

The Raid on Tansonnhut

The Sound of Bombs in the Late Afternoon

By H. D. S. Greenway
Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 28—The bombs fell on Tansonnhut in the late afternoon soon after the first real thunderstorm of the season had swept over Saigon. We knew it wasn't thunder—too sharp a sound—but what?

Out on the rain-washed streets, people were hurrying home at the end of the day when the entire city seemed to erupt in gunfire. The sound bounced off the walls of buildings, sending pedestrians scurrying for the corners and doorways.

Some of the fire was from anti-aircraft guns from the palace and machine guns from the rooftops. We could see the tracers pouring up in languid arcs trying to reach an A-37 fighter-bomber that seemed to be circling overhead.

A C-130 transport plane, low and straining for altitude like a fat duck, came in from another direction and the tracers turned on it. The startled pilot, probably

coming in for a landing, banked and got away.

We found out later that several A-37s had bombed Tansonnhut airfield, but whether the deed was done by disgruntled South Vietnamese pilots or whether it was the first North Vietnamese air raid of the war is still not known.

A Vietnamese stewardess said that Air Vietnam's Boeing was just boarding for Bangkok when the planes struck. They bombed a bay of transport planes and the stewardess said she looked across to see a "sea of fire." The passengers all scrambled for the terminal and lay on the floor. The Boeing took off without them.

Shortly after the bombing, an expert in aviation pointed out to me what he said was a Mig-21, a Soviet-built fighter used by the North Vietnamese, wheeling in the sunset-lit sky. It had been a day of Mig sightings. Reporters had said they had

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Attack—and Panic in Saigon's Streets

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seen a Mig make a pass over Saigon in the morning and the South Vietnamese air force reportedly picked up Migs on their radar, but none of the reports could really be confirmed.

In Saigon on this day, with power passing to the republic's third president in a week, no one knew what to expect, or what was happening, what was rumor and what was real.

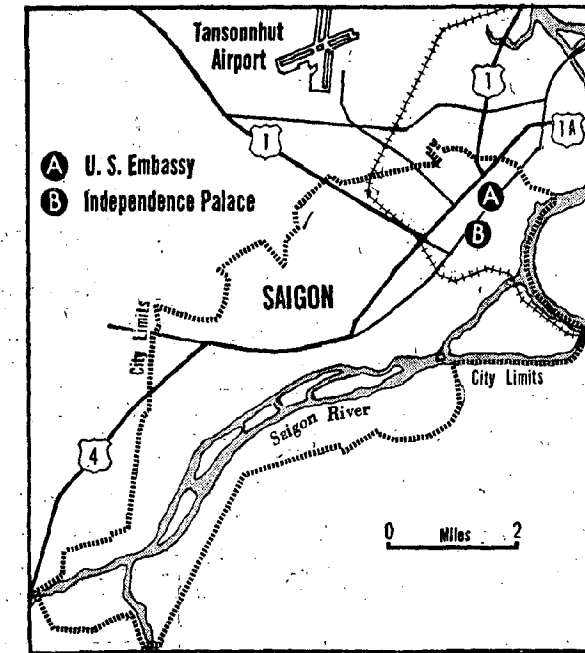
The faces of the Saigoneses, pressed into the gutter and lying on sidewalks as the furious fire crackled in waves overhead, showed dismay and fear. It is a population that has lived on the near side of panic for weeks. Now it seemed as if all control was gone.

One wire service immediately reported heavy street fighting in Saigon with North Vietnamese invaders. Another source said the planes had strafed the cathedral. Neither story proved true.

Shortly afterward the firing stopped. Soldiers appeared and started stringing barbed wire across the street near the Washington Post office. They looked frightened and jumpy—better to keep away from them.

A South Vietnamese officer, apparently enraged when a taxi stalled and did not move on his command, took out his .45 automatic and shot at the driver, fortunately, missing him.

Mike Marriott, an Australian cameraman working for CBS, was filming the scene; later the officer pointed his pistol at Marriott's head. According to Marriott, the pistol somehow failed to fire and the officer began to



The Washington Post

Tan Son Nhut Airport was attacked Monday and early Tuesday and explosions were heard throughout the city.

beat Marriott with it, opening up a scalp wound. Marriott turned and fled.

It had been a day of disorientation. On the Newport Bridge, where the Bien Hoa highway crosses the Dongnai River, you could lie on the crest of the bridge in the morning and watch the Vietcong shooting at you from the far bank, not a mile from the outskirts of the city.

Yesterday the bridge had been crowded with traffic going back and forth. Today not a vehicle moved, and nervous South Vietnamese paratroopers crept around the approaches to the bridge or peered cautiously over the side.

Early in the morning, the Vietcong, probably no more than 20 men, had moved in and taken the bridgehead on the other side of the river. Their instructions must have been to hold as long as possible. By mid-morning they were deployed off to the sides and under the bridge itself.

A couple of companies of South Vietnamese paratroopers were put into the area around 9 a.m., and helicopter gunships circled overhead looking for targets. When they found one they would dart down and fire off a salvo of rockets that would explode with a

great flash and roar, kicking up brown dust and smoke.

But when it was over, from time to time, you could see one of the Vietcong, dressed in black, rise from cover and dart to a new location. To show their defiance, the Vietcong would fire half a clip of automatic rifle rounds at the paratroopers, the bullets hitting the bridge or passing harmlessly overhead in the hot, humid air.

Behind was the skyline of Saigon. Off to the left was the American-built river port with its commissary, where only days before large American contractors could go in and carry out bundles of American groceries at the big American supermarket.

In the river lay the barges with their rocket seats which used to make the passage up to Phnom Penh. They are idle now that the Cambodian war is lost. This one seems so close to being lost.

The soldiers were about to cross the river and come on the Vietcong from behind, but none seemed to want to die this late in the war and nobody seemed in much of a hurry.

The Vietcong at the Newport Bridge and the rockets that earlier set two warehouses ablaze have showed that the river port can be closed and that Saigon, like Phnom Penh before it, is being surrounded and cut off.

The day ended with sound trucks circling through the city announcing a 24-hour curfew and telling people to go home, to shut their doors, and to listen to the radio. All is uncertainty. Everyone is afraid.

Attacks Panic Saigon: VC Reject Truce Bid

By Philip A. McCombs
and H. D. S. Greenway
Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 29 (Tuesday)—Tansonnhut airport was bombed Monday afternoon and the airport and capital were hit Tuesday morning, causing panic in Saigon and killing two American Marines.

The tempo of the war increased violently as Duong Van (Big) Minh took over as president of South Vietnam Monday in a bid to negotiate a political settlement to the war. He declared a "government of national reconciliation and concord" and called for an immediate cease-fire and peace negotiations.

The Vietcong, however, rejected the bid almost immediately and demanded additional concessions by South Vietnam.

[In Hanoi, North Vietnamese officials said Minh's return to power "comes too late," Agence France-Presse reported. "The revolutionary forces are determined to finish the job," the officials said.]

Communist forces launched heavy rocket and artillery fire at Saigon and Tansonnhut as dawn broke Tuesday, bringing with it the first reports of American casualties.

American officials, in touch with each other by radio, said two U.S. Marines have been killed. With choking voices, the officials asked where the bodies were. There were no reports of other U.S. casualties.

The radio traffic spoke of Tansonnhut being heavily shelled—"four rounds in five seconds on the flight line"—which means artillery pieces probably Russian-made 130-mm. guns were being used.

Inside the city itself, it was calm at dawn after the panic which followed the bombing of the airport on Monday, but there was the sound of helicopters overhead.

After the panic which followed the bombing of the airport on Monday, but there was the sound of helicopters overhead.

Through the pre-dawn hours, 40 to 50 rounds of rocket or artillery fire

were heard in the capital. There were a number of loud explosions, apparently ammunition dumps which were blown up.

As the rocket and artillery fire streamed in, Communist forces closed in around Saigon like a vise. There was heavy fighting Monday at a bridge on the northern outskirts where just one day earlier refugees had been crossing to stream into the city.

Monday's bombing of Tansonnhut airport, packed with South Vietnamese refugees and some departing Americans, was carried out by several A-37 jet fighter-bombers. They destroyed a bomb storage area and also hit several South Vietnamese air force C-130

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The two Marines killed at Tansonnhut were the first U.S. servicemen killed in Vietnam since Dec. 14, 1973. Their identities were not immediately released.

Monday morning a company of Communist troops dug in near a bridge on the northeastern outskirts of Saigon and cut off the highway to Bienhoa, a major base 18 miles away, which is itself threatened. There was heavy fighting at the bridge, which is just a few minutes' drive from downtown Saigon and near the U.S. embassy commissary.

Tansonnhut Bombed, Shelled

VIETNAM, From A1

transport planes. The U.S.-run evacuation was brought to a halt, was resumed and then was halted again by Tuesday shelling.

U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin went to the airport Tuesday morning to check conditions. There was small arms fire near the gate as he entered and an American voice on a two-way radio warned that he should proceed with "utmost caution."

There are still an estimated 954 Americans left in Saigon. More than 70 helicopters are available on five aircraft carriers off the Vietnamese coast to evacuate them if the airport remains closed.

(A U.S. Air Force C-130 transport was reported destroyed, but it was unclear whether this occurred during the bombing raid on Monday or in the pre-dawn shelling on Tuesday, the AP reported in Washington.)

Massive numbers of communist troops backed by tanks, artillery and sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles now surround Saigon and could enter the city at any time. Instead, they have squeezed the city with exquisite precision, cutting off exit routes, capturing nearby towns and raising tensions among the populace to a fever pitch.

Also early Monday morning South Vietnamese air force sources reported Communist-built Migs flying over Saigon. Reporters familiar with the appearance of Migs also said they saw these planes in the sky. The planes, which can reach Saigon from bases the Communists have captured in recent weeks, apparently departed without doing any damage.

Shortly after Minh's speech Monday evening, several A-37 jet fighter bombers attacked Tansonnhut airport on the northwestern edge of the capital, destroying a bomb-storage area and hitting several South Vietnamese air force C-130 transport planes parked in a row. It was unclear who was flying the A-37s, however.

Later, the jets flew over portions of downtown Saigon and drew heavy anti-aircraft fire. The crowded downtown area went into panic as soldiers fired into the sky for about 15 minutes. The government then announced a 24-hour curfew.

Theories on the bombing vary. Some speculate that the A-37 pilots were engaged because their families were not included in the evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese being mounted from Tansonnhut, Saigon's major international commercial and military airport.

Others speculate that the A-37s had been captured by the Communists during the past weeks, and that captured South Vietnamese pilots were induced to fly the raid.

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Addressing the assembled politicians and government officials in Independence Palace Monday, Minh said his task is clear: "To obtain a cease-fire accord, the sooner the better, to negotiate a political solution for South Vietnam in the frame of the Paris agreement, to end the war and to restore peace in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord."

Minh announced that his first measures will be to release political prisoners and to abolish press censorship.

He announced that his vice president will be Nguyen Van Huyen, a Catholic and former senator who resigned his seat after Thieu arranged to have the constitution amended so he could run for a third presidential term. The new prime minister, Minh said,

will be Sen. Vu Van Mau, a leading Buddhist opposition figure who led a political struggle against Thieu late last year.

Minh is expected to name his Cabinet Tuesday. He said it will be made up of "personalities who represent religious groups and political tendencies of South Vietnam . . . and whose position in favor of reconciliation is so obvious that no one could doubt about their will for peace."

Several times the new president referred respectfully to the Vietcong as "the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam"—their proper title.

Minh told soldiers to "defend the territory which is left and to defend peace. . . . When the cease-fire order is given, you should rigorously execute that order in accordance with the terms of the Paris agreement."

He also asked all government officials and police to continue "watching vigilantly to prevent all sabotage."

Addressing the PRG and "our friends of the other side," Minh said, "We sincerely want reconciliation, you clearly know that . . .

"Your standpoint has always been the implementation of the Paris agreement. This has always been ours, too. From the Paris agreement as our common grounds, let us sit together to seek together for a solution which is most beneficial to our homeland . . .

"I propose that we stop immediately our reciprocal attacks. I hope you will accept this proposal and that the negotiations will begin at once." He referred repeatedly to the Vietcong as "our brothers."

Speaking of "our allies"—perhaps a reference to the United States—Minh said the government wants to maintain friendly relations and welcomes economic and humanitarian aid.

He called on Vietnamese not to leave the country but to "stay in order to build with us . . . a new south for future generations."

Minh, 59, was the head of the military junta that took power after the 1963 assassination of President Ngo Dinh Diem. Minh was in turn pushed

out several months later and has been a political outsider ever since.

Minh is South Vietnam's third president in a week. His ascendancy, of dubious constitutionality, was carefully orchestrated by Vietnamese and by the American and French embassies who believe that a neutralist government offers the only chance to avoid an immediate Communist military takeover of Saigon.

Only hours after Minh had finished speaking, however, the Vietcong press spokesman, Maj. Phuong Nam, said his statement "is not in keeping" with demands made by the Communists.

Nam said these demands include the abolition of the Saigon government and its army.

"The Saigon administration, instrument of U.S. neocolonialism, must be abolished. The repressive and coercive war machine used against the South Vietnamese people must be abolished," the Vietcong statement said.

"Only in this way can the most cherished aspiration of the South Vietnamese people be realized in a most favorable manner and in keeping with the spirit of the Paris agreements on Vietnam."

The political scenario for the next few days is not clear, but what is clear to experienced observers is that if it does not live up to Communist expectations they will simply come in and capture Saigon.

"What they want now is a military surrender combined with a setting up of a National Council of Reconciliation and Concord in accordance with the agreements signed in Paris," said a South Vietnamese who has had long-time contacts with the Communists.

The Saigon side always viewed the NCRC as an electoral commission, but the Communists viewed it as an "administrative structure"—in effect, a coalition government made up of a Saigon part, a Communist part and neutralists.

The Communists have said that the two-month-old offensive that is bringing them victory was necessary in order to force the Saigon side to implement the agreement.

THE WASHINGTON POST Monday, April 28, 1975

A Time for Leaving at Former 'Pentagon East'

By Philip A. McCombs
Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 27—"How do you do, ladies?" blurted the American lieutenant colonel with hearty bonhomie at two waitresses sitting at a table in the compact cafeteria that serves the giant American headquarters complex at Tansonnhut air-base.

"We die," answered one of the waitresses, fingering a paper napkin.

"Die?" said the lieutenant colonel, sitting down with apparent concern at the formica-topped table. He mused somberly: "Die, die, die . . . once you die, you don't come back, *fini*."

All three giggled.

During many years of the American involvement here, this massive prefabricated building was known as

"Pentagon East". Gens. William Westmoreland and Creighton Abrams had their offices here. In these yellow, plasticine hallways, the loudest noises traditionally have been the click of military boots on the rubberized flooring and the quiet, cool hum of giant air conditioners somewhere in the distance.

The headquarters used to be known as MACV for Military Assistance Command-Vietnam. After the American withdrawal two years ago, it became DAO for the Defense Attache's Office of the U.S. embassy.

Civilians, many of them retired military men, came to staff it then and the maze of offices and meeting rooms from which the American combat role in the war had been directed be-

came primarily a logistical center in which Americans worked to keep military supplies flowing smoothly to the South Vietnamese.

Now the world is changing again, and the scene between the lieutenant colonel and the two waitresses is one of the least strange here as this headquarters is preparing for the final evacuation, the final act in a decade of intense American involvement in the Vietnam war.

Many of the offices are already closed and Americans in the final stages of departure rush through the hallways.

Marines have been brought in small groups from the large fleet waiting off the Vietnamese coast to police the complex.

"If they attack this base, they're in trouble," said one of the Marines, eating a hamburger in the cafeteria. "This is U.S. property."

His companion added: "We got a whole fleet of ships out there. Man, when the stone drops, it's going to be like the beginning of World War III."

Down the hall, some Vietnamese workers were hurried pushing an electronic computer console toward a packing area. Postal clerks were throwing large packages onto rollers that carried them to trucks outside. "I guess the post office is open," said one, "but we're just going on an hour-by-hour basis."

DAO commander Gen. Homer Smith granted a brief interview in order to dispel false reports that DAO had already closed.

"We're still ordering materiel from the States and still receiving it under the \$700 million program already authorized by Congress last year," he said. "Two ships are unloading at Vungtau right now."

The road from Saigon to Vungtau, the capital's last road link with the sea, was cut Saturday by Communist forces. Some Communist tanks are fighting only 18 miles east of Saigon on this road.

There are still about 350 Americans working at DAO, Smith said, or about one-third the normal number. He said he did not think there would be any reduction in this number "for a while."

Smith said that besides supplying the South Vietnamese, he is also working

hard on the continuing evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese.

Outside the headquarters, the tennis courts have been cleared of their nets and high chain-link fences that surrounded them so that they can serve as helicopter landing pads if there is an emergency evacuation.

Several hundred yards from the main headquarters building is a large American recreational area—an Olympic-sized swimming pool, more tennis courts, gymnasium, bowling alley, post exchange and "stop-n-shop" liquor store and delicatessen. The buildings are prefabricated like the headquarters, and the area has always had a sterile air about it by comparison with the rich sprawl of Vietnamese life outside.

Now it is the staging area

for the exodus of refugees. Sunday, 10,000 Vietnamese and a few Americans waited for their flights.

They filled some of the tennis courts, sitting on their suitcases, saying little and waiting as the Marines, with M-16 rifles slung over their shoulders and knives and flashlights hooked to their web belts, directed the flow of traffic through the area.

Overhead the giant C-5 U.S. Air Force jet transports roared down in tight circles to land, discharge their cargoes of military equipment and pick up their human cargoes. South Vietnamese Air Force F-5 fighter-bombers, supplied by the Americans, screamed over low, flying tight protective patterns around the airport perimeter.

NEW YORK TIMES
27 MARCH 1975 Pg. 1

SAIGON'S MILITARY IN STATE OF SHOCK

By BERNARD WEINRAUB
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 26—The South Vietnamese Army is stunned and demoralized by the North Vietnamese offensive and the Government's decision to abandon most of the northern two-thirds of the nation, according to Western military analysts, Vietnamese observers and army officers in the field.

These sources say that troops in the 1.1-million-man armed forces are puzzled and humiliated by the abrupt events over the last two weeks. "The army is in a state of trauma," said one knowledgeable Western official.

Another Western analyst said: "They're going through a period of terrible confusion. A lot of these officers are from the north, and their families came here in 1954. They're proud. They feel they weren't given a chance to prove themselves."

Unit Moved Abruptly

One deputy battalion commander from the Pleiku area said recently that his unit was abruptly told by the Saigon command to evacuate its camp within 30 minutes, despite only sporadic fighting in its locale. It was only when the troops moved through Pleiku, and saw fellow soldiers destroying gas and ammunition supplies, that the unit realized the Government was abandoning the Central Highlands.

"We were very angry, very ashamed," the officer told a visitor recently in Tuy Hoa, coastal city 235 miles northeast of Saigon and a refuge point for tens of thousands fleeing the highlands. "We wish we could fight to the death. It's a shameful death by retreating and starvation and sniper fire on the road."

Another officer in Tuy Hoa said: "We are not cowards. Why did we do this?"

In Da Nang today, a First Division major, with helmet and field pack, told some visi-

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tors that he left the evacuated city of Hue by sampan and had no idea where his unit had gone. "I don't even know where my wife and children are," he said in Vietnamese. "Why should I care about my division command?"

At this point there seems too much confusion within the army—and among civilians—to weigh the over-all and long-range impact on the military of the rapidly unfolding developments in Vietnam in the last two weeks. "ARVN morale is low and has been going downhill for some time," said one Vietnamese observer, discussing the South Vietnamese army. "There just can't be any major engagements in the days to come if ARVN morale is not redressed at least to some degree."

Even before the current offensive, the Army faced somber problems: corruption among division commanders; indiscipline and desertion in the ranks; a lack of incentive to keep fighting because of inept leadership, favoritism and poor pay. Moreover, the South Vietnamese Army had been hampered—some Western diplomats say crippled—by shortages of gasoline, lubricants and oil for helicopters and the whittling down of American military assistance.

In the current fiscal year ending in June, military aid here totals \$700-million, compared to \$1.2-billion in the previous year. There is some question about future military assistance to South Vietnam, a nation whose army is hard-pressed for spare parts, ammunition and hand grenades.

Several military units are first rate, say military analysts. These include a marine division in the tense city of Da Nang and the nation's airborne division, whose three regiments, of 2,400 men each, are divided between Da Nang, the coastal city of Nha Trang and Saigon. There are about a dozen ranger regiments—a once-impressive group—but the battle losses in these units are heavy and they have been seriously weakened by many cases of heroin addiction in the Central Highlands.

But the bulk of the II Government infantry divisions have proved vulnerable and shaky. Some sources say that the desertion rate may be as high as 24,000 a month, and South Vietnamese casualties, including killed and wounded, total about 1,000 a day.

The army, with no ammunition to waste, scant air mobility and haphazard air support, has turned in some sloppy performances. An example is the case of Ban Me Thuot, the highlands city whose unexpected fall to the Communists prompted President Nguyen Van Thieu to abandon the northern two-thirds of the nation.

Reliable military sources said that Communist demolition men slipped into the town after midnight on March 16, while most South Vietnamese troops were in their camps, the provincial headquarters and the rear headquarters of the 23d Infantry Division. Other soldiers had left their camps to spend the night in town with their families.

Not Much of a Fight

Military sources said that the Communists began their attack with only one battalion of demolition men—about 500—and that most Government soldiers barricaded themselves in their camp and homes. The sources said that there was scant shooting; Communist troops seized the local ammunition depot and a landing strip without a fight, and North Vietnamese tanks were in the city by mid-day.

At the same time Mr. Thieu was reportedly advised that only one Chinook transport helicopter was available to ferry in reinforcements. In earlier years there would have been dozens.

In any event, according to reliable sources, there was scant fighting in Ban Me Thuot and when a Vietnam Air Force plane flew over the city most of Ban Me Thuot was intact. One reliable account said that the next morning when Ban Me Thuot residents looked out their doors, they saw North Vietnamese everywhere.

One knowledgeable South Vietnamese source said: "The Ban Me Thuot residents began leaving the city out of fear of air force bombing. They crossed Communist troops, marching leisurely into the city. They were walking in opposite directions, and the Communist soldiers were dressed like the ARVN but wearing rubber sandals instead of boots and a red armband with a yellow star. They did not pay special attention to the refugees."

The fall of Ban Me Thuot, a decisive psychological and military blow to the army, was followed by a series of quick reversals. The important district town of Khanh Duong on Route 21 leading to the South China Sea and about 45 miles northwest of Nha Trang was rapidly overrun.

(OVER)

One Vietnamese source said it fell without a fight, resulting in the flight of six battalions of the Regional Force, or local militia, and elements of an expert airborne brigade that had been evacuated earlier from the northern provinces to defend the area around Nha Trang on the coast.

These sources also report that in the last few days the city of Tam Ky, capital of Quang Tin Province, also fell with little resistance, thus blocking the road south from Da Nang, the nation's largest city after Saigon. Da Nang now seems on the verge of falling and a major evacuation of refugees, residents and Americans is under way.

Confusing Withdrawal

Many Vietnamese now believe that army morale is cracking, amidst the rapid and confusing withdrawal and stepped-up North Vietnamese assaults. Beyond this, there are indications that fresh North Vietnamese troops have infiltrated into the south, bringing in heavy artillery, and hundreds of tanks and Sam-7 antiaircraft missiles.

"There are not many gung-ho types left," said one knowledgeable Vietnamese with close contacts in the Government. "Now that there are no more B-52's, and with enemy power what it is, the boys might choose to run rather than fight and die in the days to come."

WASHINGTON STAR 27 APRIL 1975 (28)

Hill Debate on Evacuation Reopens Old Wounds

By Walter Taylor

Washington Star Staff Writer

President Ford's request for clarification of his authority to use Marines to evacuate Saigon has rekindled the passions that for nearly a decade divided the nation over United States involvement in Indochina.

After nearly two weeks of bitter debate, final congressional passage of legislation affirming those powers is expected within the next few days. Possibly by then, the 30-year-old struggle in Vietnam will have ended and the question of recommitting troops will be moot.

But the machinations of both chambers of Congress, particularly the House, in considering the President's request have shown that Vietnam has the same divisive impact on many Americans that it did before the United States pulled its remaining combat soldiers from that country more than two years ago.

Suspicion that the President and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger still cling to hopes of salvaging the moribund Saigon regime cuts deeply through the Congress, showing no respect for partisan lines or traditional labels.

EVEN AS FORD was proclaiming in New Orleans last week that so far as America is concerned, the Vietnam war "is finished," the House was locked in a titanic debate over permitting the use of U.S. military forces to rescue Americans and endangered Vietnamese from beleaguered Saigon.

It was clear that many members of the chamber shared the fear expressed by Democratic Leader Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, D-Mass.

"What happens," asked O'Neill, "if our troops are ambushed while they are over there? What happens if we have troops who are missing in action?"

He quoted from a newspaper clipping that said California officials are making preparations to receive from 600,000 to 1 million Southeast Asian refugees.

"DO ANY OF US think for one minute that we can evacuate 600,000 to 1 million (refugees) without being back in the quagmire that we were in four years ago, six years ago, eight years ago?"

"There is no way you can do it," was O'Neill's answer to his own question.

For many of the 92 freshmen members of the House, some of whom got their start in politics on the front lines of the anti-war movement, the question was one of the most difficult they will be asked to face as legislators.

"I've been fighting against this (bleeping) war for 10 (bleeping) years," Rep. John L. Burton, one freshman leader, told a reporter outside the chamber. "Now I'm supposed to vote to send the Marines back in."

Burton, D-Calif., whose brother Phillip is chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, led an unsuccessful 15-hour parliamentary fight to prevent enactment of the evacuation bill.

ALLIED WITH him were many of the established House doves of the 1960s and early 1970s, some of whom were instrumental in the passage of several end-the-war measures in 1973: Reps. Bella S. Abzug, D-N.Y.; Charles W. Whalen, R-Ohio; Elizabeth Holtzman, D-N.Y.; John F. Seiberling, D-Ohio; Donald W. Riegle, D-Mich.; and Paul N. McCloskey, R-Calif.

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DEBATE -- CONTINUED

"Once we send military forces back over there we are launched on a cause in an uncharted sea," Seiberling asserted, "and we have no way of knowing when we are going to be able to get our forces back home again."

Riegle characterized the authorization as a "blank check" that the President could use to launch offensive actions against the North Vietnamese.

At perhaps the most dramatic moment in the debate, the always strident Bella Abzug, her face reddened and contorted in rage, gained the floor, waving an Associated Press bulletin ripped from one of the House news tickers.

"A U.S. MARINE battalion has landed at Vung Tau, South Vietnam, near Saigon, to help evacuate Americans and South Vietnamese ..." she began to read as, for the first time in hours, a hush fell across the chamber. "The reports said the landing took place Wednesday night."

Then, as Mrs. Abzug's words registered, tremendous cheering and applause rose from the Republican side of the chamber with a few Democrats joining in.

"I ask unanimous consent ... that those who applaud here join them," Mrs. Abzug snapped.

From the Democratic side, an even louder cheer went up.

(The AP story, which quoted Japanese newspaper stories, later was denied by both the State Department and the Pentagon and was, in fact, incorrect.)

FOR THE MOST part, those members of the House who in the past had been most outspoken in support of the U.S. war effort left the debate to others, although there were occasional references to the way things might have been if the war had been fought differently.

Rep. Wayne L. Hays, D-Ohio, for example, reasoned that if Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee "had had the same privileges that the North Vietnamese had, if every time he retreated across the Rappahannock River nobody could pursue him, then one of two things would have happened: either the South would have won the war, or it would still be going on."

But most other hawks and former hawks either took no part in the debate — like Rep. F. Edward Herbert, D-La., who had publicly vowed last week to be

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"the last man down" in the fight for continued military aid to Saigon — or quietly voted against the bill, like Reps. Richard H. Ichord, D-Mo., and Delbert Latta, R-Ohio.

Left to fight for Ford's request were the political moderates — and, in several instances, liberals who had fought U.S. involvement in the war.

REPUBLICAN moderate John B. Anderson, R-Ill. chairman of the House Republican Conference, counselled trust in President Ford.

"There is only one conclusion I can come to," he said, "that my friends ... are as distraught as they are because they look back over the whole tragic record of our involvement in Vietnam and they think only Nixon, and they do not realize that the man who is now President of the United States has no intention of reinvolving this country..."

In appeals for reason,

none was perhaps louder than that of Rep. Donald M. Fraser, D-Minn., a longtime-war critic.

"I know there are risks here in giving the President some discretion," Fraser told his colleagues, "but I believe the constraints that we can write in this bill, together with the political constraints which are so overwhelming, would dictate that the President could not really use his authority to do something that nobody in this Congress wants him to try to do."

"I am not saying that there is no risk, but the humanitarian responsibilities are enormous. These (the South Vietnamese) are decent people. They are people who have worked with us. They have been marked and identified."

"We owe it to ourselves; we owe it to our sense of decency and humanity, not to engage in offensive actions, but to form the kind of defensive posture that will enable us to get out as

many of them as possible."

WHEN THE FIGHT finally had ended, the House had approved, 230 to 187, a measure granting Ford the authority he had requested, but with the stipulation that any troops sent back to Vietnam be the minimum necessary to assure the safe evacuation of Americans and their dependents.

Differences between the measure and a Senate-passed bill were quickly reconciled by a conference committee the next day, and the Senate gave final approval to the legislation on Friday. The House is expected to pass the compromise bill early this week and send it to the White House for Ford's signature.

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A033 DAY LD R A REFUGEES 4-28 UPI 04-28 04152 AED

BY UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL
THE WAVE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IS ABOUT TO BURST UPON THE UNITED STATES. BUT NOT EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO GET OUT WILL MAKE IT. MORE THAN 30,000 SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE ALREADY LEFT THEIR CRUMBLING COUNTRY. UP TO 100,000 MORE WILL LEAVE COMMUNIST-ENCIRCLED SAIGON IF TIME PERMITS AND THE UNITED STATES EVACUATION AIRLIFT CONTINUES.

HOWEVER, DESPITE THE SIZE OF THE AMERICAN RELIEF EFFORT, FUELED BY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND THE EFFORTS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN SERVICEMEN, OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON SAY IT WILL RESCUE SCARCELY MORE THAN A TENTH OF THE ESTIMATED 1 MILLION SOUTH VIETNAMESE WHOSE LIVES ARE IMPERILED BY A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER.

THE FRIGHTENED REFUGEES WHO LEFT EVERYTHING BEHIND IN VIETNAM AND THE AMERICANS WHO ARE SWEATING ON GUAM, ON WAKE ISLAND AND IN THE PHILIPPINES TO RECEIVE THEM ALL ARE CONVINCED THAT THE END OF SAIGON IS AT HAND. FEW OF THE EVACUEES HAVE CERTAIN PLANS FOR THEIR FUTURE IN THE UNITED STATES.

PACKED AIR FORCE PLANES ARRIVED AT GUAM EVERY 45 MINUTES TODAY. DURWARD POWELL, THE SENIOR IMMIGRATION OFFICER ON THE ISLAND, SAID HE HOPED TO SEND 3,000 PERSONS A DAY ON TOWARD THE UNITED STATES BY POSTPONING SOME NORMAL SCREENING PROCEDURES.

EVACUATION FLIGHTS FROM VIETNAM WERE BRINGING PEOPLE OUT AT A RATE OF MORE THAN 5,000 PERSONS PER DAY, FORESHADOWING A BACKLOG IN THE TENT CITY REFUGEE CAMPS.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE ROBERT MCCLOSKEY SAID SUNDAY THE ADMINISTRATION HAS DECIDED, "AS A PRACTICAL MATTER," TO BRING NO MORE THAN 130,000 VIETNAMESE TO THE UNITED STATES -- INCLUDING THOSE ALREADY EVACUATED -- BECAUSE THIS COUNTRY COULD NOT ABSORB AN INFUX OF 1 MILLION VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

FRESH ARRIVALS IN THE UNITED STATES DURING THE WEEKEND INCLUDED 126 ORPHANS, RANGING IN AGE FROM SEVERAL MONTHS TO 10 YEARS, WHO ARRIVED ON TWO FLIGHTS AT LOS ALAMITOS NAVAL AIR STATION NEAR LONG BEACH, CALIF., SATURDAY NIGHT AND ANOTHER 65 CHILDREN WHO FLEW IN ON AN AIR FORCE C-141 STARLIFTER SUNDAY NIGHT. A "SNEAK-OUT" FLIGHT BY FLYING TIGER AIRLINES BROUGHT 32 OF THE AIRLINE'S EMPLOYEES TO LOS ANGELES SATURDAY.

THE REFUGEES LEFT BEHIND THEIR FRIENDS AND THEIR HOMES IN THE HOPE THEY CAN ALSO LEAVE BEHIND THEIR MEMORIES OF WAR AND THEIR FEARS OF FUTURE OPPRESSION.

OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF "OPERATION NEW LIFE" AT THE AMERICAN PROCESSING CENTERS IN ASIA WERE SCRAMBLING TO COMPLETE LIVING QUARTERS FOR THE HOMELESS AND HUNGRY VIETNAMESE AND HASTENING TO SEND THEM ON TO THE MAINLAND UNITED STATES.

"I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE MY COUNTRY," SAID TRAN THI LANG, A 32-YEAR-OLD DIVORCEE AND MOTHER OF TWO WHO CAME WITH A GROUP OF ORPHANED CHILDREN TO THE OROTE TENT CITY ON GUAM. "BUT I HAD NO CHOICE.

"I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO LIVE UNDER THE COMMUNISTS. AND EVEN THOUGH I LEFT MY COUNTRY, I WILL AT LEAST BE ABLE TO LIVE IN LIBERTY."

THE PENTAGON THREW MORE PLANES INTO ITS AROUND-THE-CLOCK AIRLIFT TODAY, BRINGING IN TRANSPORT JETS FROM LITTLE ROCK (ARK.) AIR FORCE BASE. TENTS WERE SENT FROM A BASE IN UTAH. NAVY SEABEES TOILED IN 100-DEGREE HEAT ON GUAM TO INSTALL LATRINES, SHOWERS AND FIELD KITCHENS AMID THE DUST CLOUDS BLOWING OVER THE TENT CITY.

THE FLIGHTS TO GUAM WERE SUSPENDED FOR 36 HOURS DURING THE WEEKEND TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION TO PROCEED. DURING THE INTERIM, 2,160 REFUGEES WERE FLOWN 1,500 MILES FARTHER EAST TO TINY WAKE ISLAND, WHERE SEABEES PUT UP 1,000 TENTS ON AN ABANDONED WORLD WAR II AIRSTRIP.

NEARLY 23,000 REFUGEES HAD ARRIVED BY THIS MORNING AT GUAM, WHERE REAR ADM. GEORGE S. MORRISON, IN CHARGE OF THE REFUGEE OPERATION, SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO HANDLE AS MANY AS 50,000 PEOPLE AT ONE TIME.

MORE THAN 12,000 VIETNAMESE WERE CRAMMED INTO A GYMNASIUM, TWO AIRCRAFT HANGARS AND A SWELTERING CITY OF TENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AT CLARK AIR FORCE BASE AND THE NAVAL BASE AT SUBIC BAY. A 10,000-TON CONVERTED MILITARY TRANSPORT BROUGHT IN 625 EVACUEES BY SEA SUNDAY.

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April 28, 75
p. 8

(OVER)

FLYING TIGER AIRLINES ARRANGED A "SNEAK-OUT" FLIGHT FOR 32 PEOPLE -- ITS VIETNAMESE EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES -- FROM SAIGON. THE VIETNAMESE WERE PICKED UP AT SCATTERED POINTS AROUND THE CITY IN A BUS WITH BLACKED-OUT WINDOWS -- THEY WORE FLUORESCENT BADGES SO THE DRIVER COULD SPOT THEM ON SAIGON'S DARKENED STREETS -- AND TAKEN THROUGH MILITARY CHECKPOINTS TO A DC8 CARGO PLANE PARKED IN AN ISOLATED AREA OF TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT.

THE AIRLINE LIED TO OFFICIALS THAT THE PLANE WAS CRIPPLED BY MECHANICAL DIFFICULTIES, THEN HUSTLED THE VIETNAMESE ABOARD. THE PLANE TOOK OFF ON THE 5 1/2-HOUR FLIGHT TO GUAM AS DARKNESS FELL.

GARY KANGIESER, FLYING TIGER'S SAIGON MANAGER, SAID "RUMORS WERE THAT ANYONE WORKING FOR AN AMERICAN COMPANY WAS SUBJECT TO EXTERMINATION ... IT'S NOT THEIR FAULT THAT THE COUNTRY COLLAPSED AROUND THEM."

No Last Stand

WALL STREET JOURNAL - 28 APRIL 1975

Selection of New Saigon Chief Should Prevent Bloody Fight, Permit Peaceful U.S. Evacuation

By ROBERT KEATLEY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON—That final big battle for Saigon apparently will never take place.

Yesterday South Vietnam's legislature—spurred by the first rocket attacks on the capital in four years—named that country's third president in a week. It told retired Gen. Duong Van "Big" Minh to form a "government of negotiation" to end three decades of war against the Communists. In realistic terms, that means surrender.

Once a new cabinet is named, it is expected to begin talks with Communist forces that now surround Saigon. The result could be either a coalition government controlled by the Marxists or an outright take-over by the Communists' government structure, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

Either way, it will place the official stamp of failure on what has been a central American policy for some 20 years. Five Presidents have tried to prevent the Communists from seizing power since South Vietnam was created as an independent state in 1954, and now the effort is over. Despite many exuberant sightings of "light at the end of the tunnel," the task proved impossible.

A Familiar Face

Saigon's new president is, in fact, an old face. Gen. Minh (called "Big" because of his size and in order to differentiate him from another Gen. Minh) was nominal leader of the 1963 coup that overthrew and killed former President Ngo Dinh Diem, America's first ally there. Gen. Minh then headed the successor government for three months before another coup deposed him. As chief of state, he proved to be respected, affable and ineffective, the kind of man who probably won't give the victorious Communists any serious problems.

After his own ouster, Gen. Minh lived in exile before returning to Saigon several years ago. Then, he was prevented from running in national elections against Nguyen Van Thieu, the president who quit in disgrace a week ago. Since the time that he was prohibited from running, Gen. Minh has appeared apolitical. He has been noticed mostly for his tennis and Delphic public statements, which indicated dislike for Saigon's rulers but didn't commit him to any specific policies.

In recent weeks, Communist sources have indicated that the Provisional Revolutionary Government would do business with Gen. Minh but not with any members of the so-called "Thieu Clique." This forced Mr. Thieu's successor, Tran Van Huong, out of office yesterday.

Press reports quoted a Communist spokesman, Phuong Nam, as saying yesterday that "anyone who loves peace . . . would be acceptable." Such comments have been interpreted as tacit approval of "Big" Minh, although the Provisional Revolutionary Government hasn't said specifically that it will deal even with him.

The conquering Communists, directed by the North Vietnamese government in Hanoi, may choose to apply what's left of the 1973 Paris agreement, which was supposed to end the war. If so, the next step will be creation of a tripartite government to rule the south. Gen. Minh would head the Saigon faction, the Provisional Revolutionary Government would provide the Communist faction.

See SELECTION, Pg. 8-F

SELECTION -- CONTINUED

and a so-called "third force" of neutralists—almost certainly to be Communist-controlled—would complete the regime.

Real power would be exercised by the Communist, or Vietcong, political operators who would replace present Saigon bureaucrats in key positions. Eventually, analysts here expect the two Vietnams to be unified under Hanoi's control, probably after a carefully managed referendum. Although the Communist force that surrounds Saigon is called a Southern organization by Hanoi, North Vietnamese divisions and party officials dominate it.

Some 150,000 troops now encircle the city, while others yesterday captured their 23rd provincial capital (out of 44) in South Vietnam. These setbacks, plus a realization that new American military aid isn't possible, have damped brave talk in Saigon about a last-ditch battle.

Avoiding a Last Stand

"We are beaten, we accept humiliation," Tran Van Lam, the senate president and former foreign minister, said yesterday.

The selection of Gen. Minh should permit two things of importance to Washington.

One is a peaceful surrender of Saigon rather than the much-feared last stand, which would damage the city and cause untold deaths. Saigon is packed with refugees who would get caught in any crossfire and who would suffer from food shortages and panic if a battle occurred. A disguised surrender, therefore, is the most humane way to end the war; it will also permit the winners to take over a functioning city.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government apparently prefers a quiet take-over and exercised much military restraint recently while Saigon's politicians squabbled about the future. Yesterday's rocket attacks were small—seemingly more reminders of reality than serious efforts to inflict damage. The U.S. and French ambassadors have been active in the effort to get Gen. Minh named quickly and presumably have communicated with Hanoi via the French embassy there. It's also believed that the Soviet Union and China were asked to influence Hanoi away from a military conclusion.

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(OVER)

Second, a cease-fire and political negotiations should permit peaceful evacuation of the approximately 1,000 Americans left there, plus evacuation of many South Vietnamese who might be in jeopardy when the Communists take control. As of last Saturday, the U.S. had already flown 30,000 Vietnamese to staging areas in the Philippines, Guam and Wake Island, and the airlift continues. Most are bound for the U.S., which has taken legal steps to permit 132,000 Vietnamese to enter.

Just how many want to leave and how many the victors will let go remains unknown. But when Communists took power in North Vietnam in 1954, they let several

hundred thousand people leave for South Vietnam and elsewhere. This time, of course, there isn't any similar haven available for such large numbers.

What U.S. Diplomats Will Do

It's possible that all American diplomats won't leave Saigon soon. The U.S. still recognizes the existing South Vietnamese government, currently headed by Gen. Minh. It may also recognize any government that results from negotiations during the next few days. That would permit continued use of the large American embassy there.

In fact, Vietcong spokesmen haven't called for total U.S. withdrawal. They say the present ambassador, Graham Martin, is unacceptable because he was such a strong

supporter of former President Thieu (too much so, say some Washington officials). The Communists also want all U.S. military advisers out, a condition that may be met today with the formal closure of the American defense attache's office—a massive complex dubbed "Pentagon East" when the U.S. had 500,000 troops in the country.

But some diplomats could stay behind as envoys to the next Saigon government. The Communists may decide that keeping an American embassy there would give extra international respectability, as well as a chance for U.S. economic aid to feed and resettle refugees. Observers in Saigon believe that the Provisional Revolutionary Government is eager for American reconstruction assistance.

Red Rockets Hit Heart of Saigon; Tanks on Move

W. Star 27 April 75
Succession Moves

SAIGON (AP) — Viet Cong gunners fired four rockets into the center of Saigon before dawn today in the first such attack since the signing of a cease-fire agreement in January 1973.

Saigon command spokesmen said six persons were killed and 22 were injured by the Soviet-made rockets.

The rocket attack came amid speculation that Gen. Duong Van (Big) Minh, regarded as a neutralist, would shortly take over the reins of government from President Tran Van Huong as a step in opening negotiations with the Viet Cong.

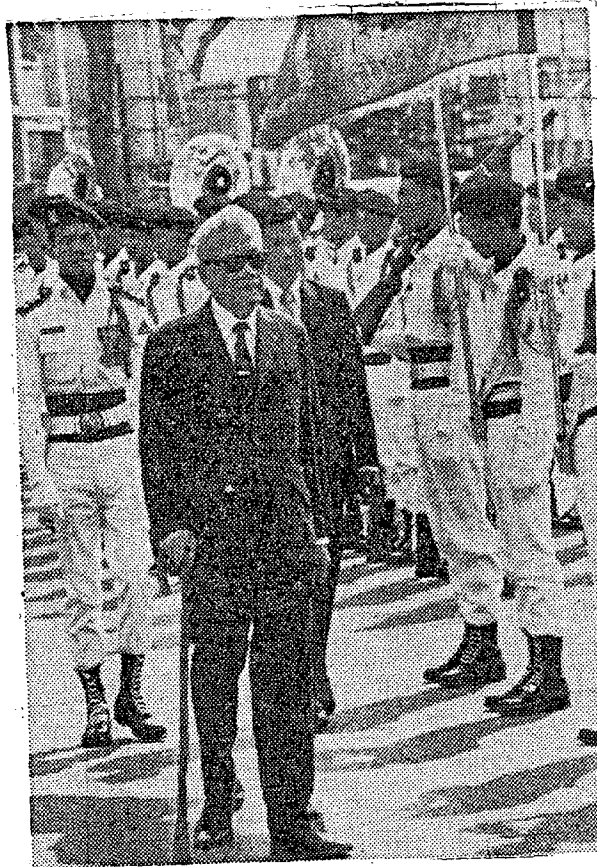
THE SAIGON COMMAND also reported today that North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces backed by tanks launched an offensive with a strike within 20 miles of the capital. It said that four tanks were destroyed in clashed at Long Thanh, a district capital.

