardy because of it. They trusted and relied on us for ten years and we must not now turn our backs on them.

That is why I have asked the Congress to take prompt and affirmative action on the Administration's request for funds to cover the costs of the evacuation and settlement of those Vietnamese and Cambodians who have had to flee.

The sooner our new arrivals can be helped on their way to the uniquely American process that has assimilated more than two million refugees since World War II, the sooner these funds will be seen, not as an unrecoverable expense but a sound investment in America's future.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 6, 1975

THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM FOR:

FROM:

SUBJECT:

RON NESSEN Talking points for your news conference and Cabinet Meeting on refugee aid.

1. We have a moral obligation to help these refugees resettle and begin new lives in the United States. They fled from South Vietnam for two reasons: They feared that they would be killed if they stayed and they did not want to live under a Communist system of government.

2. By helping these refugees, many of whom fled their native land with nothing but the clothes on their backs and a few small parcels, we are living up to our heritage as a charitable and compassionate people. I have spoken out strongly on this issue because I believe strongly that we must do the right thing morally. We are a nation of immigrants and I believe the inscription on the Statue of Liberty, which enunciates our timest qualities as a people should be our guidepost in this tragic situation.

3. The maximum number of refugees expected is 150,000 at the most and it probably will be less. Sixty percent of that number are children, the innocent victims of this war who deserve a chance to live their life in freedom and will certainly not be taking anyone's job away. Only 35,000 refugees are heads of households who will be looking for jobs; but many of these have skills which will enable them to find employment. The number of job seekers is a tiny fraction of 1% of the labor force in the U.S. Even without the Vietnamese refugees, the U.S. has been opening its doors to 400,000 immigrants a year without any impact on the job market. Since the end of World War II, almost 1,400,000 refugees from Europe, Asia, Hungary and Cuba have fled oppression and sought freedom in the United States. They have made a rich contribution to our culture and our economy and we expect the Vietnamese will do the same.

4. Many of the Vietnamese refugees coming here have close relatives or sponsors in the United States so they will be no burden to the government. Ambassador Brown's office at the State Department is using a computer to match up the refugees job skills with the available jobs. The resettlement program is being carried out in such a way that the refugees will be spread throughout the country without a heavy concentration in any one area.



Page 2

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5. We are working with other countries to resettle perhaps as many as 20,000 of the refugees outside the United States. Canada is welcoming some. Some French-speaking countries in Africa have indicated that they will take some.

6. I have received communications from Pope Paul, George Meany, and other leaders praising the refugee resettlement program and urging that the United States do everything it can to help these people. I want to compliment the Members of Congress, the Governors, the private refugee relief organizations, and the members of the public who have spoken out and acted to help the refugees begin a new life in the United States.

7. I want to emphasize one point. It is my intention that none of the aid money I am requesting from Congress will be spent by the United States Government to help the formation of Notice and South Vietnam on Could I believe it is the responsibility of the nations which sent weapons of war to the Communists to come forward now to repair the damage.

8. Let me emphasize once more my deep moral commitment to help these refugees resettle and begin new lives in the United States. Despite the opposition of a few, I believe the majority of the American people want to live up to the finest traditions of our history and welcome these new immigrants as we have welcomed so many immigrants to our bountiful land in the past. We will be a better country and a better people for doing it.

9. I know Americans want to forget the Vietnam war. But we must not take out our frustration and anger on the innocent victims of that war. To do so would dishonor the sacrifices America has made in good faith throughout this long war.

Question

Mr. President: How have State and local leaders reacted to your call for humanitarian assistance for the Vietnamese refugees?

Answer

I have received very positive communications from several Governors and Mayors supporting the thrust of my request for humanitarian assistance and stating a position of readiness and willingness on the part of State and local governments to help in this regard.

This has not been a partisan response, Governor Askew of Florida, Governor Pryor of Arkansas, and Governor Aryoshi of Hawaii are some of the Democrats; Governor Evans of Washington is one of the Republicans and Governor Longley of Maine; who is of course, an independent have all stated in eloquent terms there willingness to help these displaced Vietnamese.

