

U.S. Said to Have Failed to Save 150 Saigon Police as Promised

NYTimes

By ALAN DAWSON MAY 31 1975
United Press International

SAIGON, South Vietnam, May 30—The United States Ambassador to South Vietnam, Graham A. Martin, promised helicopter evacuation last month for 150 top South Vietnamese policemen, but the aircraft never arrived, sources directly involved in the operation said today.

As a result of the missed evacuation, the former police chief committed suicide and all records of the police department fell into the hands of the new government, the sources said.

Included in the computer records are names and details on police informers, under-

cover agents and double agents used by the Americans in South Vietnam, they said.

The sources said the main computer able to decode the records was "deprogramed" but not destroyed and the tapes containing the information were captured intact.

"Martin promised to take 150 top police officials and their families on helicopters on the last day of the evacuation," April 29, one source said.

These persons all went to the police headquarters at the edge of downtown Saigon and waited almost 24 hours for

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the helicopters, which never came, the sources said.

When the last president, of the former South Vietnamese Government, Duong Van Minh, ordered the surrender April 30, four hours after the last United States helicopter left, most of those in the compound fled in an attempt to fade into the civilian population at least temporarily.

But Brig Gen. Tran Van Hai, chief of national police until last year, committed suicide because he feared mistreatment at the hands of the Communists, the sources said.

Records at national police headquarters, whose American adviser had left before the final day, were kept intact. A low-ranking computer technician at the headquarters apparently wiped out the computer's program but there is widespread fear among former policemen that the records' tapes will be decoded later.

The policemen were considered by American officials to be particularly vulnerable targets for retaliation after the Communist take-over because many were corrupt and the fact they worked face to face with the public made them easily identifiable.

'No Comment' by Washington

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 30—A State Department spokesman



United Press International
Ambassador Graham A. Martin on American evacuation ship April 30.

said "no comment" to the report from Saigon that 150 South Vietnamese policemen and computerized police files had been left behind in the United States evacuation on April 29.

Administration officials said they had no information with which they could either verify or deny the Saigon report, and they added that it could turn out to be substantially accurate.

They said that more information might be available from Mr. Martin, when he returns from vacation.