

U.S. Seeks to Speed Flow Of Refugees From Saigon

Goal Put at 8,000 a Day

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WASHINGTON, April 24—As fears rose here that time was running out on plans for an orderly evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese from Saigon, the director of President Ford's Refugee Task Force said today that he was trying to accelerate the outflow.

Ambassador L. Dean Brown, who is coordinating the inter-agency relief effort, said in a news briefing at the State Department that about 5,000 persons were being flown daily to Guam, most of them in American military aircraft, but that he hoped "to see that raised enormously."

"I'd like to see them up around 8,000 to 9,000," he said, adding that if Communist forces started shelling Tan Son Nhut air base near Saigon, the airlift would have to cease.

"That could happen at any moment," he said, but he declined to speculate on how much time remained to complete the evacuation of as many as 130,000 South Vietnamese, 50,000 of whom would be admitted to the United States on "parole" status as "high risks" whose lives might be endangered if they remained in Vietnam.

In reply to a growing concern that has been expressed about

1,681 Americans Remain

Since April 1, Mr. Brown said, 3,474 Americans had been evacuated from Saigon, leaving 1,681. Of those remaining, he said, 813 are servicemen or civilian government employees, 405 are American contractors, 284 are other Americans, such as members of the press or missionaries, and 179 are American dependents.

Later, a State Department official who asked not to be identified said the total number of Americans in Saigon would be reduced to 1,100 by tomorrow.

Ambassador Brown said that, at last count, 12,000 South Vietnamese had been flown out of the country, most of them to Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, which has been set up as the primary staging area for refugees.

"The great majority who have moved to date are relatives" of persons in the United States, Mr. Brown said. He added that the Government estimated that as many as 75,000 persons may qualify for entry into the United States under that category.

The refugee program is including mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, children and unmarried brothers and sisters "who are living in the same household" in the category of relatives who may be admitted, Ambassador Brown said.

He also said that President Ford had decided that as many as 50,000 refugees could be granted entry as high risks.

Asked to define persons who might be included in the high-risk category, Mr. Brown said, "Some of our own employees are high risk and some of the intellectual or political leaders of Vietnam are high risk."

Under questioning, he conceded that some members of the South Vietnamese national police and persons who took part in Operation Phoenix, a former Central Intelligence Agency program that included assassination of Vietcong leaders, might also be admitted under the high-risk quota.

Ambassador Brown said that decisions on who should be airlifted out of Saigon were being made on the spot by United States Embassy officials there.

As for resettlement, he said the inter-agency task force was meeting daily to attempt to work out plans.

He said efforts were being made to "internationalize" the problem and that appeals had been made to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to the Intergovernmental Committee on European Migration for assistance.

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The United States has also sounded out a number of other countries about their willingness to accept some of the refugees, he said, and the International Red Cross and the United States Council of Voluntary Agencies, an umbrella organization for church-related groups, has been asked to help.

Mr. Brown said the voluntary groups' role would be to help find housing and jobs for the

refugees after they arrived in the United States.

"We did it with Hungarians sixties, about 675,000 anti-Castro Cubans have also been resettled in the United States."

Shortage of Funds

Mr. Brown said one of the problems of the current refugee program is a shortage of funds. Until Congress approves legislation providing more money, he said, the program is being operated on \$5-million in the budget of the State Department's Office of Refugees and Migration.

Ambassador Brown added that the Department of Defense would have to be repaid out of any funds approved by Congress for the cost of running the airlift and housing and feeding refugees in Guam or at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. He said Americans were being charged for their flights, but that the South Vietnamese were being transported free.

He did not have any figures on how much the operation had cost to date.

Legal Authority Cited

Those refugees who are being admitted on a "parole" basis as high risks are covered by a section of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. The section reads:

"The Attorney General may, in his discretion, parole into the United States temporarily under such conditions as he may prescribe for emergency reasons or for reasons deemed strictly in the public interest, any alien applying for admission to the United States, but such parole of such aliens shall not be regarded as an admission of the alien and when the purposes of such parole shall, in the opinion of the Attorney General, have been served, the alien shall forthwith return or be returned to the custody from which he was paroled and thereafter his case shall continue to be dealt with in the same manner as that of any other applicant for admission to the United States."

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the possible impact of large numbers of refugees in any one area in this time of recession, Mr. Brown pledged that "no American city will be inundated by Vietnam refugees."

"We're going to try to do this as equitably as possible," he said. He added that he had given special assurances of this to Senators Alan Cranston and John V. Tunney of California, both Democrats, who had indicated that they feared their state might bear the brunt of the influx.

In his briefing today, Ambassador Brown emphasized that no resettlement plans had been made.

"The first task is evacuation," he said. "That is the highest priority."

"It says temporary, but it's open-ended," Verne Jervis, a spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, said.

The Attorney General's parole authority is "used quite commonly," Mr. Jervis said, adding that 33,000 persons — 11,600 of them Cubans — were admitted to the United States under parole last year.

Once a permanent resident alien status has been granted, a person may apply for naturalization as an American citizen after having lived in this country continuously for five years.