The command said that the rocket attack on the capital set a number of houses afire. A small blaze also was started at the government-owned Majestic Hotel on the riverside.

The rockets could be a show of impatience by Communist commanders, whose forces are within easy striking distance of the capital and its demoralized defenders. Although they have captured three-quarters of South Vietnam since launching their offensive in March they have made no major ground attacks on Saigon.

There is speculation that they are holding back on any battle for the city, thinking they can gain its capitulation by political means.

THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE government has been making frantic efforts for the past week to form an



South Vietnamese President Tran Van Huong reviews the guards of honor at the Senate building in Saigon.

(over)

administration acceptable to the Viet Cong for negotiations to end the fighting.

A Viet Cong statement broadcast by Radio Hanoi warned that time was running short and urged citizens to rise against the Saigon government. "We are facing the crucial moment of the cause of the complete liberation," it said.

With Huong expected to make way for Minh, parliamentary maneuvers yesterday left the way open for Huong to step down without losing face.

THERE WERE predictions that Minh might take over the presidency as early as today in a move aimed at bringing negotiations with the Communists before an attack on Saigon.

Huong, 71, who succeeded to the presidency last Monday when Nguyen Van Thieu resigned, has been rejected as a negotiating partner by the Communists. Minh, a retired general, is believed to be acceptable to the Viet Cong.

More shelling and some ground clashes were reported in government-controlled sections of the country, now reduced to the Saigon area and the rice-rich Mekong Delta to the south, but there was no major fighting. It is generally conceded that North Vietnamese forces are in position to capture Saigon at any time but are waiting to see if the Saigon government can maneuver itself into shape for negotiations.

Huong, in a speech to the National Assembly, had proposed that it either appoint Minh president or give him full powers to appoint a "government of negotiation" that might spare Saigon from an attack.

INSTEAD, the assembly unanimously approved a two-point compromise resolution giving full support to Huong's peace efforts and saying he could "if necessary, choose a man to replace him."

It also specified that Huong's successor would have to be approved by the National Assembly, in effect making it possible to circumvent the constitutional provision that puts Senate President Tran Van

Lam next in line to the presidency. Lam is thought unacceptable to the Viet Cong for negotiations.

The vote was 123-0 among the members present from both houses. The president of the 60-member senate and the speaker of the 159-member lower house did not vote.

In his address to the body, Huong sharply attacked the United States for abandoning South Vietnam. "It is now clear our friends do not want to help us anymore," he said. "We now have no other choice but to negotiate."

ELSEWHERE in Indochina, the pro-Communist Pathet Lao announced it would not withdraw its forces from the strategic positions in northern Laos gained during recent fighting unless the royal Lao forces pull out of nearby areas.

Pathet Lao troops seized control of Sala Phou Khoun, a strategic junction about 100 miles north of Vientiane, early this week. It lies on Route 13 linking the

administrative capital of Vientiane and the royal capital of Luang Prabang.

Laotian Defense Minister Sisouk Na Champassak has claimed that at least 15,000 Pathet Lao troops took part in the fighting. He also said about 35,000 North Vietnamese soldiers were in the southern panhandle of Laos, along routes to Cambodia and South Vietnam.

The Laotian peace agreement signed in February 1973 provided for the sharing of ministries and other government responsibilities between the two sides. Militarily, the forces of the two sides agreed to stay in separate zones. Vientiane and Luang Prabang were declared neutral.

IN BANGKOK, Thailand, former Cambodian Premier In Tam — marked for death if he falls into the hands of the Khmer Rouge now ruling Cambodia — said he is no longer a politician and spends his time trying to find a place of exile for himself and 300 followers who fled with him.

"I don't understand why the Khmer Rouge want revenge on me," he said in an interview with the Associated Press. "I am only a rice farmer. I quit politics 16 months ago."

In Tam was forced out as premier in December 1973 because of differences with former President Lon Nol over seeking reconciliation with the Khmer Rouge. He said he had been living at Poipet, on the Cambodian side of the Thai frontier, since then.

In Malaysia, Deputy Minister Abdullah Ahmad said his country must learn from Vietnam to stand on its own feet in defense matters. "The events in Vietnam should be a valuable lesson to us never to depend on others," he said, "let them be America, Russia or China."

In Washington, Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield expressed the hope that the collapse of American policy in Southeast Asia will be followed by new nationwide goals based on "reality."

Sunday, April 27, 1975

The Washington Star

A-3
★

Hill Debate on Evacuation Reopens Old Wounds

By Walter Taylor
Washington Star Staff Writer

President Ford's request for clarification of his authority to use Marines to evacuate Saigon has rekindled the passions that for nearly a decade divided the nation over United States involvement in Indochina.

After nearly two weeks of bitter debate, final congressional passage of legislation affirming those powers is expected within the next few days. Possibly by then, the 30-year-old struggle in Vietnam will have ended and the question of recommitting troops will be moot.

But the machinations of both chambers of Congress, particularly the House, in considering the President's request have shown that Vietnam has the same divisive impact on many Americans that it did before the United States pulled its remaining combat soldiers from that country more than two years ago.

Suspicion that the President and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger still cling to hopes of salvaging the moribund Saigon regime cuts deeply through the Congress, showing no respect for partisan lines or traditional labels.

EVEN AS FORD was proclaiming in New Orleans last week that so far as America is concerned, the Vietnam war "is finished," the House was locked in a titanic debate over permitting the use of U.S. military forces to rescue Americans and endangered Vietnamese from beleaguered Saigon.

It was clear that many members of the chamber shared the fear expressed by Democratic Leader Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill, D-Mass.

"What happens," asked O'Neill, "if our troops are ambushed while they are over there? What happens if we have troops who are missing in action?"

He quoted from a newspaper clipping that said California officials are making preparations to receive from 600,000 to 1 million Southeast Asian refugees.

"DO ANY OF US think for one minute that we can evacuate 600,000 to 1 million (refugees) without being back in the quagmire that we were in four years ago, six years ago, eight years ago?"

"There is no way you can do it," was O'Neill's answer to his own question.

For many of the 92 freshmen members of the House, some of whom got their start in politics on the front lines of the anti-war movement, the question was one of the most difficult they will be asked to face as legislators.

"I've been fighting against this (bleeping) war for 10 (bleeping) years," Rep. John L. Burton, one freshman leader, told a reporter outside the chamber. "Now I'm supposed to vote to send the Marines back in."

Burton, D-Calif., whose brother Phillip is chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, led an unsuccessful 15-hour parliamentary fight to prevent enactment of the evacuation bill.

ALLIED WITH him were many of the established House doves of the 1960s and early 1970s, some of whom were instrumental in the passage of several end-the-war measures in 1973: Reps. Bella S. Abzug, D-N.Y.; Charles W. Whalen, R-Ohio; Elizabeth Holtzman, D-N.Y.; John F. Seiberling, D-Ohio; Donald W. Riegle, D-Mich., and Paul N. McCloskey, R-Calif.

"Once we send military forces back over there we are launched on a cause in an unchartered sea," Seiberling asserted, "and we have no way of knowing when we are going to be

able to get our forces back home again."

Riegle characterized the authorization as a "blank check" that the President could use to launch offensive actions against the North Vietnamese.

At perhaps the most dramatic moment in the debate, the always strident Bella Abzug, her face reddened and contorted in rage, gained the floor, waving an Associated Press bulletin ripped from one of the House news tickers.

"A U.S. MARINE battalion has landed at Vung Tau, South Vietnam, near Saigon, to help evacuate Americans and South Vietnamese," she began to read as, for the first time in hours, a hush fell across the chamber. "The reports said the landing took place Wednesday night."

Then, as Mrs. Abzug's words registered, tremendous cheering and applause rose from the Republican side of the chamber with a few Democrats joining in.

"I ask unanimous consent ... that those who applaud here join them," Mrs. Abzug snapped.

From the Democratic side, an even louder cheer went up.

(The AP story, which quoted Japanese newspaper stories, later was denied by both the State Department and the Pentagon and was, in fact, incorrect.)

(over)

FOR THE MOST part, those members of the House who in the past had been most outspoken in support of the U.S. war effort left the debate to others, although there were occasional references to the way things might have been if the war had been fought differently.

Rep. Wayne L. Hays, D-Ohio, for example, reasoned that if Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee "had had the same privileges that the North Vietnamese had, if every time he retreated across the Rappahannock River nobody could pursue him, then one of two things would have happened: either the South would have won the war, or it would still be going on."

But most other hawks and former hawks either took no part in the debate — like Rep. F. Edward Herbert, D-La., who had publicly vowed last week to be "the last man down" in the fight for continued military aid to Saigon — or quietly voted against the bill, like Reps. Richard H. Ichord, D-Mo., and Delbert Latta, R-Ohio.

Left to fight for Ford's request were the political moderates — and, in several instances, liberals who

had fought U.S. involvement in the war.

REPUBLICAN moderate John B. Anderson, R-Ill. chairman of the House Republican Conference, counseled trust in President Ford.

"There is only one conclusion I can come to," he said, "that my friends ... are as distraught as they are because they look back over the whole tragic record of our involvement in Vietnam and they think only Nixon, and they do not realize that the man who is now President of the United States has no intention of reinvolving this country..."

In appeals for reason, none was perhaps louder than that of Rep. Donald M. Fraser, D-Minn., a longtime war critic.

"I know there are risks here in giving the President some discretion," Fraser told his colleagues, "but I believe the constraints that we can write in this bill, together with the political constraints which are so overwhelming, would dictate that the President could not really use his authority to do something that nobody in this Congress wants him to try to do."

"I am not saying that there is no risk, but the humanitarian responsibilities are enormous. These (the South Vietnamese) are decent people. They are people who have worked with us. They have been marked and identified."

"We owe it to ourselves; we owe it to our sense of decency and humanity, not to engage in offensive actions, but to form the kind of defensive posture that will enable us to get out as many of them as possible."

WHEN THE FIGHT finally had ended, the House had approved, 230 to 187, a measure granting Ford the authority he had requested, but with the stipulation that any troops sent back to Vietnam be the minimum necessary to assure the safe evacuation of Americans and their dependents.

Differences between the measure and a Senate-passed bill were quickly reconciled by a conference committee the next day, and the Senate gave final approval to the legislation on Friday. The House is expected to pass the compromise bill early this week and send it to the White House for Ford's signature.

Only then will Congress know for certain whether it has helped ensure a safe evacuation of Vietnam or, as some have suggested, approved a second Gulf of Tonkin resolution that could plunge the nation back into the Indochina War.

Hanoi Bedecked For Celebration

Washington Star 27 April 75

By Daniel De Luce
Associated Press

HANOI — This capital of Vietnam's revolution awaits a triumphant climax in the South. It is decked with gold-starred red flags that hailed the Khmer Rouge victory in neighboring Cambodia just a few days ago.

Everyone on the streets of this former American B52 bombing target seems to expect the Viet Cong's National Liberation Front to take over in Saigon within a very short time. A military briefing on developments in South Vietnam was the highlight of last night's programming onanoi television, which operates twice weekly.

A newly arrived Western correspondent asked a senior official of the Foreign Ministry whether arrangements would be made for a press party to go from Hanoi to Saigon to observe a Viet Cong victory.

"ARRANGEMENTS like that take time, after an event has already taken place," the official replied. "But it's possible to go to Saigon by regular means and wait there for the victory celebration. It might be somewhat risky but not much."

However, the Foreign Ministry said it has cooperated with the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam in arranging for a trip to Da Nang by CBS television and Associated Press staffers. Da Nang has been taken over by the Viet Cong. The Western correspondents were told: "You will find everything in order in the liberated territory. Even the streets are safe at night — unlike Washington, D.C."

Hanoi looks little changed since I first saw it in February 1970. Some buildings are a bit shabbier. Others have been newly painted. But the nightly blackouts are gone. The airport is relatively crowded with international traffic. Men and women construction workers are repairing the Long Binh Bridge over the Red River. It had been bombed by American jets in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

THE RICE FIELDS are lush green. Young soldiers in new uniforms are in evidence almost everywhere. Some of them are women.

The big change seems to be in people's feelings. Their elation at the military successes in South Vietnam and Cambodia is unmistakable. The grim concentration on the war effort no longer seems the only way of life for Hanoi's citizens. They wave at a foreign photographer to take their picture. Once they would have turned their backs.

A mausoleum of heroic size is being constructed in the heart of Hanoi for Ho Chi Minh, the late North Vietnamese president and revolutionary leader.

"VISITORS FROM the South were disappointed when they found we had nothing like this," a Hanoi official explained. "We will provide them with what they have wanted, a symbol of our liberation struggle."

The PRG maintains a special representative in a villa in Hanoi. In 1970 foreign newsmen were taken to the villa to hear youths and girls from South Vietnam describe physical tortures they said they were subjected to by American counterintelligence officers. Now the topic for a briefing by special representative Nguyen Van Tien is the quick return to normal life of Da Nang, Hue and other southern cities under the PRG.

Tien is gray haired, and he was wearing a white sport shirt, tan slacks, black oxfords and a very happy smile.

"The political situation in Saigon has changed," he said, chuckling. "Will there be negotiations if Big Minh replaces the old government? That's the question asked of me by many reporters. We cannot tell beforehand. When you talk to our leaders in Da Nang you will have the opportunity to ask them personally."

Big Minh is Duong Van Minh, a retired general who is regarded as a neutralist.

W Star 27 April 75
6,000 Flown Out

United Press International

The United States yesterday expanded facilities in the Philippines and stretched its string of refugee camps across the Pacific to tiny Wake Island to accommodate Americans and Vietnamese fleeing the war zone in record numbers.

On Guam, which had been the primary stopover point for Vietnamese refugees, U.S. immigration officials were preparing to process up to 3,000 persons a day next week for the trip to the continental United States.

During the 24 hours ending at noon Saigon time, 31 U.S. planes — the highest yet for a single day of the evacuation — lifted out over 6,000 refugees, most of them Vietnamese. Hundreds of others waited at Saigon's "Pentagon East" — Tan Son Nhut airport — hoping, and sometimes fighting, for a flight.

NEAR-PANIC broke out earlier at the airport. Vietnamese with seats already assured on three commercial jets pushed over children in emigration lines and screamed at officials to stamp their tickets.

Continued From A-1

U.S. officials said that by noon yesterday the number of Americans still in Vietnam totaled less than 1,100, down from an estimated 8,000 or more in the country when the Communists began the offensive that overran three-fourths of the country.

State Department officials in Washington gave the following breakdown of the remaining Americans: 143 Defense Department civilian employees, 162 Defense Department military personnel, 150 Defense Department contractors, 497 other U.S. government employees and 143 non-government workers such as missionaries or Red Cross workers.

THIRTY-FOUR Vietnamese nuns, many bewildered and dazed from a 17-hour flight in the hold of a military aircraft, arrived in Sydney, Australia, after fleeing from town to town in South Vietnam.

"I believe some sisters drowned with refugees as they rushed to escape the war zones on ships and rafts," said their spokes-

man, who identified herself only as Sister Mary.

"We also heard some sisters were shot by the Viet Cong. When we reached Saigon we were very frightened and frightened for the people."

The U.S. government temporarily suspended evacuation flights to overcrowded Guam, expanded refugee points to include Subic Bay in the Philippines and announced the opening of a third receiving point in the Pacific, on three-square-mile Wake atoll 4,000 miles east of Saigon.

THE AIR FORCE announcement that it was using the U.S. naval base at Subic Bay, a repair facility for the U.S. 7th Fleet, 50 miles northwest of Manila, came after Philippines President Ferdinand E. Marcos ruled that no more than 200 Vietnamese would be allowed at Clark Air Base at any one time.

An American request that Marcos ease the restriction at Clark reportedly was under consideration.

A U.S. military spokesman said that by last night,

about 7,000 Vietnamese were housed at Clark and Subic Bay.

The government decided on Wake after Guam's converted military huts became overcrowded by 20,400 bewildered Vietnamese refugees — 18,000 of them arriving in one 56-hour period — and the island's 68,000 citizens began hoarding food.

WAKE ISLAND has a population of 1,700 and is administered by the U.S. Air Force. The island, now a refueling stop between Hawaii and Guam, has many empty barracks which officials said would allow an expansion of facilities to take care of the refugees. U.S. sources said Wake probably could handle up to 7,000 refugees.

On Guam itself, U.S. military authorities were building a tent city to house 50,000 of the 130,000 Vietnamese that Gov. Ricardo Bordallo has predicted might arrive.

The Pentagon said yesterday it was sending a 500-man Army contingent, including medics and cooks, to assist in caring for refugees. The personnel did not include combat units, the announcement said.

10,000-12,000 Vietnamese**Ford Set 'High Risk' Limit**

By Orr Kelly

Washington Star Staff Writer

President Ford personally made the decision that the United States should provide refuge for only 10,000 to 12,000 Vietnamese nationals whose lives may be in danger because of their cooperation with this country during the Indochina war.

Immigration Service Commissioner Leonard F. Chapman, Jr. — who was commandant of the Marine Corps during much of the war — said in an interview yesterday that Ford's decision settled a divisive dispute within the administration over the number to be admitted.

While some officials wanted to admit hundreds of thousands of what have come to be called "high risk" Vietnamese, Chapman said he arrived at a total of 50,000 — about 10,000 to 12,000 of those who worked for the Americans or held key posts in the South Vietnamese government or military establishment and an average of four or five family members for each of the high risk refugees.

"I REACHED that figure based on a consideration of what this country can absorb," Chapman said. "After all, we have eight million unemployed and 12 million on welfare."

"The 50,000 figure seemed reasonable. It is roughly

comparable to the 40,000 who came here from Hungary" after the 1956 revolt.

As head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Chapman has developed a vigorous policy — scheduled to be put into effect in the coming fiscal year — of finding and deporting aliens living and working illegally in this country. He has told Congress that, if given sufficient money and manpower, he could open up a million jobs now held by such aliens.

Chapman's decision to resist admission to this country of all but a relatively small number of "high risk" Vietnamese apparently reflects a strong feeling among members of Congress who do not want large numbers of strangers suddenly moved into their areas.

The number of endangered Vietnamese to be admitted to the United States is no indication of how many may be able to leave Vietnam to start new lives elsewhere, Chapman said. But if more than the 10,000 to 12,000 and their families are evacuated, they will have to find homes somewhere else, he said.

"THAT WILL BE up to the United Nations high commissioner for refugees," Chapman said. "That's his job."

In addition to the "high risk" Vietnamese, the

United States will admit as many members of the families of Americans or aliens resident in this country as can find ways to get here. They are expected to total some 80,000, but immigration officials said that figure was not a ceiling — as is the case with the 50,000 figure covering the endangered Vietnamese and their families.

U.S. Hopes to Keep Saigon Embassy

26 April 75
By Jeremiah O'Leary
Washington Star Staff Writer

U.S. officials yesterday held out the possibility that the American Embassy in Saigon may remain open if there is a negotiated settlement of the war in South Vietnam without a final battle for the capital.

The possibility that Ambassador Graham Martin and essential embassy officials may stay in Saigon was raised when reporters questioned State Department officials here about the seemingly slow rate of evacuation of official Americans from the city.

The United States has no target date for the total evacuation of all Americans, the State Department officials said, although these officials said they had no knowledge of a Hanoi's disposition to negotiate a peace rather than to storm Saigon with military force.

THE OFFICIALS suggested that if North Vietnam and the Viet Cong elect to negotiate the surrender of Saigon rather than take it by force, there is no final decision that the American Embassy would have to close. It all depends on whether the next few days result in a bloody and destructive battle for Saigon or the present leaders of South Vietnam decide to give up without a fight or can find basis for a negotiated settlement with Hanoi.

State Department spokesman Robert Anderson said yesterday the United States is making intense diplomatic efforts to try to get a cease-fire and to stimulate a negotiated settlement, but he refused to disclose details. These diplomatic efforts through other countries are "very delicate," he said.

Rep. William S. Broomfield, R-Mich., asserted that there is a "tacit agreement," reached through third-country channels, that there will be no attack on Saigon until Monday at the earliest to allow the withdrawal of Americans. But Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger denied the claim.

"I don't talk about what we're doing in the diplomatic field, but this was not accurate," Kissinger said when asked about Broomfield's statement.

BROOMFIELD, who originally said he learned of the alleged agreement from administration officials,

later acknowledged that he had no official confirmation from the administration. But he insisted that the report was true.

Asked yesterday about the battlefield lull in South Vietnam, Anderson said he could not account for it. "It appears to be the same situation as yesterday (Thursday)," Anderson said. "Maybe there's something on the negotiating side."

U.S. officials believe Communist forces could overwhelm Saigon by force very quickly if the order to attack were given. It is still not known, officials said, whether the Communist forces have paused only to regroup for the final push or whether Hanoi is holding back for a negotiated settlement.

THE LATEST figures on the number of Americans left in the Saigon area, according to Anderson, showed were that 1,357 official and unofficial Americans remain there. Anderson said the number of Americans working in Saigon for the U.S. government stands at about 1,160, but some of these are contract employees of the Defense Department and the Agency for International Development.

There are about 870 employees directly connected with the embassy, and indications are that this number will not change unless there is a renewal of fighting that appears to presage a final battle for the city.

There were 501 Americans airlifted from Saigon Thursday, which officials said was intended to bring the number down to 1,100. But, unaccountably, 177 Americans who turned up at the embassy were not on any previous list of U.S. citizens residing in Vietnam.

The airlift of Vietnamese refugees from Saigon to Guam was shut off for at least 24 hours early today, as military officials on that island said they needed time to prepare for new arrivals.

Rear Adm. G. Steve Morrison, commander of Naval Forces Marianas said as many as 8,000 refugees will be diverted to Wake Island.

The Pacific Air Force commander, Gen. Louis L. Wilson Jr., ordered a detachment of 70 Air Force officers and men to Wake to prepare facilities there. He

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said additional personnel and supplies would be sent to Wake as needed.

The refugee population on Guam swelled to 20,000 today, the fourth day of "Operation New Life."

Seabees and Marines can put up only enough tents each day to accommodate 6,000 people, a military spokesman on Guam said.

Flights to Guam may be suspended as long as 48 hours, the spokesman said, but plans are to resume the

flights as soon as possible.

THE AIRLIFT of Air Force and chartered commercial planes took 6,088 people from Saigon to Clark Field in the Philippines and Guam in the Thursday reporting.

The total of South Vietnamese who have been evacuated was reported last night to be almost 19,000. Yesterday, the planes flew out 3,474 South Vietnamese in addition to the 501 Americans.

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The Washington Star

Saturday, April 26, 1975

Senate Approves \$327 Million for Vietnam Pullout

By Walter Taylor
Washington Star Staff Writer

The Senate gave quick final approval yesterday to a Vietnam evacuation and humanitarian assistance measure authorizing the use of American military forces to protect the removal of U.S. citizens and endangered Vietnamese nationals from South Vietnam. The vote was 46-17.

Passage came on a bill adopted earlier in the day by a House-Senate conference committee. The legislation represented a compromise of separate measures passed this week by the two chambers.

The House is expected to act favorably on the conference bill early next week and send it to the White House for President Ford's signature.

THE BILL authorizes the President to dispatch troops to Vietnam, if necessary, to rescue Americans and their dependents from the current hostilities around the capital city of Saigon.

The authorization extends to the evacuation of endangered Vietnamese nationals, but only if it is incidental to the rescue of Americans.

The bill does not specifically limit the number of troops that could be sent into the country or the time they could remain there. However, any military action still would be covered by the War Powers Act, which restricts the President's use of military forces to 60 days without congressional authorization.

The conference bill authorizes \$327 million for the evacuation and for humanitarian assistance to Vietnam, with \$150 million earmarked specifically for refugee relief.

DEPENDING ON the cost of the current evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese from the Saigon area, a portion of the remaining \$177 million also could go for humanitarian aid.

The conferees, however, adopted a House-passed

provision that limits the aid to areas of the country still in the hands of the Saigon government. This proviso apparently would have the effect of cutting off humanitarian assistance should Vietnam come under total military or political control of the Communists.

According to several Senate conferees, a portion of the \$177 million designated for evacuation purposes could be used for military aid to South Vietnam, but only if such assistance could be tied directly to rescue efforts.

SEN. DICK CLARK, D-Iowa, who voted against the measure, said the President was given enough flexibility by the conferees to use some of the funds for "direct military assistance," if he felt it was necessary to facilitate the rescue of Americans.

"It is clear," Clark said, "that a crack has been left in the door."

If Clark's interpretation is correct, the compromise bill could come under heavy fire in the House.

The lower chamber clearly expressed its sentiments on providing further military aid to Saigon when it rejected, 394-22, an amendment to its original bill that would have provided \$150 million in such assistance to the Saigon regime.

OPPOSITION TO the compromise bill yesterday came primarily from senators who complained that the administration's efforts to evacuate Americans from Saigon without the protection of military forces has progressed too slowly.

Sen. Wendell H. Ford, D-Ky., charged that White House policy is "to leave American citizens (in Vietnam) to the last possible minute," to assure evacuation of Vietnamese nationals.

"The Senate needs to know the rationale behind this policy," declared Ford, adding that he would seek such an explanation from the President.

Call to Vietnam: May Be Last I Hear

By Ron Shaffer

Special to The Washington Post

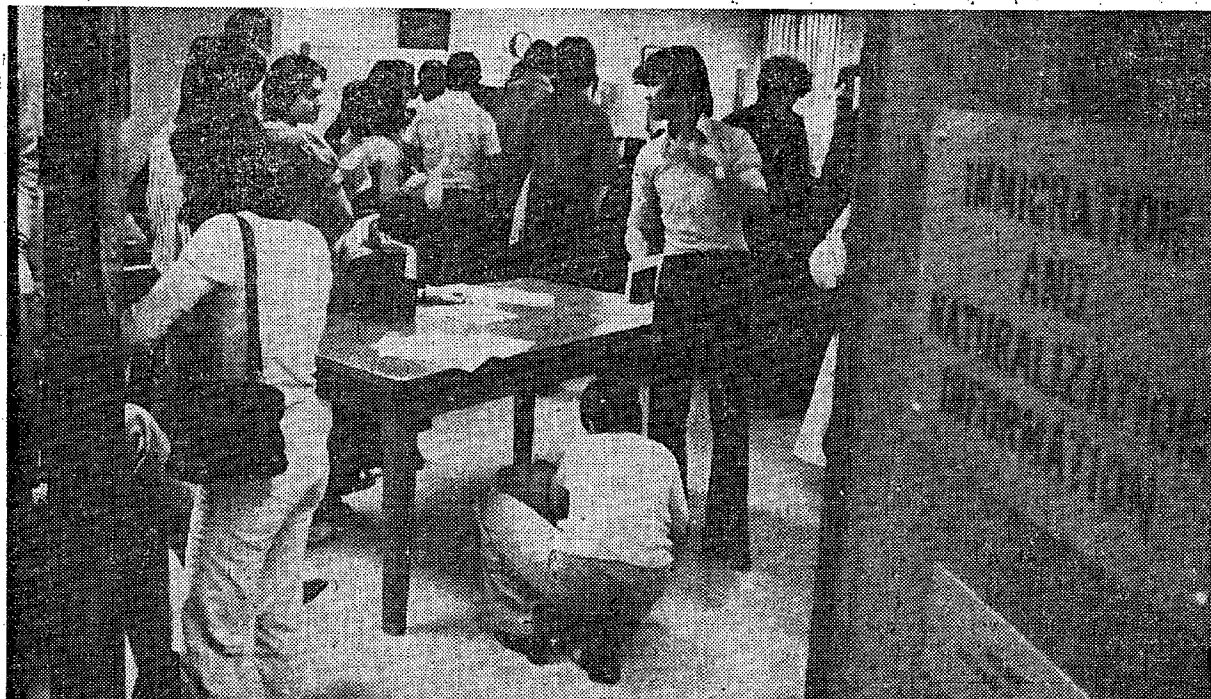
At 5 o'clock yesterday morning, the phone rang at the Arlington home of Tom and Chi Ray. It was Mrs. Ray's Vietnamese relatives in Saigon. They talked for 20 minutes; the women cried, the men tried to remain calm, she said. They wanted out.

"They're still clinging to hope because I am here," Mrs. Ray said yesterday as she filled out forms for her relatives at the immigration and Naturalization office here. "They say do something for them—they think I am God. But I am afraid there is not enough I can do. I didn't want to hang up because it may be the last time I hear from them."

The Rays were among hundreds of Vietnamese and Americans who crowded into a steamy District of Columbia immigration office here yesterday in a desperate attempt to get their relatives out of Vietnam before it falls to the Communists.

They had been given some hope Tuesday when Attorney General Edward H. Levi said that about 130,000 immediate relatives of Vietnamese in this country could come to the United States.

That announcement has sent hundreds of people—mostly Vietnamese students and businessmen and wives of Americans—to the immigration office at 1025 Vermont Ave. NW. They wait in long lines and fill out forms,



By Joe Halberger—The Washington Post

Vietnamese and Americans trying to get relatives out of Vietnam flood Immigration office at 1025 Vermont Ave. NW.

sometimes identifying 30 or 40 relatives in Vietnam that they want brought to America.

Immigration officials have added extra personnel and provided an information number (382-2826 or 2827).

The immigration requests are sent to the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, as are pledges of financial support from Americans for Vietnamese friends they want evacuated. "We're not turning anyone away," said one immigration

official. "We're trying to expedite everything."

Mrs. Ray is not optimistic. "My people told me there are so many around the U.S. Embassy they can't get near it," she said. "If they can't get the papers from the embassy, they can't get out. I told them to bribe someone."

Mrs. Ray said she cabled copies of her immigration requests to her family yesterday—at a cost of \$250—in hopes of speeding their

evacuation. "I send them telegrams to comfort them," she said. "Money means nothing now."

Mrs. Ray, who works at a travel agency here, said she felt her relatives, who include pharmacists, doctors and professors, would have no trouble adapting here. Others expressed the same sentiment.

"Give a Vietnamese some dirt in a handkerchief and he will grow a garden," said Kim Cook, another in line.

While he waited in line with his wife, Tom Ray, a Defense Department procurement analyst, said he worried for friends he worked with in Vietnam.

"They're just low-ranking people; I'm afraid they'll get left behind," he said. "The corrupt ones—the ones who should be killed—will get out," Mrs. Ray said bitterly.

Like the others in line yesterday, Mrs. Ray said her relatives would be killed by the Communists.

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THE WASHINGTON POST
A 28 Friday, April 25, 1975

Indochina Roundup

Pathet Lao Ordered to Withdraw

VIENTIANE—The coalition government of Laos has ordered Pathet Lao troops to yield territory they seized this week and ordered both warring factions to withdraw 13 miles to their original cease-fire positions, a government spokesman said yesterday.

Communist and Royalist troops were told to leave a strategic road junction at Sala Phuo Koun, 90 miles north of Vientiane, and the spokesman said a peace-keeping force of soldiers from both sides would move into the vacated area.

The spokesman also said Laos, which earlier had closed its Saigon embassy and frozen relations with the Saigon government, will now recognize the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government.

Danang Disarmament

EAST BERLIN—A total of 109,000 Saigon government troops were disarmed and 6,600 officers are still interned by Communist troops in the Danang area, the East German news agency reported from Danang.

The agency quoted a Communist spokesman in Danang as saying most soldiers had been allowed to return to their homes but that the officers will be interned indefinitely, depending on "their reasonable view and sensible conduct."

Many interned officers are permitted to receive visitors in the afternoons, and mothers, wives and girlfriends from Danang were bringing them food, the agency said.

A source in Danang told Agence France-Presse's Jean Thoraval that soldiers other than officers were released to civilian life because they could not be fed.

Thoraval also reported that traffic is much lighter in Danang, suggesting that a large segment of the middle class has left the city. Eighteen of 30 lecturers at the local university and about two-thirds of its students have returned to classes, he reported.

Simon on Asia

MANILA—U.S. Treasury Secretary William E. Simon told a meeting of the Asian Development Bank that the United States will honor its commitments and would not withdraw from the region.

"Our friends need not fear, and our adversaries should beware of adopting policies which are predicated on a miscalculation of our firmness of purpose," he said in an address to senior economic and financial officials from 40 of 41 member nations. Cambodia was absent.

Japan Cuts Back

TOKYO—Japan has decided to cut its aid program to South Vietnam and will route a planned \$10 million in emergency refugee aid through the United Nations, Foreign Ministry sources said.

Sources said the government has indefinitely postponed approval of a 30 million loan to South Vietnam for purchase of Japan goods and has dropped negotiations on \$23.3 million in grants to Saigon.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Japan feels "well and adequately protected" by its security treaty with the United States despite recent U.S. policy reversals in Indochina.

From staff reports and news dispatches

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Friday, April 25, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

A Persistent Vietnamese Peasant Defies Artillery Barrage

By Colin Smith
London Observer

SAIGON—There is about the Vietnamese peasant a resilience, a willingness to overcome impossible odds and survive that defies all clichés about Oriental fatalism and sometimes seems hardly credible.

There was compelling evidence of this at a point on Highway 1 some 10 miles west of Xuanloc at a place where Communist troops had cut the road earlier this week.

A North Vietnamese army unit, estimated at anything from company to battalion strength and, according to aerial reconnaissance, accompanied by two T-54 tanks, had inserted itself in a rubber plantation between the villages of Hungloc and Dauglay.

At the Saigon side of this road-cutting operation, the nearest government troops were positioned near a ham-

let called Hungnghia, which is settled on a small hill, really not much more than a bump in the road, overlooking Hungloc.

At this hamlet, the government forces had two tanks, some armored personnel carriers, and infantry dug in among the roofless ruins of substantial brick houses and a row of flat-roofed wooden shacks in which most of the occupants remained.

About 200 yards from their position, the asphalt road had been slashed by an anti-tank ditch, the red clay soil from which was piled on the government side.

Hungnghia had evidently seen its share of this 30 years' war. On the very brow of the hill, partly shaded by a gable roofed Buddhist shrine, was a gray tombstone, so low to the that it looked at a glance like a

The stone marks the grave of Lt. Gebelin, who shares it

with four unnamed Montagnard tribesmen of the 22d Colonial Infantry Regiment. Their epitaph simply says that they fell on May 22, 1948.

Despite repeated air attacks and artillery bombardments, the government forces had stayed at Hungloc for well over a week, during which the infiltrating Communists were said by refugees to have dug themselves 12-foot deep bunkers and generally shown every indication of staying.

One day recently the South Vietnamese were laying down a sizable barrage so that the rounds landed between 600 and 300 yards from their positions, and sometimes closer. The 155-mm shells from a battery three miles down the road were tearing up the paddy fields in front of Hungloc village and the forest of banana trees that fringed the

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road to the right. They exploded in great brown clouds among the tall greenery that half hid the red roof tops of the nobler buildings in the village itself.

At times they were landing so close to the South Vietnamese troops that anxious radio messages were sent to the gunners to lift their elevation. Air force pilots, too, when they arrived in their little F-5 fighters, dropped 250 pound bombs close enough for the blast to tug at clothing and make such a noise that it seemed impossible that those other Vietnamese would, as they did, fire back at them with machine-guns when they pulled out of their dives.

Incredibly, out of all this smoke and din, a few refugees began to make their way towards the government positions. The first were three women, a mother

and her two teen-age daughters. For a few moments their slow movement through the tall grass of the overgrown paddies caused the soldiers to tense and a couple of them cocked their weapons before relaxing at the sight of the white blouses and conical straw hats.

The movements of the teen-age girls were hampered by the weight of heavy yokes which bent their knees as they walked and from which were suspended rice-cooking utensils and a couple of electric fans. They had been walking for two days from Dauguiay and had seen no Communists.

A little while later an old man came through who said that he had seen four Communist troops in a house at the edge of the village.

More artillery was called in, some of the shells land-

ing directly on the main road. When they went over they did not so much whistle as make a rushing noise similar to a strong wind blowing through trees at night. The sight of the explosion was always visible a couple of seconds before the sound of the impact caught up with it, as if the whole scene were part of a film without a sound-track.

The forward observation officer became agitated about rounds falling short again and a white phosphorous shell landed to the left as a marker. While this was happening a figure became visible at the bottom of the road near the Communist-held village. It crossed the road very quickly from left to right and then back again from right to left. After a close look with binoculars and it became clear that the figure was a cyclist.

More shells came down,

and everybody held their breath and watched the figure zigzag slowly towards us through the barrage. Another white phosphorous round landed in the dried-up paddy about 200 yards to the left of the cyclist.

An American reporter, watching the white smoke, said: "Now lie down, you silly sonofabitch."

But, of course, the figures carried on through the brown dust clouds that sometimes fogged the road, was lost for a couple of minutes around the anti-tank ditch, and then reappeared about 150 yards away from the forward government fox-hole.

By now it was possible to see that the cyclist was a man wearing green army trousers and that he had a passenger, a small boy sitting in front of him and steadying two long sticks across the handlebars.

There was something ungainly about the man's movements and he still tacked from one side of the road to the other, although the shelling was now behind him.

It was not until he reached the brow of the hill and the small boy who looked terrified, was gulping down water from a large glass bottle they were carrying with them, that the reason for the cyclist's erratic progress became clear.

The sticks across the handlebars were a pair of crutches and his right trousers leg was flapping irrelevantly about because that leg had been amputated above the knee. While the boy drank, the cyclist, still on the saddle, rested with his good left leg on a level piece of ground which happened to be the grave of Lt. Gebelin and his mountagnards.

Conferees Agree On Vietnam Aid

25 April 75

By Spencer Rich
and Richard L. Lyons

(Washington Post Staff Writers)

House-Senate conferees tentatively agreed yesterday on a bill providing \$327 million for humanitarian aid to South Vietnam and for the costs of evacuating Americans and Vietnamese threatened by Communist reprisals.

The bill also grants the President authority to use the U.S. armed forces to take the people out, but under carefully limited conditions designed to prevent getting bogged down in a new war.

The agreement, announced by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John J. Sparkman (D-Ala.), came just two weeks after President Ford urgently asked Congress for \$250 million in humanitarian aid and \$772 million in weapons aid for Saigon, and only half a day after the House, in a marathon session lasting past 2 a.m. yesterday, passed its version of the \$327 million measure. The Senate had passed a \$250 million version on Wednesday.

The House debate saw Majority Leader Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill (D-Mass.) part with all the other House leaders and oppose the bill, allying himself with the young doves in the big freshman class. "I am opposed to the intervention of U.S. troops for the evacuation of South Vietnamese," O'Neill declared.

The \$327 million in the humanitarian-evacuation conference bill is probably

about all the President can hope to get in emergency aid for South Vietnam. The widespread conviction in Congress is that further military aid won't help Saigon survive and would simply be a waste.

The remaining details of the two bills are to be resolved in a second conference starting this morning.

In resolving the most important issue, the conferees yesterday adopted the Senate bill's language that would permit the President to use force to go in after American citizens and their dependents, and would permit rescue of endangered Vietnamese only if incidental to the rescue of Americans. In seeking to save endangered Vietnamese, the bill says, the President can't enlarge the number of troops or the scope or duration of the military operation beyond what is needed for the basic American rescue.

This tight restriction is intended to forestall any wide-sweeping military rescue operation on behalf of Vietnamese civilians that might require a massive show of U.S. force and reinvolve the United States in the war. In addition, the conference bill specifically keys the military rescue authority to the war powers act, which allows Congress by concurrent resolution to order the President to withdraw U.S. forces.

The \$327 million—basically the House figure—consists of \$150 million in new authorizations for humanitarian aid to the people of South Vietnam plus \$177 million in reactivated authorizations left over from last year to cover food, medical, transportation, military and other costs connected with evacuation.

The senate has insisted that the \$150 million humanitarian aid be channeled through the United Nations, but the House conferees balked, and language was to be worked out overnight that will let the President channel the money through such international agencies as he chooses, not necessarily the United Nations.

Several conferees said the language governing the \$177 million apparently would let the President use some of that evacuation money for weapons aid to Saigon if he believes it necessary to aid in evacuation operations, but this point may be discussed again today. Another unsettled point is whether any of the \$150 million humanitarian aid may be used to help Cambodians; the Senate bill permitted this, the House didn't.

Conferee Hugh Scott (Pa.), the Senate Republican leader, said conferees had retained a House provision barring any humanitarian aid to the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong.

The \$327 million is a ceiling; the actual funds must be appropriated in separate legislation. But the authority to use troops for rescue operations goes into effect as soon as both chambers approve the compromise and the President signs it. If today's conference winds up early, the bill could be cleared through the Senate this afternoon, but House rules would preclude a final vote there until early next week.

Sen. Dick Clark (D-Iowa), who has been sharply critical of the administration for not taking Americans out of Vietnam fast enough before force may be needed, said the latest State Department figures show 1,681 Americans and 562 of their

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dependents still in Vietnam, although the White House had pledged to bring the former figure down to 1,500 too days ago.

He said the 200-plus Americans and dependents evacuated in the last 24 hours appeared to represent a slowdown.

"Evacuation should be accelerated because as the North Vietnamese net draws closer around Saigon, the danger to the remaining Americans grows by the hour," Clark told the senate, "and so does the difficulty of getting them out without a massive reinvolvement of U.S. forces."

It is widely believed on Capitol Hill and has also been asserted by the State Department that President Ford has inherent powers to use troops to rescue endangered Americans overseas without any specific authorization from Congress. But the War Powers Act and a variety of other legislation forbid him to send troops into a combat situation in Indochina for the purpose of rescuing Vietnamese unless Congress authorizes it.

The conferees granted his request to suspend these laws and authorize him to rescue Vietnamese in certain categories, although the powers aren't quite as broad as he wanted.

Administration spokesmen, for example, weren't happy with the provision limiting the number and scope of Vietnamese rescue operations to whatever is needed to rescue Americans.

The House passed its version of the humanitarian-evacuation bill at 2:40 a.m. yesterday, 230 to 137, after nearly 15 hours of debate marked with emotional heat, tolerant attention and weird parliamentary tangles.

After disposing of more than 40 amendments and two substitute bills, the House ended up approving substantially the same bill drafted by its International Relations Committee.

In an effort to speed debate, the House by late Wednesday afternoon fell into one of the frustrating parliamentary situations that often characterize the unwieldy 435-member body's consideration of complex time-consuming issues.

The House agreed to halt debate — and presumably vote — at 4 p.m. on a substitute bill that would have forbidden use of troops to protect the evacuation of Americans and endangered South Vietnamese. But the agreement was to stop only the debate, not the offering of amendments. So for more than an hour members offered amendments which were read by a clerk and voted on but could not be explained or debated.

One was a second substitute bill offered by Rep. Bob Eckhardt (D-Tex.). He told reporters it would place more restrictions on the President's power to use troops, but Republicans hailed it as giving the Chief Executive more flexibility. The House adopted Eckhardt's substitute without debate, 272 to 146, and it appeared by 5:30 p.m. that the debate was over.

But Eckhardt's bill was thrown out by a single objection that it violated House rules by appropriating money in an authorization bill. The debate went on for nine more hours.

Distressed at the House being forced to vote on amendments it had only heard read by a clerk, freshman Rep. Michael T. Blouin (D-Iowa) called the performance "another example of why the people in this country think the only difference between us and the zoo is that we do not have cages."

