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\$405 Million Refugee

Washington Post Staff Writer

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee swiftly and unanimously approved a \$405 million authorization yesterday to provide aid for the maintenance and resettling of Vietnamese refugees.

The action was taken following three hours of hearing administration officials stress the need for quick action in order to ease the bottleneck of refugees housed in temporary quarters in the western Pacific and at three military bases in the United States.

The bill is similar to one approved by the House Judiciary Committee last week, with one major difference—a dollar limit on the authorization. "We don't believe in open-ended authorizations," Chairman John J. Sparkman (D-Ala.) told reporters after the closed session.

The amount authorized by the Senate committee was \$102 million less than the administration requested, but was in line with the figure approved Thursday by a House Appropriations subcommittee.

Sparkman said the bill would be ready for floor action today, but Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) said that the Senate probably would wait until the House voted its authorization.

Committee members indicated they tried to keep their bill close to the House bill in order to avoid a time-consuming conference to reconcile differing versions.

The Senate bill contains two other provisions not in the House version. One would deduct from the \$405 million unexpended funds already appropriated for aid to South Vietnam and Cambodia. The other would au-

thorize payment to defer the cost of returning refugees to South Vietnam if that is their wish.

L. Dean Brown, head of the task force established by the administration to coordinate refugee policy, told the committee yesterday that "one of our major problems is that the system is completely blocked."

Brown said that refugees are not being moved out fast enough from Camp Pendleton, Calif.; Ft. Chaffee, Ark., and Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., to make room for refugees waiting to come here from Guam and Wake Island.

The bottleneck in the U.S. refugee camps, according to Brown, resulted from the time-consuming security check made on each refugee more than 17 years old, and from lack of funds to pay

tary agencies that will



By James K. W. Atherton—The Washington Post

L. Dean Brown puffs smoke during Senate refugee hearing.

Fund Voted

help refugees find jobs and housing.

The three U.S. camps are nearly filled to capacity, with 2,900 refugees expected to arrive at Ft. Chaffee by the end of today. Those refugees may be the last brought from the western Pacific until more room and funds are available, according to task force representative Elinor Green.

Brown told a House Appropriations subcommittee yesterday afternoon that the government of Singapore had refused to allow 7,000 Vietnamese refugees in some 50 vessels to come ashore. "Instead, after re-provisioning and putting the refugees on seaworthy vessels, they dispatched this group of refugees to other ports and other countries. I do not know where the ships will go at this point," Brown testified.

Reuter reported that the Singapore government said six ships with more than 1,000 Vietnamese refugees had left Singapore for South Vietnam without being detected, and that another ship planned to return to South Vietnam.

In a related development, the Defense Department esti-

mated yesterday that approximately \$2 billion in serviceable equipment, supplies and facilities provided the South Vietnamese by the United States had been lost to North Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government in the fall of South Vietnam.

Erich F. von Marbod, principal deputy assistant secretary of defense, told the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee that about \$500 million in equipment supplied by the United States to South Vietnam had been recovered, including more than 40 "major" vessels and 300 aircraft.

Another 300 aircraft and 300 vessels "of every description" were left behind, according to von Marbod, as were weapons, ammunition and petroleum.

Von Marbod said his estimate, about \$3 billion less than the \$5 billion figure earlier given by Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, included the construction costs of installations built by the United States.

Von Marbod told the committee that his estimate was based on acquisition rather than replacement costs for the equipment and facilities and did not reflect depreciation costs.