

Fears on Refugees Called Unfounded

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June 26—The frequently expressed fears of many officials and others dealing with the South Vietnamese refugee program—that thousands of those who fled as Saigon fell to the Communists would be illiterate people for whom resettlement would be difficult—appear to have been unfounded.

The first sociological studies by the President's interagency task force on Indochina refugees showed that the Vietnamese group was mostly affluent, educated and from middle-class backgrounds. Large numbers of them also speak English.

One computer study of the records of 52,951 refugees showed that almost 90 per cent of the 10,039 who classified themselves as heads of households had a high school, col-

lege or post-graduate education. In fact, 33 per cent reported they had done university or post-graduate work.

Another, broader study bears out the Government's longstanding contention that large numbers of women and children among the refugees would minimize the impact on the job market.

The Government had estimated that only about 30,000 positions would be needed to take care of the newcomers. So far, only about 40,000 of

the refugees have found sponsors and left the military bases where they are being housed.

The second study, involved 177,106 of the approximately 130,000 refugees, has found that 45 per cent were under 18 years old, about 16 per cent between the ages of 18 and 24 and about 27 per cent between 25 and 44. It found 52.3 per cent were male and 47.7 per cent female.

The smaller survey found that 31 per cent of the heads of households had professional, technical or managerial skills. Of the remainder, 13 per cent were in clerical or sales work; 12.3 per cent in service industries; 10.9 in farming, fishing, forestry and related industries; .03 per cent in agricultural processing; 1.2 per cent, machine trades; 1.5, benchwork,

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assembly and repairs; 1.9 per cent, structural and construction; and 26 per cent, transportation and miscellaneous. Five per cent did not indicate their occupation.

For weeks, some persons involved with the resettlement of the refugees have been particularly worried about the and jobs for the large numbers of untrained escapers they assumed made up a major portion of the last wave to flee by boat.

However, these studies and others showed that the last to leave were not markedly different from those who left earlier by plane. Most, also, were middle-class, fairly well educated or well-trained, and many spoke some English.

Aside from the statistical studies, officials here at Camp Pendleton have noticed little difference between the late arrivals and the earlier ones.

No 'Rice Paddy' Types

"I don't think there has been a tremendous difference," Marine Lieut. Col. Arthur P. Brill, the Department of Defense spokesman here, said today. "There has been some. There have been more military people. But there was a lot of speculation that we'd be winding up

with a lot of illiterates and that doesn't seem to be true."

To the contrary, Colonel Brill said that studies here had shown that 50 per cent of the adult refugees speak some English.

One spokesman here, who asked not to be named, added, "We're certainly not getting the rice paddy type in."

Camp Pendleton is now housing 18,500 refugees, the most it can.

In Washington, Elinor Green, chief spokesman for the task force, said in making available the results of the group's studies:

"We never agreed with the assumption on the part of those people who claimed they [the last to leave] were all fishermen and farmers because they were the only ones who had access to boats."

Contending that most of the last waves of refugees were middle-class and well educated, she added:

"A lot of people who couldn't make it on a plane had a fall-back position. Some people sank all their money into a boat.

She cited task force studies conducted nearly a month apart at the Asan Camp on Guam to support her contention.

In the first survey on May 6,

shortly after the first refugees arrived there, 1,220 persons were interviewed.

Of those, 15 per cent were per cent as skilled, 33 per cent classified as professionals, 50 as housewives or students, and 2 per cent as unskilled.

In the later survey on June 1, after most of those who fled by boat had arrived, 1,181 persons were interviewed. Of those, 23 per cent were classified as professionals, 66 per cent as skilled, 4 per cent a housewives or students, and 7 per cent as unskilled.

As examples of the types of persons who fled in the different waves of escape, she noted that there were 22 doctors or persons in related fields in the first group and 13 in the second. However, she said, there were only 12 nurses in the first group and 15 in the second.

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However, in some areas, there were greater discrepancies. For instance, 51 business managers were in the first group and only 4 in the second; 34 secretaries in the first, three in the second. Presumably this was because many persons who worked for the United States Government or American companies were flown out early.

The second group also had many more military men, police and civil servants who fled at the last minute. There were 148 senior military officers in that group compared with eight in the first; 41 policemen compared with none in the first; and 68 civil servants compared with none in the first.