

No U.S. Penalty in Refugee Airlift

Washington

The Immigration and Naturalization Service has decided not to penalize Flying Tiger Airlines for flying 99 Vietnamese refugees into the United States without proper entry documents, an INS representative said yesterday.

"We have terminated proceedings against Flying Tiger based on new evidence that reflected the reasons for doing what they did," said Janet Graham.

Asked whether the case was called off for humanitarian reasons, she said, "I suppose it could be classified as that because of the situation at the time."

She said the company presented the additional evidence to INS officials.

The Immigration Service earlier had filed a notice of intent to fine the company \$99,000 for flying 99 Vietnamese refugees to Los Angeles last April, when thousands of Vietnamese and Cambodians were being evacuated from their countries.

The INS was acting under a federal law which provides penalties for transporting persons into the United States without proper visas or other entry documents.

Associated Press