

*John Thelen*

PROBLEMS

One of our major problems is to persuade the clergy to take their flocks anywhere but Bien-Hoa Province - time and again, the refugees have refused to get in trucks intended for other destinations, even though already built houses were awaiting them and better land was available.

Additional persuasion should be brought to bear on Bishop Chi to direct his priests to accept suitable locations in other Provinces.

The delay in the arrival of farming tools is a cause for concern - refugees are handicapped in the clearing of their lands and putting the soil into productivity - it is feared they will dissipate their cash allowance before they can become self supporting.

A Distribution Plan should be set up now to ensure speedy allocation of tools on their arrival here.

The Commission General has been loathe to take any steps to take over abandoned rice lands for refugee use.

Joint pressure by USOM and the French should be used to solve this problem, the more so as most of the refugees are rice cultivators.

Furthermore, we must not lose sight of the fact that by April we may expect a further mass exodus from Haiphong, which might reach the total of 200,000 -

there is only one possibility of resettling these people and that is in the areas lately occupied by the Viets - amongst others: the Plaine des Jones.

Granted that the reclaiming of this swampland is far beyond our means for resettling the refugees, and properly should be a National responsibility, it nevertheless should be within our power to encroach along the borders of this wilderness and gradually win back parts of this territory.

We will also be faced with the relocation of the more than a million displaced persons, who were chased out of their homes by the Viets during the heavy fighting in Southern and Central VN - this, however, might be a lesser problem than anticipated due to the natural tendency of people to adapt themselves to their new surroundings and their reluctance to make yet another move - it might suffice to provide them with the normal requirements to bring them on an equal footing with the refugees from the North.