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First Wave of Viet Refugees

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The first wave of an expected 50,000 Vietnamese refugees began arriving in the United States yesterday with basic questions unanswered about how, where and when they will be resettled.

Official planning for the resettlement of refugees was described as a "shambles" by sources familiar with administration efforts. "Things are confused," a State Department spokesman said yesterday in answer to a reporter's question. "I wouldn't say they're a mess. I would say they're confused."

Although the federal government will be relying heavily on voluntary agencies to help refugees find permanent homes and jobs in this country, those agencies still have not been told how much money they will receive from the government, what kind of expenses will be reimbursed or when they will begin receiving payment.

Complicating the task of government planning and coordination is a growing apprehension on the part of local governments that Vietnamese refugees may be re-

settling in large numbers in their communities.

Temporary relocation sites at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., and Ft. Chaffee, Ark., were not designated by the Department of Defense until Monday. The first refugees, including some Americans, arrived at Camp Pendleton yesterday from Guam. At Eglin, base officials were set to gear up to house as many as 20,000 refugees in 12-person Army tents as soon as they received orders from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Air Force officials at the base said last night that they still were waiting for orders to proceed.

"We have been told not to expand any funds," Eglin information officer Maj. Lester Smith told reporters, "and that the State Department is paying for this. Our instructions are to be alerted to plans and to await guidance."

Although 2,000 refugees are expected within the next 48 hours, the only steps taken so far have been to mow the grass on a field adjacent to an unused landing strip away from the main portion of the base, special

correspondent Karen DeYoung reported.

Smith said, "We're trying to figure out how many workers it's going to take, how many tents we're going to need, how much food, and we're asking for 36 hours advance notice to set it will up."

At Camp Pendleton, Washington Post correspondent LeRoy F. Aarons reported that 380 tired, hungry and in some cases disgruntled evacuees and refugees arrived in the first planeload to El Toro Marine Air Base from Guam.

At Pendleton, quonset huts and tents in a part of the base near San Clemente were ready to accommodate the first arrivals. A State Department spokesman on the scene said more than 10,000 Vietnamese refugees are eventually expected and that their stay at Pendleton could last "weeks or months."

At Fort Chaffee, plans were under way to house up to 20,000 refugees. A temporary town with police, fire and sanitation facilities as well as other services was being prepared. Officials at the Army base, used primarily as a National Guard and reserve training center said

they were expecting to house the refugees for 90 days or more.

As the refugees began arriving, some American officials continued to express apprehension over and opposition to the mass immigration.

Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.) told a news conference in Columbus, Ohio: "I am opposed to large numbers of Vietnamese coming, not only because I think it is not in our interests. I don't think it is their interest. I think the Vietnamese are better off in Vietnam, including the orphans. I was opposed to the airlift. The Vietnamese have a strong tradition of taking care of their children. They honor children in Vietnam. I think they were offended . . . by that airlift."

Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) wrote President Ford and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger that the United States should seek help from other members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in relocating Vietnam evacuees. "It is not fair to ask American citizens and our economy to again bear the entire cost of this continuing tragedy," Nunn said.

Poses Problems

The problem of making permanent arrangements for the refugees—finding them jobs and homes and helping them to resettle in new communities—is being left to private voluntary agencies.

Officials from these agencies, who last week criticized the administration's failure to give them enough information to begin planning, said yesterday that they had begun receiving sketchy reports about the refugees following a meeting here Saturday with L. Dean Brown, who is in charge of coordinating the refugee program for the administration.

"In the past, there's been much more lead time," said Wells Klein, who represents three voluntary associations working on the Vietnamese refugee problem. "This is all a crash program. No one expected it to unravel as quickly as it did."

Klein said the question of financing the private effort "is totally up in the air" pending final congressional action on a humanitarian aid bill. "We pretty well know the government is going to foot the bill. But we don't know yet what the mechanics are going to be. Yet

we're already spending our own money."

Adding to the problem, Klein said, is the economic recession in this country. After the 1956 Hungarian uprising, Klein said, voluntary agencies "got all kinds of calls" from companies offering jobs. "Now we're in a different situation. What company has 10 jobs to offer Vietnamese refugees?"

Another problem still unresolved is how local governments will be reimbursed for the anticipated additional burden that will be placed on them by Vietnamese who encounter social, medical and other problems.

"What do you do with the agreed?" asked a Senate source familiar with the official planning for refugees. "What if some are sick? Who pays for this? Do some go on welfare? What about language training? All these things have been ignored."

"You can't understand the magnitude of the problem," a State Department spokesman said yesterday. "We had to deal with sticky foreign policy issues, a dangerous military situation and explosive domestic issues. You can't ask for a worse combination of issues."