Fear of the Unknown in a Dying City

Saigon Tension Brings Exhaustion, Tortured Dreams

25 April 75
By H. D. S. Greenway

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 24 — When evening comes to Saigon, foreigners still gather on the open-sided terrace of the old-fashioned French colonial hotel, the Continental Palace, to drink an apertif as they have done for 50 years. The lights begin to come on, the waiters in white suits take orders and the slow fans on the high ceilings bring some relief in the tropical heat.

But when the hour of the curfew comes, and it now comes at 8 p.m., the customers begin to wander away from the little tables and wicker chairs and strange and even terrifying shapes begin to gather in the darkness outside.

It is the hour when beggars, cripples, prostitutes, junkies and transvestites

become desperate for one last pitch. There are children, dirty and uncared for whose only foreign words are "you, you, you give me money," and girls, some of them vacuous with narcotics, all of them begging, pleading, pulling at the last of the customers before the night and the curfew take all the foreigners away.

There have always been beggars and whores hanging around the Continental. Saigon, in that regard, is no worse than many other Asian cities. It is the desperation that is different and terrifying.

The desperation of the beggars is less controlled but no greater than the desperation of a great portion of this city. There is an air of infectious fear that pervades all contacts and all conversations now, a fear of the un-

known, of what will come and a realization that when the Communists come, for better or worse everyone's life will change forever.

Here are a few impressions and thoughts on what it is like to live here now in a dying city—a city that has always depended too much on foreigners — corrupt, venal, energetic and colorful in the last year of a 30-year civil war.

Saigon was built by the French and married to the Americans and when the new rulers come, whether it is in six days or six months, they will be harsh and intolerant and there will be injustices. In the end one can only hope that a more just and more Vietnamese society will emerge to replace the one that is now passing.

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Despair Grips Many in Saigon

SAIGON, From A1

You can see the underlying tension in the way people behave and the puffy, drawn look of people's faces.

One friend recently bought some poison to give himself and his children. When the time came, he couldn't, and so he gave his children away to distant relatives who, unlike himself, had never worked with Americans.

Another friend has been offered passage to America by his employers. He was told that he could bring only his wife and his children. In the Confucian tradition of the extended family this is intolerable to him.

"One can have many children but only one mother," he said. "Only savage people would leave their mothers behind."

Sleep is shallow in Saigon these days and Vietnamese and foreigners complain of exhaustion beyond fatigue, quick tears and tortured dreams. The tension seems to produce irrational behavior in some. A few days ago, for example, a man stabbed himself to death in front of the National Assembly. Perhaps it was a political protest of some kind, but the reaction of several Vietnamese was that it was not an entirely abnormal thing to do.

Many Vietnamese, a large number of whom have not thought it out clearly, will do anything to leave the country and escape to America. It is possible to call an acquaintance one day and have him gone the next without saying a word. The American embassy has simplified the paper work to such an extent that Americans can take out virtually any Vietnamese with them and every day the great silver Air Force planes circle the city impatiently waiting to land, load and take off again for Guam or the Philippines.

There has been none of the expected trouble with the Vietnamese authorities over getting Vietnamese and Americans out, but, in what will perhaps be the last corruption of the war, the Americans have offered to take out all the officers who could make it difficult to evacuate via the airport, including police and air force officers, along with their families.

Although there is a strong undercurrent of anti-American feeling here now, the more sensational news stories about overt anti-Americanism have been vastly exaggerated. Americans still meet with courtesy and consideration in Saigon. But the undercurrent is there and the nightmare which the American embassy faces is

that one day the population will turn on Americans in rage at being abandoned.

If anything the tension has risen a notch in the last two days since President Nguyen Van Thieu's resignation. No one knows what will happen now, and there is something manic in the way young men ride their Hondas on the Saigon streets. Public services, such as the telephone seem to be less and less workable.

Foreign embassies are closing one after the other.

"The diplomats are going out all over Indochina," one of them said. The Germans are gone, the British haul down the Union Jack today and the Australians are all but gone with much of their equipment shipped home.

In the past week ashes from papers burning in chancery gardens have been blowing in the wind. The more modern embassies have shredding machines.

If one dines with diplomats at home, one is likely to find a table, a few chairs and nothing else in vast, empty rooms. Furniture has long ago left but there is usually a little wine or champagne left.

Despite the panic, there are many Vietnamese who have no intention of leaving the country.

"Perhaps it is better if you take away all the war profiteers, the secret policemen and interrogators," one friend said. "We Vietnamese make very bad exiles. We are not as bad as the Russians, who cry even more than we do because of homesickness. But we are not like the Chinese who can get along and prosper anywhere."

There are none of the inconveniences yet that marked the last days of Phnom Penh. There are no power cuts and, so far, food and supplies are still coming into the capital overland and by sea. But the guns can be heard in the night now.

The North Vietnamese sing songs of vigor, honor and sacrifice for the revolution. Perhaps they are required to sing these songs. Sometimes they write poetry in their diaries that showst he streak of melancholy in the Vietnamese soul.

12,000 Viets Are Evacuated

25 April 75
By Murrey Marder

Washington Post Staff Writer

U.S. officials said yesterday about 12,000 Vietnamese have been flown out of Saigon, mostly within the last week, and officials are racing against time to increase the airlift to 8,000 or 9,000 a day.

U.S. officials have no way of knowing how long the airlift can continue or how many refugees it may bring out, they emphasized.

In theory, up to 132,000 Indochinese refugees can be admitted to the United States, but the more realistic goal is 50,000 "high risk" Vietnamese and their families who could be marked for Communist retaliation.

"This is going on as long as humanly possible . . . until Saigon becomes an unsafe city for evacuation," said U.S. task force director L. Dean Brown.

"A lull" in the level of fighting during the last three or four days, Brown said, helped the United States to evacuate "about 12,000" Vietnamese and 3,474 Americans. Now the airlift has shifted overwhelmingly to evacuating South Vietnamese from Saigon to Guam, at an intensified pace.

"Any time North Vietnam makes the decision to move, they can move," said Brown, a former career diplomat. "If Saigon is under attack and the airfield is under attack, that is that," he said.

"That is when you go in for the last haul" of American personnel left in the South Vietnamese capital, Brown told a news conference at the State Department.

By tonight, the American embassy in Saigon has been instructed to reduce the number of all Americans in the battered region to 1,100. An embassy official in Saigon said this means limiting official Americans, military and civilian, to "around 500."

Many other nations are closing down their operations in Saigon, and senior U.S. military officials yesterday continued to be privately critical of what they regard as the unnecessarily high number of Americans still in Saigon.

American military planners are concerned that as the threat to Saigon steadily mounts, efforts to extricate remaining Americans will become increasingly hazardous.

This military disquiet shows that in the Pentagon, as well as among analysts in other agencies, including the State Department, there is no confidence that the recent lull in the fighting is a cause for reassurance.

Diplomats of some nations hopefully interpret that lull as a signal that the Communists

are holding back to allow the airlift to proceed. Skeptical U.S. officials, however, said yesterday that while the level of fighting has fallen off, the North Vietnamese forces are steadily moving into position to close off the exit routes from Saigon.

Some American civilian specialists believe the Communists may wait a few days to see if the present political turnover in Saigon will produce the precise kind of regime which North Vietnam wants to put a facade of legitimacy on what amounts to a negotiated surrender of South Vietnam.

At best, these analysts believe, North Vietnam has an option strategy of political or military conquest, while it prepares to throttle Saigon, probably counting on panic

to create more havoc than gunfire.

Brown told reporters yesterday that since April 1,

but largely during the last week, the United States has drawn down the numbers of Americans in Saigon to 813 military and civilian government employees, 405 contractor personnel, 284 others including missionaries, press and businessmen, and 179 dependents.

The approximately 12,000 South Vietnamese flown out of Saigon during this period, he said, were mostly persons with relatives in the United States.

While some persons in both categories already have reached the United States, Brown said, as of last night there were about 9,000 refugees in Guam, the new U.S. evacuation center and about 5,000 at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, the former refugee center.

With pressure on to hurry

refugees through the U.S. embassy processing in Saigon, Brown said he hopes to see the clearance rate increased from the current 5,000 persons a day to "about 8,000 or 9,000."

About a dozen U.S. government agencies are participating in the crash operation to handle the refugee flow. They include State, Defense, Justice, Treasury, Interior, Transportation Agency for International Development and the departments of Health, Education and Welfare and Housing and Urban Development.

Refugees entering the United States for resettlement, said Brown, will be spread around the country. "There'll be no localities in the United States," he said, "that are inundated with refugees or . . . employment or health problems."

Minh Rejects Premiership, Seeks Control

W. Post
25 April 75
**Lull Goes On
In S. Vietnam**

From News Dispatches

SAIGON, April 24 — Attempts to form a government the Communist side might deal with hit a snag Thursday.

Sources said the man with the best chance of putting together such a Cabinet, Gen. Duong Van (Big) Minh, turned down an offer to take over as premier "with full powers" and was intent on nothing less than the presidency.

The military command reported only light and scattered action in the Saigon region and in the Mekong Delta area to the south. Small engagements also were reported to the northwest and northeast.

The battlefield situation was almost at a lull, apparently while the Communists waited to see if political moves in Saigon might give them what they want without an assault on the capital.

But no one questioned the grim assessment that the powerful Communist-led forces arrayed around Saigon were in position to move when they choose.

In Washington, a Pentagon spokesman said the North Vietnamese "have the capability right now of mounting a massive attack" on the South Vietnamese capital. "Something could happen any minute from the standpoint of capability."

The spokesman, Maj. Gen. Wynant Sidle, said North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces ring Saigon with at least 14 divisions, outnumbering South Vietnamese forces by more than 2 to 1.

Sidle was asked how Americans could be evacuated if Tan Son Nhut Air Base on the outskirts of Saigon was closed. He replied that assuming 1,600 Americans remain in Saigon it "could be done in a day" with helicopters, depending on how much interference they encountered.

In Saigon's major political meeting of the day, Minh talked for two hours with President Tran Van Huong, but they failed to arrive at a formula for a new government to replace the 11-day administration of Premier Nguyen Ba Can, which resigned Wednesday night, sources said.

After his meeting with Huong, Minh went on to gather support for his proposal to become president from other political, religious and military leaders. Political sources close to Minh said each of the groups he met with backed the general's proposals and stepped up their calls for Huong to resign.

Huong, who had been vice president, took over as president Monday night on the resignation of Nguyen Van Thieu. At that time it had been expected he would not hold the post long.

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Minh, head of the neutralist "third force," was a leader of the 1963 coup against the late President Ngo Dinh Diem and succeeded him until he was overthrown in 1964. In recent years he has served as a rallying point for neutralist, anti-Thieu politicians.

Minh, a French-trained soldier could be an acceptable partner for the Communists in any negotiations.

He is widely known throughout the country and is a Buddhist. Since 1969 he has been one of the mainstays of the neutralist-leaning third force in South Vietnam. Minh holds that this third force in fact speaks for the majority of South Vietnamese who he sees as uncommitted to either side.

There were indications in Paris that Minh's refusal to take the post of premier, far from closing the door on negotiations, could be the key to open it.

According to reliable sources cited by Agence France-Presse, the PRG welcomes the refusal, which bears witness to Minh's desire not to bail out Huong and to dissociate himself from Huong's team. It was not ruled out by these sources that if Minh were to become president, he could become a valuable negotiator but meanwhile the PRG is reserving judgment on him.

Some political sources in Saigon said Huong, working under a self-imposed 48-hour deadline, expected to set up a new peace government by Friday.

There was a complication. Senate President Tran Van Lam, constitutionally the next in line for the presidency, said he wanted the leadership post if Huong stepped down. He said he and a group of 20 other influential politicians would not agree to Huong's replacement by anyone but Lam.

North Vietnam's news agency reported that the Hanoi Foreign Ministry and the Provisional Revolutionary Government had charged South Vietnam with using "ultra-lethal asphyxiation bombs" against Communist-led troops at Xuanloc, 40 miles east of Saigon, on Monday. There was no comment from Saigon.

In separate statements the two governments condemned the use of CBU-55 bombs, which they called "a weapon of mass extermination outlawed by international law."

They accused the U.S. government of supplying the bombs and encouraging their use.

They warned the South Vietnamese government that "if it does not immediately cease these acts they will be considered as war crimes and punished in an appropriate fashion."

In Washington, the Pentagon acknowledged that a U.S.-made bomb may have been used by the South Vietnamese to suffocate Communist troops.

The Pentagon said the bombs originally were designed to clear helicopter landing zones of mines but proved to be inaccurate.

They might be capable of suffocating troops within a 200-yard radius but were not designed for use as anti-personnel weapons, the defense department added.

Meanwhile, Pan American World Airways made its last civilian flight from Saigon on Thursday. Its Saigon staff was evacuated by a military charter.

The U.S. flag still waved over the American consulate in threatened Bienhoa, 14 miles north of Saigon, and Consul General Richard A. Peters said "We are on the job," although the door was locked as a security precaution.

A 10 Thursday, April 24, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

Ancient Clifftop Temple Is Last Outpost for Khmer Republic

By James Fenton

Special to The Washington Post

PREAH VIHEAR, Cambodia, April 23—At last count, there still were 130 soldiers defending the Khmer Republic in this clifftop temple, 1,500 feet above sea level. "This is the Khmer Republic," said a lieutenant of the government forces. "It's very small now."

The area in question is less than one square mile. Geographically, it seems to belong to Thailand, a small section of cliff jutting out over the Cambodian plain. Culturally, however, the temple complex is certainly Cambodian, dating from before the period of Angkor Wat.

In the past the virtual enclave has been the subject of a fierce boundary dispute between the Khmers and

the Thais, which Cambodia finally won. It is odd, then, that Prince Sihanouk recently claimed the whole of Cambodian territory had now fallen to the Royal Government of Khmer National Union (GRUNK).

Perhaps Preah Vihear had slipped his mind, but that seems unlikely.

Yesterday, certainly, there was not an insurgent in sight as we drove through the Dongrek Mountains from Sisaket in Thailand, although the Thai soldiers at the border seemed convinced that we were about to be filled full of Communist lead.

There had been fighting around the temple the night before, and a new group of frontier guards had been sent to the spot. We walked the last part of the way through the forest, and

came to the temple steps where the border begins.

Looking up, we could see the flag of the Khmer Republic still flying over the ruins. It was rather torn—as if somebody had started to rip it apart and then thought better of it.

Preah Vihear is an extraordinary construction. Imagine a line of steps leading from temple to temple—half a mile up and ending in a sheer cliff.

On either side of the steps are stone carvings of lions, long twisting snakes, and phallic symbols—many of them now looted or broke, it is said, by wild elephants.

And hanging around the temple enclosures are soldiers of the defeated army. They smile as ever when they talk, but when they are not talking their faces settle into expressions of worry.

(over)

They have a lot to be worried about. Somehow or other they have not yet got around to surrendering, although they know perfectly well from the radio that everything is over.

The lieutenant starts off in grand style. They will fight to the end. They will fight till the last bullet. They are fighting because they hate Communism. They will never give up.

Then he says that maybe it would be better to go to Thailand. Maybe he will go soon; his family is in Thailand.

Then he says he is waiting here for his death. And then he giggles. Finally he says that he really cannot make up his mind whether to be a Khmer Rouge or a Khmer Republican.

He's lost radio contact

with his commanding officers in Siem Reap. His head is turning round and round. He just does not know what to do.

In comparison with the last time I came here, in October last year, there are very few soldiers or their families left. Walking among the wooden huts in which they used to live was like walking through a ghost village.

In the distance, a group of soldiers is stretching out a brilliant white sheet in the sun. Could be for surrender flags, I think to myself. A little while later the sheet reappears, dyed black. Could be for black paramas, I think.

Most of the people here are separated from their families. One of the most pathetic things about the

last stages of the war was that many on the government side got separated. The soldiers hated it; they had preferred taking their families with them, even into dangerous situations.

These people, of course, had one of the cushiest jobs of the war. There was never very much harassment here, but the trouble was, as I was told on my previous visit, it was so utterly boring.

You were isolated entirely from Cambodia. The troops who came to relieve you would go by the way of Thailand. There was nothing to do for months on end.

On either side of the temple steps are neat little vegetable patches. The Khmer Rouge, when they come, will no doubt inherit the vegetables.

But the stalls are empty where the giggling girls used to sell Cambodian brandy. The staple drink of the government troops' officer class, it was particularly welcome during the cold mountainous nights.

Snoozing in a hut is a Thai captain who, when we disturb him, comes blearily out and barks a few orders to the Khmer officers, and then retires again.

It is impossible to determine why a Thai captain is giving orders to Khmer officers, but he seems to have made himself very unpopular with everybody. Perhaps he is there to keep them out of Thailand.

Evading his stern interdictions, we slip off to see the ruins, slinking past the stone phalluses, and up to the summit.

At the cliff's edge, the guard is asleep. I seem to remember that his predecessor was asleep as well. Bstirring himself, he produces a pair of binoculars, and we stare together at the miles and miles of Cambodia that lie beneath us.

It is quite empty—a vast stretch of lightly wooded nothing. The soldier points out the invisible salient features: that was the school, that was the airfield, that was the road leading to the village.

There are tigers, and there are Khmer Rouge hanging around, but neither of these categories is visible today. And in the midday heat, in shacks and bivouacs among the ruins, the Khmer Republic is taking a well-earned snooze.

Thais Move To Hold Off Cambodians

24 April 75

BANGKOK, April 23 (AP).

—Thailand sent 1,000 reinforcements Wednesday to its frontier with Cambodia to stem the flow of refugees and weapons into the country, the Thai government said.

About 4,000 border police have guarded the 400-mile frontier since the Communist-led Khmer Rouge took over Phnom Penh on April 17. Several thousand refugees have sought shelter in Thailand and fleeing Cambodian soldiers and pilots have brought in a large number of weapons and aircraft, to the embarrassment of the Thais, who do not wish to alienate the new government of Cambodia.

Meanwhile, Cambodia was again under a blanket of silence and informed diplomatic observers speculated the new Khmer Rouge leadership might have encountered difficulties in organizing the country and its capital.

"How can 60,000 Khmer Rouge handle 2 million people?" one observer noted, referring to the small size of the victorious army and the large and unwieldy population of Phnom Penh.

Another Cambodian leader on the Communist death list has fled to Thailand, leaving only two of the seven unaccounted for.

Thai officials said former Premier In Tam fled across the border Saturday with three other persons as they were being pursued and fired on. The sources said they were in police custody near the border.

In Tam headed the government in 1973 while President Lon Nol was in the United States for medical treatment. After the Communists captured Phnom Penh, he vowed to lead a guerrilla movement in north-west Cambodia.

Of the other six men the Khmer Rouge said they would execute as traitors, only former Premiers Long Boret and Sisowath Sirik Matak are believed to be in custody in Phnom Penh, or they may have been executed.

Reliable sources in Bangkok said employees of Western agencies were safe inside the French consulate in Phnom Penh, but that the compound was surrounded by Khmer Rouge soldiers and that a shortage of food and water continued. A French government spokesman in Paris said Tuesday that Phnom Penh authorities agreed that food could be delivered and a supply plane had been dispatched.

Initially there were 1,200 persons in the compound, according to the French. Some 400 Cambodians left after the Khmer Rouge demanded that all Cambodians leave the compound, the sources said, but about 600 Cambodians remain with Western journalists, members of international relief agencies and the United Nations, and others.

The Khmer Rouge radio continued to play revolutionary songs and repeated a speech given Tuesday by Khieu Samphan, the commander in chief of the Khmer Rouge armed forces and presumably one of the top leaders of the movement.

A mass celebration has been scheduled to begin Thursday to mark the victory.

Sources said six of Cambodia's top military commanders fled after the fall of Phnom Penh last Thursday and now were in Thailand. Thailand grants all Cambodian refugees only a one-month permit to stay in the country.

Saigon in Hurried Search For Offer Acceptable to VC

29 April 75

By H. D. S. Greenway
and Philip A. McCombs
Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 23—Diplomats, politicians and generals worked feverishly Wednesday in an effort to find a political solution acceptable to the Communists, whose divisions are now gathering in the provinces outside the capital.

Vietnam's new president Tran Van Huong accepted resignation of Prime Minister Nguyen Ba Can Wednesday in the first step of a now desperate attempt to form a new government.

The prevailing view among many American and Western diplomats, and also among many Vietnamese is that the North Vietnamese have virtually won the war and that all that is left is to mask surrender with some sort of coalition that would avoid either a last battle in

the streets of Saigon or a nightmare panic and the breakdown of all order. There is no indication here yet that the Communist will accept compromise. Radio Hanoi has called the present political maneuverings "the dance of the puppets" and the Vietcong representatives in Paris have rejected the latest South Vietnamese offer to negotiate, as long as the United States is still supporting the war.

The Foreign Ministry, in a statement Wednesday, had offered to discuss "all issues within the framework of the Paris agreement . . . including the establishment of a National Council for Reconciliation and Concord."

The council, as envisaged in the 1973 Paris pact, would prepare for new national elections. It would be made up of members of the Sai-

gon government, the Vietcong and independent "third force" politicians. Thieu had persistently refused to discuss the council, contending that it would lead to a coalition government with the Communists.

But there is still some hope here that the Communists would prefer to take the temporary coalition road to final victory rather than take Saigon by storm.

The Americans are working hard behind the scenes for such a solution but events are moving now with sudden speed. Those who have spoken with President Huong, have not found that he is capable of either quick or decisive action.

The American ambassador, Graham Martin, has met with the French Amba-

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Pessimism, Peace Moves in Saigon

VIETNAM, From A1

sador, Jean-Marie Merillon, in the past days in an effort to enlist French help. The French have been in contact with the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government representatives in Paris and there is talk here of trying to get a list of acceptable Saigon personalities for a coalition. But according to well informed diplomatic sources, the PRG have not yet obliged the French by stating whom they would deal with in a coalition.

Huong summoned the French ambassador to the palace. Various so-called "third force" candidates, such as Duong Van (Big) Minh, who led the coup against Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963, met round the clock with generals, politicians and the leaders of religious sects.

There is intense speculation that the fighting, tennis-playing big match would be

given a major political role. He was scheduled to meet with the president Thursday morning.

[A group of 17 deputies in the National Assembly, members of the opposition Nation Society, issued a statement calling for the installation of Minh as president, wire services reported. Another member of the antigovernment alliance, militant Roman Catholic priest Tran Huu Thanh, whose anticorruption movement has long called for a total change of leadership, urged Huong to form a "Cabinet of national salvation" within two days or "we will act on our own."]

Meanwhile, the comparative lull in the fighting continued.

South Vietnamese commanders moved the government's warplanes out of Bienhoa in the face of an expected Communist assault on the big air base 15 miles northeast of Saigon. Government helicopter pilots re-

ported sighting a large convoy of Communist troops traveling near Bienhoa in a column of Soviet-built Molotova trucks.

A visit to the northeastern front Wednesday found conditions relatively peaceful with less artillery and mortar rounds coming in on government positions than before. Military sources said that Communist pressure in the south, along Highway 4 to the Mekong Delta, had decreased somewhat as well. But whether the Communists were deliberately halting their advance to watch political events, or whether they were simply gathering forces for another strike, was not known.

The Communist tactic so far has been to gradually surround Saigon and increase pressure on the city slowly—not unlike the method the Cambodian insurgents used in Phnom Penh. Whether that tactic will continue is uncertain.

But military sources

stress that the battle for Saigon will be fought some distance from the city—perhaps 20 to 30 miles away. Unlike the Cambodian insurgents, who in the last weeks were only five miles or so from Phnom Penh, the North Vietnamese have tanks, antiaircraft guns and missiles as well as long-range artillery. If Saigon's troops lose the battle on the outer perimeter, it will be all over for Saigon.

The British, Australians and West Germans are already closing their embassies and taking out as many Vietnamese as want to go.

[Thailand will withdraw all remaining personnel attached to the Thai embassy in Saigon on Thursday, Thai Foreign Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said in Bangkok.]

Vietnamese sources said that the Americans had promised to evacuate the families of key police and military officers who were in a position to keep the evacuation process at the airport going full tilt.

South and North Vietnamese forces have been in position for 48 hours to overrun Saigon, Western intelligence sources said Wednesday, according to the Associated Press. The sources speculated that the Communist side is delaying a final kill while it watches the rapidly moving political events in Saigon.

A hand grenade exploded in a black market stall in Saigon Wednesday night, killing three Vietnamese women and injuring three other persons. It is not immediately known if it was a terror attack.

The North Vietnam News Agency, quoting Vietcong officials, said the Vietcong captured two South Vietnamese generals in Phanrang, capital of the coastal province of Ninhthuan, in recent fighting.

Refugees Uncertain About Future in U.S.

24 April 75
By Don Oberdorfer

Washington Post Foreign Service

CLARK AIR BASE, Philippines, April 23—The way Capt. Trinh looks at it, he was never much of a soldier.

He went into the army because he had no choice. His loyalty was to the men he served as paymaster, not the government whose uniform he wore. He was born in China of Vietnamese parents, lived in Saigon and in Hanoi, and was introduced to Western ways of thought by a classical French education.

Now the war is far from over, although the death rattle can be heard, and Capt. Trinh of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam sits in a refugee center at Clark Air Base tending the bath of his small children and thinking vaguely about the better life he hopes for far away, in the United States.

"I am not afraid of the Communists, because they are people like everyone else. Of course, there will be blood in the revolution, but that is the way revolutions are. I was worried about my children, though I might be called out to fight during the battle for the city when shells come down. And I worried about the life they would lead afterwards. I didn't want them to be Red Guards. Maybe most people would be as well off under communism, but I wanted something different for my children.

"To tell the truth, in some ways I am living better than I ever did at home," said tall, darkly handsome Pham. "Here in this trailer we have air conditioning, a refrigerator, and a telephone. Of course, I might be living in one of the bunks in 'tent city' (just across the parade field) and things would be different, but right here I could have no complaint."

"Do you think America would give reclaimed land to Vietnamese so we could have a place to start?" he asks. He knows there are few rice fields in America and that land is scarce, but still he hopes.

He worked with the Communists in the Vietminh against the French, and then he deserted them. Rightly or wrongly, he had no doubt of his fate—quick and final—when the takeover comes to Saigon. Like many others, he had considered dangerous and hare-brained schemes to flee, involving small boats, money under the table and code tapping in the night.

Thus, he was delighted almost beyond belief when an American friend arranged a safe and almost effortless Air Force flight to Clark. Still, he is leaving Vietnam behind and going off into a land of the unknown. That is fearsome to him, and with good reason.

Like very many of the 6,000 or so refugees who are crowded into tents, trailers, schools, a gymnasium and other quarters on America's largest overseas military base, Trinh and Pham have been propelled from their native land by circumstances and the power and sense of honor of the United States. They know and everyone knows that no other nation could or would mount such an operation, with giant jet planes landing around the clock bringing grateful people in flight from their frears.

The problem—and the opportunity—is that many years of life are still ahead of them, and they are only beginning to search for dreams to dream. They have heard of the melting pot, but they are wary. The melting pot may be for Europeans, but what of the yellow-skinned sophisticates of the Orient, the Vietnamese?

Professor Anh, a noted mathematician of Dalat University who has studied at Berkeley, sat on an army cot in "tent city" and expressed confidence in a future in digital analysis beyond the ken of ordinary mortals. He has friends in America, and he has a skill. He is certain everything will go right.

Refugee status at Clark Air Base is a godsend in other ways as well. "My oldest son would have been drafted in June if we remained in Vietnam. Now he will not have to go." Anh had thought of taking his family to America before, but it seemed impractical. They are nine, including his married daughter and her husband, and air tickets alone would have been thousands of dollars beyond his reach. Now they all are being fed, housed and transported by their adopted country, and prepared for eventual citizenship.

A woman in black pantaloons living in "tent city" was mystified by the very question about her decision. "I know nothing. My husband said we go. So we go."

A student of Saigon University, who sat out the war with a draft exemption no doubt purchased at a handsome price, believes he will exist quite well with the help of his sister in America and the support of the United States.

"This is the price America must pay for waging war in our land and then abandoning Vietnam. It is small price, considering everything."

He has found a rationale for his journey. Evidently he has not yet found a dream to dream.

559 Evacuees Land in California

By Leroy F. Aaron
Washington Post Staff Writer
TRAVIS AIR FORCE

BASE, Calif., April 23—Hundreds of evacuees from Saigon — three-fifths of them South Vietnamese refugees landed here today.

Most were Vietnamese women and children who came with civilian American husbands and sponsors. They brought stories of homes, businesses and families abruptly abandoned, of growing anti-American tension and of black market prices for dollars and passports.

"Our house, our furniture, we had to leave it all behind. I imagine the VC have got it all now," said Walter M. Bain, a civilian contractor in Vietnam.

With him on the American Airline 747 flight from Clark Air Base in the Philippines were his Vietnamese wife, Lahn, and their three children. "I spent eight years in that damn country, and all I've got to show for it is the \$300 in my pocket and my family."

The flight was the second to arrive here today, and the tenth to land in California since the refugee airlift began last week.

The 559 Americans and Vietnamese who arrived today were processed promptly through immigration and customs at Travis and allowed to make their own travel arrangements to other parts of the country.

Under a liberalized entry procedure set down by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, so-called dependents were not questioned too closely about their status. Most were given a simple form to fill out and were told to report to immigration authorities at their destinations.

Immigration agents said several Vietnamese were getting into the country merely by "latching on" to American friends willing to claim them as spouses and offspring.

"They're not all dependents," said Immigration inspector Homer McCain. "In many cases, they're not even related."

The service today detained 135 Vietnamese refugees who had no papers. They were held in a church near San Francisco while authorities decided what to do with them. Another 19 were turned over to a Catholic relief agency.

For the most part, however, newcomers today were clearly wives or fiancées of the American civilians who accompanied them.

Because of the frantic push to evacuate, the refugees said, American dollars were at a premium in Saigon—up from 725 piasters exchange rate to as high as 3,000 piasters per dollar on the black market.

Refugees to Guam

27 April 75
By Murrey Marder
Washington Post Staff Writer

The United States shifted its swiftly expanding Vietnamese evacuation airlift from the Philippines to Guam yesterday, to remove tens of thousands of South Vietnamese before the war cuts off their exit route.

According to reports from Guam, 5,000 persons a day are expected to reach that U.S. island territory in an around-the-clock airlift. There are estimates that South Vietnamese evacuees arriving in Guam will reach 50,000 or more.

For security reasons, officials in Washington refused to discuss U.S. target figures for the South Vietnamese evacuation. In any event, officials said, no one can be certain when the Communists might close in on Saigon and sever the airlift.

One reason for the sudden shift from the Philippines to Guam as a major evacuation center, U.S. sources conceded privately, was to avoid further strain in American-Philippine relations.

The volume of South Vietnamese being evacuated shows that the United States is not waiting for a questionable ceasefire to pull out large numbers of "high risk" Vietnamese—U.S. employees and others—who could be special targets of Communist retaliation in a total take-over of that nation.

Newsmen in the Pacific reported yesterday that the ratio of South Vietnamese to Americans aboard evacuation flights appeared to be running about 20-to-1.

According to a congressional source, the United States since April 1 has taken "something like 10,000" South Vietnamese out of that country without public accounting, including orphans and relatives of South Vietnamese in the United States.

Rep. Thomas E. Morgan (D-Pa.), chairman of the House International Relations Committee, said there are now fewer than 1,000 U.S. officials and dependents in South Vietnam.

Quoting State Department figures as of yesterday, Morgan said there were still in South Vietnam 866 U.S. officials and 59 dependents, 457 American contractors with 167 dependents, and 331 other Americans, including newsmen and missionaries.

With the announcement that airlift operations have shifted from the huge Clark Air Base in the Philippines to Guam, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service said it is sending extra personnel to Guam to process Vietnamese and Cambodians headed for the United States.

See GUAM, A10, Col. 1

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The State and Defense departments also are sending extra personnel to Guam.

Authority to admit to this country up to 132,000 Indochinese refugees, including senior officials of the South Vietnamese government, was granted Tuesday by the Justice Department.

Some 10,000 Americans and Vietnamese had been flown from Saigon to Clark Air Base when a Defense Department spokesman there announced at noon yesterday the switch to Guam as an evacuation center.

Air Force spokesmen at Clark said 6,000 refugees already there, jammed into

a tent city, would be flown to Andersen Air Base on Guam, 1,500 miles to the East, or directly to the United States.

On Guam, the most westerly U.S. possession, an influx of 50,000 or more would nearly double the population of 85,000 on an island 30 miles long and four to nine miles wide.

Guam's Governor Ricardo Bordallo was reported to have been advised by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger that the Vietnam evacuees could stay as long as 90 days.

Refugees can be moved from Guam to the United States or other destinations, U.S. officials said, once the immigration service has

completed "five to seven days" of processing.

Bordallo reportedly said that Guam could accept as many as 25,000 refugees on a permanent basis. However, senators in the Guam territorial legislature yesterday demanded guarantees that United States would pay the bills for the use of Guam as a halfway house, and they expressed concern about possible Vietcong infiltrators among the refugees.

On Guam, the U.S. Navy was preparing to house the Vietnamese refugees in an old 900-bed hospital, with additional space for 10,000 more in dormitories used by American air crews engaged

in the bombing of North Vietnam in 1972.

There were reports and denials that the Philippine government of President Ferdinand E. Marcos insisted that the United States stop using Clark Air Base, the largest American military installation outside the United States, as a massive evacuation center for Vietnamese.

There was an unconfirmed report from the Philippines that Marcos had been assured earlier that no more than 200 Vietnamese would be at the Clark base at any one time.

Marcos previously announced that with Communists victors in Indochina

his nation is reassessing its relations with the United States. Marcos is scheduled to meet with his foreign policy council Friday to examine what he called "options" for withdrawing from the Philippines' mutual defense pact with the United States and withdrawing American access to bases in the Philippines.

State Department spokesman Robert Anderson denied yesterday that the airlift switch from the Philippines to Guam was ordered because U.S.-Philippine relations were "very strained."

"It was our decision to limit the operations at Clark," Anderson said, "and [its use] is not a contraven-

tion of the base agreement, and they did not so indicate." He said "Clark just didn't have the facilities we have to have."

Other U.S. officials, however, acknowledged that the United States wanted to avoid, as one put it, "further trouble with the Philippines," and Guam, as a U.S. territory, was better equipped for a major U.S. evacuation center.

Refugees at Clark Field said that the camp loudspeakers announced in Vietnamese, though not in English, that the transfer to Guam was necessary because the Philippines government did not want them there.

Aid for Vietnam, Troop Authority Approved by Hill

Evacuation Measure

27 April 75
By Richard L. Lyons and Spencer Rich

Washington Post Staff Writers

The House and Senate have approved legislation authorizing funds for humanitarian aid and to evacuate endangered Vietnamese and Americans from South Vietnam, with authority for the President to use the armed forces if necessary to take the people out.

The Senate yesterday passed its version authorizing \$250 million for the two programs by a vote of 75 to 17. The House, debating until 2:40 a.m. today, authorized \$327 million for the same purposes by a vote of 230 to 187.

Both bills came to a vote two weeks after President Ford's urgent April 10 request for \$250 million in humanitarian aid and \$722 million in emergency military aid to shore up the crumbling South Vietnam army.

While both bills can be viewed as meeting his request for humanitarian aid, the President's request for additional military aid appeared to face certain defeat. An attempt to add \$150 million in military assistance to the House bill was rejected, 394 to 22.

The House bill waived several prohibitions voted by Congress during the last two years against involving U.S. troops in combat in Indochina. It also stated that U.S. armed forces could be used to evacuate endangered South Vietnamese but said that no more could be used for this purpose than were needed to evacuate the much smaller number of American citizens and dependents. The report accompanying the House bill said that \$250 of the \$327 million is intended to help refugees within South Vietnam and that the remaining \$77 million is for the evacuation.

Attempts to have the aid money administered by the United Nations or other international organizations were rejected.

House Majority Leader Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. (D-Mass.) split from the leadership of both parties to oppose any use of U.S. troops for the evacuation.

The Senate bill authorized \$150 million for humanitarian aid and \$100 million for evacuation.

The Senate bill permits the President to use the armed forces if necessary to take the people out, but their use for evacuation of endangered South Vietnamese can be only incidental to rescue operations for Americans. The number of American troops used, the length of their stay and the geographic scope of their operations are all limited to the number needed to

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take out endangered Americans. And their involvement can be halted by a Senate-House resolution.

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The dollar figures are only ceilings; the actual money must be provided in a separate appropriations bill later. Also, the humanitarian aid must go through international agencies.

Before passage, several senators objected to the bill's authority for use of U.S. forces to save South Vietnamese, saying they feared the American troops could become reinvolved in major combat operations.

Sen. Floyd Haskell (D-Colo.) said the President already has constitutional authority to rescue Americans, and sending in U.S. troops for endangered Vietnamese could end in a "bloodbath." Haskell said, "I think the bill is putting us at the tender mercies of Henry Kissinger. Going in and getting a lot of South Vietnamese out (may be) a pretext to go in on a massive basis."

However, Sens. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) and Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) said the three restrictions on the way American troops may be used in connection with rescuing Vietnamese are designed to preclude misuse. Haskell's amendment to strip out both the \$100 million for evacuation and all the troop-use authority was overwhelmingly defeated, 79 to 10.

An amendment by Sen. William L. Scott (R-Va.) simply killing the troop-use authority was also crushed, 80 to 12.

In another key vote, a proposal by Sen. Dick Clark (D-



REP. BOB ECKHARDT



SEN. FLOYD HASKELL

... two propose changes in Indochina aid legislation

Iowa) and Herman E. Talmadge (D-Ga.) to bar use of any of the contingency fund for weapons aid to South Vietnam lost, 61 to 32.

Humphrey and others argued that the President should have flexibility to use part of the \$100 million for weapons if it appeared that this would help in evacuation of Americans—for example, shoring up a crumbling defense perimeter. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) called the funds "an insurance policy for about 1,500 Americans who remain in South Vietnam."

Clark did succeed, however, in raising the humanitarian aid figure to \$150 million from the \$100 million in the original bill.

Sen. Clark, consistently critical of the administration for not getting Americans out fast enough and thereby, in his view, increasing the likelihood of having to use troops, said the latest reports showed 1,887 Americans and 652 Vietnamese dependents still in South Vietnam. An earlier goal of reducing the number of Americans to 1,500 by now hasn't been met, he said.

The State Department reportedly had told senators that the irreducible minimum needed to man the U.S. mission in South Vietnam and related functions is 500 people.

In addition to American diplomats, contractors, reporters and their wives and children—all included in the 1,887 Americans and 652 dependents mentioned in the latest reports—the U.S. government, according to information supplied to senators, has accepted the responsibility of evacuating 1,169 diplomats from other nations and 140 staff personnel of the International Control Commission.

In yesterday's Senate votes, J. Glenn Beall (R-Md.) and Virginia's Scott voted against the Haskell amendment while Harry Flood Byrd Jr. (Ind.-Va.) and Charles McC. Mathias Jr. (R-Md.)

missed the vote. Scott was the only Maryland or Virginia senator backing his amendment (Mathias missed the vote). All but the absent Mathias opposed the Clark-Talmadge amendment. On final passage, Scott voted no, Mathias was absent and Beall and Byrd voted yes.

The House debate was the most heated and emotional since the fights to end U.S. Military involvement in Indochina two years ago.

Rep. Mendel Davis (D-S.C.) was greeted with boos from Republicans when he suggested that the administration was keeping Americans in Vietnam as leverage to obtain funds to evacuate Vietnamese.

"If we put Marines into Vietnam" (to bring out refugees) "we delegate to the President the power to use B-52s or whatever is necessary to protect their lives," said Rep. Paul N. McCloskey (R-Calif.).

But Rep. Donald Fraser (D-Minn.), longtime opponent of U.S. involvement in Indochina and a liberal leader, urged the House to give the President some authority to use troops to help evacuate Vietnamese who have worked with the United States over the years.

"We owe it to a sense of decency and humanity to help get them out," said Fraser. "I understand the distrust of the executive branch which runs so deep in this chamber because I have shared it. But if the President should go beyond the authority granted by the bill, he would be subject to a

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Ford's Request to Use Troops to Evacuate Vietnamese From Saigon Clears Senate

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted to grant President Ford his request for authority to use U.S. troops to help evacuate South Vietnamese nationals from beleaguered Saigon, but only under limited conditions.

The Senate bill, which also authorizes \$250 million for food aid, medicine and the cost of evacuating Americans and South Vietnamese, was approved by a vote of 75 to 17. The House simultaneously was working on its own version of an evacuation-aid bill last evening.

Mr. Ford says, and most in Congress agree, that he already has authority to use troops if necessary to rescue American citizens from South Vietnam. However, he wants Congress to clarify his authority to

use force in bringing out South Vietnamese who have been closely associated with Americans in the long years of warfare there.

The Senate insisted on safeguards against any use of this authority to rein-volve American troops in protracted combat. U.S. soldiers can protect the withdrawal of Vietnamese only from those areas where they are already helping Americans to get out, according to the Senate bill.

Sen. William Scott (R., Va.) tried to delete this provision altogether and restrict any use of U.S. force to the evacuation of American citizens, but he lost, 80 to 12.

Mr. Ford's separate request for more military aid for the South Vietnamese army, which has almost no chance of approval, isn't covered by the bill. An indication of

congressional sentiment came during yesterday's House debate on the evacuation bill when Rep. Sam Stratton (D., N.Y.) proposed including an extra \$150 million for military aid to South Vietnam. His proposal was crushed by a vote of 394 to 22.

President Ford, meanwhile, urged the nation to move beyond the divisiveness of the Vietnam war and begin "a great national reconciliation." In what a White House spokesman called an effort to refocus national attention on future problems and to restore American pride and optimism, the President told Tulane University students in New Orleans, "today America can . . . regain the sense of pride that existed before Vietnam; but it cannot be achieved by re-fighting a war that is finished—as far as America is concerned."

The President said the "tragic" events in Indochina "portend neither the end of the world nor of America's leadership in the world." He said he would turn his attention to a variety of new challenges, including world hunger, peaceful exploration of the oceans and space, and national self-sufficiency in energy by 1985.

*Early Bird
April 24, 75
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U.S. Steps Up Evacuation of Saigon

4,000 Taken to Philippines

Washington Post 23 April 75
From News Dispatches

About 4,000 Americans and Vietnamese landed at Clark Air Base in the Philippines Tuesday in the round-the-clock airlift out of Saigon and found a tangle of red tape and long lines blocking their trip on to the United States.

Scores of U.S. Air Force C-141 and C-130 cargo planes ferried in the evacuees, landing at 30-to-45 minute intervals from Saigon. Tuesday's arrivals brought the total carried out of South Vietnam this month to 7,500, mostly Americans. Another 1,000 are expected to arrive overnight.

One of the C-141s was fired at by a Soviet-built 57-mm. antiaircraft gun as it left Tan Son Nhut airport in Saigon, Pentagon sources said. The shell apparently missed the jet, the sources said. The 57-mm. gun is controlled by radar.

Pentagon officials said the

firing may be just an isolated incident and that so far there is no hard evidence that the Vietnamese Communists have decided to attack Tan Son Nhut or to interfere with the evacuation program.

Senior Pentagon officials said, however, that Tan Son Nhut could not remain operating for more than another three to four days if Communist pressure in the area continues.

About 1,200 of the evacuees who arrived at Clark Tuesday were jammed 20 to a tent in a hastily erected tent city and had to walk long distances to water and toilets. Other evacuees slept on cots in barracks and on mattresses on gymnasium floors.

Tuesday's passenger total was larger than for the entire month of April to date, during which 3,500 left Sai-

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Saigon Evacuation Stepped Up by U.S.

EVACUATION, From A1

gon. Most have departed since April 16 when President Ford ordered nonessential U.S. citizens to leave the Vietnamese capital. Officials in Saigon said about 2,200 Americans were left in the city.

Authorities at Clark said the tent area could be expanded to house about 5,000 persons. Many of the arrivals were American men with Vietnamese wives and children.

The evacuees faced a long processing period. Many had no travel documents, having left them behind in their hurried departure from South Vietnam.

Official U.S. spokesmen said five military chartered aircraft with a total of 1,600 seats were scheduled to leave Clark on Wednesday morning to carry evacuees to Travis air base, Calif. Other sources, however, doubted that there would be enough people finished with the processing to fill the planes.

