

18 September 1954

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Status Report on the Evacuation of Refugees from North and South Vietnam - Current as of September 18, 1954

1. Numbers:

A. The following tabulation represents the number of refugees evacuated to date:

	<u>Air</u>	<u>Sea</u>	<u>Total</u>
French	116,418	88,284	204,702
U.S.	.....	88,250	88,250
Total	116,418	176,534	292,952

In addition U.S. and French have lifted 44,715 tons of military equipment and materiel.

B. By categories the above figures include:

	<u>Air</u>	<u>French</u>	<u>Sea</u>	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>Sea</u>	<u>Total</u>
French Union Troops	12,937	11,845	.....	.....	.....	24,382
Vietnam Troops and Dependents	3,703	19,644	.....	.....	5,702	29,079
French Civilians	9,071	3,323	.....	.....	.....	12,394
Vietnam Civilians	90,681	49,424	.....	.....	80,176	220,281
Other Civilians (includes Chinese and Nungs)	196	4,048	.....	.....	2,372	6,616
TOTAL	116,418	88,284	.....	.....	88,250	292,952

II. Organization:

A. The overall coordination of the U.S. effort has been assigned to Lt. General John W. O'Daniel, Chief of MAAG. General O'Daniel, with a staff of officers, has assumed responsibility for

coordination of all evacuation efforts in the staging areas in the North (Hanoi, Haiphong, Hong Gay) and coordinating the U.S. Navy ship movements to Saigon and Cap St. Jacques. The activities of the reception areas are under his general coordination, including the services of STEM, French military, and Vietnamese military and civilian elements.

The mobilization of all evacuation resources has been achieved and, except for a movement of more refugees than the South Vietnam Government could receive, most of the earlier problems encountered in the evacuation have now been overcome.

B. French: In the North, the French military and civilian authorities have cooperated fully in assisting in staging area camp erection and supervision, land transportation, and providing small craft for transporting refugees to U.S. ships. The French have also maintained an exceedingly comprehensive air lift from Hanoi to Saigon for both military and civilian evacuees. In Saigon, French military have assisted in erecting tents and in providing transportation for refugees to reception centers and resettlement areas.

C. Vietnamese Government: In the North, the Vietnamese Government has assumed the responsibility for arranging for temporary care of evacuees, for providing food and cash payments, and assuming an increasing responsibility for supervision of the camps themselves. In Saigon, under the newly appointed Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Ngo Ngoc Doi, increasing assumption of responsibilities for refugees has been achieved. Mr. Doi has organized his own office and is apparently in reasonable control of the situation in the South. He has also assumed responsibility for conferring weekly with the province chiefs and is delegating additional responsibility to them and to several Bishops in resettlement areas for resettlement operations.

III. Resettlement:

Joint planning on the part of STEM and the Commission for Refugees achieved a mutually satisfactory resettlement plan. This plan, in summary, includes the following:

A. Refugees to be considered: Government employees and their dependents; secondary dependents of Vietnamese military forces (immediate families excluded); civilians, including farmers, tradesmen, artisans, fishermen, etc., and minority groups.

B. Total number of refugees now south of the 17th parallel in above categories is estimated at 290,000. An additional 110,000 are expected, making an anticipated total of 400,000. However, if any real acceleration of numbers occurs in the Hanoi area just prior to the October 10 deadline, this figure might reach 450,000. Since many of the persons deciding to evacuate

at the last minute will likely be tradesmen and professionals, the overage will have little effect on the 400,000 estimate because the majority of these two classes will be generally independent and in need only of transportation.

C. Tentative resettlement areas agreed upon:

Central and South Vietnam	200,000
East South Vietnam	200,000
West South Vietnam	50,000
Coastal area, Central Vietnam	80,000
Dispersed miscellaneous areas, South Vietnam	80,000
Total	400,000

The above areas are presently reasonably secure and all indicate definite possibilities of satisfactory cropping. Some areas must have bulldozing operations, drainage and brush clearance. However, much of the clearance will be done by the refugees themselves. Temporary tent arrangements are being installed, pending the arrival of the necessary building materials which will permit each family to build its own permanent housing. In most areas, one hectare of land is being allotted each family and, where possible, the houses will be constructed to permit within the village itself a small plot of ground to permit the growing of vegetables.

D. Estimated resettlement costs: The 400,000 persons anticipated break down into approximately 80,000 families. Estimated costs which will cover the construction of paillette type houses, provide equipment and seed, e.g., plows, hand tools, fishing nets, hand looms, wood working tools, etc., will amount to 14,000 IC\$ per family unit, or a total of 1,120,000,000 IC\$.

The 80,000 family units will be settled in 200 villages. In addition to the estimated family unit costs above, additional general village costs for the following items are estimated:

one school, material only	8,000 IC\$
one dispensary	5,000
One market	8,000
wells and privys	120,000
Total for each village	141,000 IC\$

Total for 200 villages : 1,205,200,000 IC\$

Additional U.S. dollars required: In addition to the 5 million dollars presently expended for tents and other housing requirements, it is estimated that resettlement will require \$3,100,000. The

additional \$3,100,000 will be used for the purchase of buffalos, quonset huts for schools and dispensaries, trucks, jeeps and station wagons for required transportation, blankets, cotton cloth, water supply and water purification, etc.

E. Other evacuees: In addition to the 400,000 evacuees from the North, there are now in South Vietnam an estimated 800,000 displaced persons who will require various types of assistance. This assistance is estimated to reach a cost of one billion piasters, at approximately one-third of the unit cost for the North Vietnam refugees.

IV. General Summary:

During the initial stages of the evacuation from the North, and with the arrival of refugees in Saigon, the Mission was gravely concerned with respect to the Government's ability to make reasonable arrangements for even the temporary reception of the evacuees. However, in spite of a frequent turnover of officials responsible for refugee activities, there now appears to be a satisfactory government approach to the problem. The last and present Commissioner of Refugees has apparently secured the necessary authority from the President to conduct his operations with reasonable support from the other ministries. With the assistance of STEM technicians, the resettlement proposals are now being implemented in an almost satisfactory manner.

The evacuation and ship transport, largely the responsibility of the U.S. military and Navy, has progressed to such an extent that agreement has just been reached to reduce by approximately 50% the numbers being transported by sea from Haiphong to Cap St. Jacques and Saigon.

The Commissioner for Refugees is still encountering difficulty in overcoming confusion and red tape involved in securing adequate funds to cover the mounting costs of maintaining, feeding, and transporting refugees to the reception centers. He is gradually obtaining the services of a greater number of functionaries who have been evacuated from the North and the outlook is indeed brighter than it was even ten days ago.

The Mission is confident, now that the peak has been passed in numbers, that with the continued sustained efforts of the U.S. Navy and military and the improved government organization and facilities, the evacuation is well in hand. Unless unforeseen difficulties arise, or the present government is seriously weakened, a satisfactory integration of North Vietnam refugees into the South Vietnam economy is assured.