Mayor Alioto of San Francisco, Mayor Lugar of Indianapolis and Mayor Fasi of Honolulu have likewise volunteered.

Federal efforts will be fully coordinated with State and local efforts to assure that our efforts are not in vain.

Note: Samples of correspondence attached.

Mayor Alioto (D), San Francisco Governor Longley (I) Maine

JHF - 5/6/75



STATE OF MAINE Office of the Governor Augusta, Maine 04830

JAMES B. LONGLEY

April 30, 1975

Gerald E. Ford, President United States of America White House Washington, D. C.

Dear President Ford:

This is a difficult day in Southeast Asia but the great hope and faith in the world, I feel, is still America and men like President Ford. I simply want you to know that I am not writing as Governor of Maine but as an individual citizen of the United States to tell you that my thoughts and prayers were with you in church this morning as they are with you each and every day to help lighten your load and give you and Betty moments of happiness which you so richly deserve.

Once again, there isn't anything you can ask me to do to help you help this country that I wouldn't try to do.

Very truly yours,

JBL:bh



JAMES B. LONGLEY

مریک مرکز برای مرکز این آج STATE OF MAINE Office of the Governor Augusta, Maine 09880

April 30, 1975

Gerald E. Ford, President United States of America White House Washington, D. C.

Dear President Ford:

The State of Maine wants to do whatever it can with summer camp availability to serve as a temporary bed and board situation for any displaced Vietnamese children. As Governor of the State I pledge the resources of the state to help these young orphans.

Very truly yours,

James B. Longley

JBL:bh



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PHS THE HONORABLE SERALD R FORD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON DC

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NAMA STREET

MY DEAR MR. FRESIDENT, WHILE IN EUROPE LAST WEEK, I READ WITH DISMAY SOME OF THE AMERICAN OBJECTIONS TO THE RESETTLEMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THE UNITED STATES. I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT YOUR HUMANITARIAN POLICY REPRESENTS THE BEST IN OUR CONSTITUTIONAL TRADITION AND WE SUPPORT IT VERY STRONELY. SAM FRANCISCO IS WILLING TO DEMONSTRATE ITS SUPPORT BY TAXING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING YOUR POLICY. HISTORICALLY WE HAVE WAD THE LONGEST EXPERIENCE

WITH ASIANS AND A SUBSTITIAL ELEMENT OF THIS COMMUNITY IS, IN FACT, A MOSAIOF MANY ASIAN NATIONALITIES. WE BELIEVE THAT THE RESETTLEMENT OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AS GROUPS IS THE MOST DESIRABLE APPROACH. IT WILL ALLOW THEM TO RETAIN THEIR CULTURE AND CUSTOMS WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF LOYALTY TO THE UNITED STATES AS THEY DEAL WITH THE PROBALENS OF ENTERING THE MAINSTREAM OF AMERICAN LIFE. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE FEDERAL PROPERITIES AVAILABLE IN THE AREA WHICH HIGHT BE UTILIZED ON AN INTERIM BASIS FOR THIS PURPOSE, IN SAN FRANCISCO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE WILL BE PLEASED TO TAXE THE LEAD IN DISCUSSING THIS MATTER WITH WHOMEVER YOU DESIGNATE. KIN??//XXXXXXX KINDEST REGARDS AND ALL BEST WISHES JOSEPH 1 ALIOTO MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO
The Press Contact at the State Department for Vietnamese

refugees questions is:

Elinor Green

Phone: 632-9380



May 7, 1975

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BRAA

The Press Contact at the State Department for Vietnamese

refugees questions is:

Elinor Green

Phone: 632-9380

MAIL AND TELEGRAM COUNT ON AID TO REFUGEES TOTALS AS OF 10:00 a.m. THURSDAY MAY 8, 1975

 PRO
 6,195

 CON
 3,941

 COMMENT
 264

TELE GRAMS AND MAIL ON AID TO REFUGEES, EXCLUDING ORPHANS

PRO	2,451
CON	2,809
COMMENT	165

TELEGRAMS AND MAIL ON RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES (SINCE MAY 2, 1975)

 PRO
 383

 CON
 764

 COMMENT
 46

TELEGRAMS, MAIL AND PHONE CALLS 💭 FROM PRESIDENT''S NEWS CONEEREN.