Some evacuees said Red Cross authorities informed them that they would have to stay two to five weeks to process their papers.

"This is no way to treat people," said Col. Paul Wragg of Tampa, Fla., the chief chaplain at Clark and a coordinator of the program to care for evacuees. "We are overwhelmed by

the sheer mass of humanity."

The scene at Tansonnhut where the evacuees were being gathered was also described as confused. By Tuesday, the former American bowling alley used as a shelter for several hundred persons was said to be rapidly filling with filth. The evacuees, mainly women and children, jammed the building—some huddled in corners and along walls. Some had been waiting for two days to leave.

Outside, other evacuees sat under large parachutes strung up as a shelter. Many sat or slept in the open air around the piles of baggage they were taking with them.

The exodus of diplomats from Saigon quickened Tuesday. The Dutch government sent a plane to pull out the last of its nationals and Canada and Malaysia were reported planning to follow Australia in closing their embassies.

French officials at the presidential palace in Paris said the French government wants its nationals to remain in Saigon. This was made known following a meeting between President Valery Giscard d'Estaing and Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues. The sources added that France had received reports that French nationals in Danang and Hue, two South Vietnamese cities taken by the Communists in March, were safe and well.

CBS EVENING NEWS CBS TV
7:00 PM APRIL 23

Vietnam Related News

WALTER CRONKITE: Good evening. As far as America is concerned, President FORD says, the Vietnam war is finished. Bob Schieffer has that story in New Orleans.

BOB SCHIEFFER: The President makes that declaration in a speech prepared for delivery tonight to students at Tulane University. In that speech, which the White House bills, as a major address on foreign policy, the President calls the events of Indochina tragic, but he says they do not spell the end of the world or of America's leadership. Unlike his recent speeches which have called for more aid to Indochina, the President instead tonight calls for a new national reconciliation to bind up this nations' wounds and to restore national pride. He says that pride cannot be restored by refighting a war that is already finished as far as this country is concerned. In a speech earlier in the day to the Navy Leagues convention here the President stressed a strong national defense.

PRESIDENT FORD: I deeply believe that the vast majority of our citizens today want to maintain American sea, land and air forces that are second to none.

SCHIEFFER: Mr. FORD's schedule here also included a ground-breaking for the library which will be named for New Orleans Congressman F. Edward HEBERT. The President has been testing the political winds in earnest recently and it was obvious today he was enjoying politics southern style. Bob Schieffer, CBS News, New Orleans.

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CRONKITE: In his defense speech the President pointed to a Soviet buildup, particularly in the navy, and said that any further cuts in military spending would endanger national security. The Vietnam war may be over for Americans, as Mr. FORD says, but there still are loose ends and Congress dealt with some of them today. Roger Mudd reports.

ROGER MUDD: The Senate this afternoon gave its final approval to what could be America's last batch of foreign aid to South Vietnam. By a vote of 75-to-17 the Senate cleared the so-called Vietnam Contingency Act of 1975, giving the President authority to use U.S. troops for the evacuation of American citizens and an unspecified number of South Vietnamese; \$100 million authorized for that purpose, \$150 million more to be funneled through the U.N. for humanitarian purpose, and requirements for the President to give the Congress daily reports on the evacuation. The main controversy on the Senate floor swirled around the President's possible use of troops to evacuate the South Vietnamese and the dangers of becoming reinvolved. Hubert HUMPHREY said the use of troops is severely limited, but he said the President must have some leeway. We cannot foresee at this hour what the situation will be, we've got to trust somebody. Dick CLARK of Iowa led the opposition, but every attempt to restrict or deny the President's military authority was defeated. The House struggled with its version of the bill most of the day, but so far has been unable to extricate itself from a parliamentary quagmire that may keep the House in session this evening. Roger Mudd, CBS News, Washington.

CRONKITE: Incidentally, a new Harris survey shows 68 percent of Americans opposed sending any U.S. troops into South Vietnam to help evacuate Vietnamese. The survey says that almost without exception, those who staunchly supported the war effort now are opposed to sending humanitarian aid, and those most opposed to the war now favor the aid.

South Vietnam's new president, Tran Van HUONG, just two days in office has wasted no time in asking for an unconditional cease-fire. And the Vietcong delegation in Paris wasted no time in rejecting that offer, calling instead for a completely new Saigon government. The Vietcong also reiterated its demand that the United States end all military involvement in South Vietnam. In Saigon the South Vietnamese government finally conceded losing four more provinces, bringing to 21 the number now under Communist control. The Saigon government

at least nominally controls the other 23. At the huge Bien Hoa Airbase, 15 miles NE of Saigon, the government prepared for an expected major Communist assault, moving all remaining fighter planes to Tan Son Nhut, the Saigon airport. But Communists also are moving toward there, down from Tay Ninh. There are reports government troops are pulling back to a new defense line at Go Dau Ha, 35 miles NW of Saigon. There also has been intense fighting 20 miles SW of the capital, as Bill Plant reports.

BILL PLANT: Thu Thua has been taking incoming rocket fire for more than a week, parts of the town are badly damaged. People drift in and out when it is quiet, but most shops in the market are closed and padlocked. Just at the other edge of town a government official is paying compensation to people whose homes have been damaged. It amounts to just under a dollar per person per week and it is supposed to buy food and temporary shelter, but it is a woefully inadequate sum. About three kilometers out of town there are clusters of families in makeshift shelters living in a dry rice paddy at the edge of the road. Their homes weren't damaged but they are afraid to go back to town, they don't believe the military action is over and they are just afraid. Nearby along Highway 4, Saigon's food supply line from the delta farmlands, South Vietnamese soldiers of the 22nd Division are being refitted and re-equipped for a battle which even the lowest ranking private knows will soon take place. They even know that the North Vietnamese will probably come at them from both the west and the south and that they are outnumbered. The Communists will probably try to cut Highway 4 at the Dun Luc (?) bridge, 15 miles from Saigon. There are tanks at the approaches to the bridge but their guns don't work except for one. The tanks are there, a soldier volunteers, for the psychological effect.

This is the same kind of cat and mouse game that the North Vietnamese played with the government troops around Xuan Loc, periodic attacks in one place to tie down government troops, while they execute a flanking movement to cutoff a major highway, this time Highway 4. Bill Plant, CBS News, in Thu Thua.

*** (Commercials)

CRONKITE: The U.S. evacuation of Americans and South Vietnamese from Saigon is quickly building to what military sources say could be one of the largest evacuations ever undertaken. At the Pentagon sources told Ike Pappas that an average 2,000 persons a day now are leaving Saigon, with South Vietnamese outnumbering Americans more than three-to-one. So far this month some 9,500 persons have left Saigon, about 7,000 of them are Vietnamese. There are slightly more than 1,600 Americans remaining in the capital, about the number President FORD has said would stay there. But Marvin Kalb reports from the State Department that if the South Vietnamese military situation appears irretrievable, Mr. FORD's expected to order a total evacuation of Americans by the end of this week. Bruce Dunning quotes reliable sources in Saigon as saying the U.S. Embassy is not yet permitting its Vietnamese employees to evacuate, the people most endangered by a possible Communist takeover. The State Department said it's checking that report. Up until today most evacuees from South Vietnam were flown to Clark Airbase in the Philippines. But in an apparent effort to appease Philippine President MARCOS, the airlift now is going to Anderson Airbase on Guam, a U.S. possession. The first group of 219 persons arrived in Guam today where U.S. officials say there are better facilities to take care of them, to process them before they arrive in the United States. Some did arrive in the United States today at Travis AFB in California, and Richard Wagner reports.

RICHARD WAGNER: There were about 300 people on the plane, many of them Vietnamese citizens with relatives in the United States. Others came with their American husbands and children. After clearing customs and immigration, the new arrivals were reunited with their loved ones. It's been six years since Pam ECKLES (?) last saw her mother. They embraced today in California an ocean away from the lost territory and continuing war that is South Vietnam. The tears are for a son and brother who couldn't get on the plane and there were more tears for a country which may never be seen again.

These evacuees are but a tiny fraction of those Vietnamese citizens who cast their lot with the United States. Back in South Vietnam there are thousands more who would give anything they have to get here before a Communist victory closes down the airlift to America. Richard Wagner, CBS News, Travis AFB.

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NBC NIGHTLY NEWS NBC TV
7:00 PM APRIL 23

Vietnam Related News

JOHN CHANCELLOR: Good evening. Tran Van HUONG has been president of South Vietnam for only two days and today it looked as though he would step down and give the job to someone else. HUONG is expected to turn the presidency over to the former chief justice of the supreme court, and according to John Hart of NBC News HUONG has asked the cabinet to resign. There is also talk in Saigon of a cease-fire within a few days. Here is Hart's report.

JOHN HART: Word from the palace is President HUONG has asked the cabinet to resign. This is the cabinet former President THIEU installed last week. Well connected western sources say President HUONG himself will resign shortly, within the next 12 to 36 hours and that he will be succeeded by Tran Min THIET (?) a member of the supreme court and former chief justice. THIET is well respected in the country and an independent who came out against THIEU in 1971. The new cabinet is expected to be made up entirely of opposition to former President THIEU. These sources, which claim to have had recent contact with the Communist side, expect a cease-fire in place within a few days and negotiations soon thereafter. Meanwhile, the Communists troops press toward this capital as the people inside scramble to please them. John Hart, NBC News, Saigon.

CHANCELLOR: Hart's report could not be confirmed this afternoon in Washington. The U.S. Senate today voted to give President FORD authority to send American troops back to Vietnam to rescue if necessary both Americans and South Vietnamese. The Senate approved \$100 million contingency fund for evacuations and \$150 million in humanitarian aid. There was a limitation on the number of American troops, that number can't be larger than the number of troops used to bring out only Americans. The vote was 75-to-17 but it was preceded by an intense debate. Catherine Mackin reports.

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CATHERINE MACKIN: The day began with Republican leader Hugh SCOTT accusing Congress of acting in a grateless way, of foot-dragging on the aid bill for South Vietnam. Looking in the direction of Democrats, SCOTT said there was a mini-filibuster to delay the bill. Democratic leader Mike MANSFIELD disagreed. He said

there was concern in the Senate that the bill could lead to a new involvement of American military in South Vietnam. Iowa Democrat Dick CLARK warned that the \$100 million contingency fund could be used by President FORD to give more military aid to South Vietnam. Colorado Democrat Floyd HASKELL wanted to strip everything from the bill but humanitarian aid. He expressed concern over using American troops to evacuate South Vietnamese, saying that is the best way to cause a bloodbath. If the mood in the Senate was to vote this minimum aid for South Vietnam, and most efforts to amend the bill failed. The Senate did specifically require, however, that the President report on the progress of the American evacuation and that he reduce the number of Americans there to an absolute minimum as soon as possible. Actually the Congress is still some distance from getting this money to South Vietnam, once the House and Senate complete action on their separate bills they must work out the differences between them. After that there is a separate vote to approve the money, so it could take a couple of weeks for the Congress to put the finishing touches on this new aid for South Vietnam. By then it might not matter. Catherine Mackin, NBC News, at the Capitol.

***(Commercials)

CHANCELLOR: The State Department said today that there are 1,500 American citizens remaining in South Vietnam. Half of them are officials, half civilians, the department said, adding that the figure will be down to 1,200 tomorrow. The huge evacuation from Saigon by air continued today around the clock, but now there is something new and significant about it. The South Vietnamese aboard the planes outnumber the Americans by about 20-to-1. There was another important change in the airlift, flights won't go into Clark Airbase in the Philippines anymore, overcrowding. Instead refugees now are being flown to Guam. And refugees are still arriving at Travis AFB in California. Here are reports from Roy Neal at Travis, from Garrick Utley on Guam and from Jim Lorry at Clark.

JIM LORRY: The increasing volume of evacuees from Saigon has proved more than Clark Airbase can handle. At first planes were arriving here at a rate of less than 20 a day. By Tuesday that figure had more than tripled. The total number of refugees rose to more than 8,000. The plan was to process people quickly and move them on to California in a few days, but paperwork and immigration regulations bogged things down. With this delay

Clark Airbase quickly ran out of housing. A makeshift tent city became the principle housing area. People slept in 95 degree heat, there was enough water for drinking, but not enough for bathing. U.S. officials rushed to alleviate the problem and came up with the plan to shift all Vietnam evacuees to the Pacific island of Guam. Guam is better for two reasons; facilities should be improved, and as an American territory, Guam is not politically sensitive. There were reports here, denied by U.S. officials, that Philippine President MARCOS had personally asked the Americans to get the Vietnamese out. So the agonizing wait to go to America will now continue in Guam. Evacuees will still have hardships but they will also have the hope that Guam can handle the flow. Jim Lorry, NBC News, Clark Airbase, the Philippines.

GARRICK UTLEY: These were some of the first Vietnamese refugees to arrive on Guam from the Philippines, waiting at Anderson AFB for further processing. The decision to transfer the refugee operation to here is causing tremendous problems. The U.S. Government is rushing medical and immigration teams to Guam to deal with the load which is growing rapidly by the hour. There are at least two military flights of refugees arriving on Guam every hour, plus civilian charter flights. As many as 50,000 Vietnamese are expected here if they can be gotten out of South Vietnam. Existing facilities on Guam can house only a few thousand at most, so tent cities are being planned here as they were in the Philippines to house the refugees. It's expected that after clearance by immigration, which will take five to seven days, most of the refugees will go on to the United States, although up to 25,000 will be permitted to remain on Guam if they want to. That is the plan, the next day or two will show how well it will work. Garrick Utley, NBC News, on Guam.

ROY NEAL: Two planes arrived at Travis AFB today, they came in from the Philippines. The first arrived at dawn with 219 passengers, who turned out to be United States civilians with Vietnamese dependents. There were no displaced refugees. The second plane arrived in mid-morning with 302 more American evacuees and dependents. The Air Force said that all the people who arrived in California today had homes waiting for them. More than 300 Vietnamese were on the planes, all were listed as dependents. More flights have been expected but the Air Force said that plan was changed.

AIR FORCE SPOKESMAN: As of yesterday afternoon we were expecting about five

flights during the course of the day today and it looks like, at the present time, we're only receiving two this morning.

NEAL: What reason has been given for the change?

SPOKESMAN: Well I understand that the airplanes are now proceeding to Guam.

NEAL: The diversion of chartered jets to airlift evacuees to Guam is expected to continue for some time. The relatively small group of Vietnamese evacuees who arrived today is on the way to new homes in the United States. Roy Neal, NBC News, Travis AFB, California.

CHANCELLOR: The Harris Poll is out today with figures on the public's attitude toward more help for South Vietnam. Eighty-one percent in the poll opposed the President's request for \$722 million in additional military aid, and 68 percent say they're against sending troops to Vietnam to evacuate Vietnamese friendly to the United States.

*** (Commercials)

Western intelligence sources in Saigon said today that the North Vietnamese and Vietcong have been in position to overrun Saigon for the last 48 hours. The other side has ten divisions in an area running roughly from Ham Tan on the South China seacoast to a point somewhere in Tay Ninh province. In the city itself today a bomb was set off in a downtown Saigon market, possibly by infiltrators. Two people were killed and a number were injured. Most of what fighting took place today occurred in the Mekong Delta as both sides fought for control of Highway 4, over which the delta's rice gets to Saigon. George Lewis reports.

GEORGE LEWIS: Convoy after convoy moved down Route 4 with fresh ammunition and supplies for the troops defending the highway. Government forces are digging in to fight for control of the road in what may be a series of large and critical battles. To the west of the highway refugees from earlier fighting had taken shelter in ditches, a good place to be when the rocket and mortar shells start falling. To the east of the highway, heavy fighting. This is Go Dinh district, a rural area just 20 miles south of Saigon. Here, two and a half miles from Route 4, villagers got caught in a cross-fire between the Vietcong forces and government troops trying to hold them back. Some of the villagers didn't fare too well. At one point the Vietcong captured a South Vietnamese watchtower and were using it to direct fire on the government troops. The South Vietnamese army responded with a barrage of artillery and mortar rounds to knock down the tower.

Finally it began to topple in flames. Air force planes were supporting the ground troops, dropping bombs on the Vietcong position. The government forces were advancing, but very cautiously. For the time being they appear to have the Vietcong outnumbered, but there also are plenty of North Vietnamese troops near here and the tide could turn rapidly. This area has been the scene of heavy fighting for two days without any sign of a letup. The South Vietnamese think they can push the other side back, but so far it's been a cat and mouse game with no great pieces of territory won or lost on either side. George Lewis, NBC News, near Route 4 in the Mekong Delta.

CHANCELLOR: Thailand today sent 1,000 more police to its border with Cambodia to stop the flow of refugees and weapons. Several thousand Cambodians have fled to Thailand since the Communist takeover. And the Thais, who have recognized the new Cambodian government, don't want to alienate that government.

The French said today that the Cambodian Communists have agreed to allow food and supplies to be flown in for the French Embassy in Phnom Penh which is running short. About 600 people, including a few Americans, have taken refuge in the Embassy.

BROKAW: Tonight the President goes before the Tulane University audience to outline his hope for reconciling differences caused by Vietnam. In the speech that he'll deliver later tonight President FORD acknowledges for the first time that the Vietnam war is finished. In his prepared text he says it is now time to bind up the nations' wounds to prepare an agenda for the future. The President also appeals for the nation to stop fighting the battles and recriminations of the past. A White House spokesman said, it is Mr. FORD's first major address of the post Vietnam-era, the beginning of national reconciliation. Tom Brokaw, NBC News, with the President in New Orleans.

***(Commercials)

President FORD said tonight that the Vietnam war is over as far as the United States is concerned and he urged Americans to bind up the nations' wounds, restore unity and self confidence and look to what Mr. FORD called an agenda for the future. The President said that in a speech prepared for delivery at Tulane University in New Orleans where he spent the day. Tom Brokaw reports.

TOM BROKAW: When President FORD arrived in New Orleans this morning he was determined not to spoil tonight the appeal for reconciliation. He avoided any discussion of Vietnam. During ceremonies honoring Louisiana Congressman Edward HEBERT, the President didn't refer to HEBERT's record as an outspoken supporter of the war, sticking instead to general phrases describing HEBERT as a courageous and untiring patriot. At a convention of the Navy League Mr. FORD mentioned Vietnam only briefly, but he did say that defense cuts could endanger detente with Russia.

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD: However good their intentions, those who claim that America is overarmed and over-spending on defense are dead wrong. It is my very deep conviction we cannot afford to cut any further without endangering our national security.

ABC EVENING NEWS ABC TV
7:00 PM APRIL 23

News Related To Vietnam

HOWARD K. SMITH: The evacuation of Americans and others from Vietnam continued today but there was a curious lack of military activity. Western intelligence sources in Saigon said the Communists have now been in position for 48 hours to overrun the capital but may be delaying while watching political developments. One major development comes tonight in a speech to be delivered at Tulane University. President FORD says Vietnam is a war that is finished as far as America's concerned. ABC White House correspondent Tom Jarriel reports.

TOM JARRIEL: The President leaves no doubt he is washing his hands of the Vietnam war, he issues a plea to the nation to avoid recriminations and restore its self confidence in a post-war era. He says a sense of national pride cannot be achieved by refighting a war that is finished as far as America is concerned. He calls for a great national reconciliation, asking that we stop refighting the battles and recriminations of the past. He rejects what he calls the polarized thinking of those who believe if America doesn't succeed in everything that we have succeeded in nothing. In a speech officially throwing in the towel on Vietnam, President FORD says we are saddened by events there but they do not mark the end of the world. There is no blame placed on the Congress, no resumption of the familiar calls for military or economic aid for Vietnam, no saber rattling towards potential adversaries. The end of American involvement is proclaimed at Tulane University on a college campus similar to the thousands of others where students rose up in bloody protest in the '60's over a war which official Washington now says is over. Tom Jarriel, ABC News, with the presidential party in New Orleans.

SMITH: The Communists today formally rejected a call by South Vietnam's new president for a cease-fire. The Communists still refuse to negotiate with members of what they call the Nguyen Van THIEU clique. We have more from ABC's Ken Kashiwahara.

KEN KASHIWAHARA: While political maneuvering continued behind the scenes in Saigon, battle action along the two major highways leading into the capital was relatively quiet today. Highway 1, for example, has been the scene of heavy shelling, but the road to Xuan Loc today looked as though a cease-fire was in effect. But it was not, even though the

South Vietnamese government, in a communique issued today, called for one. The government communique, signed by the new president Tran Van HUONG, offered to reopen peace talks with the Communists and appeared to be a gesture of goodwill. Opposition political leaders, while agreeing with the communique's intent, say that the offer itself is meaningless.

VIETNAMESE: I'm afraid that the other side will not accept the proposals made by the present government. So just recently we already declare our position that we demand the immediate formation of a new cabinet consisting of the people who are determined to restore peace and who have the authority, the goodwill and the capacity to deal with the other side.

KASHIWAHARA: Reliable sources say that serious private efforts are continuing to form a new cabinet and find a new prime minister the Communists will negotiate with. And there may even be unofficial talks scheduled soon between the current South Vietnamese vice premier and the Vietcong in Paris. The vice premier, Tran Van DONG, is the man most often mentioned as the next prime minister and is believed acceptable to the Communists for negotiations. But as long as the Communists hold the upper hand militarily any communique issued by the present government short of an outright surrender will not be taken seriously. Ken Kashiwahara, ABC News, Saigon.

*** (Commercials) ***

SMITH: The Senate today approved \$250 million in funds for humanitarian aid and the evacuation of refugees from South Vietnam by an overwhelming vote of 75-to-17. ABC Capitol Hill correspondent Sam Donaldson reports.

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SAM DONALDSON: The Senate has given the President a limited yes to the question of whether he may use American troops if necessary to evacuate South Vietnamese. Senate doves attempted to remove even this limited authorization from the bill but they were beaten back. They feared that American lives would be lost for no good purposes, they saw it at best, and at worst, American troops might be reintroduced into the war. In the end it came down to this, the President's power to use American forces to evacuate American citizens and their dependents was affirmed. His power to use American troops to evacuate South Vietnamese to whom the nation might feel a special obligation was limited to an evacuation that is only incidental to the evacuation of American citizens, meaning that U.S. troops could not be used for any separate massive evacuation of South Vietnamese. Late today the House was tied up in

parliamentary knots over its version of the bill. When the House manages to untangle itself, the final language must be drafted in a conference committee so it will be at least a day or two before the final bill will go to the President's desk for his signature. Sam Donaldson, ABC News, Capitol Hill.

SMITH: U.S. officials say the number of Americans in Vietnam was down to between 1,500 and 1,800 by sunset Tuesday Saigon time, and the airlift out is continuing. Other nations joined in the pullout today, Britain, West Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Thailand arranged for the evacuation of their diplomatic missions. Americans and Vietnamese have been flying into the Philippines from Saigon, but today the evacuation was shifted to another site. ABC's Irv Chapman reports from Clark AFB in the Philippines.

IRV CHAPMAN: The evacuation from Saigon remained in high gear this morning, planes arriving in a steady stream. The evacuee population grew past 6,000 men, women and children. New arrivals have to sit in the midday sun waiting their turn to process papers and move out to temporary housing. The tent city which went into operation only yesterday was saturated with new arrivals. They checked in, received bedding and waited around for whatever came next to get them the rest of the way to the States. Several of the post messhalls and cafeterias were closed to airmen and open to evacuees. This

base of 10,000 servicemen, plus their dependents and local employees, expanded its efforts to feed and temporarily house evacuees, but the limit was being reached. To forestall further overcrowding here at Clark, the evacuation effort is moving now to America's westernmost Pacific island possession, Guam. Already flights from Saigon are being diverted there, and some evacuees here at Clark will be moved to Guam for final processing until the United States itself is ready to receive them. This is Irv Chapman, ABC News, at Clark AFB, the Philippines.

SMITH: The first 600 evacuees arrived on Guam today and officials say that by tomorrow as many as 5,000 Vietnamese refugees may begin arriving there every day. Guam's governor said his island could accept as many as 25,000 refugees on a permanent basis.

Here in this country a Catholic relief organization near Portland, Oregon had made arrangements to take care of some 30 Vietnamese orphans. Well today the plane arrived with 76 orphans and 72 other Vietnamese refugees onboard. Dick Shoumacher reports.***

DICK SHOUMACHER: The number of orphans and refugees arriving was quite a surprise, more than four times what the Catholic relief agency had expected. Many of the children were polio victims from Saigon, tired after their long trip but not really that unhappy to be here in the United States. Originally about 30 orphans had been expected, but the picture changed when the evacuation from Vietnam expanded. The man who first asked to care for some orphans was Terry LAMBERT, a retired Army colonel who has served in Vietnam. You didn't expect this many, did you?

TERRY LAMBERT: Well we expected to take care of about 30, but any more, why we've got arrangements to take care of them.

SHOUMACHER: How is the town responding to this number?

LAMBERT: Oh, everybody takes care of you. You know, I was going to take the original 30 but then we had to call on the town.

SHOUMACHER: The town is Mt. Angel, known best for an October Festival every year where beer drinking is featured. Today that beer hall has been turned into a giant orphanage, inside 171 cots and hundreds of blankets donated by townspeople.***

SMITH: For those unable to leave the occupied areas of South Vietnam this is also a period of adjustment. We have a report tonight about the political re-education of the South Vietnamese in Communist controlled Da Nang. This is the third in our series of films made by a French television camera crew, narrated by ABC's Lou Cloffi using information from the French crew.

LOU CIOFFI: The song these young children are singing so enthusiastically is called, "Liberate South Vietnam." And whether they realize it or not, it's the beginning of a new existence for them and their parents. It's been about three weeks since Da Nang fell, but almost as the same time the conquering troops entered the city the political cadres came also, and one of their first acts was to open the schools. For the young ones their new education is beginning with those revolutionary songs, but for the adults it's more serious, and the first to go through a course of political re-education are the schoolteachers themselves. They learn the changes that they'll be required to make in their courses, mostly literature and history. Even Catholic nuns who are teachers are required to go through this new educational process, and some of those who were interviewed by the French television

team that took this film admitted that the re-education was political but they also said that nothing so far is in conflict with their religious beliefs. For the moment the political re-education is starting in the schools, but it will soon spread to the rest of the population of this city which for the past ten years has been like an Americanized boom town. This is Lou Cloffi, ABC News, reporting.

SMITH: President FORD's Vietnam speech at Tulane University tonight climaxes a day of wide ranging activities in the New Orleans area. We have a report on the President's day from ABC's Ann Compton.

ANN COMPTON: ***The White House did not bill these trips as political. News secretary Ron Nessen explained today President FORD is not a declared candidate for the presidency, because that might bring all Mr. FORD's actions and statements under the suspicion of being political in nature. Political or not, President FORD is taking a stronger than ever line on American military strength. At a Navy League luncheon he hit on one of his favorite phrases.

PRESIDENT FORD: I deeply believe that the vast majority of our citizens today want to maintain American sea, land and air forces that are second to none. Let it never be said that our generation allowed American sea power to erode into a second class status.

COMPTON: The pro-defense spending theme and the optimism of the President's recent speeches are at the heart of what he now considers the post-Vietnam era. Ann Compton, ABC News, New Orleans.

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Hanoi Stance Dims Hope of Cease-Fire

23 April 75

By Murrey Marder

Washington Post Staff Writer

North Vietnam and the Vietcong responded scornfully yesterday to the resignation of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu, diminishing prospects for a cease-fire.

Although Thieu's ouster was a prime Communist objective for years, the Vietcong Radio yesterday ridiculed Thieu's replacement by Vice President Tran Van Huong as a "horse-trading farce."

Even more significant for the Ford administration, North Vietnam turned its heaviest fire on the United States.

North Vietnam, in a Foreign Ministry statement, demanded that the United States immediately withdraw its warships assembling in Vietnamese waters, remove all "U.S. military personnel disguised as civilians from South Vietnam," and "completely end its military involvement and interference" in that nation.

In addition, Communist officials made it clear that any evacuation of South Vietnamese employees or friends of the United States should be subject to negotiation—after other demands on the United States are fulfilled. This means a veto right on who leaves South Vietnam.

President Ford said Monday night that he hoped a cease-fire could be arranged to make it possible to evacuate Vietnamese who have worked for the United States and others to whom the United States is obligated.

"These terms are clearly so high as to compel the United States to rub its own nose in the mud, so to speak," said one American authority.

Whether the war ends with an assault on Saigon or with a political surrender, this source said, North Vietnam evidently is determined "to leave no doubt as to who won this war."

After a meeting between President Ford and Republican leaders, Sen. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) was asked if there was "any hope expressed that Saigon might not fall, or any expectation?"

Case replied that "I saw no such hope" and he said none was expressed either by the President or by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

On the contrary, Case said, Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger speculated that the Communists "might want to celebrate" the May 19 birthday of North Vietnam's late President, Ho Chi Minh, "in Saigon."

See DIPLOMACY, A16, Col. 3

Washington Post
April 23, 1975
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Hanoi Scorns Thieu Ouster; Truce

Hopes Dim

DIPLOMACY, From A1

"The Communists hold all the cards," one authoritative U.S. official said glumly.

American strategists' hopes for obtaining even marginal leverage on the outcome of the war now rest on Gen. Duong Van (Big) Minh coming into power in South Vietnam, with a government with which the Vietcong might negotiate.

The U.S. expectation is that Huong would resign and South Vietnamese Senate leader Tran Van Lam would designate Big Minh to head the government. In the past, the Vietcong has indicated it favored such an approach. But that was before Communist forces had clear power to seize military control of Saigon virtually whenever they wish to take that route.

If the Communists chose what American sources privately conceded to be this political "fig leaf" course, there might then be a cease-fire and bargaining over which South Vietnamese would be permitted to be evacuated with the remaining Americans. Only a few weeks ago, this would have been considered the "worst case" outcome of the war; now it is rated the "best case," and it is studded with obstacles, U.S. officials concede.

Although the Ford administration discussed with Congress yesterday authority to admit up to 132,000 refugees from Indochina to the United States, Mr. Ford said Monday night that removing any large number would be "virtually impossible" without either a cease-fire or a sizeable force of American troops.

All that was discussed on this topic at the White House yesterday, Case said, was in the narrow limitations of the bill now pending in the Senate: to remove only those South Vietnamese "who are dependents of Americans and such others who were greatly endangered who might be brought out as an incident of the evacuation of the Americans." Anything more, said Case, would require agreement "between North and South Vietnam and ourselves."

According to a Senate source, Assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday that no plan yet exists for evacuating great numbers of South Vietnamese.

House Republican Leader John J. Rhodes (Ariz.) said after the White House talks yesterday that "under certain circumstances it might be necessary for the insertion of (American) force temporarily for the purpose of securing (evacuation) landing areas, but there was certainly no discussion of any large-scale operation by American personnel."

Americans in South Vietnam were to be reduced to "some 1,500" by the close of business yesterday, "the minimum necessary to carry on skeleton operations," Case said the members of Congress were assured. Congress has put pressure on the administration to reach that level, from a figure of about 6,000 Americans 10 days ago.

The Ford administration was silent yesterday about the status of exploratory talks with other nations to try to produce a cease-fire in South Vietnam. French



FRED BRANFMAN
... gets set of terms

expectations for operating as a broker to arrange a political settlement once Thieu was gone, however, were publicly denied yesterday.

French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues reportedly held two hours of fruitless talks in Paris, meeting separately with North Vietnamese Ambassador Vo Van Sung, and with Pham Van Ba, mission chief of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Vietcong).

Sung and Ba, smilingly facing newsmen, echoed the demand that the United States first must "cease all its military interference" in South Vietnam, and "the whole Thieu clique must be overthrown and replaced by a government wishing peace, independence and national concord."

Ba said he told Sauvagnargues that the Huong and Thieu governments were "brother administrations."

The Vietcong Radio in South Vietnam used much stronger language: "The only difference between Thieu and Huong is that

Thieu is a bloodthirsty militarist and Huong is a reactionary, civilian traitor well-versed in knuckling under, frenziedly opposing Communism and opposing the people to the end."

Hanoi's Foreign Ministry said that if the United States wants to, it can withdraw its "military personnel disguised as civilians" from South Vietnam "in a short time—two or three days, or even within 24 hours." The Hanoi statement ambiguously promised "fair treatment" to "the Vietnamese who were once associated with the Americans..."

At a press conference here yesterday, two Americans who recently talked with Vietcong representatives in Paris said they were told that the "departure of Vietnamese to countries like the U.S. should come up during and after negotiations" following creation of a new Saigon government "seriously committed" to the 1973 Paris cease-fire accord.

Fred Branfman, who returned from Paris Monday night, and Gareth Porter, co-directors of the Indochina Resource Center here, said they were given a set of proposed terms "for ending the war peacefully."

These terms included "a new Saigon government" which, unlike Thieu, is not "committed to the war or (to) demanding new U.S. military aid to augment existing stockpiles"; and "mediate talks, in Saigon now, not Paris, 'to bring about a cease-fire, demarcation of military lines, democratic liberties, and a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord'."

The PRG, they said, "insists that for such talks to succeed, all U.S. paramilitary personnel must leave—although a U.S. Embassy, and American businessmen and relief workers could remain" and "aid from international organizations like the U.N. or International Red Cross would be welcome... They state they will pose no obstacles to the evacuation of U.S. personnel on civilian airlines."

Branfman and Porter said the United States should "accept such a scenario" and abandon plans to use "U.S. combat troops to evacuate Americans and South Vietnamese" and "stop any further efforts to push military aid to Saigon."

Prospects Dim on Viet Arms Aid

Arms Aid Chances Fading

23 April 75
By Spencer Rich
and Richard L. Lyons
Washington Post Staff Writers

Prospects that Congress will vote any major weapons aid for South Vietnam all but disappeared yesterday, but both chambers readied approval today of humanitarian-evacuation aid bills, despite fears of American military re-involvement if troops are sent in for civilian rescue operations.

Both the House and Senate evacuation and humanitarian aid bills also would authorize the President to use troops if needed to take out American civilians and some endangered Vietnamese civilians. Skeptical members of both chambers put off final votes yesterday, hoping that holding up the military authority for a day or so will permit evacuation under current relatively peaceful conditions of all but a handful of Americans, thus making it less likely that troops will be needed later.

The \$327 million House bill and its \$200 million Senate counterpart probably will be passed today, but it is becoming increasingly clear that this may be all the administration can expect.

It appears that the White House will get little if any of the \$722 million it has requested for emergency weapons aid to Saigon during the fiscal year ending June 30. The Senate Armed Services Committee so far has refused to vote added military aid, the White House has dropped plans to tack a weapons-aid amendment onto the Senate humanitarian-evacuation bill, and yesterday these actions took place in the House.

The House Armed Services Committee, which in the past has authorized everything requested for Vietnam, voted 21 to 17 to table and at least temporarily kill the President's request for more military assistance.

See AID, A11, Col. 1

AID, From A1

Many supporters of more aid voted to table for fear it would be killed on a straight up or down vote.

House action was postponed until next week on the \$165 million voted by the Appropriations Committee Monday for more military aid to Saigon. If it were considered to be meaningful and likely to pass, it presumably would have been given top priority status.

In the senate, Dick Clark (D-Iowa) and a handful of others fearful of using troops for rescue operations held up a final vote on the \$200 million humanitarian-evacuation aid bill.

Clark and the Foreign Relations Committee have repeatedly pressed the administration to speed up evacuation now, while troops

aren't needed. Assistant Secretary of State Philip C. Habib told the committee yesterday morning that, by around midday yesterday, it was expected there would only be 1,500 American personnel left.

Clark said this was a drop of roughly 1,000 over the preceding 24 hours and was encouraging. However, Clark said there were also 1,000 to 1,500 Vietnamese dependents of Americans still there, so all told there were perhaps 3,000 left.

Once this was down a bit further, Habib reportedly said, the rest could be taken out if needed in "one big scoop" by plane and helicopter—a difficult but not massively risky endeavor.

The President has also asked for authority to use U.S. troops to take out up to 175,000 Vietnamese nation-

als whose lives are considered in danger if the Communists take over. But there are deep fears that U.S. troops could come under fire and take severe casualties if they try to take out that many.

"I don't want to use Americans to evacuate South Vietnamese," said Sen. James Abourezk (D-S.D.). "I'm afraid of what will happen if they get shot at. You can't tell what kind of place that is."

Arms Aid

Other senators, like Frank Church (D-Idaho), favor going ahead with the authority, provided sharp restrictions on U.S. troop-use for evacuation of Vietnamese are included. Church said the military situation is now so tight around Saigon that "obviously we can't take out 175,000 unless the North Vietnamese allow it."

Sen. John Tower (R-Tex.),

Senate GOP Policy Committee chairman, said, "We're working toward some sort of negotiated settlement that would allow us to get them out without the contingency of troops"; otherwise, "obviously we're not going to take out 175,000."

Senate Minority Whip Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) said, "As a practical matter, any large number [of South Vietnamese escapees] brought out is going to have to be brought out under a cease-fire arrangement."

The reason why the White House request for added military aid to Saigon is in so much trouble is the widespread belief that South Vietnam can't be saved and the money will just be wasted. Many believe that Mr. Ford's request for the \$722 million is merely a gesture to convince U.S. world

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(OVER)

and South Vietnamese opinion that at least he did his best, without any real hope of getting the money.

Rep. George H. Mahon (D-Tex.), Appropriations Committee chairman, conceded that the \$165 million in weapons aid voted by his committee was in good part a gesture, not in the real hope it could change the military situation.

Rep. Donald Riegle (D-Mich.) and other opponents of the \$327-million humanitarian-evacuation bill contended that its omission of precise limits on the number or use of troops could make it another Gulf of Tonkin Resolution empowering the President to reinvolve the United States in an Indochina war.

Rep. John B. Anderson (R-Ill.), House Republican Conference chairman, denounced Democratic suggestions that President Ford would "stoop as low" as to put the United States back into the war under the guise of seeking authority to help resettle or evacuate refugees. He urged the House not to send out word that "we in Congress are so spineless as to defeat such a modest proposal" for humanitarian assistance.

Rep. Charles Whalen (R-Ohio) said he will offer an amendment today forbidding the use of troops. This would "keep the administration's feet to the fire" and force it to evacuate all Americans and endangered Vietnamese now, before a collapse of South Vietnam requires use of troops and possible loss of life, he said.

Huong, Opposition Confer

By H. D. S. Greenway and Philip A. McCombs

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 23 (Wednesday) — South Vietnam's new president met Tuesday with government officials and members of the political opposition in an effort to stabilize the military situation and to form a new government with some chance of negotiating a political solution with the Communists.

Observers give President Tran Van Huong very little time, perhaps a few days or less, to do this. "Really, it's all over," said a Western diplomat. "It's just a matter of getting someone to negotiate a surrender. If there's no real change in the government, the Communist war machine will just continue relentlessly."

There was a battlefield lull Tuesday that some observers saw as a hopeful sign that the Communists might be holding back to see if the resignation of

President Nguyen Van Thieu Monday night will result in political moves amounting to surrender.

Other observers, however, see the lull as a typical North Vietnamese tactic of gathering their forces together before making a new strike. Such a strike at Saigon would undoubtedly be the final one, observers say.

The government forces are now in an almost impossible position of trying to defend Saigon with five or six divisions against what will soon be 12 North Vietnamese army divisions, with more on the way south.

Reliable sources disclosed that Thieu's resignation came after U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin visited him in the presidential palace late Saturday night and indicated that he ought to step down.

See VIETNAM, A14, Col. 1

The new government Wednesday, in renewing its call for peace negotiations, indicated that it was willing to go farther than Thieu in meeting the demands of the Vietcong.

A Foreign Ministry communique said South Vietnam "stands" ready to resume the negotiations on all issues within the framework of the Paris agreement including the establishment of a National Council for Reconciliation and Concord.

The council, as provided by the Paris agreement, would be made up of members of the Saigon government, the Vietcong and a neutral force. Its role would be to organize elections in the south and to try to bring cooperation between Saigon and the Vietcong.

Thieu persistently blocked negotiations for the formation of the council, contending that it would have been the first step toward a coalition government including Communists.

The move, the first overture to the Communists by the new Saigon government, was rejected by the Vietcong however.

"The proposal fools no one and will hardly help the Americans out of their defeat," a statement issued by the Vietcong delegation in Saigon Wednesday said.

President Huong Tuesday met with several antigovernment personalities, including lawyer Tran Van Tuyen and Supreme Court Justice Tran Minh Tiet. The substance of their discussions was not disclosed, although there was speculation one of them would be asked to become premier.

[Huong also met with

Thieu who is believed planning to go into exile in a few days, possibly to Taiwan, news agencies reported. Political sources reported that Huong and U.S. Ambassador Martin had tentatively agreed that Defense Minister Tran Van Don should be named premier.]

An antigovernment National Assembly deputy, Ly Qui Chang, said President Huong was going to set up a government of "Thieu without Thieu" but that only a government determined to make peace could save the situation.

Father Tran Hun Thanh, leader of the Catholic Anti-corruption movement, said that Thieu's resignation would not solve any problems. He said there

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New President Confers With Political Foes

VIETNAM, From A1

In his televised interview with CBS Monday night, President Ford said, "There was no pressure by me or anyone in Washington" to get Thieu to quit. He left open the possibility that the matter might have been discussed with Thieu by U.S. officials in Saigon.

The American position here now is extremely precarious, with Washington reportedly favoring an immediate and total American pullout but with Martin holding the line against this for the time being. A total American evacuation is seen as dooming any last-ditch effort by government forces to hold themselves together in a defense of Saigon, since it might well create panic.

The carefully controlled evacuation of Americans and their Vietnamese families continues from Tan Son Nhut airport. Sources say there are now only 2,200 Americans left in South Vietnam. A few weeks ago there were about 8,000.

Reaction to Thieu's resignation was generally favorable, but there was a strong feeling that he should have done so long ago when there seemed some chance that the course of events could be reversed. Little sadness was expressed at his stepping down, but neither was there much rejoicing because few people believed that the new president could do much to alter the critical situation.

a complete change of all government policies aimed at resuming political talks with the Communists and at improving the morale of the people.

Anti-government leaders Gen. Duong Van ("Big") Minh, Fr. Thanah, Buddhist politician Vu Van Mau, and Catholic politician Nguyen Van Huyenh declared they will not join any new government under the new president because they do not think he is really trying to achieve peace.

Gen. Minh issued a statement saying the whole government should have resigned, not just Thieu.

The strong anti-American tone of Thieu's Monday night resignation speech was not a complete success, although there is quite a bit of anti-American sentiment here now. Many Vietnamese said that Thieu was trying to place all the blame on the Americans when in fact a great deal of it belonged on his own shoulders.

Radio Hanoi also spoke of a "Thieu without Thieu" government and said, "There will be many other things to see in the puppet show in the days to come, but one thing is certain: unless Ford and Kissinger give up the neocolonial policy and put an end to the U.S. involvement, they will meet bitter defeat."

[A Vietcong radio broadcast monitored in Saigon attacked Huong as a "seller of the nation, a blind anti-Communist reactionary and a man who will betray the nation and the people," AP reported.]

Many military officers fear that there is very little to negotiate now that the military situation is so grim. However, several positive steps are being taken.

A military committee is being formed, according to army sources, to try to stabilize the military situation and to prevent any collapse of morale following Thieu's resignation.

The first reaction among military officers appears to be a wave of relief that Thieu is finally gone but there is anxiety about the new government because Thieu said it would be a "government of negotiation."

Sources say there will be a move to bring back able generals, such as Nguyen Duc Thang, former minister

See VIETNAM, A15, Col. 1

Way Cleared For 132,000 War Refugees

23 April 75
By Lawrence Meyer

Washington Post Staff Writer

Attorney General Edward

H. Levi has issued orders permitting up to 132,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees into the United States, it was announced yesterday.

Levi issued the orders Monday night after receiving an "urgent request" for such authorization from Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, acting in his capacity as special Presidential assistant for national security affairs.

The significance of Levi's action was clouded by statements from State Department officials and informed congressional sources expressing skepticism that many Vietnamese could be evacuated because of the rapidly deteriorating military situation in South Vietnam.

One State Department official involved in planning for the accommodation of Vietnamese refugees in this country said the question of mass immigration had become "academic" because of the military situation.

