

# U.N. Official Denies That Saigon Hinders

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Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 23 — A spokesman for Prince Sarudin Aga Khan, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, today disputed assertions made in Washington that Vietnamese refugees wishing to return home were being impeded from doing so.

L. Dean Brown, director of the United States Government's Interagency Task Force on Indochina Refugees, said yesterday that 1,000 South Vietnamese wanted to go home, but their return had been made difficult because of the "obstreperous attitude" of the officials of the new Provisional Revolutionary Government in Saigon.

Without mentioning Mr. Brown by name, the spokesman here said today that the representatives of the Saigon Government "have been cooperating" with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on repatriation.

"The P.R.G. would welcome the return of those who left the country recently," he added.

Mr. Brown's statement

prompted the High Commissioner's office here to rebut the suggestion that Saigon was blocking repatriation and to underscore that its relations with the new regime have been "positive."

The High Commissioner's office has representatives in Paris and Geneva, who have been dealing with the Saigon Government, and in Hanoi. However, there is no office in Saigon.

Mr. Brown, in testifying before a House Judiciary subcommittee had also implied that there was a delay in repatriation because the High Commissioner was waiting for assurances from Saigon that the returned Vietnamese would not be punished.

The High Commissioner's representative here maintained that the possibility of punishment had never arisen, because the United Nations makes certain that the refugees are being returned voluntarily,

and that the Government is willing to have them back.

"There have been no reprisal actions aken against refugees repatriated by this office," the spokesman said. "We ask refugees to sign papers that they want to return home, and we assume that the countries taking them back are receiving them in a humane spirit. This has been the experience in Laos, Sudan and in many other instances of large-scale voluntary repatriation."

In Washington, the Government's task force said "it was pleased to learn Saigon authorities' attitude toward repatriation as reported today by representatives" of the United Nations High Commissioner.

It also said that it "looked forward to the expeditious movement of those Vietnamese who have indicated their wish to return to their country."

## Protest Threatened

FORT CHAFFEE, Ark., May 23 (AP)—A spokesman for 107

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# Refugees Wishing to Return Home

Vietnamese refugees at the resettlement camp here says that the group will hold a protest demonstration unless the United States arranges for their return to their homeland by next Thursday. 29 MAY

Le Minh Tan, 44 years old, who worked for the American Government in Saigon for 12 years, said that he and the other refugees appreciated the help given them by the United States, "but we just want to go home."

A Pentagon spokesman said that the group's request had been referred to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The United Nations will send representatives here to interview the refugees, but it is not known when they will arrive, said Col. Joe Rogers, an Army public information officer here.

Mr. Tan said that he had left Vietnam "to avoid being killed."

"We did not know if the

V.C.s [Vietcong] would kill us or not," he added.

He said that he decided to return when he learned that the new government in Saigon had promised that Vietnamese going back to their country would not be killed.

"If the United States Government does not do us the favor of taking us back, we demonstrate will have a small ration," he said. "We will go on the streets and ask that we be taken back."

He said that the refugees who wanted to go home still had some fear.

"But we think we die only one time," he said. "If we die, we die in Vietnam."

Six of Mr. Tan's children were left in Saigon in the confusion of evacuation. He said that most of the others who wanted to return also had families in Vietnam.

## Cambodians Seek Return

NEWPORT, R.I., May 23 (AP)—Twenty Cambodian naval of-

ficers who have received permission to remain in this country would return to their homeland if their safety could be assured.

"The majority would like to return to Cambodia if they could return with safety and no bloodletting or reprisals against their families," Frank P. Castelnovo, officer in charge of the Office of Immigration and Naturalization in Providence, said today.

"Our people talked with them, and that was the feeling of all the officers," he said.

Mr. Castelnovo said that the immigration office had granted the Cambodians final permission to remain in the United States for an indefinite period and seek work.

The 20 junior-grade lieutenants were attending an 18-week course at the Naval Education and Training Center here when their Government fell to Communist-led insurgents in April. The officers graduated in a private ceremony.