NOTE: THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THESE DEALT WITH THE REFUGEE AID QUESTION. A FEW WERE ON GUN CONTROL. NONE OF THESE HAVI BEEN COUNTED, AS YET IN THE ABOVE TOTALS. THEY WILL BE STARTING TOMORROW.

PRO	517
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COMMENT	41

TELEGRAMS AND MAIL ONLY

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PRO 292 CON 159 COMMENT 11

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THE REFUGEES

May 9, 1975

A Report on Editorial Opinion and 'How Goes It' Inside The Camps

The Congress

During the five days ending Friday, May 9, what appeared to be growing congressional sentiment against the sudden influx of Vietnamese refugees quickly changed to one of moving swiftly to pass funding requested by the President.

David Binder of the N.Y. Times reported (5/6/75) that during Congressional hearings on Monday, L. Dean Brown of the State Department encountered a number of critical comments from Congressmen questioning both the legality and propriety of giving asylum to those Vietnamese officials who had mishandled U.S. funds or participated in torture and assassination.

But on Friday (5/9/75), the <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> reported that in the wake of the President's plea for the aid in his news conference, Congress appeared ready to move swiftly. And Binder in the <u>N.Y. Times</u> said Congress appeared to be moving as best it could to respond to the President's pleas. And in the <u>Washington Post</u> on Friday, Lawrence Meyer reported the Senate "swiftly" passed a bill that could authorize as much as \$147 million.

The swift change in Congressional inclination was credited to the President by Jim Wieghart in the <u>N. Y. Daily News</u> in Friday's editions. Wieghart said: "The power of the presidency as a 'bully pulpit'... was forcefully demonstrated by President Ford in connection with the South Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees issue... The President's 'damn mad' reaction to what was largely mean-spirited, racist opposition, coupled with his powerful appeal to the essential decency and generosity of Americans in his nationally televised press conference... appears to have brought the Congress around."



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Inside the Camps

Camp Pendleton

NBC reported Wednesday night (5/7/75) what appears to be a display of the determination of the refugees to be helpful as U.S. officials attempt to process them out of the camps and into the American mainstream.

The refugees at Pendleton have established a tent-by-tent, row-by-row system of "town hall" meetings to handle problems in an organized manner. They have further established classroom instructions for their children in English, drawing upon support offered by the local community.

Despite this apparent upbeat spirit among the refugees, the Los Angeles Times reported (on 5/6/75) that U.S. Marines who were veterans of Vietnam were "amazed" to see so many tears from the people who had never cried back home, even over the wreckage of their homes or the bodies of their countrymen.

NBC News reported a spirit of cooperation among local and state officials (5/7/75), the <u>L.A.</u> Times reported (5/6/75) this observation about San Clemente:

"(San Clemente) is more concerned about potentially rampant Asian diseases than anything else.

"'Oh, Christ, yes,' sighs one marine escort, a veteran of Pendleton, 'they hate us, everybody in Oceanside and San Clemente. They'd like to turn the whole base into a Leisure World and now they're really worked up, with all these Orientals creeping into town.' "

"Which, of course, may be unfair because, later on an entire delegation of well-dressed, most-elderly ladies from Oceanside appeared," with one saying they were very concerned about the Vietnamese.



Fort Chaffee, Arkansas

There have been no network television reports from Fort Chaffee in the past week, but press reports are generally encouraging about local community reaction and smooth operations at the camp.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch (5/6/75) reported smooth processing of the Vietnamese and both the Chicago <u>Sun-Times</u> (5/5/75) and Memphis <u>Commercial Appeal</u> (5/1/75) reported a warm reception for the refugees from the local community.

Moreover, the <u>NY Daily News</u> (5/6/75) reported from Fort Chaffee that the Southern Baptists in the area were taking an active role in setting the tone of welcome in the community. Local radio stations have offered to sponsor 15-minute Vietnamese-language programs each day and letters to the local editor are running 9-to-1 in favor of the presence of the refugees, the Daily News said.

