

Air Team Due in Saigon Today to Speed Pullout

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SAIGON, South Vietnam, Jan. 26—A team of about 75 Air Force transportation specialists is expected to arrive here tomorrow to help speed the airlift of the remaining American troops out of South Vietnam, American officers said today.

A few hundred American soldiers have left the country since Wednesday, when President Nixon announced that a cease-fire would be signed Saturday.

But the officers said they thought that the large-scale departure of the more than 24,000 American servicemen still in South Vietnam would probably start toward the end of next week.

"There's a lot of paper work to be done," one officer said. "Personnel records have to be checked out, everyone's got to have new assignment and, of course, there are awards and decorations that have to be handed out. You wouldn't believe the paper work we've got to do, but once we get this thing cranked up it ought to go pretty smoothly."

The officers said the troops would be moved on large jet transports chartered from commercial airlines. They are to fly directly to Travis Air Force Base in near San Francisco, stopping along the way only to take on fuel.

According to the terms of the cease-fire agreement, all United States military personnel must be out of South Viet-

nam within 60 days of the signing.

Informed officers say they expect that a little more than half of the remaining troops to be gone by the end of the first 30 days. The last troops to leave will be those in headquarters units and military policemen who are responsible for providing protection until the end.

All through the American withdrawal from a peak of more than 500,000, however, fresh troops have been arriving in South Vietnam. Informed officers say the last two flights bringing American troops landed here the day before the President's announcement.

The last flights also carried several civilians and a contingent of marines, the officer said, suggesting the shape that American involvement in Vietnam will take in the days to come.

The civilians, informed officials said, were joining a growing force of technicians paid by the United States to assist the South Vietnamese military forces. Some officials say that as many as 10,000 American civilian technicians will eventually be assigned to South Vietnam, many of them working with Saigon's air force, which is gravely lacking in skilled mechanics and specialists in other fields of aviation maintenance.

The marines are to be assigned as guards at United States diplomatic facilities. As the American military organization is liquidated, officials say, the United States plans to establish consulates in at least

three of the four military regions of the country and the marines will guard these installations, as they do around the world.

Meanwhile, tons of equipment must be shipped home, although great quantities will be signed over to the South Vietnamese armed forces.

True to form, however, the the American command here is cautiously waiting until the cease-fire goes into effect before making any major moves.

"We've got to keep our guard up until the last minute," one officer said.

"The early part of next week though, you'll start seeing a lot of activity as the units actually start dismantling themselves and packing up," he added.

Many Helicopters to Stay

At the large military port in Saigon today, soldiers were setting up steam cleaning machines and clearing warehouses to temporarily house the helicopters and other heavy equipment that will go back to the United States. Officials of the Department of Agriculture will inspect each piece of equipment to insure that no foreign soil, insects or worms inadvertently enter the United States.

One officer said that of about 650 American helicopters currently in Vietnam, 250 would be turned over to the South Vietnamese. Most of these will be UH-1's, the helicopter that has been most widely used in this war. A few twin-rotor CH-47 transport helicopters will also be left behind.

The officer said the South

Vietnamese would also get scores of trucks and jeeps, and a few fork-lifts and bulldozers.

Many of the buildings that Americans built and used have already been signed over to the South Vietnamese with their furnishings and need only to be vacated.

A great deal of the final preparation for the American departure was completed last October and November, when it seemed that a settlement might be signed any day.

"We were signing over stuff to the Vietnamese as quick as he would write," said one officer, "so we could be ready to move out if the war ended tomorrow."

In October, one Navy officer reportedly released all of the air conditioners that his unit had owned along with a handful of outboard motors. When it became clear that the war was dragging on the officer went to the South Vietnamese officer who had received the goods and asked to borrow them back. But the officer had sold almost everything. The American reportedly ended up buying back some of the equipment with the black market in order to keep his unit going.

Many of the American bases turned over to the South Vietnamese during the early stages of the withdrawal have been stripped and abandoned.

In some cases, South Vietnamese officers have reportedly refused to accept former American buildings when they discovered that plumbing and electrical fixtures have been removed.