

164 Refugees On Road Back

Camp Pendleton

More than 160 Vietnamese refugees wishing to return to their homeland arrived at this military base from Ft. Chaffee, Ark., yesterday to begin the process of repatriation.

A total of 164 refugees landed in Southern California aboard two military C-141S and appeared "smiling, quiet and happy," according to a base spokesman.

They immediately were given quarters and meal cards at the large San Onofre camp where they were integrated along with the rest of the refugees.

"There have been no demonstrations so far and everything is peaceful," the base spokesman said. "Since all of the refugees have made their applications for repatriation through the United Nations, our job is merely as a housekeeper to provide them with a place to stay."

Earlier yesterday, at the Arkansas refugee center, several hundred South Viet-

namese refugees staged a demonstration expressing gratitude to Americans for providing refuge for homeless Southeast Asians.

Demonstrators carried signs which read "Only Viet Cong wish living under Communists," "We are grateful to Americans for their assistance," "Down with Communist lackeys who frustrate Vietnamese existence," and "Don't threaten and force other refugees to return to Vietnam."

Army Colonel Joe Rodgers said the demonstrating refugees were afraid the refugees who want to return to Vietnam would lead Americans to believe that the refugees are ungrateful.

The group of 164 refugees requesting repatriation left the camp two days ahead of schedule. Officials said feelings were running high, but emphasized the earlier departure date was because of the availability of planes and not because of concern over confrontations.

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