However, a problem over which Washington may have some influence was cited in the <u>Sun-Times</u> report. The refugees are cold at night, their clothing inadequate to the drop in temperature. "The government, moving like an elephant; has not gotten around to distributing donated clothing," the Sun-Times said.

Eglin Air Force Base, Florida

The Miami Herald reported (5/5/75) a situation that could bring about a change in community reaction there, and at the other refugee camps. The Herald said the next group of refugees, unlike the first, will not all be doctors, lawyers and engineers, two-thirds of whom found U.S. sponsors on their first day.

(4) - Refugees

However, reaction thus far has been either muted or good. The <u>Herald</u> said that despite some local opposition to bringing the refugees into an area of high unemployment, there were no protesters to greet the first group, and about 100 were present to wave and applaud as the Vietnamese arrived.

The Orlando Sentinel Star (5/4/75) reported thorough advance preparations for the refugees: tents quickly setup, 93 cooks flown in from military bases around the nation, bulletin boards located strategically throughout the tent area, and an effort to find someone to start a refugee newsletter.

The value of Cubans in the area was illustrated in a column in the <u>Miami Herald</u> (5/3/75). The writer, a former Cuban immigrant, said that during a several hours conversation "between two refugees from Communist countries," the ice began to melt and, when he learned I was Cuban, the Vietnamese man said, "Then you can really understand what we are going through."

"Dazed Viets Finding Comfort in Rice, Climate, and Cubans," was the headline over yet another <u>Herald</u> story, further reflecting the ability of the Vietnamese to identify with the local Cuban community.

Yet, resentment over the government's apparently all-out effort for the refugees is present. Charles Whited, a writer and long-time observer of the Miami area, wrote in the Miami Herald (5/7/75):

"The Ford administration's call for \$500 million to aid Vietnamese refugees is not unnoticed. Henry John, an unemployed contruction laborer...marked his 34th birthday Tuesday in an unemployment check line.

"'The government isn't looking, 'he said, 'at what's happening in America.'"



Editorial Opinion

The editorial support for welcoming the refugees has not wavered, and it continues to come from both liberal and conservative papers, and commentators.

Some examples:

The DesMoines Register (5/1/75) observed that the refugees have paid the U.S. a "high compliment" by entrusting us in their time of disaster.

The <u>Dallas Times Herald</u> (4/30/75) said negative reaction from some quarters comes close to tarnishing the nation's image on the eve of its bicentennial.

The Kansas City Star (4/30/75) said the refugees deserve the warmest welcome that a decent sense of hospitality can provide.

The Baltimore Sun (5/8/75) said the vast majority of the refugees are in a group which it is hard to imagine will do anything but enrich us.

And the Orlando Sentinel Star (5/2/75) observed that all the immigrants before the Vietnamese have contributed much to help make and keep America great.

From network television, the commentaries of Smith, Sevareid and Brinkley have supported receiving the refugees. NBC's Bill Monroe, normally their Washington interviewer for the "Today Show," presented a personal Byline Thursday morning (5/8/75) in which he gave some interesting statistics. He said the U.S. took in 5-times the number of potential job seekers during the Cuban influx; that three times that number enter the U.S. every year legally; and that perhaps as many as fifteen times that number enter illegally each year.

The Embassy of Norway has been instructed to inform the Department of State of the following matter.

:P. M.

The Norwegian ship MS "Hermelin", at present in Bagkok, Thailand, on route to Japan, has 83 South Vietnamese refugees on board. The group consists mainly of women and children. It contains also a doctor, a nurse and personnel from the United States Embassy in Saigon. The Thai authorities have not allowed the refugees to go ashore in Thailand without m written declaration from the Norwegian Government guaranteeing that Norwegian authorities will take the responsibility for transporting the group out of Thailand within a certain period of time.

The Norwegian Government has through the Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok, informed the Thai authorities that it is prepared to give such a guarantee to the effect that the Norwegian authorities will take responsibility for the transportation of the refugees out of Thailand within approximately 30 days in order possibly to bring them to Norway.

