

Gov. Evans Leads Washington State In Aiding Resettlement by Vietnamese

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CAMP MURRAY, Wash., June 6—The state of Washington, alone among the 50 states, has developed a Vietnamese refugee resettlement program that ranges from recruiting the new settlers at Camp Pendleton to finding them homes, jobs and friends.

By Thursday, the state had signed up more than 500 South Vietnamese refugees to come here in the next few days with the state as their initial sponsor. With the help of a squad of state agencies, more than 175 refugees have already been settled here.

Every day, more Vietnamese families leave the stark, barron gullies of Southern California's Camp Pendleton for the three-hour flight to this shady, green National Guard camp near Tacoma.

As a result, Ha Ton That and Mai Hoang An and hundreds of other refugees may not know exactly where they are in the United States. But they do know who the friendliest American is. "He is Mr. Daniel J. Evans," Mr. That said. "This is a genuine national challenge," the Governor said in an interview. "It's really not all that tough. And yet it helps so many people directly."

Washington's program began early last month as a direct response to the hostility by some Americans toward the refugees.

"This was not the attitude we wanted associated with our state," Mr. Evans said.

In recent days, the nationwide attempt to match refugee families with American citizens or groups has bogged down as religious and refugee placement organizations, charged chiefly by the Federal Government with locating the requisite civilian sponsor, struggled with the task.

Languish in Camps

The state of Nebraska has recruited a few doctors, but thousands of people who volun-

teered to become sponsors have never been reached. And many refugees, long since cleared by immigration and security officials, languish in the nation's four main refugee centers at Camp Pendleton, Elgin Air Force Base, Fla.; Fort Chaffee, Ark., and the military reservation at Indiantown Gap, Pa.

In contrast, Washington State's program has gone so well that Governor Evans expects to seek a few hundred more refugees to settle here. On Wednesday, state workers, who have the explicit and energetic backing of the Governor's office, resettled 42 refugees from here, or about one-third of the camp's capacity.

At 3 P.M., Marsha Stewart telephoned the James Johnson family in Kirkland, Wash. At 7:30, the Johnsons picked up their new house guests—Dang Thu Thi, Dang Nga Thi and her son.

At the same time, 34 other refugees arrived from Camp Pendleton.

Hired by State

This week Mr. Evans, who has had several Vietnamese refugees hired by the state government for their office skills, summoned civic and religious groups for meetings to spur more sponsorship offers. His own church in Olympia was among the first to sign up.

In mid-May, Governor Evans dispatched two state aides to Camp Pendleton. Over the loud-speaker, they announced the registration of 500 persons wishing to settle in Washington state. Within two hours, 800 applied.

To assure a cross-section, state officials randomly chose 50 with good English skills and 50 with none. Then they went to Room 4 of the San Clemente Motor Lodge, spread the other forms face down on a bed and picked 400 more refugees.

In Washington state, meanwhile, other state employes and Volunteers quickly organized the Vietnamese Assistance Center here, which already has

its own green and white exit sign on nearby Interstate 5.

State employment offices were alerted to the refugees' skills. Large employers such as Boeing were solicited, and lists of sponsors were compiled. Soon, the authorities hope to give drivers' license examinations in the camp.

At Camp Pendleton, Joel Aggergaard and Carole Boone shepherd the Washington settlers through their processing and then urge patience as the refugees persistently ask, "When can we go?"

There is little to do now at Camp Pendleton except to think about how little there is to do.

However, almost daily another Washington contingent is told to pack for Western Airlines Flight 43. The Federal Government pays the air fare

and has promised to reimburse Washington state for much of its resettlement expenses.

Few of the new Washington residents had ever heard of the state, and many opted to come not so much because it was Washington but because it was not Camp Pendleton.

"I understand it is cold in Washington and rains a lot," said Vu Duc Vinh, who wrote speeches for Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky.

Mr. Vinh has no hopes of writing Vietnamese speeches for a living.

"I take any job," he said. "I understand that I must start a new life now."

"I like to go to Washington because Mr. Dan Evans makes us so welcome," said Phan Van Phuoc, whose wife is eight months pregnant. "I think my baby be here soon and be United States citizen before his father."

Before his departure from Camp Pendleton the other day, Tram Ngoc Giang was excited but apprehensive.

"They say Washington welcomes us," he said, "but we do not know if this is true."

After his arrival at Camp Murray across the street from the G.I. Laundry and Galloping Gertie's Grill, Mr. Giang stood with a bouquet of flowers in his hand.

"There are many kind people here," he said.

Soon teams of employment

counselors and public assistance officers began matching refugees with a list of sponsors.

Some sponsors promise full support, others promise partial support like free housing or a job, and still others promise to act as big brothers while the refugees look for work, learn to shop and register for schools. Based on need, the state provides some financial assistance.

A Few Problems

There are some problems. A few sponsors sought cheap domestic help or women for massage parlor work. They were rejected. Housing for the large families is difficult to find, and Federal officials will not permit the use of several dozen federally owned abandoned homes in Seattle.

Some refugees, faced with a choice between potential sponsors, postponed the selection daily to remain in the security of the camp, where food is ample, the staff speaks Vietnamese and the cabins are heated.

It can be intimidating to enter life in a strange land where people use such things as electric toothbrushes.

"Everything in the United States makes me wonder so much," said Ha Ton That, a community college instructor from Nha Trang.

Governor Evans and most others here believe the refugees



Associated Press

Gov. Daniel J. Evans welcoming Tony Le, former employe of U.S. Embassy in Saigon, and son to Washington.

will mix well with the state's already varied ethnic background and give many Americans new cultural lessons and insights.

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sor who is sponsoring the Huynh Cam Phouc family, put it: "We felt it was an American responsibility to help. And in some ways, you know, it is a privilege."

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