

Officials Here Worried By Viet Evacuation Talk

By Carolyn Anspacher

Federal, state and local officials were trying yesterday to prepare for a possible influx of thousands — perhaps up to a million — Vietnamese refugees, but found themselves tilting with shadows.

There are no plans yet on how to deal with what may become a massive entry of emigres because, so far, only the rumor mill is operational.

The reports, however, proved so disquieting to California Health and Welfare Secretary Mario Obledo that he both telephoned and telegraphed Secretary of State Henry Kissinger calling for an immediate conference.

"I am concerned that agreements may have been reached guaranteeing residency to as many as 500,000 to one million Vietnamese," he wired.

Obledo said his mandate as health and welfare secretary includes primary responsibility for employment, health and welfare for California's 21 million residents.

He reminded Kissinger

that California has the nation's largest number of unemployed (952,000); that 2.4 million are receiving some form of medical or welfare assistance; that four million live at or near the poverty level and that 20 million are taxed "close to the maximum acceptable in a free enterprise system."

Obledo said California will continue its traditional policy of offering compassion and opportunity to new residents "provided appropriate economic and financial arrangements are made."

"Due to the enormous impact on our state, I request that you consult with me before any final decision is made as to the relocation of Vietnamese refugees," he said, adding he hope the conference could be held within 48 hours.

Similar concern was expressed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., who said California's first responsibility is to its own (who are) "up against the wall."

"We have people in this state who are looking for jobs," Brown said. "We

have people whose backs are against the wall when it comes to paying taxes and meeting family responsibilities.

"We can't be looking 5000 miles away and at the same time neglecting people who live here There is something a little strange about saying let's bring in 500,000 more people when we can't take care of the one million we have who are out of work."

If there are no plans yet formulated to receive and give temporary shelter to refugees it is because no word had come yet on the numbers to be expected.

Neither the Presidio nor the Sixth Army has had any word at all, either from Washington, the Philippines or Guam. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service is equally in the dark.

The Red Cross here has been informed that some refugees would be arriving here under aegis of these agencies: the International Rescue Committee, the Institutè for International Education, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Church World Service, the Hias Lutheran World Relief and the Tolstoi Foundation. But

when or where, officials have no idea.

San Francisco Health Director Dr. Francis Curry said he is trying to prepare for a possible medical emergency.

He said the refugees could bring with them polio, tuberculosis, virus dysentery and malaria. He said the emigres could also carry such "non-esthetic" parasites as lice and worms.

In Sacramento, Colonel Neil Allgood said the California National Guard has a 20-page staff working paper on how to take care of Vietnamese refugees.

Without giving details, he said the plan is "an estimate of our capabilities and those types of missions that might be assigned to the military — which might include providing food support and medicine if it came to that point."

Alex Cunningham, deputy director of the state Office of Emergency Services, said "plans are on the shelf" to utilize Camp Roberts in San Luis Obispo county and Fort Irwin near Barstow in the Mohave Desert on a temporary basis for the refugees.

Late in the day, at a San Francisco news conference, Health, Education and Welfare federal Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger said his agency is now active in contingency planning for arrival of the refugees.

He said no one has any idea how many — if any — will be allowed to come out and added there is no evidence for such "wild estimates" that the number might reach one million.