

U.S. Plans Waiver to Admit Up to 130,000 Indochinese

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WASHINGTON, April 22 — The Justice Department announced today plans to waive immigration restrictions so that up to 130,000 refugees from Indochina, including ranking officials of the Saigon Government, could be admitted into the United States.

The plans, developed at the request of Secretary of State Kissinger, were approved unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

In a letter to the committee's chairman, Senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi, Attorney General Edward H. Levi declared: "We were advised that it was deemed essential to begin at once to assist the departure from Vietnam of appropriate individuals if such an effort were to be orderly and successful."

State Department officials would not say whether steps had been taken to find places in the United States where the refugees could settle.

Meanwhile, the White House announced that the number of Americans in South Vietnam would be reduced to 1,500 by tonight as a result of an accelerated airlift.

With a large force of American ships, planes and marines poised off the coast to help with a final evacuation if needed, the Senate and House put off at least until tomorrow legislation that would authorize troops to evacuate South Vietnamese along with the remaining Americans.

About 4,000 Americans and

Vietnamese arrived at Clark Air Base in the Philippines today as part of the round-the-clock airlift from Saigon.

Philip C. Habib, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, reportedly told members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at a briefing this morning that the Administration's immediate objective was to reduce the number of Americans and dependents in Saigon to 1,200 and then "see how

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much below that we can go."

After a meeting of Republican leaders with President Ford, Senator Clifford P. Case of New Jersey said that 1,500 was "the minimum necessary to carry on skeleton operations."

Other senators said that several hundred alien dependents, mostly Vietnamese wives of Americans, were not included in the 1,500 figure.

900 Leave Saigon

Pentagon officials said that more than 900 Americans and dependents were among those evacuated from Saigon today, and the stepped-up pace of the withdrawal seemed to satisfy most members of Congress.

But action on legislation that would provide money for humanitarian aid and evacuation aid and supply specify President Ford's authority to use troops was delayed primarily because of the skepticism of some senators and representatives.

In Senate and House debates today, two primary concerns were expressed.

The first was the belief of legislators that the number of Americans in Saigon could be reduced even further. The second was their fear that the use of troops in an evacuation could result in a renewed military involvement by American forces.

Senator Dick Clark, Democrat of Iowa, the leader of the group that forced a postponement of action today, told his colleagues that he wanted no more Americans in Saigon than could be removed "with one swoop of the helicopter."

Opposition to Involvement

On the House floor, Representative Fortney H. Stark, Democrat of California, was applauded when he declared: "I don't want to send 50,000 Americans in there to involve us in another war."

Despite this opposition, there appeared to be sufficient strength in both houses to pass the legislation in the next day or two.

The House, in what some members regarded as a test vote, voted 325 to 95 to bring the bill up for debate.

Representative John B. Anderson of Illinois, the third-ranking Republican in the House, angrily denounced the "ridiculous charges" that Mr. Ford, "by some Machievellian device, is seeking to involve the United States again in South Vietnam."

"My ears can hardly believe what I hear on the floor of this house," Mr. Anderson shouted.

There was still overwhelming opposition in Congress to giving Saigon military aid, unrelated to the evacuation effort.

The House Armed Services Committee, which had previously given unwavering support to United States policy in Indochina, voted 21 to 17 against increasing the authorization for military assistance to the \$722-million President Ford requested.

At the Pentagon, Maj. Gen. Wyant I. Sidle, a Defense Department spokesman, said that all the Americans and alien dependents still in Saigon could be withdrawn by helicopter in no more than nine hours.

General Sidle said that there were 5 carriers, 12 amphibious ships and 12 destroyers in the South China Sea off South Vietnam and that about 5,000 marines were aboard.

Two carriers, the Hancock and the Okinawa, were said to have helicopter squadrons, and the Air Force was reportedly ending more helicopters to the Midway.

Planes Sent to Thailand

As an additional contingency measure, F-4 fighter-bombers were sent to Thailand, presumably to provide air cover, if needed, for an evacuation.

Senior American officials were said to be worried about the movement by the North Vietnamese of surface-to-air missiles to within range of Tan Son Nhut, Saigon's principal airfield. Experts said that once the missiles were in place they would increase the risk of evacuation by air.

The Justice Department, in announcing that immigration restrictions were being lifted to permit the entry of many Vietnamese citizens, said that they would include up to 50,000 "high-risk" Vietnamese, such as "past and present U.S. Government employes, Vietnamese officials and significant political and intelligence figures and the spouses and children of those parents."

Immigration restrictions were also being waved, according to the Justice Department, for from 10,000 to 75,000 Vietnamese who are close relatives of American citizens; about 1,000 Cambodians employed by the United States who have been evacuated to Thailand, and about 5,000 Cambodian diplomats around the world.