

26 S. Vietnamese Ships Bring 20,000 to Subic

From News Dispatches

SUBIC NAVY BASE, Philippines, May 7—A convoy of 26 South Vietnamese navy vessels carrying about 20,000 exhausted refugees arrived here today after a week-long voyage.

A U.S. Navy spokesman said the 20,000 persons, who boarded the vessels at Phu-Quoc Island off the southern Vietnamese coast, may be the last of at least 70,000 evacuees lifted by sea and air from South Vietnam Tuesday and Wednesday of last week in an operation code-named "Frequent Wind" and backed by 46 vessels of the 7th Fleet.

Arrivals were transferred immediately to six civilian merchant ships chartered by the U.S. Military Sealift Command and sent to Guam, the Navy spokesman said. There they will be processed and continue to the continental United States.

A U.S. embassy spokesman said the vessels had technically become U.S. property as U.S. Navy officers boarded each ship before they entered Philippine waters and took title.

The move was apparently designed to meet a Philippine demand that no South Vietnamese government ships or personnel enter its

territory. Saigon has demanded the return of ships and planes carrying evacuees from the country.

Eight C-141 transport jets took off from Subic today for Wake Island with 1,600 refugees, the Navy spokesman said.

The spokesman added that the Navy expects to complete the airlift to Wake and Guam within the next two or three days. A total of 34,000 refugees have been flown there since April 26, he said.

Some 20,000 refugees reaching Guam today were the first to arrive by ship and largest single daily influx.

Guam's governor placed the island under emergency status Tuesday to handle crowding of the 212-square-mile U.S. territory. Gov. Ricardo J. Bordallo's declaration gives him special powers to help the military care for the refugees. Schools are closed to free buses for the arrivals.

In other developments:

- A spokesman in Bonn said West Germany is ready in principle to take in refugees and has contacted the United States and the U.N. high commissioner for refugees.

- Graham Martin, the U.S. ambassador to South Viet-

nam as the evacuation was carried out, flew 130 miles north of Manila to the Philippine mountain resort of Baguio to "rest and do some work," a U.S. embassy spokesman said.

- A Canadian official in Hong Kong said his country had agreed to admit 1,000 refugees stranded in Bangkok, Singapore, Manila and Hong Kong.

- In Singapore, former South Vietnamese Information Minister Nguyen Ngoc Linh criticized the U.S. attitude toward some 7,000 refugees ordered to stay aboard 46 ships off that tiny nation.

"The U.S. has the distinct obligation to take care of the refugees from South Vietnam," Linh said. "Instead, the American embassy here completely ignored their written appeal for help."