

SEChronicle
Vietnamese
APR 30 1975
**Exodus in
Own Planes**

Bangkok

Thousands of South Vietnamese soldiers and their families fled Saigon by air yesterday to Thailand, Hong Kong or the choppy waters of the South China Sea.

By dusk yesterday 130 South Vietnamese planes, including F-5 fighter-bombers, transports and attack planes, had arrived at the American-run Utapao Air Base in Thailand carrying about 2000 Vietnamese soldiers and civilians.

One South Vietnamese colonel "bulldozed" his way aboard an Air America C-46 flight to Hong Kong by attempting to ram his jeep into the plane while it was taxiing on the runway at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport. Before the plane took off another 14 South Vietnamese had climbed aboard.

Dozens of others were flown to U.S. Navy ships in the South China Sea. The Pentagon reported that fleeing Vietnamese had landed or ditched 18 helicopters on or near two Navy ships, the Blue Ridge and the Denver. No casualties were reported.

Another South Vietnamese plane brought 130 Vietnamese, including air force men and a handful of women and children, to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. The plane was a four-engine DC-6B that had been used for VIP flights by high-ranking officials.

Two planes made emergency landings in Thailand. One hit a tree, killing four persons, military sources said.

The Thai Foreign Ministry said all South Vietnamese planes in Thailand will be returned to the "next government in South Vietnam," and South Vietnamese refugees will be allowed to remain in Thailand only 30 days.

The Thai government has said it does not want to give political asylum to Cambodian and South Vietnamese

refugees. It is eager for at least peaceful and if possible cordial relations with the new regimes next door in Indochina and has had problems in the past with political exiles from Laos and Burma.

Associated Press