A Senate source, who attended a Central Intelligence Agency briefing yesterday, said senators were told that it will be "a matter of days" until Vietnam falls. As a result, this source said, the senators were told that most Vietnamese refugees would probably be picked up off the coast from small boats in the South China Sea.

Levi spoke Monday night with leaders of the Senate and House Judiciary committees before issuing the order authorizing the immigration permission sought by Kissinger.

The full Senate Judiciary Committee, which last week asked Levi to keep it informed on a daily basis of his actions regarding the refugee problem, voted unanimously yesterday to endorse the steps he had

See REFUGEES, A16, Col. 3

132,000 War Refugees U.S. Clears Way for

REFUGEES, From A1

taken. The committee's vote, although a formal gesture of support, had no legal significance since the attorney general has the authority to permit refugees to enter the country in emergency situations.

After receiving instructions from Levi, Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner Leonard F. Chapman Jr. issued orders to the INS regional offices.

As outlined in a letter from Levi to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman James O. Eastland (D-Miss.) yesterday, five groups of persons are being permitted to enter the United States:

- A maximum of 50,000 "high risk" Vietnamese refugees and their families, described by Levi as "past and present U.S. government employees, Vietnamese officials whose cooperation is necessary for the evacuation of American citizens, individuals with knowledge of sensitive U.S. government intelligence operations, vulnerable political or intellectual figures" and "former Communist defectors."

- Between 10,000 and 75,000 Vietnamese nationals having immediate relatives who are American citizens

or permanent resident aliens in the United States.

- An estimated 1,000 Vietnamese who already have left Vietnam and are at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, "provided they qualify as high risk individuals."

- About 1,000 Cambodians now in Thailand who had been evacuated from Cambodia by the United States.

- About 5,000 Cambodian diplomats in other countries where they face "forcible return or expulsion."

While seeking congressional concurrence for authorizing the refugees to come to the United States, Levi said that "every effort

will be made to obtain international assistance for all Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees and to arrange their resettlement in third countries."

The conditions under which these refugees would be admitted to the United States would leave them in legal limbo. Although physically present in this country, permitted to hold jobs and entitled to the protection of American laws, the refugees would not formally be recognized as being present in the country, according to an immigration service spokesman.

To seek citizenship, such a

refugee first would have to apply for status as a permanent resident alien, like any other immigrant.

Present law permits only 20,000 persons a year from any East Asian country to be admitted into the United States as permanent resident aliens. Without special legislation such as that enacted in the past for Cuban and Hungarian refugees, some Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees would never be eligible for citizenship because of both the numerical quotas and the preferences established under the current immigration law.

Washington Post
April 23, 75
p. 16

A 12 Tuesday, April 22, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

Ailing Huong Is Known as Honest Man

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

Tran Van Huong, who succeeded Nguyen Van Thieu as president of South Vietnam yesterday, was picked to be on Thieu's ticket in 1971 primarily because his advanced age and illness seemed to rule him out as a challenger for the top office.

Huong, 71, is a long-time politician with a reputation for honesty and competence. But his poor health—he suffers from high blood pressure and heart trouble—could severely limit his role in the current critical period.

As vice president, Huong has been a familiar figure around Saigon, a dignified but bent old man, walking with the aid of a cane, as he officiated at ceremonies and meetings that Thieu was too busy to attend.

The constitution gave him only the ritual duties of presiding over meetings of a couple of impotent social and educational bodies. Thieu assigned him the task of conducting an anti-corruption campaign in the government, but if it ever had any results they were kept quiet.

In the past, however,

Huong has played a leading role in Saigon's turbulent wartime political history, one of the few non-military personalities to do so.

He was born in Vinhlong Province, deep in the Mekong Delta, and his southern background made him useful to Thieu many years later when the president wanted someone to reduce the influence of natives of North Vietnam, who supported Huong's predecessor in the vice-presidency, Nguyen Cao Ky.

A graduate of the School of Pedagogy in Hanoi, Huong spent his early years as a high school teacher in Mytho and later went into educational administration. He served two terms as mayor of Saigon and took up an active political career in the capital, building a reputation as an opponent of the dictatorial methods of President Ngo Dinh Diem.

In 1960, Huong was one of 18 prominent politicians who signed the so-called "Caravelle Manifesto," demanding reforms in the Diem government. Though three more years were to pass before Diem was over-



TRAN VAN HUONG
... successor to Thieu



TRAN VAN LAM
... successor to Huong?

thrown, the declaration issued after a meeting at the Caravelle Hotel was significant landmark on the path to his downfall.

A year after the ouster of Diem, Huong was appointed prime minister by Gen. Nguyen Khanh, in the days of the revolving-door governments in Saigon, but he lasted only until forced out of office in a Buddhist uprising on Jan. 27, 1965.

He ran unsuccessfully for president in the first elections under the new constitution of 1967, finishing fourth in a field of 10 although he carried Saigon. That was the election in which Thieu won his first term as President and Ky was elected vice president.

But under the Vietnamese system of government, the prime minister, who is appointed by the president, is the country's chief administrative officer and one of the most powerful men in the country.

Huong was appointed to that post again by Thieu on May 25, 1968, in the aftermath of the Vietcong's Tet offensive.

Although he was popular with the public and built a reputation for personal honesty, Huong was unpopular with the generals and with other politicians, who resented his tendency to appoint colorless administrators, instead of political personalities, to important jobs. Under intense political pressure, Thieu forced him out of office once again on Aug. 22, 1969.

Huong returned to public life two years later, when Thieu chose him as running mate in an effort to give his ticket some broad-based popular appeal at a time when it appeared that the president would face genuine opposition in the race. After both Gen. Duong Van "Big" Minh and Ky pulled out, declaring the election rigged, Huong resister pressure from his associates to withdraw from the ticket, and was elected with Thieu later that year.

Earlier in his life, Huong wrote poetry and books on Vietnamese opera. He has two children, but his wife died earlier this year.

Neil Sheehan

The Right *U. Post* To Be *22 April 75* Rescued

The sudden resignation of President Nguyen Van Thieu has created an opportunity for the United States to avoid an act of betrayal in Vietnam that will haunt us if it occurs. That act would be the abandonment of those Vietnamese whose lives or well-being are certain to be endangered by the Communist victory in the South.

The departure of Mr. Thieu has removed an obstacle to negotiation and brought a fluid political situation in which a settlement might be arranged to permit a large-scale evacuation.

The United States has a profound moral commitment to Vietnamese who placed themselves and their families in jeopardy by taking the American

The writer is a correspondent in the Washington bureau of The New York Times, currently on leave of absence to write a book about Vietnam. He has spent more than 10 years covering the war, from Washington as well as Vietnam.

side in the long war against their Communist-led countrymen. They would never have done so if five American Presidents, including Gerald Ford, had not sought to maintain an anti-Communist government in Saigon, and if each succeeding Congress, again including the present one, had not acquiesced in this policy by voting the funds to fight the war.

Precisely who was responsible for the original policy and who is to blame for the current debacle is beside the point at the moment. The end has come. The only thing that matters now is to make the U.S. exit from Vietnam as decent as possible in terms of the human obligation involved. If there is any American honor and any American credibility to be salvaged from the Vietnam venture, it lies in fulfilling that human obligation to those Vietnamese who put their faith in us.

But the Vietnamese are being abandoned in the wrangling between a Congress traumatized by years of deceit and disillusionment and an administration equally traumatized by the sudden collapse of a policy in which so much blood, treasure and personal ego have been invested.

The possibility of employing American troops to conduct an evacuation of Vietnamese on any sizeable scale appears to have already been mooted by the swiftness of the North Vietnamese advance, the congressional stricture against the reintroduction of U.S. military forces, and the lack of any workable plan by the administration to use those forces in time if Congress were willing to lift the restriction. South Vietnam's most important air base, Bien Hoa, which is 15 miles north of the capital, was rendered largely unusable this weekend by North Vietnamese artillery fire and within days the shells may be falling on the last major airfield, Saigon's Tan Son Nhut.

The only remaining possibility would seem to lie in taking advantage of the resignation of President Thieu to swiftly negotiate a settlement. In such an arrangement the United States might terminate military and economic aid to Saigon and foster creation of a coalition government in exchange for the guaranteed right to evacuate those Vietnamese who will be in greatest jeopardy in a Communist Vietnam. Hanoi's consent to the introduction of some American troops to ensure an orderly evacuation might also be necessary. To obtain a settlement along these lines, the United States might have to agree to provide major humanitarian aid to the Communist side in the interim period and to pay subsequent war reparations. A nation that can spend \$350 million to scoop up some bits and pieces of an out-of-date Russian submarine can well afford to rebuild a war-ravaged Vietnam.

It is possible, of course, that with military victory so close, the Vietnamese Communists may refuse any negotiation. The United States should make the attempt, however, because we owe it to the Vietnamese and to ourselves to try.

Much of the Congress, the administration and the public appear to be trying to salve conscience over the scenes of anguish in Vietnam with the old saw that it was, as President Kennedy coined the term, "their war." We gave the Vietnamese 55,000 American lives, \$150 billion and if they couldn't "hack it," then they will have to suffer the consequences.

But the salve won't heal because it was never just "their war." It was more ours in many ways than theirs, except where the dying was concerned. Their army did far more of that than ours did—five times more. Since 1961, approximately 250,000 South Vietnamese soldiers have been killed.

We let 675,000 Cubans into this country after those the Kennedy administration sent off to fight at the Bay of Pigs were captured instead and had to be ransomed out of jail.

We gave 40,000 Hungarians refuge and their nation fought on the side of the Nazis in World War II.

The Vietnamese have more than earned the right to be rescued.

**"Damn Americans! What have you
done for me since the last
eight or ten years?"**



Washington Post 22 April 1975

U.S. Faces Viet Refugee Problem

22 April 1975
By Lawrence Meyer

Washington Post Staff Writer

With time running out in Saigon, the Ford administration has taken the first steps toward planning for the arrival of Vietnamese refugees, but officials are increasingly pessimistic about being able to rescue large numbers of people from Saigon.

The first problem facing the Inter-agency Task Force on Vietnam, established by the White House Friday, is that it has no idea how many refugees may be coming to this country.

However, as the military collapse of the Saigon forces has accelerated, officials have shelved last week's estimates that as many as 200,000 Vietnamese refugees might come to the United States.

"The facts of the situation, how it turns out, that's what's going to decide it—how many people get out," one government official working on the task force said yesterday.

Another official said the question of how many Vietnamese would arrive has become academic in the last two days because of the rapid disintegration of Saigon's defenses.

Before this disintegration, the task force had run into a restlessness within Congress over the prospect of large numbers of Vietnamese coming into the United States under the Attorney



SECRETARY KISSINGER ATTORNEY GENERAL LEVI

... asked about "limited use" of authority on immi
... asked about "limited use" of authority.

General's authority to "parole" persons into the country in emergency situations.

Last week, after public and private hearings with Philip C. Habib, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, the Senate Judiciary Committee wrote Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and Attorney General Edward H. Levi to endorse the "limited use" of Levi's authority to permit orphans and alien dependents of American citizens into the United States.

The committee said it also would welcome consideration of use of the parole authority to facilitate the immigration of certain Vietnamese nationals to join their families already in this country.



"However," the letter continued, "prior to the use of the parole authority ... for the purpose of large-scale evacuation and resettlement of Vietnamese nationals, the committee will require such recommendations in writing and daily consultations on this important matter of public policy until further notice."

Habib's testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee was only one of a series of appearances by him and Kissinger during which they were questioned about possible immigration of large numbers of Vietnamese refugees to the United States.

During his Judiciary appearance last Tuesday, Habib, told the committee in closed session that the administration was thinking in

terms of 200,000 Vietnamese refugees, a staff source said.

Habib mentioned several countries—Australia, France, Brazil, Venezuela—that might take refugees. "He sort of talked about conversations, he never mentioned commitments. He talked about spreading these people around the world," this source said.

"The committee to a man was skeptical of the whole process," the source said. "I think they're skeptical about the numbers. I think they're skeptical about who is coming out [from Vietnam]. I think they're skeptical about how these people will be taken care of. We can go down the list of two dozen questions."

This source said the committee felt that 5,000 or 10,000 persons can be absorbed in this country. "But if you're talking about 200,000 people, that's a hell of a lot of people."

When a reporter mentioned the lack of relocation camp sites and other facilities to a member of the task force yesterday, he replied, "That's an academic point. We don't have that kind of numbers yet." According to this official, "sites have been suggested," but not selected.

Besides the relatively serious problems in refugee planning, other less severe issues also must be handled.

According to one Immigration and Naturalization Service official, "We don't even have the proper forms. That's a minor problem, but at the same time, the bureaucracy has to have its paperwork."

The Departure of Nguyen Van Thieu

PRESIDENT THIEU'S resignation brings the war in South Vietnam one long step closer to a Vietnamese solution, which is the only kind that ever had a real chance. Nguyen Van Thieu ruled, not wholly without achievement, for seven years. But he was never other than the chosen instrument for an American solution—that is, for a solution that would allow the United States to assert its own international interests, variously described at various times. Nothing so well proved Mr. Thieu's reliance on Americans in order to stay in the palace as the manner of his leaving it. It was, if you will, Nixonian. Mr. Thieu might have told the truth, which is that virtually all of the non-Communist political, military and religious groups in South Vietnam had lost confidence in his leadership. Instead, he chose to blame the United States, and Henry Kissinger in particular, for what he said was an American failure to deliver on Mr. Nixon's "written" commitment of support. Surely he is the last leader in Saigon so out of touch with Vietnamese nationalism as to lament publicly that he did not enjoy enough American patronage.

From an American point of view, the best thing about Mr. Thieu's resignation is that it seems to have been almost entirely a Vietnamese affair, with minimal American participation. Had the United States had a direct or conspicuous hand in removing him, we would have risked assuming some further responsibility for either the political wreckage in Saigon or the welfare of a successor government. As it is, we do not have that responsibility. The new president is a 71-year-old former prime minister in poor health, and likely soon to be replaced. Whoever now speaks for Saigon, however, will not be an instrument of American power. Whether the Vietnamese Communists will consider whatever new leadership emerges as something distinct from the Thieu "clique"—with which they have said they will not negotiate—is not yet clear. In any event, it is not for the United States to try to arrange South Vietnamese political affairs any further. If President Huong in fact turns out to be a transitional figure, the transition will be, as it should be, a Vietnamese process.

In this respect, it is important to Americans that the understandably bitter resignation remarks of President Thieu not be permitted to distort the American debate on Vietnam. Mr. Thieu, as best as we could understand reports of his resignation speech, declared that the United States had defaulted on a certain "written" aid commitment from former President Nixon. He read it off camera, or off microphone, it seems. Well, we have it on Mr. Ford's authority last week that he had personally reviewed the Nixon-Thieu correspondence and "there was nothing in any of those communications that was different from what was stated as their public policy." There is, to be sure, a dispute between the administration and its critics as to just what that "public policy," in all its nuances and shadings, actually was. Our own view is that, despite what the administration now claims, there was not at the time of signing of the Paris accords any clear and open White House statement that the United States was assuming an open-ended responsibility to supply military aid to the Thieu government and to threaten reintervention in the war on its behalf. Quite the contrary. But whatever one thinks about that debate certainly there is no need or place for President Thieu to become a participant in it. President Ford surely does not wish to accept as an ally in this debate a discredited and embittered Vietnamese politician who is attacking Mr. Ford's own Secretary of State.

And what now? The North Vietnamese have 10 divisions poised near Saigon. They will soon be—if they are not already—in a position to impose their political will. This makes it impossible to overlook any longer the political demands of the insurgents' Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. The PRG continues to insist that it wishes to negotiate a political settlement on the basis of the Paris accords, which call for the formation of a three-part council of national reconciliation, and then for elections. Its interest in a political rather than a military settlement evidently flows from its belief that it will thereby have smoother access to the people's loyalties, and to international standing and international aid. With President Thieu gone, this would seem to be the only reasonable course left for the South Vietnamese. If anyone in Saigon feels that there still exists the alternative of military "stabilization" and prolonged resistance, he should take a second look at Saigon's military situation as well as read closely the largely negative comments of those American legislators who spoke yesterday about the post-Thieu prospects of more military aid.

The second major demand of the PRG is for the "immediate and permanent" withdrawal within two or three days, of the remaining Americans in Saigon. Mr. Thieu's departure eliminates the last conceivable reason for further delaying their evacuation; there need be no more empty airplanes flying back to Clark Field. But the further very difficult matter remains of the fate of those South Vietnamese whose association with Americans may have put them in jeopardy now. Hanoi and the Vietcong may well claim that any American effort to evacuate these "endangered" Vietnamese is a hostile political act. But the American obligation to those Vietnamese is very large and very live—as Neil Sheehan argues persuasively elsewhere on this page today. That said, it must be added that even if Hanoi would give its tacit consent to American evacuation of the more severely compromised South Vietnamese, such an operation would run a heavy risk of interference by the South Vietnamese themselves. For it will not be possible in the best of circumstances to evacuate all those who will want to leave. So some American covering forces would be required—at best. And at the worst, if Hanoi refuses to sanction the evacuation of any South Vietnamese, a large American expeditionary force would be required and great risks would be involved.

If there is any real hope, then, for the removal of any substantial number of South Vietnamese at minimal risk, it would seem to rest on a negotiated agreement with the North Vietnamese and the PRG. Neither Saigon's bargaining position nor that of the United States is particularly strong at this point. Much will depend on how much of a premium Hanoi and the PRG place on avoiding a fight to the finish for Saigon, with all of the additional devastation and loss of life that this would entail, and on how much both are interested in humanitarian aid, long-term reconstruction and development, and constructive relations with the outside world. We do not pretend to know whether such a bargain can be struck. But before any large-scale, unilateral effort is made to evacuate the endangered South Vietnamese, it seems to us that an effort to negotiate the safe removal of as many of them as possible should be the first priority of American diplomacy and a goal as well for those other international parties who are now offering to assist in bringing an end to the suffering and destruction in Vietnam.

Vietnam Talks Explored

Ford Seeks Cease-Fire for Evacuation

22 April 75
By Murrey Marder
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Ford said last night that the United States is "exploring with a number of governments negotiating opportunities" to seek a cease-fire in Vietnam for evacuating remaining Americans and thousands of South Vietnamese employees.

The United States has not yet been able to make contact with Nguyen Van Thieu's successor as president of South Vietnam, Tran Van Huong, in the brief time since Thieu's resignation, the President said, but plans to do so.

If either the North Vietnamese or the South Vietnamese show "displeasure" at such an evacuation, the President said, "some fairly sizeable force" of Americans would be required for any large evacuation of South Vietnamese who would be exposed to retaliation.

President Ford said, "There was no pressure by me or anyone in Washington," for the resignation of Thieu, despite Thieu's charge that he was under American pressure to resign. Mr. Ford said Thieu's decision "as far as we know was made entirely on his own." The President, however, left open the possibility that Americans in Saigon did discuss the resignation with Thieu.

Mr. Ford responded gently to President Thieu's charges that the United States abandoned the South Vietnamese government to the Communists and reneged on its commitments to the Saigon regime.

The President said that with the congressional "lack of support" for maintaining the flow of military supplies to Saigon, "I therefore can understand Thieu's traumatic disappointment."

Mr. Ford said the lack of American support certainly had an impact on President Thieu's decision to withdraw precipitously from some provinces.

That withdrawal was ineptly managed, Mr. Ford said, and he reiterated that he does not intend to make the fixing of blame a campaign issue in 1976.

The President said the situation concerning possible negotiations and evacuation is "so fluid right now" that he could not forecast the im-

(over)

mediate course of future events.

He said, "At the moment it does not appear . . . possible" to determine how events will unfold. He said "there is no problem sending in American troops to evacuate Americans," but he repeated that if there is to be "a sizeable evacuation of South Vietnamese" then "I think the Congress ought to clarify the law. If it is decided to send in American forces in the absence of a cease-fire agreement, the President said, this would be a 'short term, very precise, military involvement.'"

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger said earlier that negotiations on Vietnam "might avoid a battle for the city of Saigon" but that the choices left in the war are "extremely limited."

Kissinger, in testimony before the House Appropriations Committee, avoided any direct comment on Thieu's charges that Kissinger in October, 1972, made an agreement "by which the United States sold South Vietnam to the Communists." Thieu had charged that when he blocked that original cease-fire proposal, the United States made commitments to him in the January, 1973, Paris accords, which it failed to completely fulfill.

Ford administration officials were uncertain what will emerge politically in Saigon.

That will be a key to the limited negotiating possibilities left in South Vietnam, administrations officials said, for evacuating remaining Americans and some South Vietnamese on terms that are expected to amount to a surrender.

"At this late hour in Vietnam," Kissinger solemnly told the House Appropriations Committee yesterday, "we're talking now about

achieving the most humane and the most controlled situation that is possible."

Kissinger said that "the outcome of the political changes that have begun in South Vietnam today cannot be predicted and may take many forms."

The secretary said: "There are various negotiating efforts going on but it would be inappropriate for me to discuss them at this moment."

When asked what could be gained at this late hour by authorizing any new military assistance for South Vietnam, Kissinger said that one of the humane objectives would be, "for example, to avoid a battle for the city of Saigon if that can be done."

Kissinger stressed that in the last 10 days, as the South Vietnamese government's military position has been crumbling, American policy has concentrated on "saving lives" and averting "a panic" in Saigon. "In this situation," Kissinger said, "a great deal depends on the psychological impact."

The House Appropriations Committee agreed after hearing Kissinger in open

and closed session to support \$165 million in military aid for South Vietnam plus \$165 million in humanitarian aid even though there may not be time to deliver it if voted by Congress.

Although many members of Congress hailed the resignation of Thieu as a new opportunity for diplomacy to salvage something out of the massive defeat for the South Vietnamese regime, administration officials are not very sanguine about what diplomacy can now produce.

Thieu's resignation brought renewed demands on the Communist side for removal of the entire "Thieu clique" as a precondition for any negotiation, plus a cutoff of all American aid to the Saigon government.

In private, some U.S. strategists expressed regret over the manner of Thieu's resignation because it was done, as one official put it, "in exchange for nothing" with the Communists.

Similarly, U.S. officials last month were dismayed that no attempt was made to bargain over the loss of four-fifths of South Vietnam that was abandoned in the

disastrous, uncoordinated withdrawal of Saigon's forces.

Gen. Fred C. Weyand, Army chief of staff, in testimony that preceded Kissinger's yesterday, said the political outcome ahead in Saigon now "will probably be something that will be peculiarly Vietnamese."

Weyand said that "a number of people who are coming into power in Saigon now have been in touch with the other side."

From an American military viewpoint, Weyand agreed, the Saigon government's military position "is virtually hopeless."

Kissinger stopped short of saying that any actual negotiations are now under way. After the hearing, when asked if his reference to "negotiating efforts" meant negotiations or only diplomatic probing, Kissinger replied, "explorations."

"In our view," Kissinger told the House committee, "the willingness of Congress to approve our request will affect our ability to bring matters to a controlled situation." He said, "The South Vietnamese have nowhere else to turn."

\$165 Million for Military, Same for Humanitarian**House Committee Votes Vietnam Aid**

By Richard L. Lyons
and Spencer Rich

Washington Post Staff Writers

The House Appropriations Committee yesterday voted \$165 million in military aid and the same amount in humanitarian aid to South Vietnam, after the administration made another appeal for help for Saigon.

The Appropriations Committee acted after hearing Army Chief of Staff Fred C. Weyand testify that, although Communist forces "have the capability to overwhelm" South Vietnam, U. S. aid might deter them from doing so.

"Whether they will try that depends on their view of the cost," Weyand said. If the United States provides more military aid to South Vietnam, Communist forces might decide they would rather negotiate than suffer the losses needed to capture Saigon and win a military victory. Without more U. S. aid, South Vietnam will certainly fall soon, Weyand said.

Rep. George H. Mahon (D-Tex.), Appropriations Committee chairman, said the committee voted 36 to 15 to reduce the military aid figure from the \$200 million he had recommended to \$165 million, then cleared it for the floor by a voice vote.

Mahon said the committee has no assurance that the military aid would make a difference, but felt it should be provided so the Saigon government "will not be dealing from a position of total weakness."

The military aid faces an uphill fight on the House floor. The caucus of all House Democrats voted last month 189 to 49 against any further aid to South Vietnam. Mahon said some committee members who oppose more aid voted for the bill to let the House vote on the issue.

The \$165 million in military aid is part of \$300 million previously authorized but not appropriated. Similarly, the \$165 million for

humanitarian aid comes from \$177 million in leftover authorization for economic aid. A bill to raise the humanitarian aid ceiling by another \$150 million comes up in the House today, and its Armed Services Committee is to vote on the President's request to increase the military aid ceiling by \$422 million.

Capitol Hill pessimism that South Vietnam can hold out at all, even with military aid, was evident yesterday as the Senate took up a bill authorizing \$200 million for humanitarian aid to South Vietnam and for evacuating U.S. citizens and endangered Vietnamese.

Rather than militancy, the mood was one of resignation and relief that the long and costly U.S. involvement is drawing to a close.

"They're down the tube," said Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.). Sen. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.), GOP floor manager of the \$200 million

measure, said there was a "kind of inevitability about what happened that no change in our policy could have affected."

There is much talk on Capitol Hill of negotiations if South Vietnam can hold out militarily a bit longer, but few seem to believe they can result in the creation of a permanent independent South Vietnam.

Rather, the best that many members believe is possible through negotiations is a new South Vietnamese government consisting of the tripartite National Commission on National Reconciliation envisioned by the 1973 Paris accords. This would include the Vietcong, and probably would be dominated by them, but at least it might avert a bloody battle for Saigon, it is argued.

Earlier, with only about a dozen senators on the floor, the Senate by voice vote approved a resolution asking

the President to press for negotiations to attain a political settlement and to carry out the Paris accords. Both Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) and Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said the administration had been trying for 10 days or more to bring about negotiations to end the fighting.

Scott told reporters, "I think the departure [of Thieu] comes too late to change the picture."

Sen. Dick Clark (D-Iowa), said he favors delaying action on the bill—which also would authorize the President to use U.S. armed forces to rescue Americans and endangered South Vietnamese—until the administration makes a better showing on withdrawing Americans.

Citing State Department reports that 377 Americans or their dependents had been taken out Saturday, 170 Sunday and 484 yesterday, he said 2,816 Americans and 1,246 dependents remain as of noon yesterday Washington time.

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

2 Towns Periled in Vietnam

22 April 75
U.S. Post
**Battle Lines
Set 26 Miles
From Saigon**

From News Dispatches:

SAIGON, April 21 — Two more South Vietnamese provinces appeared to be on the verge of falling to Communist forces Monday amid reports that the battle lines had reached a point only 26 miles east of here.

UPI reported that Xuanloc, the capital of Longkhanh Province, and Hamtan, the capital of Binh Tuy Province, had both fallen to North Vietnamese and Vietcong attackers. Other news agencies said government forces were still holding on to the two cities, but radio contact had been lost with Xuanloc. The loss of radio communications usually means that a position has been overrun.

If Longkhanh and Binh Tuy provinces fall, they would be the 20th and 21st of South Vietnam's 44 provinces to come under Communist control.

North Vietnamese forces have already taken positions between Xuanloc and Saigon and the provincial capital, under siege for 12 days, is no longer considered strategically vital to Saigon's defense. Xuanloc is 40 miles east of Saigon and Hamtan is on the coast 35 miles farther east.

Military observers saw the potential fall of Xuanloc and Hamtan as having its biggest impact on the morale of government troops and civilians, especially in and around Saigon.

Military sources said more than 150 bombing raids were flown in support of government troops around both cities. Bombs were dropped on Communist positions less than a mile from Xuanloc, they said.

The command said bombing raids were also made west of Xuanloc, where there were reports of heavy ground action as Communist troops pushed government forces steadily back toward the large, American-built airbase at Bienhoa, 15 miles northeast of Saigon. The government pulled its troops back to a new defense line 26 miles from here and just east of Bienhoa.

Western sources said Bienhoa airbase, South Vietnam, is still in government hands. See FIGHTING, A16, Col. 7.

2 Province Towns On Verge of Falling

FIGHTING, From A1

nam's largest, and the nearby base at Longbinh may be the next Communist targets. Bienhoa has been shelled off and on for a week, and the government has moved most of its planes to Saigon's Tansonnhut airbase.

Bienhoa is the site of most of South Vietnam's aircraft maintenance facilities, many of which cannot be moved to Tansonnhut.

In Binh Tuy province, North Vietnamese tanks and infantrymen continued their advance down the coast to strike at Hamtan. The airfield three miles northwest of the city was attacked just before dawn.

The fall of Hamtan could open the way for a Communist push toward Vungtau, Saigon's main port.

To the south, military sources in Saigon said the Communists assaulted the district town of Benluc, 18 miles southwest of Saigon just off the Highway 4 to the Mekong Delta. The town is defended by the government's shattered 22nd Infantry Division.

Earlier Monday, a South Vietnamese military spokesman said Communist tanks and infantry were pushing down the coast of the South China Sea, apparently aiming for Vungtau.

Agence France-Presse quoted an official military source as saying there was "great confusion" in Vung-

tau with crowds of people arriving from Saigon to try to leave the country by sea. The source said many junks had disappeared from the port, 80 miles southeast of Saigon.

Meanwhile, the Australian government announced that it was closing its embassy in Saigon. It said the Australian air force would fly the embassy staff out of Vietnam.

Ambassador Geoffrey Price warned all Australians not on the embassy staff to leave immediately.

The Laotian government also closed its embassy and sent the entire staff home to Vientiane.

Washington Post
22 April 75
P. A-16

Pathet Lao Stage New Attacks

VIENTIANE, April 21 (UPI)—North Vietnamese troops Monday spearheaded new attacks on Highway 13 linking Vientiane and the royal Laotian capital of Luang Prabang and Defense Minister Sisouk na Champassak said government forces are in danger of losing control of the road.

Prime Minister Prince Souvanna Phouma sent an urgent cable to the headquarters of the pro-Communist Pathet Lao near the northeastern border with North Vietnam requesting orders be issued for the attackers to withdraw.

The cable was addressed to Prince Souphanouvong, Souvanna's half brother and titular leader of the Pathet Lao. Sisouk said that if the Communists do not withdraw, it would pose a serious threat to the peace agreement and cease-fire that has been generally observed since 1973.

Sisouk told a news conference that two government positions near the road were abandoned Sunday night and the fighting continuing Monday near the junction of Highway 13 with Highway 7 in mountainous country 90 miles north of Vientiane, the administrative capital of Laos.

Government air force T-28 bombers were ordered to fly air strikes against the attackers and reinforcements were being moved into the area, Sisouk said.

Military sources said it could not be determined whether the road had been cut. They described casualties in the fighting so far as minor.

The renewed fighting was in the same area where government troops lost some positions along the cease-fire line last week in a Communist attack timed to coincide with the Laotian new year celebration.

Fighting died down Thursday but resumed Sunday with a combined force of North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao troops moving against the government positions, Sisouk said.

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U.S. Is Rushing Men, Planes To Aid American Evacuation

22 April 75

By Michael Getler

Washington Post Staff Writer

The United States is sending several thousand additional Marines plus electronic warfare planes, jet refueling tankers, more helicopters and more transports to Indochina as concern grows here over evacuating some 3,000 Americans still in South Vietnam.

Senior U.S. officials describe the situation as "touch and go."

The likelihood has increased that a swift emergency evacuation may be necessary as Saigon's outer defenses crumble and North Vietnamese artillery and antiaircraft missiles come within range of Saigon's Tansonnhut airport.

A big question mark, however, is the political impact of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu's resignation yesterday. Conceivably, Thieu's departure could produce last-minute negotiations that could forestall an attack on the city

and its airport and allow a more orderly evacuation.

The United States is taking a number of steps to beef up U. S. forces already positioned within reach of South Vietnam:

- Several thousand Marines from the 3d Marine Division are sailing from Okinawa in amphibious craft to join the more than 4,000 Marines from the same division already on Navy carriers and other ships off the South Vietnamese coast.

- Air Force transport planes have been ordered to pick up at least an additional 1,500-man battalion of Marines from Hawaii and

move them to Okinawa. They will remain there as a back-up force in the Pacific for the 3d Division.

- Air Force helicopters based in Thailand are being flown to the U. S. aircraft carrier Midway in the South China Sea to give the potential evacuation force a third carrier loaded with helicopters.

- To cope with the increasing threat from North Vietnamese missile crews near Tansonnhut airport, the Air Force is rushing specially equipped F-4 Phantom jets back to Thailand from bases in Okinawa.

These planes, code-named See MILITARY, A13, Col. 2

U.S. Rushing Marines and Planes To Aid Evacuation of Americans

MILITARY, From A1

"Wild Weasels" and used extensively in the U.S. air war against North Vietnam in the early 1970s, carry special equipment for detecting and jamming the radar systems that guide the Russian-built SA-2 missiles to their targets.

- The Air Force has begun a stepped-up airlift out of Tansonnhut using C-130 transports flying from bases in the Philippines.

These four-engine transports, while smaller and slower than the C-141 and C-5 jet transports, are far more rugged and are viewed as a better bet to survive hits from smaller Russian SA-7 antiaircraft missiles that are also known to be in the Saigon area.

- To help keep the growing U.S. air armada flying, the Air Force is also dispatching additional aerial

refueling planes to Thailand.

There are also reported to be three U.S. merchant ships in Saigon harbor which conceivably could be used for evacuation purposes, though the narrow river channel is viewed as quite vulnerable.

The military build-up is meant to cope with an evacuation under fire, although U.S. officials hope the remaining Americans can be withdrawn without being threatened by hostile fire.

If Tansonnhut is under fire but an airlift still seems the best way out, then the Marines would be flown in to try to protect the field from direct assault, while U.S. jets struck threatening missile batteries and, if they could spot them, long-range 130mm artillery.

If the airfield were shut down, then helicopters could be used to pick up remain-

ing U.S. citizens from various locations in downtown Saigon, with Marines again being used to form protective rings around much smaller landing zones.

Though a helicopter evacuation was used without incident in Phnom Penh, senior U.S. officials are clearly worried about having to resort to helicopters in Saigon, a city which could be in the midst of panic and anti-American violence if a final assault on the capital is launched.

While political developments could forestall such an attack, the prospects that a last-resort helicopter evacuation might be necessary increased in the past two days as U.S. military analysts declared that the Saigon area had clearly come within range of the Communists' SAM antiaircraft missiles and long-range artillery.

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'The Americans Promised Us'

SAIGON, April 21 (UPI)—Excerpts from Nguyen Van Thieu's speech in which he resigned the presidency of South Vietnam follow:

"If you [Americans] give us the same aid as the other side gives North Vietnam we would win."

"If the Americans don't want to support us any more let them go, get out! Let them forget their humanitarian promises!"

"No matter that we cannot accept, we are adults. We are going to continue to be insulted because Americans won't help us."

"The Americans promised us — we trusted them. But you have not given us the aid you promised us. With that aid which you promised us, I would not be afraid of the Communists."

"My resignation will let the United States give you aid and open the way to negotiations."

Thieu said he and former President Richard M. Nixon had an agreement "on paper" under which Nixon pledged "all necessary military and economic support to the Republic of Vietnam when threatened by the Communists."

"I never thought a man like Mr. Kissinger would deliver our people to such a disastrous fate," Thieu said.

"To fight against the rebels we have to have ammunition, the wherewithal to fight. The other side gets it from the Communists. The Communists bring down more people, more tanks, more guns and they would like to overrun us."

"If the United States had intervened as it should have we would not be losing province capitals, district capitals and we would not be faced with losing the national capital. Maybe we could have worked out something with the Communists."

"We lost tanks. We lost artillery. The United States,



Associated Press

Thieu as he appeared on television.

when this happened, should have reacted.

"Let me ask you, when the Americans saw the loss of those vehicles and weapons, why didn't you come and replace them? When you saw our people being lost, why didn't you come in and help our people? You signed the Paris agreement which said you would do this."

"Now I have told you the situation and how the allies have treated us. I am hiding nothing."

"Now we are going to regroup and we are going to retain III Corps and IV Corps, even though others made stupid mistakes in I Corps and II Corps. Do not lay down your arms. Keep your arms. If you make the mistake of abandoning outposts and laying down your

arms we are going to lose everything."

Referring to the 1972 proposed Paris peace agreement that was later changed because of Thieu's protests, he said:

"I argued with the Americans. I told them, 'You are selling out South Vietnam to the Communists,' but the American officials said, 'We demand you sign this agreement.'"

"I rejected that plan. I said we won't go along with it. I don't go along with any agreement with the Communists in any form whatsoever. The North Vietnamese will not agree to our constitution, our laws, in making a solution of what is to be done here in South Vietnam."

"This has been shown. Russians, Chinese, Americans, even Kissinger have not been able to work it out."

"I told you in those days [1968] that if you listened to these political schemes of the Americans you would be lost. Now you are going to find out what I meant in those days in 1968."

"I put out the plan that there was only one solution. I was given an alternative solution. The alternative solution was that I could take an airplane out of Vietnam on Oct. 26, 1972. I was told I could leave the country. I also was told my life was threatened by Vietnamese."

"Finally, we had to reach a compromise solution [in 1973]. I said that I would only agree to a solution whereby the problem of North Vietnamese troops was settled. This solution was: the problem concerning the armed forces of South and North Vietnam shall be settled by the Vietnamese governments, the Vietnamese elements themselves, on the basis of gradual reductions in the troop strength and demobilization."

"I believe that this was not our desired solution to the problem concerning the North Vietnamese troops and was not an ideal solution. But we could do nothing better. We could not drive all of them out of the South at a time when the United States had stopped fighting and had stopped aiding us. That was why I considered this solution acceptable if North Vietnam had good will."

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to Flood Vietnamese Exodus Growing

Friends and Relatives in United States Provide Assistance

By Don Oberdorfer
Washington Post Foreign Service

CLARK AIR BASE, the Philippines, April 21—The trickle has become a rivulet, and the rivulet is slowly building toward a flood.

A Vietnamese air force helicopter pilot—a darkly handsome young man with his wife, mother, brother and six other members of his family sitting in a row beside him—said he had to get out because the Communists would kill him. His sister works in the U.S. embassy, and she was instrumental in his departure.

A Vietnamese military intelligence officer, sitting with his wife and three children, told a similar story. He had a friend in the American military who put him on an airplane flight headed for Clark field and the hangar where he sat, now waiting for word of further transit to the United States.

A 38-year-old Vietnamese accountant handed over his wife and children to an American at Tansonnhut airport. They would pose as his "family" for the purpose of the trip to American soil. The accountant himself was shoved into a line under an

assumed American name and somehow passed through.

An American named Jim Scrivellito, an aircraft technician from Reno, Nevada, saw a Vietnamese hand over a thick roll of greenbacks to an American at Tansonnhut with a fervent plea to "put me on the list to go." He is certain the request was granted.

Close to 600 people arrived here yesterday. More than 800 had arrived by 7 p.m. today, with several more flights on the way. Most of those on the more recent flights were Vietnamese, with only a smattering of Americans.

Vietnamese are trying to buy, borrow, beg or steal their way out of their collapsing country at almost any risk or price. American friends are helping all they can, believing that the lives of their friends and relatives are at stake.

R. E. LeMann, an employee of the U.S. firm of Lear-Siegler, was told by a Saigon attorney three weeks ago that an exit visa for his wife, Thuan, could be obtained for \$80 in greenbacks. Last week the lawyer said the price had gone up to

\$400, and 10 more days would be required. He was willing to pay but he couldn't wait, knowing what he did about the deteriorating security in Saigon.

"It's not that Americans don't want to get out, it's that some of us couldn't get out unless we wanted to leave our Vietnamese families. I could never do that. It was bad enough when we boarded a bus ahead of my wife at the airport in Saigon. I never want to see a look like that on her face again," LeMann said.

Since the first evacuation flights two weeks ago, several thousand Americans and Vietnamese have poured into and through this vast air base, the largest outside the United States. According to informed estimates, about 3,000 Americans and Vietnamese are here right now waiting for flights to the United States.

This morning a tent city capable of housing persons (20 to a tent) began rising in the 90-degree heat on a grassy parade field. The tent area will be a supplement to the hot, crowded barracks where 70 to 80 men, women and children are crammed in bunk-to-

Assistance

bunk, sharing four toilets and two showers. The lucky ones go to a three-story barracks called "Freedom House," which is under 24-hour guard to prevent comings and goings and to keep the people away from the press.

Late Sunday night, an air force plane was held up two hours on the runway at Tansonnhut airport by Vietnamese military police and marines claiming that unauthorized persons were on board. The U.S. embassy finally intervened, according to witnesses, to arrange release of the plane.

Although the U.S. Congress has not yet acted to provide special status for Vietnamese evacuees, American officials here expressed confidence tonight that none will be sent back to Saigon.

In aggravated cases, the processing at Clark Field may take as long as three weeks. Most of the refugees will be moving out, sooner, however, as sponsors are found, immigration papers are processed and charter

flights take off for destinations across the Pacific.

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Americans Main Factor In Thieu's Presidency

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

When Nguyen Van Thieu rose to power in South Vietnam by outmaneuvering his rivals, it hardly seemed likely that he would be a central figure in world affairs for a decade to come.

Conservative, suspicious, and unremarkable in appearance, he possessed neither the Mandarin dignity nor erratic flamboyance on which other Vietnamese leaders based their appeal. But Thieu was able to hold and expand a power that became nearly total because he had a decisive asset: the full support of the United States.

Weary of the coups and counter-coups that made an international laughing stock of the fledgling nation to which they had committed themselves, American officials embraced

Thieu and his ally, air marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, when they took over as head of a new military government in 1965. Ten governments had come and gone since the American-supported ouster of President Ngo Dinh Diem two years before.

The brash and dashing Ky, as prime minister, held the headlines for the next two years, while Thieu built support behind the scenes. After he was elected president in 1967, he and the Americans developed a relationship based on mutual need that Thieu once compared to a troubled marriage. "Between man and wife there are fights," he said, "yet they don't necessarily become enemies because of that . . . Moreover, their fights must take place in the bedroom, after the door has been locked. They must never take place in front of the children."

See THIEU, A14, Col. 1

THIEU, From A1

The former general provided the continuity, stability and willingness to embrace the forms of democracy that the United States believed essential for implementing the plans and programs by which they hoped to turn South Vietnam into an independent republic.

He never really believed in Western-style democracy, which he regarded as a dangerous luxury for a country at war, but used it to legitimize the power he had seized by intrigue.

And once Thieu was duly elected, under a constitution the U.S. embassy in Saigon helped to draft, the Americans let it be known that they would tolerate no more nonsense. Continuation of the American effort would depend on uninterrupted functioning of the new government—a hollow threat, in the view of many analysts, but one that Thieu was able to use to keep his generals in line and subdue his political opponents. The war, and the Americans, combined to make him indispensable.

As recently as April 3, President Ford referred to Thieu as "a head of state elected by the people." That was what Thieu appeared to be, and what the Americans of the Johnson administration desperately wanted him to be: the popularly elected head of an independent, self-sustaining South Vietnamese republic.

In fact, no such nation really existed, as Thieu well knew. It unraveled the first time it was seriously tested in the absence of American sustenance, and the president who embodied the institution, Nguyen Van Thieu, was doomed to go with it.

Thieu was not altogether a puppet of the American embassy, which he periodically defied on issues great and small. He was a complex and skillful man who manipulated his mentors perhaps as much as they manipulated him.

Although he was never a charismatic or popular figure, he probably rose highest in the esteem of his countrymen in the fall of 1972 when he held out for months against acceptance of a peace agreement the Americans had worked out with North Vietnam but which he viewed as inimical to South Vietnam's survival.

In the words of Charles Yost, former American ambassador to the United Nations, Thieu was one of "those clients to whom we have so totally committed ourselves that they can afford to ignore our advice and our interests."

By his own standards, Thieu was a patriot. He fought South Vietnam's long fight with toughness, courage and determination, at least for as long as he and his generals believed the Americans were beside them.

He survived military and political crises that would have brought down lesser men. He showed flashes of wit and surprising introspection when he allowed himself to talk freely. He endorsed, at least in public, thoroughgoing social and institutional reforms in South Vietnam.

