

NYTimes
**Saigon Copter Lands on Another
In a Stampede to Carrier's Deck**

By The Associated Press

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ABOARD U.S.S. BLUE RIDGE, in South China Sea, April 29—Scores of South Vietnamese helicopters filled with military men and civilians fled Saigon today and headed out to sea to search for the carriers of the United States Seventh Fleet.

Seven of the helicopters arrived unexpectedly above this vessel carrying Americans and Vietnamese evacuated from South Vietnam. The seven copters made a dash for the helipad at the rear of the ship.

One pilot dropped his helicopter on the blades of another that had just landed and chunks of metal ripped through the air. The top helicopter, with its load of women and children, nearly toppled into the sea, but they were rescued and there were no injuries.

United States sailors heaved the two damaged choppers overboard to clear the landing pad. For the Vietnamese it was a last-ditch chance to survive.

As other Vietnamese helicopters landed their passengers were pulled free. American sailors ripped the doors off the craft to make them sink and the pilots then jettisoned them in the sea to make room for other arrivals circling overhead. Two small craft rescued the swimming pilots.

The American evacuation was reported orderly, although it was delayed several times because of weather and pilot fatigue.

The Blue Ridge is the command and communications vessel of the 40-ship Seventh Fleet armada waiting off the coast of South Vietnam to evacuate Americans and other foreigners

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Women, Children, Generals

ABOARD U.S.S. BLUE RIDGE April 29 (Agence France-Presse)—The first helicopters to reach the Blue Ridge unloaded babies, wives of Vietnamese Air Force and Army officers and American officials. Later helicopters brought army and air force generals.

Some women rushed from helicopters clutching their children and crying.

Mothers carried powdered milk in tins and mosquito netting. One evacuee brought with

him two bottles of cognac and gin, which marines tossed overboard.

Fourteen helicopters landed on the Blue Ridge this morning. The Navy did not announce the number of Vietnamese arrivals, but said 26 Americans, two Filipinos, two Koreans and two other unidentified non-Vietnamese were among them.

In the first hour of the landings, eight helicopters were jettisoned into the sea after unloading to clear deck space for more.

On nervous pilot leapt from his helicopter, which then smashed against the Blue Ridge's starboard side, spraying the main deck with metal fragments. The pilot was rescued.

Afrail to land his craft in the sea, one Vietnamese pilot jumped from it 100 feet above the water. His helicopter plunged into the sea almost on top of him, but he, too, was rescued.

Several other pilots jumped from their cockpits before their helicopters crashed into the water and were rescued by the crews of two small boats.

Although helicopters plunged into the sea one after another there were no fatalities.

The evacuation to the Blue Ridge began at dusk yesterday when a South Vietnamese Army helicopter arrived unexpectedly. It carried 16 young South Vietnamese soldiers, two women and two children.

WESTCHESTERITES, arise! Move your money to a bank that puts it to work for Westchester. Scarsdale National. Advt.

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A member of the U.S. Marine Corps, in helmet and protective jacket, helping to maintain order and keep unauthorized persons from boarding a bus for evacuees in Saigon.