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It has, however, been brought to our attention that several of the refugees have connections in the United States. Some of them are even said to have ogtained a clearance for entry into the United States.

The Embassy of Norway would appreciate any comment which the Department of State may be able to give in this matter

Washington D.C., May 8, 1975

Attention:

Ambassador Brown Head of Interagency Task Force for VietNamese refugees



THE WHITE HOUSE

May 12, 1975

TO: FROM:



FYI. Original to Amb. Brown for direct reply on behalf of the President and a copy has been sent to Jay French, Counsel's Office.



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

22 East 40th Street

New York, N.Y. 10016 (

(212) 725-1222

May 8, 1975

President Gerald R. Ford The White House Washington, D.C.

Dear President Ford:

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The American Civil Liberties Union applauds your call to Americans to welcome the Vietnamese coming to the United States as refugees. As in the past, we favor the provision of asylum to people of any political opinion who flee other countries because they fear persecution for their beliefs. In this instance, the role of the United States in the Vietnam war makes it particularly appropriate that we provide a refuge. Our country helped to create the situation which made these people flee.

Some of our fellow citizens have expressed antagonism to these refugees. They fear competition for already scarce jobs. In response, the federal government appears to be following a policy of dispersing the new arrivals across the United States. This policy raises some difficult problems affecting the rights of the new arrivals.

Once they are in the territory of the United States, the Vietnamese refugees are fully protected by the Constitution, and must be free to settle where they choose. Previous immigrants - Jews in New York City, Cubans in Miami, Dutch in Grand Rapids, Irish in Boston, Scandinavians in Minneapolis - have derived comfort and strength from settling in the same communities as people of similar origins. If they wish to do so, Vietnamese refugees have every right to settle in one place. In attempting to diminish any adverse economic impact on a particular area, the federal government must take care to respect this right, and we assume that no restraints on travel will be imposed on the refugees once they are settled within the United States.

Continued

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Edward J. Ennis, Chairman, Board of Directors • Ramsey Clark, Chairman, National Advisory Council Aryeh Neier, Executive Director Executive Department: Alan Reitman, Associate Director • Roger N. Baldwin, Executive Director Emeritus and International Work Advisor • Trudy Hayden, Brian Heffernah, Carol Jennings, Philip Ryan, Helene Toiv, Staff Associates.

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Page 2

The ACLU chapter on Guam is monitoring the treatment of refugees on that island. As yet, we have only fragmentary reports. What we have heard makes us urge you to be sure that the refugees are accorded equality of treatment. We recognize the difficulty in providing proper facilities and expeditious attention to the needs of such large numbers of people. But we think you can take steps to insure that Vietnamese with ties to American corporate interests are not favored in treatment to the disadvantage of all others.

Sincerely, Neg

Arych Neier Executive Director, ACLU

AN:ms

cc: Attorney General Edward H. Levi

Commissioner Leonard F. Chapman, Jr.

PHU QUOC

These are points to be made in response to questions about a possible evacuation of some 40,000 Vietnamese from Phu Quoc Island:

- 1.) <u>Phu Quoc:</u> is part of Vietnamese territory. <u>An evacuation</u> of Vietnamese on the island would constitute an invasion of Vietnam.
- 2). Our evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese has been carried out. We picked up, in addition, thousands of Vietnamese who sailed out to U.S. ships (or flew out of Vietnam). We are now making every effort to resettle these refugees in the U.S. The President's directives along these lines are well known.
- 3). Even if such an operation were possible, which it is not, the purpose of the operation would not be to rescue <u>Americans</u>, but rather Vietnamese, for which a U.S. military engagement is prohibited by law.

The people on the island are subject to the control of South Unothomose authorities



ISSUE

VIETNAM REFUGEE PROGRAM - CURRENT STATUS

- Q. There are reports of delays in resettling Vietnam refugees in the U.S., of refugees desiring repatriation, and other problems. How is the Vietnam Refugee resettlement program going?
- A. I believe great progress is being made. The Defense Department has accomplished well the prodigious task of providing interim quarters for the refugees. Other governmental agencies, as well as private voluntary agencies, are performing admirably and effectively in processing these refugees, obtaining sponsors for them, and resettling them in new houses in this country or other countries.

