

Refugees Who'd Return

Washington

At least 800 refugees want to return to Indochina so far, but United Nations officials have been unable to get assurances they won't be punished. Congress was told yesterday.

Ambassador L. Dean Brown, director of President Ford's Indochina refugee aid group, said the new Communist governments in South Vietnam and Cambodia "are now being obstructive."

"As of now," he said, "the U.N. high commissioner for refugees does not feel in a safe enough position to send anyone back."

Testifying before the House refugee subcommittee, Brown said refugees wanting to return to Indochina are not yet being told of the problem, in hopes it can be solved.

He said the U.N. refugee commission, which has taken responsibility for returning the refugees, asked the new governments for assurances the returnees will not be punished but has gotten no commitment.

The U.N. commission had processed 670 refugees for return to Indochina as of Tuesday, Brown said, and **that** figure is expected to rise to 1000 by the end of this week.

He said 130 refugees in the three U.S. centers have said

they wish to return home.

Those being processed for return include a number who did not want to leave their native countries, such as crew members of ships and boats that took refugees out of Indochina, Brown said.

Brown also told the subcommittee the bottleneck over getting security clearances for refugees wanting to stay in the United States has been broken but said the next bottleneck will be getting sponsors to move the refugees into new homes and jobs.

With the monsoon season starting on Guam and at other Pacific refugee camps any time, Brown said, clearance of the security bottleneck should open up a new flow of refugees from the Pacific.

He said there were 130,425 refugees as of Tuesday including 60,806 in the Pacific and 64,684 in the United States of whom 18,432 have already been resettled.

Most of the remaining 4935 are in ships in the Pacific, Brown said.

He said about 35,000 sponsors will be needed to take responsibility for settling refugee families into new homes and jobs throughout the United States.

The State Department has received 12,500 sponsorship offers and the national volunteer agencies seeking sponsors have received thousands more, Brown said.

Brown said the total number of refugees could still go to 150,000 although he said he remains hopeful that only

about 130,000 will come to the United States.

He said 1500 have gone to other countries so far, primarily Canada, and more than 1800 have expressed a desire to go to 19 countries other than the United States.

Associated Press