Pacification, land reform, free elections, economic expansion, miracle rice, militia training, all the building blocks of the nation-state were put in place with fanfare during Thieu's tenure, financed by billions of American dollars. In most of the country, none of it survived its first big challenge after the departure of U.S. planes and men.

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(OVER)

Thieu often described himself as a peace-loving man who wanted to be remembered as the man who brought peace to his country. But his presidency was a creature of the war.

He used the presence of the enemy, the threat of Communist attack and subversion, as a whip against his domestic opponents. The war gave him cause to imprison dissidents, impose martial law, exile rivals, close newspapers and continue provincial administration in the hands of army officers.

"To be president in a peaceful country, in peacetime, is not interesting," he once told a group of journalists. It was a role he was destined never to play. From the time of his boyhood, life in Vietnam has been dominated by war.

Thieu was born April 5, 1923, in a fishing village near Phanrang, on the coast of the South China Sea northeast of Saigon, the youngest of five children. His first experience of war, he recalled later, came in 1942, during the Japanese occupation of Vietnam, when bombs fell on his native village.

When the French returned after the war, Thieu served briefly with Ho Chi Minh's Vietminh rebels. After about a year, he became convinced that the Vietminh were Communists first and nationalists afterward, so he left them and went to Saigon to continue his education.

With the help of a brother who had risen in the world, he obtained an appointment to a merchant marine school. But when he discovered that the French would pay him less than they would pay a French officer, he turned down a shipboard berth and transferred to the Vietnamese National Military Academy in Dalat. Commissioned a lieutenant, he entered the service of the French against the Vietminh.

He rose rapidly to the rank of major. In 1954, the last year of the French war, he is said to have called in artillery fire on his own family home during an attack on the Vietminh. He made a career of military command after the 1954 Geneva convention, taking additional training in the United States and holding a variety of posts until the early 1960s.

During that time, he converted to Roman Catholicism, the religion of his wife and of President Diem, a factor that was in his favor when Diem reshuffled military commands to give the units based nearest Saigon to officers he trusted. Thieu was commander of the Fifth Infantry Division, strategically located at Bienhoa, just outside the capital, at the time of the coup against Diem in 1963.

The leaders of that coup, especially Gens. Duong Van (Big) Minh and Tran Van Don, soon became familiar names in American news accounts of events in Vietnam, but Thieu, who temporized over the coup until its outcome was certain before committing himself, remained an obscure figure.

He held the position of secretary general of the Military Revolutionary Council that took control of the government under Big Minh's leadership. But through most of 1964, attention was focused on Gen. Nguyen Khanh, who ousted Big Minh after only three months, on the revolving-door succession of military and civilian governments that followed, and on the so-called Tonkin Gulf incident, the reported attack on two U.S. destroyers that triggered direct American military intervention.

It was a period of confusion and turmoil in both Vietnam and the United States. While political intriguers shuffled cabinets in Saigon, the Vietcong were seizing vast stretches of the countryside. The American commitment was growing steadily. Restive Buddhists, whose repression had been partly responsible for Diem's ouster, were still a troublesome domestic problem.

"By early 1965," Chester Cooper said in his book, *The Lost Crusade*, "American policy was clearly floundering. . . . It was apparent both from official briefings and first-hand evidence that the Vietcong held the initiative throughout much of the Vietnamese countryside and could mount a considerable campaign of terror within the limits of Saigon itself. The Vietnamese government, despite all the help it had been given, seemed unable to hold the Communist forces in check."

It was in that atmosphere of coup and crisis that Thieu first entered the national government as deputy premier and defense minister under Tran Van Huong, later vice president in Thieu's second term.

That was in January, 1965. Huong was gone by June 18 of that year, when Ky became premier and Thieu his chief of state. That ended the succession of toppling governments, with President Johnson committing himself to Ky and Thieu at the Honolulu conference several months later. But by that time the United States was bom-

bing North Vietnam, American troops were pouring in, and the entire conflict had entered a new phase.

When Ky and Thieu took office, Dennis Bloodworth, an experienced British observer of Southeast Asian politicians, described the new government as "natty little men with slicked down hair," indistinguishable from their predecessors. That was a commonly held view at the time, but it was erroneous. Ky was popular, flashy, and congenial to Johnson, despite such gaffes as his observation that Vietnam needed a new Hitler. And Thieu proved to be made of sterner stuff than had been recognized up to that time.

The American objective in South Vietnam was always twofold: to defeat the Vietcong militarily and to create a nation out of the South Vietnamese tumult through governmental reorganization and the establishment of a democratic system.

Thieu Resigns, Terms U.S. 'Inhuman'

22 Apr 75
By H.D.S. Greenway

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 21—Nguyen Van Thieu resigned today as president of South Vietnam in an emotional and angry speech in which he called the United States "inhuman" for not living up to its responsibilities toward his country. Thieu is succeeded by his vice president, Tran Van Huong, 71, a civilian and a former prime minister.

Thieu said he was resigning because the U.S. Congress was now considering the issue of aid for South Vietnam and he hoped that his resignation would fa-

vorably influence the outcome of that debate.

[By the time Thieu announced his resignation, he had little support left either within South Vietnam or elsewhere. An analysis of Thieu's resignation by The Washington Post's Philip A. McCombs appears on Page A16.]

He warned, however, that the \$722 million requested by President Ford would not be enough to achieve military stabilization which, according to Thieu, was necessary if peace talks were to resume. Thieu said he had asked Ford to send B-52 bombers into

action again over Vietnam but that he had not received an answer.

"They [the U.S. Congress] are haggling over \$300 million, although the \$722 million initially requested by the President was grossly insufficient," Thieu said. "Who knows if the requested \$300 million will not now be increased to \$700 million or even \$1,000 million."

But while asking for increased aid, Thieu severely admonished Washington. "The inhuman attitude of the United States," he said, "is that of a great power fleeing from its respon-

sibilities." At length, he traced what he considers as the betrayal back to the signing of the Paris cease-fire accords in 1973 which he said "led the South Vietnamese people to death."

Thieu's resignation follows weeks of speculation and rising discontent with his leadership, or the lack of it. It is felt that a new civilian government might be able to make some arrangement with the Communists to avoid a battle on the streets of Saigon, but no one can say how the Communists will react to this move.

The resignation, which was report-

edly decided only today, followed reports of the abandonment of Xuanloc Sunday night with the government now trying to draw new defense lines before Bienhoa and Vungtau.

Thieu said in his speech that the new government under Huong would call upon the North Vietnamese to cease their attacks and to resume peace talks in Paris, which the South Vietnamese would enter into "without any conditions." He said the new government would also ask the United States to provide enough aid in order to bring about a military stabilization.

[Informed sources in Washington said Huong is expected to resign in a "few days" for reasons of health. He will be succeeded by Tran Van Lam, president of the Senate and former foreign minister, the sources said.]

Thieu said that the Communist insistence that they would not resume negotiations until he resigned was just a "trick" and that this argument had "poisoned" opinion both in the United States and in South Vietnam—even among his own soldiers.

See VIETNAM, A14, Col. 1

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(OVER)

VIETNAM, From A1

Rather than have it said that "if Mr. Thieu stays there will be no peace talks," Thieu said he would resign even though he was just a "victim"—a scapegoat whom the Americans were using to cover and excuse their abandonment of Vietnam.

Thieu spoke from the Presidential Palace before a hastily assembled audience of members of the South Vietnamese Assembly, the Senate and the Supreme Court. The speech, which lasted for two hours, was carried on national television.

The outbursts of anger and the barely controlled emotion—at times he seemed to be fighting back tears—contrasted with the calm and collected

Thieu who seemed so confident during his first inauguration in November of 1967.

With his country now on the verge of a military defeat, Thieu seemed distraught and stressed that American aid was "urgently, urgently, urgently" needed before it was too late.

But Thieu's speech was bitterly anti-American.

He said he had always been against any agreement which allowed the North Vietnamese to retain their troops in the country, and he said former President Richard Nixon promised that America would retaliate strongly against any North Vietnamese attack.

Vice President Spiro Agnew, when

he came to Saigon, was supposed to reiterate that promise, Thieu said, but he mentioned only aid and the recognition of South Vietnam as the only legal government in the south and not the promise of U.S. retaliation.

"You must remember that in 1968 the American pressure was not small," Thieu said. "They wanted us to bring the so-called liberation forces into power. I fought against it. Anybody who wants to know what person I am, who wants to know about the power of the regime, should ask the American government about what happened in 1968.

"I told you in those days that if you listened to these political schemes of the Americans you would be lost," he continued. "Now you are going to find

out what I meant in those days in 1968."

Watergate and the energy crisis had resulted in an American reduction in aid, Thieu said, while the North Vietnamese were getting more and more aid and equipment from China and the Soviet Union. The Communists had launched attacks last December just to test the American response, he said, and when there was none, they were encouraged to strike again.

Thieu took responsibility for the loss of the northern part of the country, but he said his original decision to withdraw from the highlands was justified because he had so few troops. He said that some generals had proved to be cowards, but that in recent battles

the South Vietnamese had tried to stop the North Vietnamese advance, but had proved too weak.

But he clearly indicated that he mainly blamed the United States:

"I told the United States then, 'You are asking me to do what your army did not succeed in doing with \$300,000 million in six years,'" he said.

"I told them, 'You wanted to get out of the Vietnam war honorably, and now you are asking us to do things that are impossible or unreasonable. For me to carry on this war despite the cuts in military aid is like giving me \$3 a day and pretending I can live like a luxury tourist.'"

Thieu said that he himself had never personally lacked courage and that he

had refused American pressure to attend the peace talks in Paris in 1968, even though it meant someone might have him killed, he said. But he was afraid when he learned that the Americans were going to cut aid, he said, and he doubted that the Americans themselves could hold back the enemy on the present terms.

When the speech ended, Thieu kissed Huong on both cheeks and Huong asked for the cooperation of all to help stabilize the military situation.

As Thieu spoke, Americans trying to enter the defense attache's office at Tan Son Nhut airport to evacuate Saigon were told to take cover because a sniper was in the area shooting Americans as they tried to leave.

Neither Thieu nor most of his countrymen ever thought the latter was achievable, or even desirable, in a country dominated by religious, familial and sectional politics, but it was a condition of continued American support in an ever-widening war, so they went along.

"Democracy as they have it in America... cannot exist here as yet," Thieu said years later. "We aren't ready for it yet. Don't forget that Vietnam never knew democratic life in the sense that you mean it. Until 1945, we were a French colony. Until 1954 we were dominated by the Vietminh. Until 1963 we were under President Diem. I take the liberty of affirming that democracy began to exist here in 1965."

The cornerstone of the newly created democracy was the national constitution; approved in 1967 by a constituent assembly under the watchful eyes of the military.

That constitution, strikingly similar to the American one, provided for the election of a president and vice president running on one ticket, and of a two-house national assembly. The presidential election of 1967 was the first big test of the new system, of popular participation, of security in the countryside, and of the losers' willingness to accept the results.

Ky and Thieu pledged that they would not run against each other, but both announced their candidacies. The outcome was settled not at the polls but months before, at a three-day meeting attended by 48 generals. That was, by all accounts, a tearful and overwrought bargaining session at which Thieu prevailed. Gen. Cao Van Vien, who arranged the meeting, later became chairman of the Joint General Staff under Thieu, to no one's surprise.

Ky agreed to run as Thieu's vice presidential candidate, and the result was almost a foregone conclusion. Thieu hardly campaigned, though he was always effective in a crowd, but the dozen civilian candidates shuttled energetically around the country, promoting the notion that a genuine contest was under way.

Big Minh and a popular neutralist named Au Truong Thanh were barred from running. It came as no surprise that Thieu and Ky won easily, outdistancing the nearest rival by 2 to 1; but they and the Americans were shocked that a little-known lawyer who used a peace dove as his election symbol, Truong Dinh Dzu, came in second.

Shortly afterward, Dzu was tried on previously filed charges involving financial speculations and sent to prison.

By the time Thieu took office, Ellsworth Bunker was the American ambassador to South Vietnam. He and Thieu developed a close working relationship and American support for the duly elected, popularly supported president never wavered, despite crises and blunders that strained their relationship.

Backed by the United States, Thieu skillfully consolidated his power. He neutralized the coffee-house malcontents, sent disgruntled generals in to exile, built up the national police, and worked hard at seeking popular allegiance.

His overall policy was inflexible, summarized by his famous doctrine of the "Four No's"—no coalition government, no territorial concessions, no Communist activity in South Vietnam, and no pro-Communist neutralism.

He exasperated the Americans, and the world, by refusing to attend the Paris peace negotiations that began in

1968. He infuriated the U.S. mission—except, apparently, for Bunker—by jailing a popular national assemblyman named Tran Ngoc Chau, violating his legislative immunity and ignoring a ruling by the South Vietnamese supreme court that Chau's trial was illegal.

In fact, over the years, Thieu made blunder after blunder. He installed a rice-stealing incompetent as head of food distribution to refugees in Danang; he left a weak and cowardly general, heading an untried division, guarding the vital Demilitarized Zone; he set unrealistic goals and impossible deadlines for this or that accomplishment; he invited the wrath of the sects by announcing plans to draft Buddhist monks and seminarians.

Perhaps most damaging of all, he ran for re-election unopposed in 1971 after manipulating the conditions of the election so that both Ky and Big Minh decided not to challenge him. The Americans made no secret of their disappointment, but by that time no other national leader was in sight and there was no legitimate way to install anyone else in power.

Thieu was an easy man to underestimate. With his bland face and conservative style, surrounded by flinty-eyed bodyguards, he looked like less than he was.

He had one of the world's most difficult jobs, and he not only survived but gained in strength after each new crisis: the Tet offensive of 1968, the ill-fated 1971 invasion of Laos, the Easter assault and loss of Quangtri in 1972, the arm-twisting by Henry A. Kissinger that forced him to sign the Paris peace agreement, the pullout of the American troops and planes. Until the loss of the Highlands city of Banmethuot that set off the rout of Saigon's best troops, Thieu seemed firmly in control and would surely have won a third term in the 1975 elections.

It is probable that few if any Westerners really understood the relationship between Thieu and the people of South Vietnam. Just before the Paris accords, for example, Thieu went on nationwide radio with a long, emotional speech in colloquial language saying his country would never accept its proposed terms.

Some Vietnamese complained that Thieu had violated the dignity of his office by the style and tone of his address; others praised him for talking at last in a language the ordinary people could respond to.

The criticism of Thieu lasted as long as his regime: that he was corrupt, that he kept and tortured political prisoners, that he preferred continuation of the war to a negotiated peace. He rejected them all, sometimes vigorously, sometimes wearily.

He once proclaimed death to corrupt officials and drug traffickers and announced a new anti-corruption campaign, ignoring the fact that the previous anti-corruption campaign was still going on. He proclaimed corruption "a national danger, a national shame," and said he was determined to fight it. It remained a fact of daily life at every level of army and government, as it is throughout Southeast Asia.

After the 1973 Paris accords, Thieu went through the motions of turning his country away from war and toward peace. He talked of tax reform and of reforming the civil service, of increasing the country's export trade and attracting tourists. But he never seemed really convinced that his country could go it alone.

"The French abandoned us in 1954, and because of that half of Vietnam fell to the Communists," he told the Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci at the time of the Paris agreement. "If the United States does the same thing now, the other half will go. It has happened other times in history, when a country cannot resist an invader it simply lets the invader invade."

Throughout his presidency, he alternated between gregariousness and accessibility at times and virtual seclusion at others. He remained almost totally out of sight during the Easter offensive of 1972, prompting unfavorable comparisons with Diem, who totally lost touch with reality in his last days. Thieu himself was known to think more of Charles de Gaulle, the military man forced into politics to save his country, as his historical model.

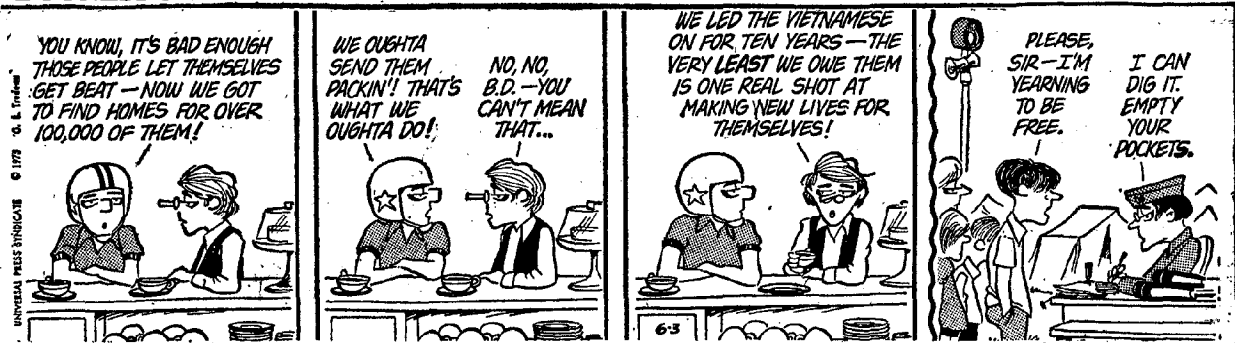
But he differed from de Gaulle in more than physical stature. He could not rid himself, even two years after the Paris accords, of the notion that his country's fate was in the hands of America.

"I am very confident," he said in an interview with The Washington Post two years after the agreement, "that the United States, which has never lost any war, which has never failed to help any people who would like to preserve their independence," would come to his aid once again.

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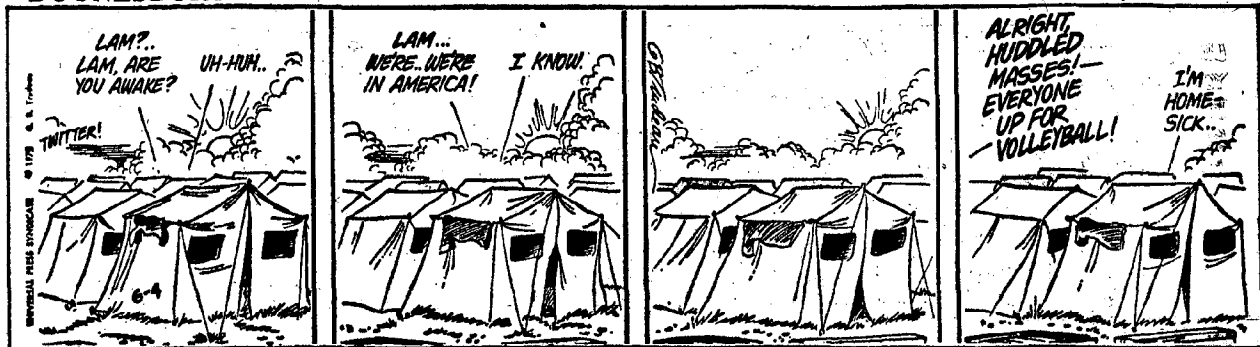
DOONESBURY

By Garry Trudeau



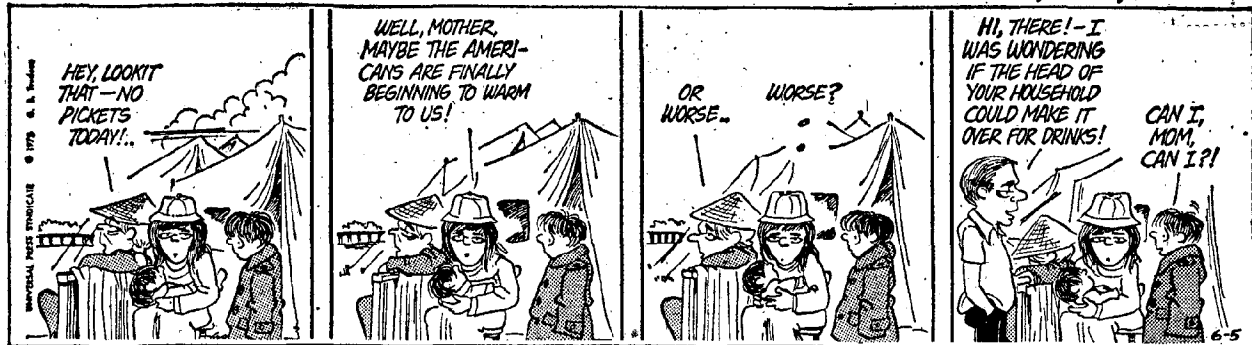
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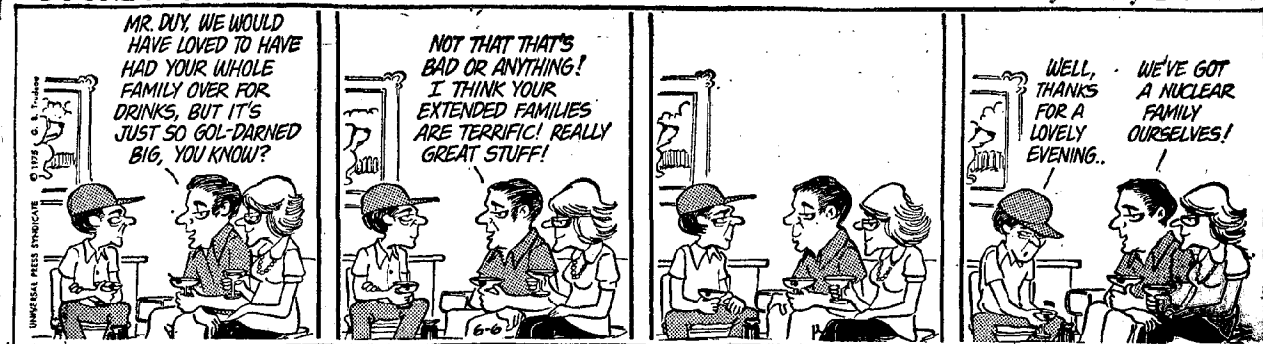
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America's Last Day in Vietnam: A Desperate Manner of Leaving

By H. D. S. Greenway
Washington Post Foreign Service

ABOARD THE USS BLUE RIDGE. May 1 (delayed in transmission)—The horizon is crowded with the ships of an American battle fleet circling slowly in the South China Sea off the Vietnamese coast. They are picking up thousands of refugees who are drifting in small boats, many of them filled to the gunwales and

out of food and water, the flotsam left from the wreckage of a quarter century of American involvement in Vietnam.

For two days now helicopters and a few fixed-wing aircraft of the Vietnamese air force have been trying to land on the American carriers 50 or more miles off the coast in a last desperate flight from the mainland.

Some of them, borne like butterflies on an off shore wind, have lost their way and crashed at sea. Some of the helicopters have landed but there is no room for the machines themselves and many have been pushed overboard as soon as their crews and passengers are free of them.

Some of the Vietnamese helicopters are saved, however, and the sailors paint over their markings—obliterating the red and yellow colors of a republic that ceased to exist sometime on Wednesday when the South Vietnamese surrendered in Saigon.

The American ambassador to South Vietnam, Graham Martin, is aboard this ship. Gray-faced and sick with pneumonia, he told reporters last night that America need not have left Vietnam in the manner it did if only it had lived up to its commitments.

Others have said that the seeds of Saigon's destruction were always present and evidenced by the fact that, after all these years of assistance, successive regimes have never given the country social justice or a government in which any but the corrupt could be-

See SHIPS, A14, Col. 1.

lieve. America could postpone the Vietnamese revolution but not prevent it and today the American embassy in Saigon lies looted—torn apart by the Vietnamese who had been left behind.

For a war that had gone on for more than a generation, the end came with astonishing speed. In barely six weeks the entire edifice had collapsed, from the first mishandled retreat from the Central Highlands to the sight of North Vietnamese trucks and tanks entering Saigon.

The last day of the American involvement began with a heavy shelling of Tansonnhut airport. We wake at four in the morning listening to the sounds of the shells and rockets exploding and it seemed as if there were two or three coming in every five seconds. Most of us knew then that it was the end. A bombardment of that magnitude meant that the North Vietnamese had lost patience with the long-winded and futile efforts of the South Vietnamese to install a government of surrender and that the final attack on Saigon had begun.

Reporters began to gather nervously in the halls of their hotels before dawn. They packed their bags, looking underneath the bed for a lost sock, and doing all the inexplicable trivial things that people often do in emergencies because their minds cannot quite comprehend that none of the trivial things of normal life matter any more.

Such incongruities happened throughout the day. The white suited clerks at the front desk of the Continental Palace Hotel were carefully adding up each account by hand while mobs of people were trying to press packets of piasters upon them in an effort to get away quickly.

The North Vietnamese artillery

slacken with the oncoming dawn and reporters, on the top of the Caravelle Hotel, saw the disturbing sight of South Vietnamese planes being shot out of the sky with heat-seeking missiles. Everyone knew that the evacuation would have to be by helicopter and, if the North Vietnamese wanted to do so, they could shoot down many of the helicopters.

It was not until morning that the evacuation order was given and Americans and other foreigners who wanted to go began assembling at staging places around the city. From there they would be taken to the defense attache's compound, near the airport. Others went straight to the American embassy. The last minutes were spent wishing good luck to Vietnamese and foreign friends who were staying behind.

At first the city was calm. But as the hours went by the word began to spread that the Americans were leaving and great crowds be-

(OVER)

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gan to gather outside the locked gates of the embassy grounds. All that day and night they pressed against each other crying and pleading to be let in.

Families became separated, and even Vietnamese who had papers promising them they could go could not get in.

A well-dressed man in civilian clothes came close to the gate and, making sure none of the others could see what he was doing, showed us a note saying he was a brigadier general and named an American official whom he begged us to contact.

And when the helicopters began to arrive, landing in the chancery parking lot and on the roof, the people outside just stood and stared. The wind from the rotors lashed the well-manicured bushes and flower beds like the breath of a hurricane and the shredded documents of the American decade burst from their burn bags and blew up and over the gates in a snow of confetti.

In the end, when even

some Vietnamese who had been admitted to the embassy realized they were going to be left behind, the looting began. The American evacuees and the Marines, as their numbers thinned, gave ground slowly and locked themselves into the main building in order to leave by the roof. They retreated upwards floor by floor until the last of them was gone in the morning light of Wednesday as the North Vietnamese were entering the city.

We left as night was falling in a helicopter whose nervous gunner asked where the fighting was. But there was no fighting in the city that day, only despair, panic and a few shots fired into the air.

Our helicopter flew over the twin steeples of Saigon's main Roman Catholic cathedral and we could take a last look down Tu Do Street, wet with rain. Beyond us, to the northeast, an ammunition dump was exploding and there were other fires on the far horizon.

Many of the Americans who left that day had spent

a decade or more wrapped up in the problems of Vietnam. Some had supported the American effort, others had become convinced that only by leaving could American help the Vietnamese. But none who crossed the coast that night in the gathering dark with Vietnam burning and exploding behind remained unaffected at the manner of our leaving.

Fallout From Vietnam

Hill Leaders See Challenge to Military Programs

21 APR 75

By George C. Wilson
Washington Post Staff Writer

The United States must acknowledge the limits of its military power and rely more on other methods to influence world events, a wide spectrum of congressional leaders said in assessing the U.S. role in Vietnam.

A related conclusion expressed in a series of interviews is that the miscalculations generals and admirals seem to have committed make them as vulnerable to challenge as other government leaders.

This means, said both hawks and doves in Congress, that the Pentagon and its programs will be challenged more — not less as President Ford had hoped — once the book on Vietnam is closed.

Such traditional champions of the military in Congress as Chairmen John C. Stennis (D-Miss.) of the Senate Armed Services Committee, John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and George H. Mahon (D-Tex.) of the House Appropriations Committee agreed that new perceptions about military power have formed because of Vietnam.

Military leaders interviewed said they realize they and their programs are under severe challenge but hope to show that military and economic strength are interrelated, not competitive.

An early test of how much these new perceptions have been translated into votes against military programs comes next month when a group of lawmakers backed by a broad-based lobby will try to shoot down the Air Force B-1 bomber — or at least slow its construction.

This congressional tide running against the B-1 is opposite the one that forced President Kennedy to keep the old B-70 bomber alive in 1961. The administration, not the Congress, was opposed to the bomber in the days before the national disillusionment of Vietnam.

Rep. Henry S. Reuss (D-Wis.) — a new power in the Congress of 1975 because of his elevation (with the support of new members) to chairman of the House Banking, Currency and Housing Committee — is one of those congressional leaders who believes this new perception about the limits of military might is all to the good and long overdue.

"A prosperous economy in the United States and a society with its spirit restored is vastly better for retaining American influence than the kind of interventionism and adventurism that have been mistakenly thought of as internationalism in the last few years," Reuss said in an interview.

"Talking to leader after leader all over the world," Reuss continued, "I'm just convinced that if we move toward full employment without inflation; adopt a free trading position internationally in which we don't, in panic, put artificial restrictions on our exports as we did on soybeans or on foreign, job-creating investment here—we will be doing more for world peace and American international well-being than any number of battalions could do."

"And that idea is not isolationism," he contended, "but a recognition of the fact that military power has been largely—but not of course entirely—superseded by political, social, economic and moral power."

Pointing to the effectiveness worldwide of the Arab "oil weapon," the threat of cutting off another country's oil supply, Reuss said: "Here are some tiny, little strips of sand in the desert who are holding the United States at bay."

"If that relatively small amount of economic power can do that," Reuss reasoned, "why don't we try the interesting foreign policy step of getting our own economy in order at the expense of the military budget and see whether that, in

terms of world trade, world investment and world aid, doesn't do great things for our general power and prestige?"

"We don't need to be in Korea or Taiwan or in Vicenza, Italy, and many other places in the numbers we are," he said. "If we would send to the Italian people the same amount of wheat for pasta that it now costs to keep the 7,000 American troops in Vicenza, the Communists would be losing elections all over Italy."

Rep. Mahon of Appropriations acknowledged that the failures in the Vietnam war have provided a wider political market for ideas like Reuss' as the United States searches for new methods to achieve "national power." Military leaders have been lumped in with civilian leaders in the general disillusionment with government, Mahon conceded.

"The American people are wondering how we could have handled this situation better," Mahon said. "It does something to us inside. They realize we were thwarted in our objectives."

Mahon's counterpart in the Senate, McClellan, agreed that U.S. objectives were not achieved. But he disagreed that substituting economic power for military power is the answer to restoring prestige and credibility lost in the war.

An outspoken critic of giving foreign aid with no strings attached, McClellan said that if handing out money were the answer to national power, "then the United States would be preeminent in the world today, considering the \$200 billion we have given out in the last quarter of a century."

Although he will try to cut the Pentagon budget by \$5 billion this year as part of the tactic both he and Mahon have resorted to in hopes of preventing deeper cuts from being imposed on the floor, McClellan asserted that the United States must remain "second to none" militarily.

(OVER)

The lessons of Vietnam, he said, are that the United States should "never enter another war unless we intend to win it" and must be "far more selective" in deciding where to fight communism.

He did agree with Reuss and his allies on the point that Vietnam showed the limits of American military might. "We cannot police the whole world against communism," McClellan said, "nor can we support the needs of all the developing countries and others with respect to economic and military assistance. There are limits to our resources."

Stennis, like McClellan and Mahon, cannot be classed as a dove when it comes to funding or fielding military force. But he, too, acknowledged that the Vietnam war had signalled compelling warnings about the limits of this facet of national power.

"I still think to play a world role you must have military strength behind you," Stennis said, "otherwise you would be challenged too many ways."

"But," continued the Senate's leading champion of Pentagon causes, "we have to be more careful about using our military strength. It has to be defined more clearly just what position on the playing field we're going to cover."

"There's a whole new situation in the Pacific now," Stennis said. "It seems to me that we'll have to find a more useful role for Japan to play there."

At the Pentagon, several public affairs officers advised members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to refuse The Washington Post's requests for interviews.

However, several high ranking officers did agree to be interviewed on a not-for-attribution basis in hopes of adding the military perspective.

They stressed that military and economic strength should not be regarded as competitive but complementary—that the stability of one is necessary for the stability of the other.

If the United States should bring all its forces home and cancel its commitments to its friends, this military isolation would be followed by economic isolation, they said.

Military leaders also said that actual strength and the way it is perceived abroad can be two entirely different readings. The United States today is just as strong as it was a year ago, went this argument, but it might not look this way to allies abroad because of reverses in Indochina.

Given the importance of perception, military leaders sounded the same theme as Mahon: Right now would be the wrong time to slash the Pentagon budget or make other big changes that might be interpreted abroad as a falling barometer.

One military planner with expertise in how the United States could deliver its power to distant points in an emergency said the changing world situation dictates improved mobility. Specifically, this means basing more military power at sea and getting more long-range aircraft to deliver troops and weapons.

For planning purposes, the military has to assume that the United States may someday be down to no bases in the mid-Atlantic and only a few in the Pacific. This possibility is spawning a number of programs for extending the reach of American military power.

The Air Force, for example, is asking for money to modify wide-bodied commercial jets like the Boeing 747 to carry arms in an emergency. The basic idea is to strengthen the floor of the plane and cut in wider doors so that the plane could be mobilized to carry arms to Israel if necessary—adding to the airlift currently supplied using the Air Force's C-5 transport planes.

The C-5 can fly from the United States to Israel without landing by getting refueled in flight. The Air Force wants to give its C-141 this same ability and also lengthen the plane's body so it can carry larger cargo. Both planes are seen as insurance against loss of the

Azores as a mid-Atlantic base and denial of overflight rights from countries on the route to Israel.

Still another Air Force idea to cope with the prospect of no place to land American planes between

here and world trouble spots is a fleet of jumbo jets converted to flying fuel stations.

"We've got to base our power largely at home," Mahon agreed. "We've got to be sure we have mobility. Planes like the C-5A become an important instrument of our power."

Navy contingency planners studying the post-Vietnam world realize their ships are likely to lose ports in Indochina, the Philippines and perhaps Okinawa, prompting them to push for improved ports in Micronesia—specifically the Palau Islands.

The Army, realizing more power may have to be based in the United States in the future, is trying to build forces that can get ready faster to fly to distant trouble spots.

American military power, said one military leader interviewed, consists of three main elements: the nuclear umbrella that deters nuclear attacks on the United States; mobile conventional forces that can move under that umbrella; and perception that the United States has the will and ability to use its forces.

Because the United States let Cambodia and South Vietnam fall without intervening militarily, some analysts argued, that third element, of world perception, is the shakiest right now. Congressional restraints on the President's war powers is one reason for the shakiness, home analysts contended.

But Sens. Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.) and George McGovern (D-S.D.), who pioneered legislation to curb those presidential powers,

said those restrictions make the United States more formidable, not less, because the whole country will be behind any future military actions. The restrictions limit military actions the President can take without congressional approval.

Harold P. Ford, former Central Intelligence Agency executive who prepared estimates on relative military strengths of the nations of the world, warned against letting the Pentagon increase its forces to offset an imagined loss of power from the Vietnam debacle.

We must learn to live as the first among equals instead of first," he said. "Allies going their own way is a healthy thing. The same thing is happening within the Communist bloc. A strong case can be made that much of military strength is irrelevant."

Air Force Is Thieu's Last Card

By Colin Smith
London Observer

SAIGON—The South Vietnamese air force is President Thieu's last card.

What he is probably hoping above all else is that the North Vietnamese army will maneuver their tanks into the open country around Saigon in daylight, where they will be particularly vulnerable to fighter-bomber sweeps.

The South Vietnamese air force has already enjoyed some small successes around Xuanloc. The government has produced at least one photograph of a decapitated T-54, its severed turret almost clean off the chassis.

There are intelligence reports, however, that radar-guided surface-to-air missiles of the type that caused heavy losses among Israeli aircraft during the last Middle East war are being moved by the communists towards the big Saigon air field at Tansonnhut.

Most North Vietnamese and some Vietcong units already possess the more primitive shoulder-fired Strella (SA-7) heat-seeking missiles which are particularly effective against low-flying jets.

In one day in the delta recently, two Strellas accounted for two A-37s, killing three crewmen.

Small units of Vietcong guerrillas, as distinct from North Vietnamese regulars, who are doing most of the fighting elsewhere, have become particularly active in the delta during the last two weeks. In many places they have left the government holding nothing but the roadway along Highway 4, the "rice road" between the country's most fertile region and the capital.

It is quite likely that the government's delta airfields, as well as being molested by SAMs, could find that their overland route to the capital is cut and ammunition and fuel would have to be airlifted to them in what is left of the transport fleet.

Then, with the big air base at Bienhoa north of Saigon fallen and the delta airfields isolated, the bulk of the South's 350 remaining aircraft might have to be crammed onto the runways at Tansonnhut, a dream of a target for the North's gunners.

Rocket-firing helicopters would be able to operate for limited periods away from the main airfields, but anyone who has seen the South Vietnamese army in the field is quickly reminded of their reliance on close air support from fixed-wing aircraft.

Earlier this week, I was with a company of the Regional Forces along Highway 1 being supported by two F-5 fighters, whose pilots dropped their bombs exactly where they were supposed to—so close to the forward foxholes that the blast pulled at our clothes.

The North Vietnamese or Vietcong opened up at them as soon as they were pulling out of their dives, as if somebody had wakened them with fireworks.

According to a European air attache here, the morale of the young Vietnamese pilots, almost exclusively drawn from the upper classes and all trained in the United States, is "exceptionally high considering the circumstances."

Their main complaint is the way they were forced to abandon their bases without a fight. Not only does the memory of Danang rankle, but also the earlier retreats from the Central Highlands air fields at Pleiku and Phuocat.

They feel particularly cheated about Phuocat, where the base commander was flying operational sorties up to half an hour before their withdrawal. Then, they had to go back and bomb the aircraft left behind, abandoned either because they were temporarily unserviceable and there had been no time for repairs or because they simply did not have enough pilots to fly them out.

Reconnaissance aircraft have since photographed Soviet-made MIG-19s at Phuocat and Pleiku, which has raised

the possibility that the Communists may be preparing to introduce their own air support for the first time in the war.

It may be significant that early Friday morning a rocket attack was made against a radar station, five miles southwest of Saigon. The station is part of the city's air defense ring.

From Phuocat, Saigon is well within range of the North Vietnamese air force's old twin-engined Il-yushin 28 bombers. For those who have been on the receiving end of these weapons for so long, the temptation to strafe and napalm the South Vietnamese army must be almost overwhelming.

But the Communists might have second thoughts about such an effort. It could lead to their first major defeat in the current offensive.

Although it is primarily an army air corps trained for a ground support role, the South's air force does possess some F-5E attack fighter-bombers, and is thought to have at least 50 pilots trained to use them. Only if these South Vietnamese pilots found themselves with no fields from which to fly might Hanoi feel the opportunity for air warfare too good to miss.

A 16 Monday, April 21, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

In Endless Rows, They Bear the Pain of Wounds Silently

By David Lamb
Los Angeles Times

SAIGON—They lay on endless rows of steel-framed beds, their broken bodies bandaged and plugged into dripping bottles, and the humid, dark ward was very quiet. They bore the pain of the wounds silently.

Stripped of their guns and uniforms and innocence, they looked young, too young to have been forced into manhood not ever having known a single day of peace. They rested without pillows on faded blue sheets, half naked, cooled only by

overhead fans that groaned through the 97-degree heat.

For most of them — all members of South Vietnam's long-suffering armed forces — there perhaps would be no more battles to fight. The cities and homes and bases they defended already had fallen in the Communist advance. Conghoa, the hospital where they now lay, one day soon might have some empty beds for the first time in many, many months.

"I do not understand why some people say our troops will not fight," said an or-

derly, dressing an amputated leg. "If they do not fight why do we have so many dead and wounded soldiers? These men stand and fight, not run. These are not back wounds you are seeing."

True. Squad leader Nguyen Nhan fought for three days during an attack on his village, before finally falling wounded.

"I prayed to every god," said Nhan, a Buddhist. "I prayed to anyone I think will listen. 'God, God,' I said, 'please help,' I think of the worst then, maybe I

die. I was very scared of dying.

"Now I just pray I can get back to my province. I have seven children there and I worry about them. I want them to go to school and learn things, but I am afraid they will have to be soldiers like me."

More than 4,000 war casualties like Nhan are in this old French army compound, now South Vietnam's largest military medical facility. One hundred doctors and 900 nurses rush them from helicopters and ambulance trucks, labor over their torn

bodies under the glare of emergency room lights. Then, if they survive, hope there is room for them among the hospital's 2,500 beds.

There are 32 buildings scattered about the hospital's 26 acres of trimmed lawns and swaying palms. They are long, low motel-like structures with yellow cement sides and sun shades rolled down over wide verandas and there is no room in any of them.

Inside, the soldiers spend hours waiting for a visit from their families, unit

commanders or perhaps the hospital's psychological warfare officer.

The officer is a captain and although he provides the patients with no specific battlefield reports these dark days, he tells the ones who ask: "The war is going well and we are defeating the Communist invaders. We are all soldiers and we must be prepared to die for our freedom."

But he pulled an American visitor aside in one of the wards: "Now may I ask you a question? What do you hear the situation is?

Do we have a chance?" The American gave him a candid, unencouraging assessment.

"I still will tell the soldiers we are winning," he said after a moment's pause.

The soldiers volunteer little that has not been said before about U.S. military aid, a generation of warfare, communism or democracy. They are largely apolitical. Their dreams are modest — to return home in good health, to be reunited with their families, to live in peace.

Certainly those are the

dreams of Cpl. Vo Van Vien, who was wounded five days ago while on patrol in Phanrang. It is the best air base in the country, he said proudly, better even than Bienhoa, and the city is quiet and pleasant with very little trouble from the Vietcong. His friends and his family are there.

"I will be here many more months," he said. "Then I just want to go home and be with my family in Phanrang. That's all I want."

Unknown to Cpl. Vien, Phanrang had fallen to the North Vietnamese six hours earlier.

Congressmen Say Mail Runs Heavily Against Vietnam Aid

By Helen Dewar

Washington Post Staff Writer

Washington area residents are writing, calling and visiting their congressmen in unusually heavy numbers to protest President Ford's proposal for more military aid to South Vietnam.

Most congressional offices say the response is running about 3 to 1 against more arms aid, although some constituents express support for humanitarian assistance and concern for the plight of orphans and refugees.

In their opposition to increased military aid to Vietnam, the constituents are underscoring opinions already held, although in varying degrees, by the House and Senate members who represent them. All ten Washington area members of Congress are at least leaning against the President's proposal. Most are outspoken in their opposition.

The President is getting his strongest support from the suburban Maryland district of Rep. Marjorie S. Holt (R), where supporters of military aid are trailing opponents by a margin of only 3 to 2.

However, in the neighboring district of Rep. Gladys N. Spellman (D-Md.), the mail and phone calls are running, nearly 10 to 1, against Mr. Ford's proposal of \$722 million in new arms to the Thieu government.

According to Spellman aide Frank Shafroth, protests against any further assistance to Vietnam were coming in at the rate of 6 to 1 before the President aired his \$722 million proposal in a speech to Congress April 10. Afterward, he said, the margin jumped to 10 to 1.

"No more money—nothing—enough is enough," an Alexandria woman wrote Rep. Herbert E. Harris (D-Va.) in a response typical of those who oppose any more aid of any kind.

A perusal of Harris' mail on Vietnam, which was running roughly 3 to 1 as of Thursday, showed a common theme of frustration and impatience, coupled with mounting concern for domestic problems and refusal to accept the notion that the United States has a moral obligation to Vietnam or an important stake in its future.

"It's like pouring sand down a rathole," wrote an Annandale businessman. "Please do not send any more of our hard-earned dollars over there again . . . There has been enough waste over there and it's time our dollars are used in the United States," wrote a Manassas couple.

"I can't agree that the American people have a moral obligation to Vietnam," said a Fairfax man.

"In March 1968, my brother-in-law was lost evacuating wounded from Hue. Seven years and countless lives later, Hue is in Vietcong control. What good did his death, the loss of others and billions of dollars do?" asked another Harris constituent.

Supporters expressed fear of Communist expansion if South Vietnam falls and said the U.S. has a moral commitment to defend allies in trouble.

"This is America's Munich," an Annandale man wrote Harris. "It is up to you whether you shall be part of it."

