

CONFIDENTIAL

D. G. Lavergne, Asst. Dir. for Resett. & Rehab.

28 Jan. 1955

M. H. B. Adler, Chief, Field Service

Weekly Situation Report - Week Ending Jan. 15

ESCAPES AND REFUGEE EVACUATION

4052 escapees were reported to have entered Haiphong during the week ending 15 January. The majority of these escapees arrived via the Hanoi-Haiphong railroad without Vietnamese permits to cross the border of the perimeter. Vietnamese control near the demarcation line is restricted to a search for money, gold, and other valuables. No attempt appears to be made to close this escape route.

The Evacuation Committee and other Vietnamese groups concerned with the escape and evacuation of refugees continue to plan for escapee operations after the May withdrawal from Haiphong. During a one-day visit to Saigon the Field Representative in Haiphong recommended support for the establishment of an Escapee Operations Center in Hue. In addition, he noted the need for reception centers along the 17th parallel to receive persons crossing the border and a relocation camp and interrogation center in Hue. He suggested an initial American impact at the reception centers in the form of emergency medical care, food, or other relief. Escapees would be interrogated and processed at the Hue relocation center. A continued American impact in the form of relief and care was recommended. The Field Representative is preparing a detailed report on the proposed plan.

Reports from Haiphong continue to indicate a heavy post-Tet exodus of refugees now resident within the Haiphong perimeter as well as a probable increase in the numbers of escapees. The USNS Marine Serpent has arrived to relieve the USNS General Howze on the evacuation run. The Howze is scheduled to depart early next month, but the Marine Adder is scheduled to arrive soon afterward to provide a second vessel to meet the anticipated increase in the refugee evacuation load.

As of 15 January the total personnel of all categories evacuated from North Vietnam was as follows:

	FRENCH & OTHER TRANSPORTATION			US NAVY	TOTAL
	<u>Air</u>	<u>Surface</u>	<u>Self-Evac.</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
French Military	20,636	46,664			67,300
VN Military	6,076	35,262		13,657	54,995
French Civilians	10,470	19,647			30,117
VN Civilians	144,575	65,972		176,847	387,394
Others	363	11,695	41,328	8,344	61,730
	<u>182,120</u>	<u>179,240</u>	<u>41,328</u>	<u>198,848</u>	<u>601,536</u>

CONFIDENTIAL

EVACUATION OF SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

The evacuation of Government-owned civilian supplies and equipment of American-aid origin continues on schedule. The bulk of the equipment is reported to have been shipped. Most of the items remaining to be shipped are vehicles and equipment now being used by essential government services within the perimeter.

No further action has been reported from Haiphong in regard to the shipment of privately owned equipment at 400 piasters per cubic meter. No action or policy decision by the Navy was reported from Haiphong.

Reports indicate that the Haiphong cement plant will continue in operation through March, by which time it is anticipated that all imported supplies such as gypsum, paper bags, etc., required for the manufacture of cement, will be consumed. The director of the cement plant reported that all replacement parts and other small stores for the plant had been shipped southward. He did not believe it would be practicable to dismantle any part of the plant. The management of the cement plant expects to have a 25,000-ton stockpile of cement for consumption in Free Vietnam at the end of March. The management has requested the Vietnamese government to consider this stockpile--which is described as a two months' supply--for the country in preparing import schedules for cement. This request was made to avoid unnecessary competition with Japanese or other imported cement during April and May.

The Charbonnage du Tonkin requested information on available shipping space for the heavy coal mining equipment in Hon Gay and Campha Port. However, the director of the company noted in this letter that the final decision to evacuate this equipment would depend upon the results of negotiations between the Vietminh and the French Mission in Hanoi.

The Field Representative and other American personnel doubt that this equipment can be evacuated at this time without Vietminh consent because of the heavy Communist infiltration of the coal mine region.

RESETTLEMENT

The office of the Commissioner General for Refugees reported a total of 231,397 refugees actually located on resettlement sites in South Vietnam on 18 January. This represents an increase of 1789 persons over the previous week. 106 additional housing units were completed during the week, bringing the total number of resettlement dwellings constructed in South Vietnam to 17,264.

The office of the Commissioner again failed to produce a report on the progress of the resettlement program in Central Vietnam. The reporting situation in regard to CVN continues as described in the previous weekly report.

-2-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

The Resources Development Advisory Committee recommended against resettling additional refugees in Ben Tre province. The Committee unanimously recommended the transfer of approximately 6000 refugees now in camps in the province to other areas for resettlement. The Committee next will investigate the resettlement areas in Tay Ninh province. The Field Representative responsible for Tay Ninh describes the province as a potential resettlement area for a considerable number of refugees.

The Directress of the An Lac Vien Orphanage visited Saigon during the week to discuss the evacuation and resettlement of the institution near Saigon. An attempt was made to impress her with the necessity for clarifying the legal position of the orphanage and the creating of a responsible legal organization to administer the institution. As a result of these conferences a budget has been received, but no action appears to have been taken in Haiphong to create the recommended administrative body. A report from the Field Representative on this matter is expected next week.

cc: Program & Requirements
Agriculture & Natural Resources
Public Works
Health & Sanitation
Education
Program Support.

Gen. O'Daniel, MAAG

CONFIDENTIAL