

WXPost
**At the End,
Harrowing
Conditions**

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The following dispatch was filed from aboard the USS Denver in the South China Sea by Washington Post correspondents H.D.S. Greenway and Philip A. McCombs after they were evacuated from Saigon.

The evacuation was made under harrowing conditions. Tansonnhut Airport was under intermittent fire all day, so the evacuation was by helicopters flying from the sea into the Defense Attache's Office near the airport and into the embassy compound. There were rockets landing near the Defense Attache's Office, and many helicopter pilots reported that they had received fire from the ground as they shuttled the evacuees to the South China Sea.

At the U.S. embassy thousands of people stood at the gates pleading to be let in, while Marines charged with fixed bayonets off helicop-

ters to repel any attack on the embassy. The well-cut grass, the flowers and bushes, were lashed by the hurricane wind of the helicopters. Shredded documents burst from their bags, filling the air with confetti. It was perhaps the last time that Marines would have to confront Vietnamese.

In the city itself, confusion, looting and panic began as public order began to break down. But despite the hazards and confusion on the ground, the Marines and the Navy managed to bring off the evacuation without a single death or injury to an evacuee at least as of this writing.

As our helicopter lifted up and away from the U.S. embassy, it flew low over the city in the growing darkness. One could see confusion in the port, with a large flotilla of all types of vessels heading down the Saigon River to the sea.

Fires were burning in the outskirts of the city, and miles away an ammunition dump was exploding. We crossed the coast at last light with the fires burning behind us, the game played out in a helicopter full of Americans and Vietnamese who had become too dependent upon them.