A Marine officer told an aide to Rep. Joseph L. Fisher (D-Va.) that the Marines should invade Vietnam and volunteered to lead the force. But a constituent who identified himself as a 1968 West Point graduate who lost 50 friends in Vietnam told a Spellman aide that if Congress wants to intervene again in Vietnam, "the congressmen should do the fighting."

For reasons that were not immediately clear, the volume of mail varied widely from office to office, although it was unusually heavy in most offices.

Rep. Gilbert Gude (R-Md.) has received more mail on Vietnam aid than any other issue since the Nixon impeachment controversy, a Gude aide said. But, Rep. Holt's office said her mail was running about average for a major issue.

Aides to Virginia's Fisher and Harris said the Vietnam aid issue has prompted as much if not more mail than any other development since they took office in January.

Generally the mail to House members was heavier than it was to senators.

District of Columbia Del. Walter E. Fauntroy (D) received few letters or phone calls on the issue, aides said, but they added it was not unusual because Fauntroy does not have a vote on the House floor.

Phnom Penh Blackout Limits News to Songs

U. Post 21 April 75
From News Dispatches

BANGKOK, April 20—The news blackout from Phnom Penh continued today, four days after the Khmer Rouge captured the Cambodian capital, and the Khmer Rouge Radio, monitored here, broadcast only heroic descriptions of the city's fall and revolutionary songs.

The lyrics of one song contained a reference to "killing the abject Phnom Penh traitorous clique and completely liberating Phnom Penh," but it was not certain whether the song, titled "Red Flag of the Revolution Is Flying Over Liberated Phnom Penh," reflected actual executions.

A clandestine radio Saturday reported execution of Cambodian leaders, including former Premier Long Boret, but a French newspaper reporter radioed that he had seen him alive.

Telephones and telex machines in

the Cambodian capital did not answer calls from neighboring countries, and Phnom Penh Radio was not broadcasting. There was no communication reported from the French embassy.

Between 600 and 1,000 Cambodian refugees, including some 300 soldiers, sought to make radio contact through a military radio from the camp they had set up across the border in southern Thailand near the town of Chantaburi.

"The trouble is, the other side does not reply," a soldier told a Reuter reporter who visited the camp.

Reports reaching Bangkok said that other defeated Cambodian soldiers who had fled on armored personnel carriers across the border near the Cambodian town of Pailin, about 250 miles southeast of Bangkok, had touched off arguments be-

See CAMBODIA, A16, Col. 5

CAMBODIA, From A1

tween Thai border guards and Khmer Rouge soldiers.

The pursuing Khmer Rouge soldiers had reportedly demanded that the Thai border guards return the defeated government troops, and the Thai guards refused.

The reports said the Khmer Rouge then set up loudspeakers just across the border to broadcast their demands to the Thais. The Thai police replied, the reports said, that any decision to return them would have to be made by the Bangkok government.

Reporters who witnessed the Khmer Rouge takeover of Poipet, a Cambodian town near the Thai border, said a barbed wire barrier has been erected to prevent Cambodians from crossing

into the town of Aranya-prabhet in Thailand. The bridge between the two towns, according to Agence France-Presse, had never before been barred.

Poipet, about 200 miles northwest of Phnom Penh, was captured Saturday by Khmer Rouge soldiers, mostly in their teens, who were armed with Chinese assault rifles and American grenade launchers.

"I have walked from Pursat Province in Central Cambodia to Poipet and all of us lived on food we found in the forest," one 16-year-old soldier told an AP reporter across the barrier.

"Khmer Rouge do not have any ill feelings toward Thailand because we are close neighbors, but we dislike the Americans because they support the Lon Nol

government and help capitalists," the young soldier said.

Radio Hanoi confirmed Sunday that some fighting was still going on in parts of western Cambodia, but it said nothing about Phnom Penh.

Agence France-Presse reported that most foreigners who stayed behind in Phnom Penh, many taking refuge in the French embassy, were believed to be "all right," but added that there was no news about the fate of Le Minh Sanh, charge d'affaires for the South Vietnamese government.

Telegrams exchanged between Saigon and Bangkok to organize his evacuation arrived too late, the agency said, and the South Vietnamese aide and his family remained at the chancellery.

(OVER)

Lon Nol Said To Be Buying Hawaii Home

W. Post 21 April 75
HONOLULU, April 20
(AP)—Former Cambodian President Lon Nol plans to buy a \$103,000 house in a Honolulu subdivision, a realtor says.

An agent for Mike McCormack Realtors here said the former political figure last week visited the home in the Hawaii Kai subdivision. Lon Nol and his wife liked the house, the agent said, and decided to buy it.

The former Cambodian president, his family and about 20 other Cambodians in his entourage are staying in special quarters at Hickam Air Force Base near Honolulu.

The two-story, four-bedroom house is located in the Mariner's Cove section of the subdivision originally developed by the late industrialist Henry Kaiser. Homes in the area range between \$75,000 and \$750,000.

The real estate agent said the papers for purchase of the home had to go through escrow and the final financing details are expected to be completed next week.

"I just can't understand why a man like that would want to buy a house here. It's wide open, with a large frontage to the street and not a heck of a lot of privacy," said a neighbor. The house's current owner, Joseph H. Meyer, would not confirm the sale, saying, "I cannot comment on that."

The home is located near an inland waterway, which homeowners may use to shuttle their yachts to the Pacific. A private guard provides security but passersby are free to enter the area.

Lon Nol arrived in Honolulu on April 10 after leaving his country April 1. He reportedly came to Hawaii for further medical treatment at Tripler Army Medical Center where he was treated after suffering a stroke in 1971.

The partially paralyzed Lon Nol has been unavailable for comment about the fall of his country.

Province Near Saigon Threatened

U.S. Speeds Up Evacuation Flights To Philippine Base

W Post 21 April 75
From News Dispatches

SAIGON, April 20.—North Vietnamese forces backed by tanks closed in today on Binh Tuy Province east of Saigon and the evacuation of government forces and civilians appeared to signal its imminent collapse, field reports said. The evacuation of Americans from Saigon was stepped up.

Binh Tuy Province would be the 20th of South Vietnam's 44 provinces to be taken by Communist-led forces, all but one of them since mid-March.

Saigon military officials said tank-led North Vietnamese forces, driving south along coastal Highway 1 after rolling over Phan Thiet provincial capital, overran three government positions defending Hamtan city, the capital of Binh Tuy Province, 75 miles east of Saigon.

Field reports said many of the city's 50,000 inhabitants fled to a ferry to carry them to the port of Vungtau farther south.

South Vietnamese transports and Chinook helicopters lifted hundreds of government troops back to the defenses of Long Binh base, 12 miles north of Saigon, the field reports said. Military vehicles were assembled near the Hamtan airport for destruction and helicopters airlifted artillery guns out.

Communist-led forces kept up shelling attacks on Bien Hoa air base, 15 miles northeast of Saigon. Fifteen rounds of artillery hit the base but caused no casualties or damage, the Saigon command said.

The Communist side now controls about three-fourths of South Vietnam's land mass and about one-third of the 20 million population. The government's strongpoints are Saigon, and Bien Hoa, Tay Ninh and Binh Duong to the north of the capital and the Mekong Delta to the south.

UPI quoted military sources as saying the government had arrested five South Vietnamese generals who held commands in areas lost to the North Vietnamese and Vietcong. There was no confirmation of the report.

Washington Post correspondent Don Oberdorfer reported from the Philippines that the pace of evacuation from Saigon was quickening.

Planeload after planeload of Americans and Vietnamese arrived at Clark Air Base on the first leg of trips to the United States.

A total of 596 passengers from Saigon landed here Sunday afternoon and evening, and the early morning hours of Monday. About twice as many flights, a total of 14, are scheduled to pick up evacuees from Saigon Monday.

For the first time, some of the Vietnamese passengers were bearing large white *laissez passer* documents issued

by the Saigon government, which serve both as exit visas and temporary entry permits to the United States. The appearance of these papers was taken as a sign that Saigon has begun to ease its restrictions on departure of Vietnamese nationals.

Most of the Vietnamese arriving last night appeared to be wives and children of departing Americans, many of them civilian contractors who worked for the American military in Saigon. About 500 Vietnamese without travel papers are being held here as stateless persons pending decisions of the U.S. government on their legal status.

Arriving passengers aboard the U.S. military craft from Saigon were being instructed "on behalf of the State Department" to refrain from speaking to reporters because "what you say may be held against Americans and others remaining in Vietnam." It could not be learned who authorized the statement or just what concerns it reflected.

The Vietcong news agency denied charges that reprisals were taken against former Saigon government employees in areas controlled by the Communists. The agency said U.S. government reports of reprisals were "vicious lies... put out by the Ford administration to cover the crimes which the United States and the Thieu clique are committing in evacuating by force the population and children of South Vietnam."

The North Vietnamese news agency denied a charge by the Laotian defense minister that North Vietnamese troops were fighting Laotian royalist troops inside Laos.

NEW YORK TIMES 21 APRIL 1975 Pg. 1

Refugee Airlift Expands After 2 Weeks of Trickle

By DAVID A. ANDELMAN

Special to The New York Times

CLARK AIR BASE, the Philippines, April 20 — The flow of people leaving South Vietnam, which started with a trickle nearly two weeks ago, developed tonight into what military and diplomatic officials here considered the start of the major airlift sought by President Ford.

Eight C-141 jet transports of the Military Airlift Command carried nearly 500 people — Americans and Vietnamese — from Tan Son Nhut airfield in Saigon here to Clark Air Base, more than 1,000 miles to the east. Late tonight, 217 more people, who had arrived over the last two weeks, left on a World Airways flight for Travis Air Force Base in California.

Many Were Smuggled

Officials here who have talked with these passengers say that many of the Vietnamese do not know where they will be going if they are allowed to enter the United States or what they might be doing.

A key problem that has still apparently not been resolved is what to do with the Vietnamese who are without any official status. The United States has been trying to find other countries willing to accept some, but the Philippine Government has categorically refused and the legislature on Guam is still considering the matter.

Many were understood to have been smuggled on board by American friends or relatives. Some were the Vietnamese girlfriends of Americans in Vietnam, others were house-

hold servants or had other close ties with Americans.

In the suddenness of the Communist advance in the last month, most were caught unaware and were delayed in leaving by the South Vietnamese Government's refusal until now to issue them passports or other travel documents.

Arrivals indicated tonight however, that the South Vietnamese Government had become more flexible in the last 24 hours, reportedly under American pressure in Saigon and had begun to issue an informal "laissez passer" — literally "let pass" — document which American officials have agreed to accept in lieu of a passport or visa.

All of these Vietnamese are still to be detained, although it is hoped that new procedures may minimize this detention.

A number of Vietnamese passengers, both today and the last two weeks, have not had any valid travel documents. While the stay at Clark Air Base for the American evacuees is generally only overnight or for two or three days, there are now more than 500 Vietnamese with no travel documents being held until American officials here can figure out what to do with them.

Several evacuees today had harsh words for the red tape imposed by both South Vietna-

mese and American officials in Saigon.

The evacuees were divided almost evenly between Americans — largely employees of Government contractors working in South Vietnam — and those called dependents, largely Vietnamese.

There were small children, babies in arms and slung into backpacks. There were children with olive skins and blond hair and almond-shaped eyes.

A few cried, most looked on in silence as their fathers handed passport and travel documents to the lines of military and civilian processors who waited at long row of tables to stamp passports and check visas and health certificates.

Problem Expected

It is the Vietnamese refugees without travel documents — a group expected to swell into the thousands over the next week or two — that are expected to pose the greatest problem for the evacuation effort.

The airlift began with a single flight on April 4, and anywhere from two to five planes have been leaving Clark, flying to Saigon and returning each day since then — a total of more than 70 flights. But, until today, many planes had been returning empty or with only a handful of passengers.

Air Force officials here shake

their heads and say: "What are they doing over there? They just seem to be running in circles."

As a result, more than two weeks of flights until tonight had produced fewer than 1,200 evacuees, although the 70 flights have had a combined capacity of nearly 5,000. And Clark Air Base officials have said that the base could handle

up to 5,000 at any one time.

"This is clearly the key to the entire airlift — how they resolve this question," said one Air Force officer. "The few thousand Americans we can handle with no problem. But it's these others, especially if there is a flood of them and we have to hold them for days or weeks. I just don't know what we will do." iw2

BALTIMORE SUN 20 APRIL 1975 (21) Pg. 1

Saigon withdraws fighter-bombers from night flights at key air base

Early Bird 21 April 75 page 1
From Wire Services

Saigon—The South Vietnamese government yesterday temporarily withdrew its strike planes from Bien Hoa air base, the last major base before Saigon itself, after the government lost its last major stronghold on the central coast.

Meanwhile, fears of a final, decisive thrust against the capital mounted as Communist forces were reported to be consolidating their position in the Mekong Delta south of Saigon, and closing in on the air base to the north.

Fighter-bombers will continue to make daytime use of the Bien Hoa base, 18 miles from Saigon. But at night when the heaviest Communist shelling is directed at Bien Hoa, the planes will be stationed at Tan Son Nhut Airport just outside the capital.

The aerial pullback came after the port of Phan Thiet, 100 miles to the east, fell to a swift Communist tank and infantry assault late Friday. A Saigon command spokesman said government defenders withdrew by boat during the night after some street fighting.

Communist troops now control all the territory of two of South Vietnam's four military regions and 19 of its 14 provinces. This accounts for more than two-thirds of its total territory.

The loss of Phan Thiet also robbed the government of another in its dwindling number of ports—only Vung Tau, south of Saigon, and Rach Gia, in the Mekong Delta, remain.

The Saigon command reported only sporadic fighting in delta areas, but military sources said there were signs that North Vietnamese and Viet Cong units were moving into strategic positions in Long An province, the delta gateway to the capital region.

The delta, Saigon and regions immediately adjacent to

it are the only sections of South Vietnam still under the shaky control of the Thieu government after an offensive from Communist-led troops that began in early March.

The fighting reported in Long An was in areas near Tan An city, the village headquarters were attacked, the sources said, and radio contact was lost with some of them. The sources said the aim appeared to be to disrupt security in the province, especially along Highway 4, the key road link from Saigon into the delta.

With other areas of the country lost, much if the food supply for Saigon now comes from the delta, which always has been the rice bowl of South Vietnam. There is some speculation that if the Communist forces do not launch a direct attack on Saigon, they might try to cut off the delta and halt movement of foodstuffs into the capital.

Bien Hoa air base was hit early yesterday by more than 20 artillery and rocket rounds. Military sources have said the artillery being used against the base includes long-range 130-mm. guns.

There have been reports that the recent fighting around the provincial capital of Xuan Loc, 40 miles east of Saigon, might be a prelude to the opening of a drive on Bien Hoa, which like the delta could serve as the beginning of a possible move on Saigon.

Military spokesmen said, however, only light action was reported Saturday in the Xuan Loc region.

Three North Vietnamese divisions are around Xuan Loc and more were reported to be moving from areas recently occupied towards Saigon.

A Viet Cong spokesman, meanwhile, said it was still planned to take over Saigon, but he declined to set a date.

Colonel Vo Dong Giang, deputy leader of the Viet Cong delegation in Saigon, reiterated the long-standing policy of action on three fronts—military, political and diplomatic.

Informed sources said the chief Saigon government representative at the moribund peace talks in Paris had been urgently summoned home.

It was not clear whether some initiative was being made to bring about negotiations, for which a precondition from the Communist side is the removal of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

Most Vietnamese seeking to leave the country found their efforts stymied by the government's policy banning issuance of travel documents. The Interior Ministry has said it will only consider travel applications from wives of foreigners and their children.

One Saigon newspaper re-

ported yesterday, however, that "big businessmen and families of high-ranking government officials" still were leaving the country. It quoted an unnamed government minister as saying: "If we are to rebuild the morale of the Army and the people, we should stop immediately all talk and plans of escape and strictly observe our restriction on overseas trips."

Another newspaper said five South Vietnamese generals, one major and five province chiefs had been placed under house arrest "to facilitate" the investigation into the loss of the northern and central parts of the country. Government officials denied the story, but said five general officers are under investigation.

BALTIMORE SUN 20 APRIL 1975, Pg 1 (21)

Five aircraft carriers off Vietnam for rescue

Early Band 21 Apr 75
Page 5

By CHARLES W. CORDRY
Washington Bureau of The Sun

Washington—The Defense Department confirmed yesterday that five aircraft carriers and a number of amphibious ships are now in the South China Sea near Vietnam, obviously prepared for large-scale rescue missions, as the last battles of the war appeared to be shaping up around Saigon.

Military analysts here said Communist forces are being deployed for a possibly three-pronged assault in the Saigon area—from south, west and north—But main attention was focused on the Bien Hoa Air

Base where ground attacks could be launched at any time.

There would be no recovering from the loss of the big air facility, 15 miles north of Saigon, and the adjacent Long Binh Army depot, the analysts said. An immediate effect, besides the large material losses, would be to pose a lethal artillery and antiaircraft missile threat to Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport—though it may still be conjectural whether Hanoi's forces would seek to seal off that evacuation route.

The swift movement of the U.S. naval units toward the South Vietnamese coast left no doubt of the gravity of the situation as it is now viewed here. Several of the ships were ordered out of ports where they had just arrived to give their crews shore leave.

The carrier Hancock left Singapore and the Okinawa steamed out of Subic Bay in the Philippines, each with big transport helicopters lashed to their decks, ready to rescue Americans remaining in Saigon and possibly some South Vietnamese as well. Both had participated in the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, a week before.

The carrier Midway also left Subic Bay to join the Coral Sea off Vietnam, and the nuclear-powered Enterprise abruptly canceled shore leave and departed Manila for the South China Sea. These three ships carry fighter aircraft that would protect an evacuation.

Among the large amphibious ships now at sea are the command ship Blue Ridge, the Dubuque, Durham and Frederick. They, and the helicopter carriers, have about 4,000 marines aboard, a force that can easily be enlarged if necessary. The marines would provide security at landing areas as evacuation was undertaken.

There were unconfirmed reports yesterday that additional Marine air units in Hawaii had been altered for possible duty in the Vietnam operation.

The withdrawal of Americans from Saigon by commercial and military aircraft, meanwhile, has been stepped up, though officials would say little about it. Since the Communist offensive began early in March, the number of Americans in Saigon has been reduced from 6,000 to fewer than 4,000 and is believed rapidly on the way down to 1,000 or 2,000—a number that the Navy and marines could take out quickly by helicopter.

Congress has put off until this week any action on President Ford's request that it clarify his authority to use United States forces in rescuing Americans and South Vietnamese from Vietnam. He had sought the clarification by yesterday.

There is no question of his authority to rescue American nationals in any case. What Congress may do about possible undertaking to pull out thousands, or tens of thousands, of South Vietnamese remains to be seen. So, too, does the extent to which it would prove feasible to attempt the pullout, for it would have to be done by sea and the Communists now are in position to seize the main escape route through the port of Wung Tau.

Hanoi is now reported to have 13 combat divisions in or near the Saigon military region, with an advantage of 2 to 1 or better over defending forces, and in a few days could have 15 divisions there.

The buildup of main concern has been just east of Bien Hoa, and another, involving three divisions, is in progress just to the south of Saigon in Long An province.

Bien Hoa has most of the South Vietnamese Air Force's remaining attack aircraft. Efforts at removal have been under way air weapons and repair facilities. Long Binh similarly is the Army's main storage area for weapons and equipment.

The Communists' long-range 130-mm. guns could hit Saigon's outskirts and the Tan Son Nhut Airport from Bien Hoa and, military sources said, SA-2 antiaircraft missiles are being moved toward Bien Hoa. Shoulder-fired SA-7 missiles have been in use in the Saigon region for some days and have knocked down several aircraft, they said.

NEW YORK TIMES 18 April 1975 Pg. 14

250 Saigon Refugees, Illegally in Philippines, Are at U.S. Base

Early Brief 2:1 Apr 75 Page 2-4

By DAVID A. ANDELMAN
Special to The New York Times

CLARK AIR BASE, the Philippines, April 17—More than 250 South Vietnamese refugees, most with no passports or visas and with no place to go, have in the last two weeks arrived illegally from Saigon aboard United States Air Force planes.

The refugees are being held incommunicado under State Department orders until, according to one Embassy official, "we can figure out what to do with them."

Meanwhile, the refugees—men, women and children, many employees of Americans in Vietnam or otherwise connected with them—wait here in enforced isolation.

Nonuniformed security guards at Clark Air Base have been assigned to make certain that the refugees do not leave the barracks to which they have been assigned. The refugees have been denied any contact with the outside world, including access to newsmen.

Embassy officials declined to discuss the situation at all today, but the decision, it was understood, to "detain and process" the refugees was made by Ambassador William H. Sullivan in consultation with State Department officials. The Ambassador refused today to discuss the reasons for his action.

Concerns of Officials

However, it was learned that there are several major concerns that American officials have been expressing about these refugees.

The principal fear is that these refugees may set a precedent, and there may be a flood of future refugees while resettlement problems are still unresolved and formal United States policy has not been set on the matter.

Further, no other nation—including the Philippines, which is apparently worried about a potential flood of 200,000 South Vietnamese pouring through Clark Air Base here—have agreed to take any of these South Vietnamese.

"Everyone" here also has watched what happened at Da Nang," said one senior Embassy official, referring to the situation when thousands of South Vietnamese charged across the field, nearly overwhelming evacuation planes.

"If they think that they can come through here freely, we may have the same thing at Tan Son Nhut," the official continued, "and it just might jeopardize the departure of Americans from there."

There is no indication, however, according to people who have talked with refugees repeatedly over the last two weeks here, that anything like the Da Nang situation was involved in their departure.

Some of these refugees are understood to have been members of families working for Americans in Saigon; other are wives and children of Americans working there who had neglected ever to formalize the relationship or obtain necessary travel documents, not realizing that the situation was critical until it was too late to obtain documents.

The exact means by which they managed to get on board the C-141 transports that each day shuttle between Saigon and Clark—bringing Americans and legal Vietnamese emigrants, including children—is still not known.

But since their arrival at Clark, apart from the enforced isolation, they have been well-treated while the State Department processes forms and decides where they may be sent. Their return to Saigon has not been ruled out but one official said that likelihood is "becoming slimmer by the day."

These refugees have been eating regular mess-hall meals, been provided with television and radio sets and movies and athletic equipment, and have been given complete physical examinations as preparation for possible immigration to the United States.

The air base itself, the largest American overseas Air Force installation, reportedly remains prepared to accept and process a far larger number of refugees should that become necessary.

Air Force officials said today that as many as 5,000 could be handled at any given time at the base and that it was prepared to begin accepting them immediately.

The Flow of Americans

Barracks, two huge gymnasiums and other facilities here have been cleared of their traditional equipment and rows upon rows of mattresses and cots have been moved in. Much of this preparation was initially for the air lift of South Vietnamese children but that has virtually stopped.

The base, however, is maintaining these facilities in the event that a major evacuation from South Vietnam is ordered.

Meanwhile, Americans continue to trickle through Clark in a steady stream. Each day three or four flights land with anywhere from 20 to 70 Americans on board.

While the latest figures here indicate that the American population in South Vietnam may still be 4,000 or more, over the last two weeks 900 have arrived here on the evacuation flights, and others would have left on scheduled commercial flights.

However, with the pace of the last several days through Clark continuing, by the end of next week the American population in Saigon could be reduced to 1,000 persons.

At that level, one large day's airlift of C-5a transports could

remove all remaining Americans to Clark. Air Force officials here, however, have as yet received no indications that such an operation, like Operation Eagle Pull, which emptied Phnom Penh of Americans in several hours,—was being contemplated for Saigon.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE 18 APRIL 1975

Early Cont 21 Apr 75 Page 12-F

Viet Red directive: Drive for victory during 1975

By Philip Caputo

Chicago Tribune Press Service

SAIGON—The Communist high command in South Viet Nam, apparently reacting to its huge battlefield successes in the current offensive, has issued a directive instructing its forces to press for a military victory this year, a Western intelligence source disclosed Thursday.

A Vietnamese source close

Exclusive

to high government circles, meanwhile, said that South Vietnamese officials from President Nguyen Van Thieu on down are seriously concerned about the deteriorating situation in the battle for the key provincial capital of Xuan Loc, 40 miles from the capital.

The Communist directive was issued April 3 by the Central Office for South Viet Nam, which serves as the general field command for North Vietnamese units fighting in the South. According to the source, the order reflects a substantial change in Hanoi's plans, which, when the offensive began more than six weeks ago, had scheduled 1976 as the decisive year.

BUT TO THEIR surprise as much as anyone else's, the North Vietnamese routed some of the government's best divisions, seized two-thirds of the South, and drove to within striking distance of the capital.

The April 3 directive, the contents of which were learned by the source this week, indicates that the Communists intend to bring the war to a conclusion as quickly as possible by taking advantage of their superior battlefield position.

The source said the document is significant by what it omits—any mention of plans to seek a political solution to the conflict. Nevertheless, it is thought by many observers here that if Thieu were to step down in favor of a more broadly based government, the Communists would be willing to negotiate.

THAT FEELING is not shared by those in power now. The Vietnamese source indicated that if Hanoi did have plans to talk, their unexpected victories caused them to revise their strategy.

"We are expecting a simultaneous attack on Saigon from several directions," he said, noting that the slow, but marked crumbling of the military situation around Xuan Loc is causing concern among

high government officials and army officers.

In the last two days, North Vietnamese units in the area have:

- Overrun government positions north of the provincial capital, which has been leveled by incessant Communist shelling.

- Attacked and routed the 52d regiment of the government's 18th division in a battle near a strategic road junction east of the city.

- Brought up 120 mm. cannon to within range of Bien Hoa air base and shelled the runways, threatening to neutralize Vietnamese airpower.

DURING A VISIT Thursday to the Xuan Loc area, this correspondent learned that the Saigon government has committed an extra armored regiment and at least one battalion of the 5th infantry division to the battle.

This is in addition to the 18th division, at least two Ranger battalions, and the elite first airborne brigade. The North Vietnamese, as one military source phrased it, "are employing the tactic of drawing the tiger from the mountain."

This means that increasing numbers of Saigon's strategic reserves, as well as units assigned to other sectors of the capital's perimeter, are being

drawn off to keep roads and flanks clear and thus prevent the Xuan Loc garrison from being cut off.

UNDER THE circumstances, the government has not been able to do otherwise, but the effect has been to weaken its defenses elsewhere and expose the capital to an assault from another direction.

At the same time, units engaged in the Xuan Loc fighting are being attrited by an enemy that outnumbers them nearly three to one. Also, in spite of heavy artillery bombardments and air strikes, the government forces have been unable to break thru Communist roadblocks on Highway 1, linking the provincial town to the capital.

Observations in the field reveal that the South Vietnamese army is fighting reasonably well and courageously, but the balance of forces is too much in its disfavor.

MEANWHILE, refugees in the vicinity told newsmen that large North Vietnamese units, supported by tanks, are sweeping thru Kiem Tan province north of Xuan Loc.

This could signal an attempt to cut Highway 1 closer to Saigon and the beginning of a campaign to close down the air base at Bien Hoa and seize South Viet Nam's huge logistics depot at Long Binh, all in preparation for an attack on the capital.

In trying to counter this, Thieu is in a position like that of a chess player defending his king with a queen, a bishop, and a few pawns against an opponent who has all his major pieces.

NEW YORK NEWS - 18 APRIL 1975 Pg. 2

Weyand Says Reds Move SAMs South

Early hand 21 April 75 page 2-3

Washington, April 17 (News Bureau) — The North Vietnamese are moving surface-to-air missiles into the Saigon area and the situation in South Vietnam is precarious, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Fred C. Weyland said today.

"The North Vietnamese strength is building up," Weyand told reporters as he left a closed-door session of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "The military assistance which we are asking for is to prevent it from becoming irretrievable."

Asked whether the North Vietnamese were moving SAM missiles to the Saigon area — as Sen. George S. McGovern (D-S.D.) said earlier in the day — Weyand said, "yes." He did not elaborate.

Unconditional Talks

Word of the North Vietnamese move came as Sen. John J. Sparkman (D-Ala.) said that two top South Vietnamese officials had told him Saigon was prepared to enter into unconditional negotiations with the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong for a ceasefire and a political settlement.

Sparkman, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he had been told by South Vietnam's foreign minister, Vuong Van Vac, and Saigon's ambassador to the U.S., Tran Kim Phuong, that they were willing to negotiate a political settlement in Paris and a military ceasefire in Saigon. The senator stressed that the negotiation offer was "without any preconditions."

But, said Sparkman, so far, Hanoi has refused any negotiations unless South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu steps down, the U.S. ends all aid to the Saigon regime, and a government of "national reconciliation" is formed in Saigon.

Considering Requests

As the situation worsened in Vietnam, three Congressional committees considered President Ford's controversial proposals for nearly \$1 billion in military and humanitarian aid.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which ignored Ford's original aid request, was considering a \$200 million "contingency" fund to be used mainly to evacuate Americans and some South Vietnamese from Saigon.

The House International Relations

Committee also brushed aside the Ford request and worked on language of a bill authorizing \$150 million for humanitarian and evacuation programs. Chairman Thomas E. Morgan (D-Pa.) said that with money already authorized or appropriated, this would provide a total of \$352 million in non-military aid for South Vietnam.

Meantime, Chairman John C. Stennis (D-Miss.) of the Senate Armed Services Committee proposed a \$515 million military aid measure. This was basically Ford's request for \$722 million, but reduced so as to provide only for "essential items," in Stennis' words.

"I believe," said Stennis, "That the great majority of the American people do not want to see the South Vietnamese, who I feel have fought very well in the two years since we left, go down and be totally overrun just for the lack of ammunition that we could supply just by buying it and shipping it there without involving our men."

Stennis said the \$481.1 million in military aid he proposed would enable South Vietnam to make "a real start" in regrouping and re-equipping troops for the defense of Saigon and the Mekong Delta.

But a Senate staff report — supposedly secret but leaked within a few hours of its distribution to Foreign Relations Committee Members — assessed the South Vietnamese military situation as "irretrievable."

In addition, the report strongly criticized U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin for resisting removal of Americans from South Vietnam. Sen. George S. McGovern (D-S.D.) said he had been told that the North Vietnamese could ring Saigon's key Tan Son Nhut Airport with SAM missiles within 10 or 12 days.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
MONITOR 4/18/75 Pg. 15

Early hand 21 April 75
Viet situation
"irretrievable"

By the *page 2-4*
Associated Press

Washington

A secret congressional report assesses the South Vietnamese military situation as "irretrievable" and accuses U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin of delaying plans to evacuate Americans, sources said.

President Ford says, however, that South Vietnam could stabilize its defenses if Congress approves his request for military aid to Saigon and that he has ordered the evacuation of all "nonessential" Americans in South Vietnam.

The military aid request went before the Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday. A further presidential request for \$250 million for humanitarian relief for South Vietnam was up for action in the House International Relations Committee.

NEW YORK TIMES - 18 APRIL 1975 Pg. 15

Some of Last Messages From Encircled Capital

Carly Byrd 21 Apr 75 Page 2-1

The following messages are among the last received by the Associated Press bureau in Hong Kong from Phnom Penh before communication lines went down a few hours after the surrender of the Cambodian Government yesterday.

The messages were sent by Mean Leang, an AP reporter, and a Cambodian, from the Phnom Penh Post Office's communications center, where he had been receiving reports from other Cambodian reporters for The Associated Press.

Moonface, referred to in the first message, is the nickname of a Cambodian reporter-photographer. Seang is an AP reporter. "Black-jacketed guys" refers to the rebels, who wear black combat uniforms. The message reads: "I alone in Post Office. Losing contact with our guys. Only guy seeing me is Moonface at 1300. I have so numerous stories to cover."

"Only call from Seang still at Hotel Le Phnom. Seang told me black-jacketed guys want his bike."

In the next message Monatio is a French term for the Khmer Rouge and Vichet is a Cambodian photographer. It reads:

"I feel rather trembling. Do not know how to file out stories. How quiet the streets. Every minute changes. At 1300 local my wife came and saw me here at post office saying that Monatio threatened my family out of the house. Vichet lost his camera to the black-jacketed guys."

"Appreciate instructions. I not admitted to Le Phnom this morning into Red Cross security zone. Need press card. I have none. Last night they admitted me to Le Phnom. The Red Cross ordered removal of all belongings whatsoever having military aspect."

"I, with a small typewriter, shuttle between the post of-

fice and home.

"May be last cable today and forever."

George Esper, chief correspondent for The Associated Press in Indochina, replied telling Mr. Mean Leang to seek safety at once.

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For U.S. Envoy in Saigon, It's 'Business as Usual' Amid Military Setbacks

early ed. 21 April 75 page 2-1

By JAMES M. MARKHAM
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 17 — As Saigon's military situation has continued to decline, Ambassador Graham A. Martin has astonished a number of officials here by running a "business as usual" operation at the American Embassy in Saigon.

While the issues of evacuation of Americans from Saigon and emergency humanitarian aid have been uppermost in some minds in Washington, Mr. Martin has been sending high-priority cables urging long-term economic development programs for what Saigon retains of South Vietnam.

"The day after they bombed the palace," said one informant referring to a disaffected pilot's attack on President Nguyen Van Thieu's downtown residence, "Martin came in with a cable on the economic development of Cochín China" — southern South Vietnam.

With more than a touch of irony, one State Department official said: "He thinks humanitarian aid isn't important, that the mission is taking good care of that. He thinks we should look to the future."

Message Distribution Curbed

Lately, Mr. Martin, who has long been preoccupied with a fear that his communications might leak to the press, has been sending the bulk of his cablegrams with the highest possible secrecy classification, sharply reducing their distribution.

But, among other things, his mission has been sending to Washington lengthy denunciations of alleged atrocities by the Communists in their advance toward Saigon. It also has been sending messages charging the American press with insufficient reporting of such atrocities.

Mr. Martin has taken the position that a firm American stand in support of President Nguyen Van Thieu's Govern-

ment would in itself help stabilize the situation, the sources said.

In one message, he was said to have advised the State Department to "lock up the panic button."

And the reportedly told a visitor in Saigon that if an evacuation became necessary he would take out "one million Vietnamese" and then leave himself.

At the same time that he has been taking this stand, a reliable source said, senior officials of the Central Intelligence Agency in Saigon have broken with the Ambassador's relatively optimistic view of the military situation.

Until the rout of Saigon's forces in the northern and coastal provinces last month, the same C.I.A. officials in Saigon took a relatively sanguine view of the military situation.

Mr. Martin strenuously opposed any evacuation of Americans from Saigon on the ground that such a move would have a demoralizing effect on the Thieu Government and Saigon's armed forces, reeling from their setbacks in the north.

The Ambassador's reluctance to complete the details of contingency evacuation plans stirred deep bitterness in the embassy.

Under pressure from Congress, Mr. Martin is reported to have relented somewhat.

Since then, under pressure from Congress and the State Department, Mr. Martin has reportedly relented somewhat on the issue, although details on retrenchment of Americans in Saigon have not been plentiful.

"I think he's being over-ridden," said one high-ranking State Department official, who

believed Mr. Martin's objections were being ignored and that orders to proceed with the evacuation were being given.

Mr. Martin, a 62-year-old career diplomat who has served as Ambassador to Thailand and Italy, is a figure of legend in Saigon for his long hours of work. Insomnia is known to keep him up late into the night, when he often dashes off some of his most acerbic messages to Washington.

Representative Paul N. McCloskey Jr., who joined an eight-member Congressional fact-finding tour that arrived in Saigon in February, remarked that Mr. Martin did not appear to be in good health.

Mr. McCloskey, Republican of California, said that when he and Mr. Martin paid a private visit to President Thieu, the Ambassador had difficulty in walking up the steps of the Presidential Palace.

"He's not a well man," Mr. McCloskey said in a telephone conversation. "He's operating on will. His body's not in good shape."

The Congressional delegation, which represented a broad spectrum of opinion on the Vietnam issue, met with President Ford on March 5. Secretary of State Kissinger was present.

At the meeting, according to several sources, Representative John J. Flynt Jr., a conservative Georgia democrat who led the delegation, told Mr. Ford that the members of the group were in disagreement on a number of questions but added, "One thing we all agree on is that your Ambassador in South Vietnam is a disaster."

In Saigon, the delegation members were taken aback by Mr. Martin's expressions of confidence in Mr. Thieu and his army, his optimistic view

of their future and his widely disputed insistence that the Saigon Government held no political prisoners.

One participant in the meeting with President Ford, said that when Mr. Flynt delivered his harsh evaluation of Mr. Martin, "Jerry didn't say anything. He just sat there puffing his pipe."

Today, Secretary of State Kissinger reiterated his "full support" for Mr. Martin, saying that the Ambassador was accomplishing with "great skill" the difficult job of protecting the lives of Americans in South Vietnam and keeping up the morale of the Saigon Government.

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Vietnam War Rules Put to Rout

By DREW MIDDLETON

North Vietnam's unorthodox strategy and tactics have made heavy gains over South Vietnam's poorly implemented military orthodoxy, United States analysts have concluded after preliminary studies of the fighting.

"Military Analysis" The transfer of aircraft, equipment, munitions and headquarters

from Bien Hoa to Saigon; the concentration of Communist forces, including three fresh divisions, north, east and south of the capital; the increase in harassing actions on the edge of the city—all these indicate to the American analysts that the stage is being set for the final act.

The invaders have strengthened their operations against the highways from the rice-producing areas of the Mekong River delta to Saigon, a development that leads many analysts to believe that the Communists' initial plan is to seal off the capital and wait for a political collapse.

Sidestepping a Rule

In their almost consistently successful advance through South Vietnam the northern forces have ignored, as they have through most of the war, the accepted rule that ground advances must be supported by air power.

They have also demonstrated, analysts pointed out, that sufficient surface-to-air missiles and modern, multiple-mount antiaircraft guns, controlled by radar, can nullify an enemy's superiority in aircraft and pilot-experience.

The Hanoi command apparently assumed that the South Vietnamese Air Force did not have suitable aircraft for decisive intervention in the ground battle; events proved the northern generals right.

The A-37's, Saigon's somewhat elderly strike planes, were vulnerable to missile and gunfire. The F-5's, built as fighters, were not effective when they were converted to fighter-bombers.

Teamwork Is Stressed

"Ground forces need aircraft designed and built for ground support to establish an air-ground team," a retired Air Force general said. "Improvisation doesn't work."

Some heretics, discussing the gospel of air power, predict that Saigon's remaining aircraft, driven out of Bien Hoa by shelling, will not play an important role in the defense of the capital because of the North's anti-aircraft capability. North Vietnam has reportedly deployed an entire antiaircraft division to protect its troops around the city.

Other skeptics contend that even at full strength and well maintained, Saigon's air force could not have halted the invaders' surge. The arguments over this failure in movement interdiction, regarded by United States Air Force officers as a

major air mission in such a situation, figure largely in military studies.

U.S. 'Couldn't Stop 'Em'

"A single man or a regiment of men on the march in trucks is a mighty difficult target when well defended," one American military source said. "Even when we had our Air Force there with thousands of planes, B-52's, F-5, special gunships — we still couldn't stop 'em coming down the Ho Chi Minh trail."

So the North, such sources agree, "gave" the South the air battle and carried out its operations without using a single aircraft for ground support, air superiority, reconnaissance or the movement of troops.

Long-range artillery—the Soviet-made 122-mm. and 130-mm guns now deployed around Saigon—were used instead of fighter-bombers to soften southern defense and whip along the forces retreating in the Central Highlands.

While the North succeeded with its unorthodox approach, the South failed largely because it was unable to carry out orthodox tactics.

The Withdrawal Decision

Granted the numerical superiority of the North Vietnamese in South Vietnam in the first week of March, Saigon's decision to abandon Pleiku and Kontum in the Central Highlands was rational, American officers believe.

But the decision involved one of the most difficult operations of war: The planned withdrawal of men and supplies covered by an active rear guard fighting delaying actions to slow the enemy offensive.

"Those troops were combat-ready under good leadership," an American officer with long experience in Vietnam declared. "Everything we've learned thus far bears out the old axiom; 'there are no bad troops, only bad officers.'"

Running Out of Options

Prolonged defensive operations in the north, American sources concede, would not have prevented the southern movement to the Saigon sector. But, given stronger leadership on the part of the South, they argue, the invaders would not have been able to build up their strength in that critical sector as rapidly as they did.

The South has just about run out of tactical options, in the American view. Saigon can economize on manpower by moving back to a shorter perimeter; indeed, with fewer than 50,000 troops available for the capital's defense, some consider the move long overdue.

Constriction of defense lines, however, also involves a reduction in tactical choices.

The Southern commanders, especially Maj. Gen. Pham Van Phu, now reported under house arrest in Saigon, fumbled the operation. Junior officers and enlisted men were not told the reasons for the withdrawal;

arrangements for covering the retirement were haphazard; the choice of roads was made without considering the refugee problem; no plans were made to direct or control the vast exodus of civilian refugees who left with the army.

When North Was Weak

In past campaigns, particularly in 1972, American officers pointed out, it was the Northern high command that was weak in command and control of large formations. In this operation, Southern commanders like General Phu, who commanded the II Corps, failed to control any but their immediately deployed forces and forgot liaison with subordinate commanders of other units.

Consequently, the divisions in northern South Vietnam, including the First, which was regarded as the army's best, had little chance either to extricate themselves from the debacle or to organize the defense of Da Nang and other coastal cities when they finally reached the coast.

The terrain around Saigon is so laced with watercourses and canals that there are a limited number of areas suitable for counterattack by the armored brigade that is the only force left to the defenders for tactical counterpunches.

If an attack comes, an army with its back to the wall has no alternative but to slug it out.

U.S. Flotilla Off Vietnam Coast;

THE EVACUATION

By Jeremiah O'Leary

Washington Star Staff Writer 209/175

Plans of the United States for evacuation of all Americans from South Vietnam, and of an undetermined number of South Vietnamese nationals, moved into a state of intense activity yesterday amid signs that time is beginning to run out.

Officials said 3,212 Americans are known to be still in the Saigon area. They are being flown out from Tan Son Nhut and Bien Hoa airfields at an undisclosed pace, with the objective of reducing the number to about 1,000 by the end of this week.

Direct control of Operation Talon Vise - code name for the evacuation - has now been assumed by Ambassador L. Dean Brown, head of a special inter-agency task force set up on the seventh floor of the State Department. Brown was described by one administration source as head of the evacuation effort with control over all aspects except military contingency plans in the event the evacuation effort meets resistance from any source.

THE PENTAGON disclosed that five U.S. aircraft carriers and a naval task force of seven transports, plus destroyers and a force of 4,000 Marines are now en route to waters off the coast of South Vietnam. The forces include the jet carriers Midway, Coral Sea, Hancock and Enterprise and the helicopter carrier Okinawa. The Hancock and the Okinawa both carry strong complements of heavy Marine Corps helicopters of the type that carried out the successful evacuation operation at Phnom Penh, Cambodia, a week ago.

North Vietnam called deployment of the carriers a "brazen challenge" and a violation of the 1973 Paris peace accords. A foreign ministry statement broadcast by Radio Hanoi said the action shows the United States is interfering in South Vietnamese political affairs.

High-ranking U.S. sources reported there is disagreement between Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger on the speed with which the remaining Americans should leave the Saigon area. The State Department favors a deliberate and programmed departure now to avoid causing panic among South Vietnamese officials and people while the Pentagon wants the civilian Ameri-

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cans out as quickly as possible. These sources said Ambassador Graham Martin in Saigon favors a slower rate of departure.

Kissinger is scheduled to make another and possibly final appearance on Capitol Hill tomorrow to testify on emergency humanitarian and military aid legislation. He will appear at 3 p.m. before the House Appropriations Committee, probably in open session. Some officials are predicting that Congress will approve approximately \$200 million in funds for humanitarian aid, but few officials hold any hope for any of the \$722 million President Ford had asked for military aid for Saigon's beleaguered forces.

KISSINGER ALSO is expected to decide tomorrow whether he will be able to leave Washington Wednesday on his scheduled five-day trip to South America. One source said everything now hinges on what happens in Vietnam.