At present, more than 700 refugees per day are being resettled from three reception centers (Camp Pendleton in California, Fort Chaffee in Arkansas, and Eglin Air Force Base in Florida). With the full operation of a fourth center at Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania anticipated soon, and with the increasing efficiency of current resettlement, I expect that this rate will increase substantially.

As of June 2, 23,742 refugees had been resettled in the United States and 1,969 had been released to other countries. At that time, approximately 48,000 refugees were located in reception centers in the U.S. and 55,000 in the Pacific area.

Currently, approximately 1,225 refugees have expressed the desire to be repatriated to Vietnam. Such cases will be turned over to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees.



6/6/75

TASK FORCE STATEMENT RELEASED LAST NIGHT, SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 1975

The Interagency Task Force has not yet received a courtesy copy of the Senate Judiciary Committee's report and is thus unable to discuss it in detail. The seven weeks of our existence have not been without problems of course but the cooperation of the military and civilian departments of the Federal government, of the voluntary agencies and the private sector and of the Congress has permitted an unprecedented undertaking in so brief a time.

Today, seven weeks after the inception of the Task Force more than 130,000 human beings who very recently were fleeing for their lives can look forward to their new ones with confidence because of the unceasing efforts of the dedicated Americans who are engaged in the truly monumental resettlement task. While there continues to be ways in which we can improve a program which was developed under crisis conditions, we are satisfied now that the fundamental aspects of the program are sound, coordination with resettlement voluntary agencies is effective, and channels of communications are open to all who wish to use them.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 12, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

RON NESSEN

FROM:

TED MARRS Min

The attached material prepared by the Interdepartmental Task Force on Refugees will be of interest to you.

At this point the publicized criticism of the program is belied by the basic facts that about twenty five percent of refugees have been resettled in the United States, that clearances are now a minor problem, that resettlement rates have been increasing steadily and that refugee morale is generally good.

There are problems:

- 1. Accelerating resettlement with continued quality emphasis.
- 2. Removing refugees from Pacific area and/or insuring appropriate housing.
- 3. Insuring increased public attention to and understanding of sponsorship.
- 4. Providing management support through OMB.
- 5. Identifying and cataloging sponsor offers.
- 6. Matching of sponsors with cleared refugees.
- 7. Providing task force and advisory committee personnel support.
- 8. Insuring mail and phone response on a timely and accurate basis.
- 9. Completing contract negotiations with Volags.
- 10. Utilizing the offers of colleges and universities to assist in education.



- 11. General Accounting and reimbursement to the States.
- 12. Augmenting Volag resettlement procedure.

With OMB augmenting the Interdepartmental Task Force management, and an increased public understanding of sponsorship responsibilities through the Presidential Advisory Committee on Refugees, these problems should be overcome.

Enclosure

June 18, 1975

REFUGEE TASK FORCE

EXAThe Task Force is preparing a report for delivery to the Congress (as required by law 5-24-75) on the status of the Task Force's efforts to resettle the Indochinese refugees. The report will probably be available on or before June 24. Members of the Task Force will appear in person before Congress as well.

Today at 12:30 p.m. the Task Force will issue the attached press release on the transfer of refugees from Guam.

Any questions about the seven ships off Guam should be referred to the Task Force:

CONTACT: Eleanor Green 632-9380

* coming separately from State



THE WASHINGTON POST Wednesday, June 18, 1975 A 3:

Guam Asks U.S. Aid to Clear **Harbor of 7 Refugee Ships**

By George C. Wilson Washington Post Staff Writer The governor of Guam sought help from official Washington yesterday to dispose of a fleet of Vietnam refugee ships cluttering up his harbor-one with chained prisoners clanking around the decks, another with treasure in the hold, a third the new home of Vietnamese families and four completely abandoned.

"Everybody in Washington seems a little nervous about doing anything about these ships," Gov. Ricardo J., Bordallo said after making his rounds. "I may have to tow the ships out in the ocean and sink them." Otherwise, said Bordallo, summer and fall storms could sink the ships in Guam's harbor or wash them onto the shore-requiring a multimillion-dollar salvage and repair effort.

