

# 4 Private U.S. Groups Trying to Aid Vietnam

Washington

In a direct contradiction of U.S. policy, at least four private American organizations are still trying to ship more than \$1 million worth of food and equipment to Vietnam.

The U.S. government cut off all aid to Vietnam with the fall of the Saigon government in March, but since that time three private non-profit organizations have applied for licenses to send at least \$1.2 million in goods to the nation now controlled by the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

The three groups are the American Friends Service Committee, the Central Committee of Mennonites and the International Children's Fund.

A fourth agency, the Bach Mai Hospital Fund, is currently supplying goods.

None of the licenses, which come from the Commerce and Treasury Departments after the State Department gives its blessing, has yet been issued. But official U.S. sources said privately here they believe all will be granted once the situation in Saigon becomes clearer to American diplomats.

In anticipation of sending such shipments, the American Friends Service Committee has opened a Hong Kong office to supply about \$1 million worth of aid.

A spokesman for the Philadelphia-based Quaker organization said his groups wants to give the Vietnamese \$500,000 worth of food, medicine and agricultural equipment, \$175,000 worth of machine tools to repair hospital equipment, \$150,000 to the North Vietnamese to set

up seven cooperative workshops — small factories — and \$75,000 for supplies to a Hanoi high school hit by U.S. bombs.

“Our feeling is that there are still a lot of suffering

people there — a lot of victims,” the spokesman said.

Another religious organization, the Central Committee of Mennonites of Akron, Pa., already has sent \$200,000 worth of canned pork and condensed milk from Hong Kong to Haiphong, North Vietnam.

Another agency that has applied for a license is the International Children's Fund of Berkeley, which wants to send \$90,000 worth of cortisone and drugs from London to Vietnam to combat tuberculosis.

Tom Miller, an attorney who runs the fund, said that last February he got a State Department telephone call telling him it would be all right to send \$5000 worth of drugs to the North Vietnamese Red Cross. But after he applied for a second license in early May to send \$90,000

worth of additional medicine, this time to the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam, he received no response at all. He is irritated about the delay.

Another organization, the Bach Mai Hospital Fund, Inc., of Cambridge, Mass., is still supplying goods to Vietnam under an old permit that has not yet expired.

Tom Davidson, the executive secretary for the fund set up to rebuild the Hanoi hospital hit by bombs during the war, said his organization is now sending \$50,000 worth of medicine to Danang from Japan. He wants to raise an additional \$100,000 for more medicines for the south.

“We will be applying for an extension of our license,” Davidson said. “If it comes down to it, we will ship without a license.”

Newsday