

U.S. and U.N. Are at Odds On Relief for Indochinese

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UNITED NATIONS, April 26—Continuing disputes between the United States and the United Nations over Indochina may be hampering an efficient large-scale emergency aid program for the millions of civilians left behind in South Vietnam and Cambodia.

"There are only two outfits that can effectively administer a relief operation of the size required," a U.N. official maintained—"the U.S. and the U.N."

"In this case, the Americans can't move in and function themselves—but only they can provide the money."

The money is there—\$150 million in the compromise aid bill passed by Congress. The aid would be channeled through unspecified "international organizations, so it is up to the administration to decide whether to use the United Nations. So far, U.N. officials admit, the U.S. administration "has been reluctant" to do so.

Until the United States comes through, "we're broke," said Sir Robert Jackson of Australia, who ran the U.N. relief operation for Bangladesh and is now running the one for Indochina.

"Our funds are now totally inadequate to the needs of the region," Jackson said in an interview. He

put the need at well above the \$100 million from all sources that Secretary General Kurt Waldheim has publicly requested.

So far, 13 Western governments have given \$11 million, with nothing from the United States, the Soviet block the oil-exporting nations or China.

The money has been used to deliver more than 1,000 tons of food, drugs and shelter materials to Phnom Penh, Saigon and the areas of South Vietnam under Communist control. "Now we're operating on credit," Jackson said.

Food stockpiles, as well as charter planes and ships, are available in Bangkok and Singapore. Requests for specific items are coming in from the Vietcong and the new Cambodian government has signaled that it will soon ask for relief aid. "We are able to get the stuff in quick," Jackson said. "What we need is the cash."

The American reluctance to provide it through the United Nations, says a White House official, stems from American "irritation" at actions by Waldheim on Vietnam, and the anti-Americanism of the Third World majority that dominates U.N. forums.

"We're tired of the U.N. always asking for money but not letting the U.S. have any control over it," the White

House official said. "The Third World has all the U.N. votes, but it isn't paying its share."

U.S. pique at Waldheim was generated when he allowed the Vietcong to open a liaison office with the United Nations in Geneva early this year. More recently, Waldheim did not heed an American request that he publicly appeal to Hanoi to allow the evacuation of Danang after it fell.

Agency for International Development Director Daniel Parker told a U.S. congressional committee that Waldheim's attitude was "unconscionable" and "unthinkable."

U.N. officials maintained that a response to the U.S. request would have achieved nothing, antagonized Hanoi, and endangered the U.N. capacity to provide aid to Vietnamese civilians behind Vietcong lines.

When the United States found itself with \$5 million for relief it turned the money over to the Red Cross, not the United Nations. "It's not punitive," a State Department official insisted. "It went to the most efficient channel."

The differences between Waldheim and the U. S. government may have been eased somewhat by Friday's meeting between the secretary general and Secretary

of State Henry A. Kissinger. U. N. officials reported that although there was "no clear answer from the U. S. on aid funds, Waldheim is encouraged and optimistic; the meeting was friendly and none of the frictions came up."

A potential new friction is a recent U.S. request that the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees help resettle the Vietnamese who are being evacuated to Guam.

State Philip Habib told a Senate committee that he was still "trying to extract an answer."

High Commissioner Prince Sadruddin Aga Kahn is being cautious. His is one of the two U.N. agencies involved in the Vietnam relief effort. "There may well be strong feelings on the Vietcong side," one U.N. aide admitted. "It's a case of heads you win, tails I lose."

But U.N. officials indicated that in the end, Sadruddin would agree to the U.S. request.

"If the U.S. wants to help at all," a U.N. official insisted, "here we are, and we can do it."

More friction may emerge on Monday when the U.N. Economic and Social Council is to take up a proposal to invite the Vietcong to a U.N. conference for the first time—in June, in Mexico City, on International Women's Year.