

WXPost MAY 7 1975
Limiting of Refugee Aid Seen

Byrd Sees No Support

By Lawrence Meyer
Washington Post Staff Writer

Senate Majority Whip Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.) yesterday predicted that Congress will not approve the full \$507 million in new money requested by the Ford administration to help support and resettle Vietnamese refugees.

"I just don't think that Congress will pass that figure," Byrd said. "There is no political support for it. There is no grass-roots support for it."

House Minority Leader Rep. John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.) said, however, that Congress will support the administration's request for \$507 million to pay the costs for an estimated 150,000 Vietnamese refugees through Sept. 30, 1977. "The American people are not responding in a negative way," Rhodes said.

L. Dean Brown, head of the interagency task force established to coordinate government and private activities for the refugees, told reporters yesterday that the funds now being used for refugees will be exhausted within a week. The task force has about \$98 million in foreign aid money that was transferred from other accounts to be used for the refugee evacuation.

According to figures gathered by the task force, about 43,000 refugees still are en route to interim camps in the western

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The captain of a ship that brought 5,030 Vietnam refugees to Guam said thousands were left behind. Details, A-41.

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Private Help Offered

By Ron Shaffer
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Thousands of Americans, stirred by the plight of 130,000 homeless Vietnamese coming to this country, have swamped the State Department with offers of jobs, job training, temporary homes and financial assistance for the refugees.

This outpouring of support comes while other Americans—fearful of job competition and additions to welfare rolls — are expressing dismay that the country is taking in the refugees.

"I think Congress is getting the hate mail, while we're receiving the offers of support," said Chris Pappas, assistant director of state's office of refugee and migration affairs.

Some examples State Department and relief officials here reported: A man in Pontiac, Mich. offers to train a Vietnamese man to become an automobile mechanic. The mayor of Beckley, W. Va. said the Town Council had voted to support two refugee families. A firm in El Dorado, Kan., will train construction workers; farmers in Joplin, Mo. need farm hands, and a mushroom grower in Portland, Ore. wants helpers.

Many have called offering to open their homes to Vietnamese refugees while they become settled here, State officials said.

Typical of the letters of this type, they say, is one from a man in North Dakota: "We live on a farm and we have plenty

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REFUGEES, From A1

Pacific, 48,000 refugees are in those camps another 15,400 are in camps in the United States and 11,850 refugees have been processed and released.

The total number of known refugees was estimated yesterday to be 118,677, according to a State Department spokesman. The department has said there may be 30,000 others that it is not yet aware of.

Brown told reporters that he would like to see his task force disbanded within a week. He set a target goal of three months for the resettlement of those refugees who come to the United States.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council, holding its quarterly meeting yesterday, endorsed a statement calling on Congress "to appropriate without delay sufficient funds to facilitate the resettlement of the Vietnamese refugees in the United States without placing an undue burden upon the already hard-pressed resources of our state and local governments."

"This is a nation of immigrants," AFL-CIO President George Meany told reporters after the meeting. "There'll be possibly 30,000 looking for jobs, and yes, we have 8.9 per cent unemployment. But if this great country can't absorb another 30,000 people and help them find a way to make a living it will be denying its heritage."

Brown, in testimony before a House Judiciary subcommittee Monday, estimated that 30,000 jobs would be needed for the refugees. "Compared to the Cuban thing," when more than 650,000 Cuban refugees came to the United States, "this is a pittance," Brown told reporters during a State Department briefing yesterday.

The White House said yesterday that letters and telegrams it has received are running against aid to the refugees. A total of 2,809 messages opposed aid and 2,451 favored it, according to the White House. On the question of resettling refugees in this country, 240 opposed and 82 approved.

Byrd, who spoke on the Senate floor and later to reporters, said the screening process for refugees "ought to be as thorough as possible" to keep out undesirables, such as prostitutes and criminals.

Brown said that convicted criminals and prostitutes were "automatically excludable" from being permitted into the United States if they are detected. Under questioning, however, Brown acknowledged that because the United States has signed a U.N. protocol on political refugees seeking asylum, it cannot force refugees to go back to their country involuntarily.

Brown revealed that officials in Florida, whom he declined to identify, had exerted pressure to hold down to about 2,500 the number of refugees who will be housed at Eglin Air Force Base in northern Florida at any one time. "The Florida authorities let it be known that they didn't want too much," Brown said.

Initially, Eglin was estimated to have a capacity for 18,000 to 20,000 refugees as the other two bases, Camp Pendleton, Calif. and Ft. Chaffee, Ark., became filled with refugees. Brown said that in addition to pressure from Florida, representatives of voluntary agencies who are resettling the refugees indicated that they would be spread too thin if they had large numbers of refugees at three different locations.

In California, where former South Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky arrived yesterday at El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, Ky told reporters he hoped to "be a leader" for the refugees at Camp Pendleton. Ky, who stopped briefly to talk to reporters before boarding a bus for Camp Pendleton, said he felt an obligation "to stay with the other refugees."

HELP, From A1

of meat, milk and eggs and garden produce. We would like to offer our home to a Vietnamese refugee family."

Five hundred offers of assistance were logged at the State Department yesterday, officials there said. Those getting through had to hold the telephone a half hour because of the volume of calls. Officials said yesterday they will add more telephones to the 16 already in service.

Pappas said he believes part of the support comes from Americans who have been to Vietnam. "You can't send millions and millions of Americans there without some of them feeling ties to the place," he said.

"Another factor is that this is the traditional American response to a crisis. We saw the same kind of offers for the Hungarians and the Cubans. People feel an obligation to help."

A minority of the callers have had questionable motives, State and relief officials said. Some seem to want wives, babies, live-in maids or nurses.

"Oh we are getting some people saying they are looking for domestics, some sharpies trying to rent apartments, but most of the offers sound legitimate," Pappas said.

A McLean, Va. retired couple who said they did not want personal recognition, offered to take in a family "because they are people in need; they've been called gooks too long. It's time we treated them like people."

John W. Hartigan, a Navy Department employee, said he and 30 colleagues who also worked in Vietnam are looking for Vietnamese friends who may have escaped. They want to offer housing and job assistance to them.

The State Department is collecting such specific offers in a computer, along with the names of all the refugees, in hopes of making connections.

General offers of support are being forwarded to the American Council of Volun-

tary Agencies in New York, where they are distributed to volunteer relief workers at the three refugee camps.

The State Department said it is taking offers of assistance at a local number, 632-9800, and from out of the area on a toll-free line, 800-368-1180.

The U.S. Catholic Conference, one of the agencies working directly with the refugees, is taking offers of support from Maryland and the District at 526-4100, and in Virginia at 684-7413.

Locally, a number of churches have begun individual relief efforts, and groups of citizens are also starting drives to offer support.

John McCarthy, executive director of the U.S. Catholic Conference refugee section, said his representatives at the refugee camps will first attempt to relocate Vietnamese with relatives or friends, or if they have none, where they can find suitable employment. "We'll try to match them to their skills," he said. "We won't have a surgeon picking mushrooms."

Of each 1,000 coming into the camps, 160 are men of working age, 240 are women and 600 are children, he said. About 70 per cent have at least some command of English.