

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

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Four Embassies Close

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Friday, April 25—About 5,000 Vietnamese left Saigon for Guam yesterday aboard United States Air Force jet transports as the evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese continued.

Only limited Communist advances along Saigon's shrinking defense perimeter were reported, but fear about the city's future intensified.

Pan American World Airways closed its office in Saigon and discontinued its twice-weekly flights to the United States. Most airlines that serve Saigon have either stopped flying here or are about to. Cathay Pacific, a British-owned and Hong Kong-based carrier, terminated its flights Tuesday after its pilots and crews said Saigon was too dangerous. China Airlines, of Taiwan, is scheduled to end service tomorrow.

Four embassies—the British, the West Germans, the Dutch and the Thais—closed yesterday and evacuated most of their personnel. Diplomats spent the morning burning official papers and clearing out belongings.

About 100 Britons were scheduled to leave for Singapore aboard a Royal Air Force C-130 transport.

Only the French and the Bel-

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U.S. Flies Out 5,000 More Vietnamese

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gians, who have full diplomatic relations with Hanoi, have indicated they intend to stay. The French have been reported active both here and in Paris trying to arrange talks between the Communists and Saigon.

Only about 1,500 Americans are left in Vietnam, an embassy spokesman said. There were about 7,500 at the end of March. Embassy officials said they hoped to cut the number to 500 by the weekend.

Total Pullout Feared

It was unclear whether the United States Embassy would then also close. Many Vietnamese are convinced that they will wake up one morning soon and find all the Americans have secretly disappeared.

Embassy officials would only say that after they had reduced the number of Americans to 500 they would reconsider their options. This figure is considered sufficiently low to allow a speedy evacuation by helicop-

ter if there is fighting or disorder in the city.

Complicating the evacuation process, about 100 Americans flew in yesterday to pick up Vietnamese wives, girlfriends and children. In all 400 Americans arrived over the last week.

Embassy officials said that 5,100 people, almost all Vietnamese, were evacuated Wednesday from Tan Son Nhut air base to Guam by United States Air Force planes. An equal number were said to have been taken out yesterday aboard C-141 transports that took off every half hour.

Some Fear Reprisal

Some of the Vietnamese were wives or children of Americans here, many were employes of the Defense Attache's Office or of the embassy who fear reprisal from the Communists for their association with the Americans.

Adding to the tensions in Saigon generated by the approach of large North Vietnamese forces and the resignation of President Nguyen Thieu, was a plethora of rumors.

One, reported by Japanese newspapers, was that the marines had landed Wednesday in Vung Tau, the small resort and fishing port on the South China Sea 40 miles from Saigon. The report was heatedly denied by an embassy spokesman and there appeared no evidence to substantiate it.

Saigon's rumor-prone afternoon newspapers carried a detailed account of a supposed Hanoi coup in which Le Duan, North Vietnam's most powerful Communist leader, had his main rival, Truong Chinh, assassinated. Mr. Chinh has long been described by Western Hanoi-watchers as being more inclined toward Peking than is Mr. Duan. The papers said the coup had touched off a series of major events, including the withdrawal of large North Vietnamese units from the south and an invasion of North Vietnam by Chinese Communist soldiers.

One rumor widely circulated in Saigon was that Chairman Mao Tse-tung had died.

Dollar Rate Soars

The growing sense of panic and the departure of thousands of Vietnamese drove the black-market rate for dollars soaring again. Brokers in the Cho Lon section of the city were demanding up to 5,000 piasters for a dollar. The legal rate is 755 to the dollar. On Wednesday, the black market rate had climbed to 3,800.

The attempts to escape were causing widespread emotional stress.

A secretary in one American office who had elected to stay when her fellow workers chose to be evacuated sat at her desk crying. "Everyone has gone," she said. "How can I work?"

A family that had paid an American employe of the defense attache's office 10 million piasters (about \$13,000 at the legal rate) to get them aboard an evacuation flight, were shouting at each other yesterday when the American left without them.

"It was stupid to pay the money," one member of the family said angrily. "It would have been stupid not to use the money now," another replied. "In a few days it will only be good for wrapping paper."