The standard response from Washington bureaucrats, Bordallo said, was: " Well, governor, use your good judgment,"

Associated Press

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"Nobody was reassuring," he said. "I don't mind being the scapegoat if nobody wants to take the responsibility. But who owns the ships? The Bank of Saigon is supposed to own one. But what is the Bank of Saigon now?"

One of the ships, with soldiers aboard, had gone from Saigon to Singapore, where naval authorities, according to Bordallo, put three unruly soldiers in irons and sent them on to Guam.

One rumor, he said, is that the three are North Vietnamese soldiers who intended to pirate the ship after leaving Saigon. His own view is that they are South Vietnamese soldiers who are disillusioned with everybody and everything.

The three men-who will not give their names-are in leg irons and are sometimes manacled to the rail or other fastening points.

The guard for the prisoners, the governor said, is the ship owner, who fears he will lose his vessel if he

abandons it. The owner's 21year-old daughter, educated at the University of Florida,and his wife and another relative are also living onthe ship.

The treasure ship-which is manned—has vases and other Vietnamese antiquities in boxes in the hold, the governor said. Guam officials had thought the treasures were from a Saigon museum when they examined the boxes, the governor said, only to find them addressed to a Vietnamese woman now living in Canada. Somehow the museum pieces were left on the Saigon dock, the governor said. and the woman's collection was loaded aboard instead. ...

The largest refugee ship in Guam harbor, a 10,000-ton vessel built in Italy, is now a floating apartment house for about 15 Vietnamese.

Feeding the people on the three occupied ships and taking care of the four abandoned ones is costing Guam \$100,000 a month, the governor said. That, together with other expenses incurred by Guam for being a way station for refugees, will cost a total of \$5 million for the year, Bordallo predicted.



Messe yplen - to i INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE FOR INDOCHINA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

FOR RELEASE JUNE 18

ACCELERATED MOVEMENT TO CONTINENTAL U.S. DRAWS DOWN REFUGEE POPULATION ON GUAM

In accordance with its announced policy of moving as many refugees as possible from their hastily-constructed tent cities on Guam to the continental United States before the advent of the annual storm season in that part of the Western Pacific, the Inter-Agency Task Force has completed the initial stages of a draw-down and is today embarking upon an accelerated program.

On May 14, the refugee population on Guam reached a one-day high of 50,233. One month later, on June 16, the population had dropped to 25,144. As early as June 4, the total refugee population in all sites in the Western Pacific dropped for the first time to a lower figure than that of the total number of refugees in Stateside reception centers.

Orders have gone out aimed at decreasing the number of refugees on Guam by the last weekend in June to those who can be accomodated in fixed facilities. The tent cities will be closed and the approximately 10,500 remaining, but still temporary, inhabitants will be housed in wodden barracks.



INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE FOR INDOCHINA DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

In consultation with the Congress, the resulting short-term surge of refugees into the continental reception centers will be accomodated by brief increases of the capacities of the four centers.

As of June 18, a total of 131,211 have entered the U.S. system, and 38,145 have been processed and released, 3,813 to third countries.

June 18, 1975

SUBJECT:

REFUGEES

Do you have any response to the criticism on the poor handling on the refugee problem?

GUIDANCE: As a result of the legislation passed by Congress providing funds for the refugees, a status report on the refugees is required within 90 days after enactment of the law, and each 90 days thereafter until the problem is solved.

> The first status report is now being prepared and we expect to transmit it to Congress and make it public on the 23rd of June. Therefore, I think it would be premature to comment on the various stories that have appeared surrounding the refugees.

What will the report contain?

GUIDANCE: I believe this first status report will provide some historical background indicating the steps that have been taken to date, the current number of refugees, their location, the numbers that have settled with sponsors, and those that remain to be settled. The report will also indicate forward plans for dealing with the rest of the resettlement.

Supplement - Chiles June 18, 1975

REFUGEE TASK FORCE

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Associated Press

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