Brown, former ambassador to Jordan, and his deputy, Clay McManaway, have taken charge of the evacuation task force to cut bureaucratic red tape and centralize the operation. One official said, "In a vast bureaucracy like ours, a situation like this needs somebody in direct command. Brown reports directly to Kissinger and the President and he is the boss as far as AID, the Immigration Service and everybody else except the military are concerned."

THE RATE at which the Americans and their dependents are to leave South Vietnam was being kept secret because of the administration's desire to avoid the appearance of a mad rush out of the country.

Officials hope the operation will be as successful as the effort at Phnom Penh with no casualties and no panic. But there the United States was able to evacuate only a handful of Cambodians threatened with Khmer Rouge reprisals.

In the Saigon area, there are some 175,000 South Vietnamese. Washington would like to evacuate if possible. Officials concede that such a large number could be evacuated only on ships having access to a port such as Vungtau. However, Vungtau is expected

to be inaccessible to people in Saigon, so rapid is the advance of the enemy forces.

THIS LEAVES only two realistic choices, officials say: evacuation of a large number of South Vietnamese by fixed-wing planes operating from the two major airfields still in Saigon hands, or evacuation of a much smaller number by helicopter. At Phnom Penh, the Marines used only 33 heavy helicopters under strong jet fighter cover to evacuate more than 200 persons, but there was no real resistance by the Khmer Rouge and no panic.

One major concern is that North Vietnam forces may be in position to shell the main airfields. Even worse, U.S. officials say, is the possibility that South Vietnamese troops or civilians will interfere with the evacuation through panic, hate or frustration.

Although the Marines are prepared to send strong forces ashore to secure the departure zone, the most dreaded contingency is a situation in which American troops are killed or wounded, or are forced to fire on erstwhile allies who may try to fight their way aboard evacuation aircraft or use their weapons to try to block the evacuation.

THE ADMINISTRATION has concluded that it has the legal power, as in the Dominican Republic 10

years ago and in Cambodia last week, to use U.S. forces to an unlimited extent to protect the lives of American citizens. The sticking point, on which Congress has not yet taken any action, is whether force may be used to evacuate South Vietnamese nationals.

High-ranking officials believe that if Ford has to use the 4,000 Marines who are on ships near Saigon on the South China Sea to evacuate the remaining Americans, they could be legally employed to cover the departure of South Vietnamese or other nationals. But these officials doubt the legality of adding more troops to such a covering force for saving Vietnamese citizens once all the Americans have departed.

Officials declined to discuss the rules of engagement that will be issued to U.S. military forces in an emergency evacuation situation. But it is believed jet fighters and ground troops will have unrestricted right to employ all weapons if attacked by any force during the evacuation.

It was noted at the State Department that Congress raised no protest about the evacuation of some Cambodians when the Americans were airlifted from Phnom Penh even though there was no legislation authorizing it. Should Congress fail to act before an eleventh-hour evacuation becomes mandatory in South Vietnam, these officials are sure Congress will not protest if South Vietnamese are included among the evacuees.

Communists Gain

THE FIGHTING

From News Services 204/75

Communist forces overran the last government-held enclave on the central coast of South Vietnam yesterday and North Vietnamese gunners rendered the nation's most important fighter base largely unusable.

The Saigon government lost its 19th province headquarters to the Communists with the fall of Phan Thiet, capital of the coastal Binh Thuan Province, which is the home of South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu.

This left the entire Northern two-thirds of the country in Communist hands. Intelligence reports said the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese now have about 100,000 troops in the Saigon area, outnumbering government troops two to one.

SAIGON COMMAND spokesmen said early today that North Vietnamese tanks and infantrymen were attacking government defenders at Ham Tan City, 75 miles east of Saigon and the capital of Binh Tuy province.

A senior Viet Cong official hinted yesterday that the Communist side may delay the expected military onslaught against Saigon to allow time for a peaceful conclusion of the war.

The official, Col. Vo Dong Giang, deputy chief of the Provisional Revolutionary Government's military delegation in Saigon reiterated Communist insistence on two conditions — that Thieu step down, and

that all American "military advisers disguised as civilians" leave the country.

But he implied that there was still time to meet these conditions before a final offensive against the capital is launched.

Most Western military analysts believe that Communist strength around Saigon is now so overwhelming that the capital could fall in days or hours after the Communists launch a major attack.

WELL INFORMED Vietnamese military sources reported that continued Communist artillery attacks on the air base at Bien Hoa, only 15 miles North of Saigon, had forced the South Vietnamese to move many of its planes, including all of its U.S.-made F-5 fighter-bombers, in to Tan Son Nhut air base in Saigon.

Bien Hoa air base is the government's last major air force installation outside of Saigon. It was heavily bombarded by artillery and rocket rounds early yesterday.

Military spokesmen said only light action was reported yesterday in the Xuan Loc region, 40 miles east of Saigon.

Other military sources said the government also had begun to withdraw part of its large headquarters for Military Region III from Bien Hoa to Saigon. Military Region III includes the area around the capital.

According to people working at Bien Hoa, the North Vietnamese for the last four days have been firing long-range 130mm artillery into the air base with great accuracy.

"They fire only every 10 minutes or so," said one aircraft mechanic. "But it means we have to stay in our bunkers and can't do any maintenance work on the planes."

A WESTERN intelligence official said the fact that Bien Hoa was now "exposed" to Communist artillery was a serious development. For Bien Hoa has long been the largest military complex in the Saigon area, containing the fighter base, military region headquarters and a huge supply and ammunition depot.

Military sources reported Communist troops occupied at least four villages in the Mekong Delta within 14 miles of Saigon. All four villages were in Long An Province northwest of the capital.

Navy sources said a Vietnamese ship spotted the red, yellow and blue Viet Cong flag flying on Son Tu Tay Island in the Spratley chain, 400 miles east of the port city of Vung Tau. The chain of small islands is claimed jointly by Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, China and Malaysia.

Orphan Airlift to Resume

W. Star 19 April 75
The Immigration and Naturalization Service has given the go-ahead for resumption of the airlift of orphans from Vietnam after a 48-hour interruption.

The Immigration Service announced yesterday that it had notified the State Department that it can go ahead with arrangements for bringing some 300 more orphans to the United States.

The orphans will be part of the total of 2,000 children the Immigration Service had originally agreed could be brought into this country even though all of the paperwork normally required for admission had not been completed.

Only those children who are already in the custody of a licensed adoption agency and whose applications for admission to the United States for adoption were already being processed by April 10 will be admitted.

So far, 1,633 orphans have been brought to the United States under the speeded-up program brought on by the deteriorating military situation in Vietnam.

Whether more than 2,000 orphans will be permitted to enter this country will be considered by the Immigration Service only if there is a request from the State Department.

James H. Greene, deputy

commissioner of immigration, said earlier this week that when plans for the speeded-up movement of orphans from Vietnam were first made his office was told there were only some 1,500 orphans in the process of being adopted. The figure of 2,000 was chosen, he said, to allow some leeway in the program.

— Orr Kelly

300 More Viet Orphans Cleared for U.S. Flights

19 April 75

By Bill Richards

Washington Post Staff Writer

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service granted approval yesterday for 300 more Vietnamese children to be flown to the U.S. for adoption under the controversial "Operation Babylift" program.

Vern Jervis, a spokesman for the Immigration Service, said that questions over whether children already brought in under the program are eligible for adoption will have to be answered by courts in the states where the children have been placed in foster homes.

Jervis said the 300 Vietnamese children authorized for admission to the U.S. yesterday had been "in the pipeline" when Immigration temporarily halted the children's flights earlier this week so that the federal

agency could determine whether there had been "irregularities" in the emergency adoption system.

The Vietnamese children, Jervis said, were all believed to have been screened and to be legally adoptable by U.S. parents. Their admittance will bring the total number of Vietnamese and Cambodian children admitted under the emergency program to nearly 2,000, the ceiling set by the U.S. Attorney General earlier this month.

Asked whether the ceiling will be raised still higher, Jervis said, "It could be. It would not be out of the question." But he said there has been no specific request yet that it be raised.

The Babylift program has become a source of contro-

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Operation Babylift Resuming

CHILDREN, From A1

very, especially after 28 Cambodian children arrived at Dulles Airport on Monday without necessary releases for adoption. Several children told interpreters they still had parents living in Cambodia but had been told they could study in the U.S. if they boarded a plane out of Phnom Penh on April 9.

According to Immigration Service officials there were apparently no officials in charge of the children when they left Phnom Penh on a plane that was chartered by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

A team of investigators and interpreters from AID, Immigration and the State Department began a series of interviews with all 28 children yesterday to try to learn whether they did have parents and just how they got on the flight. The children are scattered in foster homes throughout the Washington metropolitan area, according to officials of adoption agencies which handled the placements.

Charles B. Olds, executive director of the Pierce-Warwick Adoption Agency in Washington, which placed most of the Cambodian children, said yesterday that three or four of the youngsters under 5 years old had been put in homes as "permanents."

"They are being placed where permanence is a possibility," said Olds. Most of the others, he said, were being put into homes on a temporary basis but with parents who had asked to adopt Vietnamese or Cambodian children in the past.

"We think it shouldn't be

long before their status is cleared up," Olds said. "We're waiting for a decision by Immigration."

Leonard F. Chapman Jr., commissioner of the Immigration Service, said Thursday that there is "no evidence that these (the Cambodian) children are adoptable."

Yesterday Jervis said that an order had gone out April 4 to all the Immigration Service offices around the country that none of the children admitted under "Operation Babylift" would be sent back to the Far East.

He said that in the event of court action over the adoptable status of the children, Immigration would not take the position that they are ineligible but would just present the findings of its investigation.

The placement of the Cambodian and Vietnamese children drew further criticism yesterday from three black social service agencies from Washington, Detroit and Chicago. The agencies charged at a press conference here yesterday that most of the children in the emergency program who

were fathered by American blacks in Vietnam were being placed with white families here.

Spokesmen for the agencies estimated that at least 325 of the children in the Babylift program had black fathers, but few were being placed with black families. They said they had compiled a list of 40 black families eager to take the children, most of them near Detroit, said had little response when they presented the list to adoption agencies handling the children.

A 14 Saturday, April 19, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

A Pillar of American Business Scene Leaves Saigon

By Philip A. McCombs
Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON—When American businessman Peter S. Glick put his Vietnamese wife on a flight to Europe a few days ago, she said she hoped to return when things settled down. He told her, "There isn't any way you're ever going to come back to this country."

Glick now has departed, ending nine years in Saigon during which he became a pillar of the small American business community here, learned to speak Vietnamese fluently, and came to feel deep respect and affection for the Vietnamese people and their beautiful country.

Peter Glick's story is one of personal anguish that is shared by many Americans who became intimately connected with Vietnam. His departure marks the end of a charming, expatriate way of life for many Americans, and it also symbolized the end of the U.S. business presence here.

When the Communist offensive began early in March, there were about 150

American businesses and perhaps 350 American businessmen in South Vietnam, other than contractors invited here to do U.S. government jobs.

Now the American business community is rapidly disintegrating as its members close up shop and ship out their assets before the probable Communist takeover. The international oil companies which were drilling in the bed of the South China Sea off the coast have decided to halt operations, according to reliable sources.

Glick, 35, is a lean, balding, suntanned man who came here in mid-1966 as assistant director of the Asia Foundation, a research organization. Three years later, he decided he liked life here and founded his own business development firm, Asia Design and Development, with high hopes of prospering in an era of stabilization in South Vietnam and of eventually building up his business throughout Southeast Asia.

Those hopes were initially frustrated by the almost im-

penetrable bureaucracy and corruption here and, ultimately, by the war. The Communist 1972 Easter offensive virtually brought a halt to Glick's growing business. He never regained his momentum. When the scope of the current offensive became clear a month ago, he decided to get out—a defeated, sad, frustrated, somewhat bitter man.

"America will probably gain a certain vision as a result of what is happening here," he said as he sat in one of the few remaining chairs in his otherwise empty apartment in downtown Saigon. "But the really sad thing is that no Americans at home are going to fully feel what a terrible disaster this is. I will feel it, because my in-laws are here, and I'm going to live with it the rest of my life through my wife."

Glick's in-laws were caught behind Communist lines in Banmethuot in the Central highlands. His wife went through days of agony and then, Glick said, "Finally we had word they were okay. Everyone (in

(over)

Banmethuot] was issued ID cards and had to dress in brown, and my wife simply realized they weren't coming back."

At that point, he began the complicated process of getting her out of the country. He spent days getting his wife cleared through police stations, land tax offices, salary tax offices, construction tax offices, the Foreign Ministry, the U.S. embassy, and other bureaucratic checkpoints.

As the wife of an American, she was entitled to a passport and exit visa, but Glick believes that with the sudden crush of thousands of people trying to leave Vietnam, he might never have succeeded without his Vietnamese language ability.

"There you are in line, a white face with a file in your hand, and the poor overworked clerk looks up and thinks, 'oh my God, another S.O.B. who's going to make impossible demands.' But then you speak to him in Vietnamese and he completely flips the other way and does what he can for you. They asked me

why my wife hasn't there personally and I said I didn't want her to suffer all the standing in line and frustration, and they liked that."

Glick had also been struggling to help his brothers-in-law and their families with the snarl of red tape.

"My French friends tell me I'm crazy to try," he said. "They say if you start helping a Vietnamese family you never finish because they are so large. But I say this is wrong. The country is about to fall, and it will be hermetically sealed by the Communists. You know, I have to live with this other human being, my wife, for the rest of my life and I'd be a fool not to do everything I can."

"Seventeen years from now, she'll be sitting on the back porch watching the kids and sipping a root beer and a cloud will drift by in the sky and her mind will snap back to this time. I hope she will say to me, 'You did what you could.'"

By the time of his departure, Glick occupied a special position in Saigon society. He was past president

of the American Chamber of Commerce and a director of the prestigious Cercle Sportif club, to which most leading Vietnamese and foreigners here belong.

For nine years, Glick has been swimming about a mile a day in the Cercle's Olympic size pool, and he figured that, at the time of his departure, he had swum several thousand miles. Each day at noon he could be seen chatting with friends around the pool in French, Vietnamese, Chinese or English, or eating his standard lunch—several slices of cold, lean roast beef and a soft drink.

"For an average American, life in Saigon may sound shockingly exotic and adventuresome," said Glick, "but my reasons for remaining here are essentially bourgeois, middle-class and normal. You can live comfortably on modest means, the weather is nice, your children can grow up in a pleasant atmosphere with good schools in an enlightened, international community. The Vietnamese people are intelligent, attractive and urbane. Also it's a country at war, and one feels one

is a participant in the reality and the agony of one's time."

Glick, who claims to understand the Vietnamese better than most Americans here, said he thinks the United States made mistakes of over-restraint in its military policy here.

"We have overestimated the South Vietnamese, and we have scandalously encouraged them to overestimate themselves," said Glick. "For example, we pushed the value-added tax on them. We told them you got the brains, you got the capability, you got the young guys to do it. Hell, the administration of a value added tax is chaotic in Europe, what could it be but chaotic here?"

Glick thinks that the United States "toyed around with" Vietnam and never seriously set out to win the war.

"I guess the really great lesson in living for nine years in Vietnam is the terrible provincialism in the United States. We are the ones playing the role of world decision-maker, and

we do it with all the foresight of a six-week old infant."

"We know so little. We were too busy with Vietnam to get to know and feel and understand the place. We were too busy maneuvering troops and destroying enemy sampans and capturing crew-served weapons. We should never have sent the U.S. military out here to live in air-conditioned rooms and take two R and Rs [rest and recuperation leaves] each tour. We should have pulled our belts in at home and fought this thing as a war, taken it seriously."

Glick now plans either to go into business in Manila, or to return to the United States. He has nearly completed a novel about Vietnam, and he thinks he may spend a few months first in Hawaii touching it up.

"It's an adventure story," said Glick. "A guy like me gets into business here, and gets rolled up in one or two thinks unwittingly. He asked by someone to check out something fishy. It is trouble for him, and he finishes badly."

Xuan Loc Assault Builds

New York Times News Service

SAIGON — Heavy North Vietnamese reinforcements yesterday moved into the battle for Xuan Loc, 38 miles northeast of here, as other Communist troops staged a series of small-scale attacks close to Saigon.

Reports from the field said the defenders continued to hold Xuan Loc, now a city of ruins, but they were surrounded. Some Communist units were said to have advanced about nine miles west along Route 1 toward Saigon.

Fifteen miles northeast of the capital, the Bien Hoa air base was shelled by North Vietnamese heavy artillery for the third day.

No casualties were reported, but a military spokesman said that the continued shelling forced the government to begin moving its F5E jet fighters from Bien Hoa into Saigon's Tan Son Nhut air base. Many trucks also transported loads of 500-pound and 750-pound bombs from Bien Hoa to Tan Son Nhut for safer storage.

MEANWHILE, Western intelligence officers said they still expected a full-scale North Vietnamese thrust at Saigon in the next few days.

[The U.S. Embassy began burning "nonessential" papers yesterday, United Press International reported.

Embassy sources said the papers being burned were classified documents no longer considered essential to the mission's operation, and did not include codebooks.]

To the east, North Vietnamese troops backed by artillery assaulted several government positions around Phan Thiet, a government enclave on the South China Sea. The defenders there reportedly were heavily outnumbered, and Western officials expressed doubt that the city could be held much longer.

THE WESTERN analysts said that the most ominous development for Saigon was that yet another North Vietnamese division had been

detected moving into the 10-day-old battle for Xuan Loc, which anchors the capital's northeastern defense line.

The new unit, the 312th division, left North Vietnam only a few weeks ago, the informants reported. Its presence gives the Communists a total of five divisions in the broad battlefield around Xuan Loc, including the 6th, 7th, 325th, and 341st divisions.

The 341st is also a new arrival from North Vietnam, while the 325th was brought down in the past two weeks from near Hue, the old imperial capital in the northern part of South Vietnam.

In opposition to these Communist forces, Saigon has only the 18th division, a brigade of paratroopers and some ranger units. The government troops are all said to have taken serious casualties in the past 10 days' fighting.

REPORTS from the field yesterday said that the situation at Xuan Loc was stable for the second day, with the city itself surrounded and cut off and the Communists having advanced about nine miles west along Route 1 toward Saigon.

The Saigon command reported a series of Communist infantry and artillery attacks on this broad battlefield, with nine North Vietnamese killed and two government soldiers killed and 27 wounded. Saigon claimed 100 Communists had been killed and a 130mm long-range gun knocked out by air strikes seven miles west of Xuan Loc on Route 1.

On the southern edge of Saigon, Communist commandos fired B40 rockets and small arms into the large Phu Lam communications base. One child was killed and nine other persons, including six civilians, were wounded, a military spokesman reported.

The Phu Lam base, built by U.S. troops, is one of the most important in the country and has been the target of commando raids before.

AT THE SAME time, other guerrilla units attacked two small villages about five to ten miles south of the capital. Intelligence sources have reported that the North Vietnamese planned commando attacks in and around Saigon to continue for the next several nights. Government police and militia have been put on special alert.

Laotian Rightist Reports Clashes

W. Star 19 April 75

VIENTIANE, Laos (UPI) — Communist military campaigns in Indochina have spread to Laos, where pro-Communist troops backed by North Vietnamese soldiers are battling rightist forces in three sections of the country, the Laotian defense minister said yesterday.

Defense Minister Sisouk Na Champassak told a news conference that the fighting began Monday about 100 miles north of Vientiane, when the Communist troops overran five government positions, and is still continuing.

Champassak is a rightist who espouses the "domino theory" that a Communist takeover of one Southeast Asia nation leads to Communist conquests in neighboring countries.

Besides the fighting in the north, he said fighting also was taking place in south and central Laos, a nation bordering on North and South Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and China.

"I don't know if it is a

North Vietnamese or Pathet Lao initiative and what they are pushing for," Sisouk said. "But these are flagrant violations of the cease-fire agreement which I strongly condemn."

The defense minister said that at least 15,000 North Vietnamese troops were confronting royalist troops throughout the country, in addition to another 35,000 North Vietnamese forces who are guarding the Ho Chi Minh trail in eastern Laos.

Sisouk said he had protested the fighting to Deputy Prime Minister Phoumi Vongvichit, the ranking pro-Communist Pathet Lao member of the coalition government.

Indochina Roundup

N. Post 19 April 75

Manila May End U.S. Defense Pact

MANILA—The Philippines may scrap its mutual defense treaty with the United States and take over two American military bases if that is in its national interest, President Ferdinand E. Marcos said yesterday.

In his sharpest statement yet on the Indochina situation, Marcos said he is calling a meeting of his foreign policy advisers next Friday.

A main issue, he said, is possible takeover of Clark Field, headquarters of the U.S. 13th Air Force about 50 miles south of Manila, and Subic Bay Naval Base, a major supply and repair facility of the U.S. 7th Fleet about 90 miles northwest of Manila.

The two installations are covered by a military bases agreement concluded in 1946. About 8,000 American military personnel are at Clark and about 5,500 at Subic Bay. The bases employ about 46,000 Filipino civilians.

Marcos said next week's meeting also will discuss upgrading the Philippine armed forces and possible establishment of a neutral

zone in the southwest Pacific.

Taiwan Pullout

TOKYO—About 1,700 U.S. Air Force personnel will be pulled out of Taiwan in the next few months, reducing American military strength on the island to caretaker status, U.S. military sources said.

At its peak five years ago, U.S. strength on Taiwan was 9,000 men. The current force is 4,500. Sources said the force will be reduced by withdrawing the last of four Air Force squadrons stationed in central and southern Taiwan.

Meanwhile, in Taipei, President C. K. Yen said the Taiwan government has no doubt that the United States will keep its commitment to safeguard Taiwan.

Life in Danang

DANANG—A staff correspondent of Agence France-Presse reported that the city is calm, the streets full of life and that many of the tens of thousands of refugees who had crowded into what was South Vietnam's

second-largest city have been moved back to their homes in the countryside.

The dispatch also quoted Vietcong authorities as saying that South Vietnamese soldiers who surrendered when the city fell were free to move about but that officers had been sent to "re-education centers." The dispatch said the Vietcong military presence was inconspicuous and that patrolling soldiers were indulgent even with those who ignored the 9 p.m. curfew.

An AFP dispatch from Saigon quoted two young Frenchmen who escaped the captured town of Banme Thuot as saying foreigners in the Central Highlands town have been told by the Vietcong they are free to continue their jobs but not to leave the area until Saigon has fallen.

Relief Aid

UNITED NATIONS—A personal envoy of United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim has been in Hanoi about a week conferring with North Vietnamese and Vietcong authorities

about U.N. relief aid, a U.N. spokesman said.

The spokesman declined comment on reports that Waldheim might sound out the Communists on a possible Vietnam cease-fire or a declaration of Saigon as an "open city."

For the Record

- Twenty young Cambodians, uncertain whether they will return home or even if a Cambodian navy still exists, continued training as usual at the international officer candidate school in Newport, R.I.

- Douglas McMinn, a retired British hardware wholesaler who sold his business six months ago for about \$3.5 million and gave two-thirds of the money to his employees, has donated \$115,000 for Indochina relief.

- Twenty delegates from Communist, African and Arab countries at a human rights conference in Geneva condemned evacuation of South Vietnamese children to the United States as contravening Geneva Conventions for protection of civilians.

From staff reports and news dispatches

Washington Post, 19 April 1975

Bienhoa Base:

'We Are the Objective'

Air Wing, Munitions Depot Clustered at Next Stop to Saigon

By Sam Jameson

Los Angeles Times

BIENHOA, South Vietnam, April 18 — "In the United States, what do Americans die of?" an old lady, her jagged teeth dyed black, asked of a Vietnamese interpreter sipping tea with two Americans in a shop by the side of the Dongnai River here.

"In Vietnam, we die of war," she said in response to her own rhetorical question.

The old woman, dressed in black pants, a shabby blouse and a conical straw hat shading her wrinkled face, appeared to sum up the fatalistic desperation which has overcome this city's 112,000 people.

They know it is only a matter of time before South Vietnam's No. 1 air base for fighter planes at the edge of which they live is threatened.

"This time I won't flee. I'm too old," she said.

Phanthiet and Phanrang, capitals of Binhthuan and Ninhthuan provinces to the northeast were lost yesterday, although ineffectual "pockets of resistance" remained in Phanthiet, knowledgeable sources said. They were the 18th and 19th capitals of South Vietnam's 44 provinces to fall. Their takeover completed North Vietnamese subjugation of all of the central and northern regions of the country.

A strong stand maintained for more than a week by South Vietnamese forces at Xuanloc, capital of neighboring Longkhanh Province, was now reported to be teetering.

Next in line on the road to Saigon was Bienhoa, home of South Vietnam's 3d Air Wing only 15 miles northeast of the capital, and nearby Longbinh, the nation's biggest equipment and ammunition depot.

"We are the objective," said a U.S. official in Bienhoa who asked not to be identified. "Xuanloc is just a pause in the road to here."

Already, considerable damage has been inflicted on the massive air base.

On Tuesday night a rocket barrage on the base was followed several hours later by a suspected sapper attack on

an ammunition dump. In a four-hour fire that spread for more than half a mile over parts of the massive base "large" numbers of South Vietnamese rockets, as well as a large amount of ammunition for small arms, were exploded, creating blasts and reverberations so strong that U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin was awakened 15 miles away in Saigon and called Bienhoa to ask what happened.

A few 250- and 500-pound bombs laid out for use in a planned Wednesday morning air strike also blew up, sources said.

A huge bomb depot, however, was not damaged. After the sun came up Wednesday, the air base was hit for about 10 minutes with 40 rounds of rocket and artil-

lery fire. It was the first time since the 1973 cease-fire that the base, once a major U.S. Air Force installation, had been hit by artillery, although rocket attacks have been common.

An unspecified number of propeller-driven airplanes and some of the base's repair shops were damaged or destroyed, an official said. No jets were hit.

Thursday morning, artillery fire, from either big 122-MM. or 130-mm. guns—started coming in again. Vietnamese Air Force planes, however, knocked out some of the artillery and it stopped firing after only four rounds.

Officials here were still not relaxing.

"There is a minimum of three North Vietnamese di-

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visions in Longkhanh Province, only some of which are pointed at Xuanloc. Most of them are pointed in this direction," an official here said.

In Saigon, another official said the fall of Phanthiet and Phanrang would free at least an additional three North Vietnamese divisions to head this way.

Such an array would vastly outnumber the forces Saigon has committed in the area at this time: the 18th Infantry Division, the 3d Armored Division, one airborne brigade, and elements of another armor brigade and some marines.

Propeller-driven fighter planes, F-5 jets and air force maintenance and repair operations at Bienhoa could be housed in Tansonnhut air

base in Saigon, with some overcrowding, officials said.

But the massive depot at Longbinh was another matter.

"If we lose Longbinh..." an official said, his voice trailing off.

American technicians and electronics specialists employed on civilian contracts at Bienhoa air base were being trimmed back.

Townspeople, for the most part, were uneasy. No exodus has started and some said they wouldn't flee.

"It's the base that's going to hit, not us," one shopkeeper said, and then added: "Besides, where can we go? Saigon is just another 15 miles."

Guerrillas Hit Radar Base at Saigon's Edge

Large Force Imperils City

From News Dispatches

SAIGON, April 18 — A major communications center six miles from downtown Saigon was attacked by Communist commandos today as reinforced North Vietnamese forces pressed toward the city.

South Vietnamese sources said revised troop estimates showed the Communists now have about 80,000 men within 45 miles of Saigon, including at least part of a commando division believed already to have gone underground in the capital itself.

Communist sappers armed with automatic rifles and antitank rockets killed a child and wounded nine other persons in an attack on the Phulam radar and radio communications center on the southwest edge of Saigon. They blasted at least three openings in the fences surrounding the vast facility but were driven off by South Vietnamese ground units and helicopter gunships.

Military sources in the field said major Communist forces had bypassed the battered provincial capital of Xuanloc and were heading for the vital Bienhoa airbase 15 miles northeast of Saigon and within shelling range of the capital.

Radio contact was lost Friday with several points in the Saigon government's last central coast enclave, Phan Thiet, 100 miles east of Saigon, and it appeared that the area was under Communist control.

South of Saigon in the Mekong Delta, Communist troops were reported to have infiltrated three district towns about 20 miles from the capital in what appeared to be another attempt to cut off the city from its food supplies. Government planes stepped up air strikes against the towns in Longan Province, the Saigon command said.

Reports from Manila said the nuclear-powered aircraft

carrier USS Enterprise broke off a five-day goodwill visit only hours after it began and sailed suddenly for an undisclosed destination.

U.S. officials refused to comment on speculation that the carrier had been ordered to South Vietnamese waters to aid in the evacuation of Americans.

The U.S. embassy in Saigon continued to burn documents. Sources said the papers being burned were classified documents no longer considered essential to the embassy's functioning and did not include code books or other top secret information.

South Vietnamese sources, in reporting the presence of about 80,000 Communist troops within 45 miles of the capital, said there are about 51,000 combat-effective South Vietnamese troops around the capital and an estimated 100,000 home guardsmen, including teenagers and men too old for normal military service.

The sources said the Communists and South Viet-

An Old Man's Search For His Son's Body

U. Post

United Press International

19 April 75

XUANTHAO, South Vietnam, April 18. — The old man wearing a pith helmet went from one stranger to another of this village on Highway 1 today, telling each of them: "I just want to see my son one more time."

His son, he said, was dead, killed Wednesday two miles from here in the rout by North Vietnamese forces of the 52d regiment of the government's 18th Division.

Hoang Dinh Huy, 70, a retired architect from Saigon, has been at this village, 27 miles northeast of the capital, for the past two days trying to recover his son's body.

Huy held a hand-drawn map which he said showed the precise location of the body of his son, a captain in the 52d Regiment, which was virtually wiped out when the 7th North Vietnamese Division swept past besieged Xuanloc to within 23 miles of Saigon.

Soldiers who had served with the captain had given the map to Huy when they informed him of his youngest son's death. The map was crude but it was precise enough to show the very hut in Apnguyenhue village, where the body of Huy's son lay.

Government soldiers moving slowly in a column toward Apnguyenhue refused to permit Huy to accompany them.

"Too dangerous," they said.

And it was, of course, even for an old man who wanted to see his youngest son just one more time.

He moved away to talk to others, pointing at his crumpled map as he did so. They listened, sympathetically it seemed, then turned away to deal with problems of their own.

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namese have about equal numbers of armored vehicles.

South Vietnamese military sources said there were four Communist divisions northeast of Saigon in the vicinity of Xuanloc; one slightly to the west, near Bienhoa; one to the southeast near Vungtao and one to the southwest near Longan.

In addition, the Communists also have an artillery division with long-range artillery, an antiaircraft division, a tank division and a commando division in the capital vicinity.

U.S. embassy officials said they were stepping up the evacuation of Americans and their families but the number actually leaving was smaller Friday. Only 35 evacuees arrived at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, a drop from Thursday's 140—the highest number flown out in one day since President Ford ordered nonessential personnel to leave South Vietnam.

The 28 members of a South Vietnamese regional force defending the Spratley

archipelago island of Songcuutay apparently abandoned it three days ago when three Chinese ships came close by, according to military sources in Saigon.

Radio contact with Songcuutay, one of 57 islands and atolls in the archipelago 500 miles out in the South China Sea has been lost, officials said.

H. D. S. Greenway of The Washington Post Foreign Service reported from Saigon:

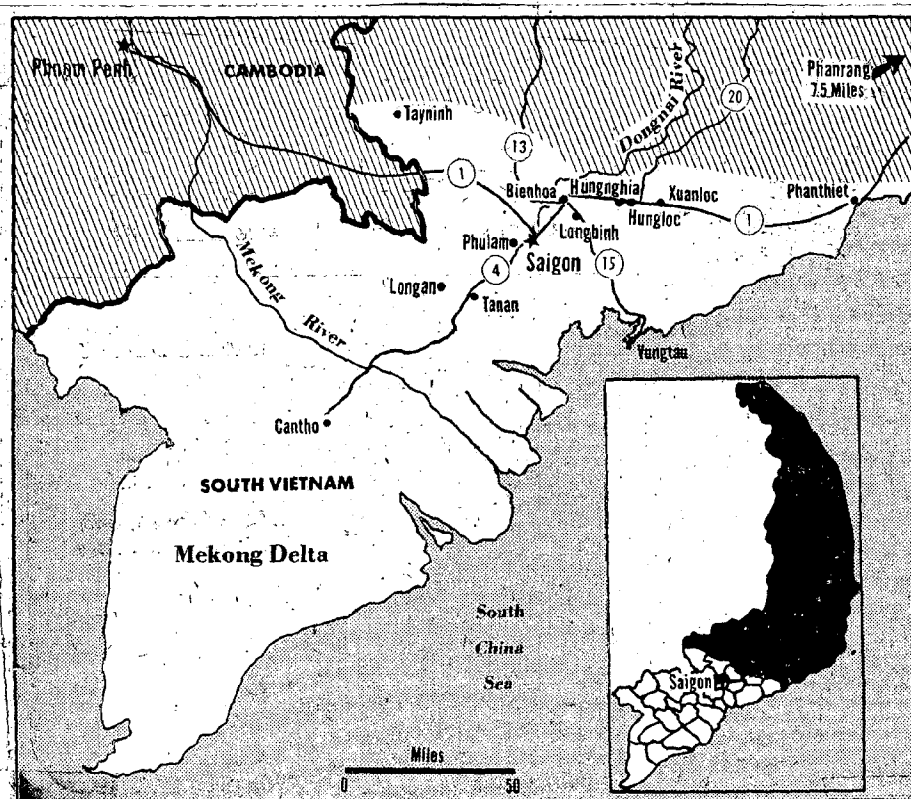
The government's military position continued to deteriorate Friday as North Vietnamese troops attacked and overran the coastal city of Phanthiet and increased their pressure on Highway 4 South of the capital by rolling over seven government outposts in Longan Province according to military sources.

The pace of the battle for Saigon, which many military sources now believe has begun in earnest, is accelerating. It is so far taking the form of coordinated attacks to cut Highway 4 to the Mekong Delta, over which much of the city's food travels, and perhaps to brush by the government troops around Xuanloc, in order to attack the big government base at Bienhoa.

Military sources said that it was doubtful that Xuanloc could be held much longer and that South Vietnamese troops may soon try to break out of the Xuanloc pocket in the next few days in order to take up defensive positions for Bienhoa.

The loss of Phanthiet on the coast leaves the way open for a North Vietnamese sweep towards the port of Vungtao about 120 miles further down the coast. The government is expected to make every effort to defend Vungtao because the port and its peninsula command shipping lanes at the entrance of the Saigon river. Its loss would cut Saigon off from the sea.

In the delta, military sources said that the loss of seven outposts in Longan seriously threatened the defense lines of Tanan, a provincial capital 28 miles south of Saigon on Rte. 4. Intelligence sources are predicting a major attack to permanently cut the road in order to isolate Saigon from the delta.



By James K. Edwards—The Washington Post

Numbers designate major highways connecting Saigon with the provinces.

Phnom Penh Evacuation Is Ordered

From News Dispatches

The new Khmer Rouge authorities in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh called on the 2 million inhabitants of the city to evacuate it yesterday because of what they said was an imminent U. S. bombing attack.

Several Khmer Rouge spokesmen denied that there had been any such evacuation call, but the French Foreign Ministry confirmed it after receiving reports from its consul still in Phnom Penh. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the titular leader of the new government also confirmed it in a French radio interview from Peking.

Phnom Penh is a "bourgeois" nest which must be "cleaned out," Sihanouk told the radio station Europe No. 1.

The Soviet news agency Tass said that "scores of thousands" of peasants were going back to their farms from the city. It said that the capital's normal population of 600,000 had been swollen to 2 million by refugees from the countryside.

A report received in Bangkok, capital of neighboring Thailand, said that Khmer Rouge loudspeaker trucks toured the city warning that "American bombers" were about to "raze the city." The loudspeakers reportedly told residents to flee at least a dozen miles into the countryside.

There were immediate reports of panicked evacuation scenes, but a later dispatch from the French consul in Phnom Penh radioed to the French embassy in Bangkok said that the city seemed quiet and deserted after the initial wave of departures.

He said that 2,000 foreigners had sought refuge in the French embassy compound from the Hotel Le Phnom, the neutral zone set up by the International Red Cross before the fall of the city.

Among those reported to be safe inside the French embassy was Sidney Schanberg, the correspondent of The New York Times, con-

trary to a Thai radio report that he had been shot by the Khmer Rouge.

Analysts differed over explanations for the new rulers' desire to empty out the capital. Some suggested that the authorities did not want the problem of feeding so many people who had been subsisting on U.S.-provided rations.

Others suggested that putting the people on the road would give the Khmer Rouge an opportunity to screen them more easily for persons they wished to imprison or eliminate. Another possible explanation was that emptying the city's homes would give the conquerors the opportunity to search them and to make a housing inventory to allocate quarters for those they wished to establish as residents of the capital.

Radio reports and news agency dispatches from Cambodia were cut off by the new authorities.

Thousands of refugees reportedly stormed Thai border crossings, even though the Thai government had closed the frontier to prevent just such an influx. The refugees who penetrated the Thai barriers were said to include a number of high-ranking Cambodian republican military officers.

A long list of governments recognized the new Cambodian rulers diplomatically. Heading the list were the five members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

Other countries recognizing the Khmer Rouge government included neighboring Laos. Japan said it would recognize it as soon as it proves its effective control over the entire territory of Cambodia.

But Sihanouk was quoted as telling a Japanese visitor in Peking that it would be a number of years before Japan would be permitted to reestablish ties with Cambodia because of Tokyo's support for the fallen government of Marshal Lon Nol.

Sihanouk received "ardent congratulations" in a cable from Soviet Communist Party chief Leonid Brezhnev. Moscow had previously snubbed him because of his close association with China.

Other congratulatory messages came from Chinese leader Mao Tse-tung, Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro, Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat

and Jordan's King Hussein.

Japan's Kyodo news service reported that Sihanouk had called on China to "remain the prime supporter" of the Khmer Rouge government.

French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues offered to exchange ambassadors with the new government. The French consul in Phnom Penh is currently the rank of the Khmer Rouge diplomat there.

A number of Cambodian diplomatic missions abroad cabled their offers to serve the new government.

Sihanouk repeated that he would only serve as a figurehead for the government. Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan, Washington analysts cautioned, however, that they do not believe Samphan wields the dominant power in the Khmer Rouge organization.

There was still no word on the whereabouts of former Premier Long Boret, the last chief of government before the Khmer Rouge takeover.

Some reports said that he had managed to get to Thailand, but the Thai Foreign Ministry denied any knowledge of his whereabouts. Other reports said he had been captured by the Khmer Rouge, and still other dispatches said he had escaped to an area under control of republican forces and was organizing a resistance movement against the new rulers.

Gen. San Suthsakman, the last president of the Cambodian republic, landed in Thailand yesterday morning aboard a Cambodian air force plane.

Diplomatic sources in Saigon and Bangkok said the republicans were still in control of several provinces, especially near the northwest border with Thailand.

Kissinger Says U.S. Exploring Negotiations on South Vietnam

By Murray Marder
Washington Post Staff Writer

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger said yesterday that the United States is now exploring limited negotiating possibilities in Vietnam, which other sources said can only be evacuation bargaining or "a negotiated surrender."

In testimony before the House International Relations Committee, Kissinger said the military situation in South Vietnam "is very grave" and "there are obvious limits to what a negotiation could achieve under present circumstances."

Kissinger sought to hold out hope that negotiations may preserve some elements of self-determination for South Vietnam. He said "there are still certain benefits to the North Vietnamese from negotiations." In a closed meeting afterward with the committee, Kissinger hinted that a diplomatic "process is under way," but he stopped short of saying what that meant.

The United States, however, is still trying to determine what would be required to produce any kind of negotiation with the Viet-

namese Communists, other sources said. Nothing that can be described as diplomatic negotiations, they said, has yet begun.

President Ford yesterday named former career diplomat L. Dean Brown to coordinate evacuation, humanitarian aid, and the flow of refugees from South Vietnam.

White House press secretary Ron Nessen told reporters in Concord, N.H., that Brown will head a special task force, reporting to the President and Kissinger. Brown retired last year after serving as a deputy under secretary of state and ambassador to Jordan and Gambia, and now has taken a leave of absence from the Middle East Institute here.

Evacuation of Americans and South Vietnamese who worked for the United States dominates the administration's interests, including its diplomatic possibilities, although officials avoid saying so publicly.

At best, many administration officials say in private, only an evacuation type of negotiated agreement in Vietnam is likely. Even that

would require satisfying the Communist demand for the ouster of South Vietnamese President Thieu, and the United States repeatedly has pledged that it will never collude in "the overthrow" of the Thieu government.

The only path around that barrier, U.S. sources concede in private, would be the replacement of Thieu by the South Vietnamese themselves, a course which the Ford administration dares not advocate in public.

Instead, the United States says it remains ready to carry out the political formula set out in the 1973 Paris accord, which calls for a three-segment National Council of Reconciliation and Concord to hold elections for a new government in South Vietnam.

The three segments would represent the Saigon government, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam [the PRG, or Vietcong] and a slate of "neutrals."

In yesterday's hearing, however, Rep. Jonathan B. Bingham (D-N.Y.) said to Kissinger: "You surely know better than anyone

the role that President Thieu played in trying to block that agreement."

"He never liked it," Bingham recalled, while "Hanoi hailed it... He [Thieu] had no intention to carry out the political aspects of the agreement."

Kissinger drily replied, "I agree with you that his enthusiasm for it was under firm control."

North Vietnam and the Vietcong, however, Kissinger noted, now demand the outright overthrow of Thieu and a total cutoff of American aid to his government as a condition for any negotiations.

"I do not believe that any one personality is going to be the key to a settlement," said Kissinger.

The United States, he said, "supports the government of Vietnam," not any one individual. Kissinger said further discussion of this sensitive subject would have to be in closed session.

Rep. Stephen J. Solarz (D-N.Y.) said it is time to recognize that "the days of the regime in South Vietnam are numbered." What is most important, Kissinger reiter-

ated, is to seek "a controlled" outcome to the Vietnam tragedy, to avoid chaos.

Solarz, who recently talked with Vietcong representatives in Paris, said after the hearing that to imagine there can be any negotiations "while the Thieu government remains in power is to engage in political myopia." Even with Thieu removed, said Solarz, the best that can be expected is "that the Communists might be disposed to use negotiations as a pretext for surrender." There is no likelihood, he said, of leaving behind any "independent authority in Saigon."

Rep. Donald M. Fraser (D-Minn.) said after the closed hearing that "we didn't get any details that would enable us to make any judgment" on whether serious negotiations are in prospect. He said Kissinger was "vague but emphatic that they were working hard on the diplomatic front."

Fraser said "the critical question" is whether supplying any new military aid to South Vietnam would assist diplomatic efforts for evacuation, without use of U.S. troops.

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

Capital Given Just 3 Weeks

1968 75
By Michael Getler

Washington Post Staff Writer

With 15 North Vietnamese divisions now moving into position on three sides of Saigon, top U.S. defense specialists say the start of heavy and widespread attacks on South Vietnam's capital and its outskirts appear likely within a day or two.

Some officials here believe that even if Saigon's remaining outnumbered forces fight bravely they will be overwhelmed in three weeks at the most and the last battle of the second Indochina war will be over.

The first Indochina war, between France and the Vietnamese Communists, ended with the Geneva accords of 1954.

It is possible that Hanoi, for some reason, may decide to hold back from a massive attack on the city. But senior defense specialists say the chances of that happening now appear to be less than 25 per cent, and all available evidence points to the beginnings of a very heavy assault.

"There are going to be extremely heavy attacks in the Saigon area in the next few days. There is very little doubt," said one senior official.

"The end is coming, and it's coming fast," said another sorrowful official with many years of experience in Southeast Asia.

A week ago, there were eight Vietcong and North Vietnamese divisions in the two military regions containing Saigon and the rice-rich Mekong Delta. Now, or within another day or two at the most, there will be 16 divisions.

All but one of these—a North Vietnamese division positioned near the largest delta city, Cantho—now appear targeted on Saigon.

Long-range 130-mm. guns are being moved to bring Saigon's Tansonnhut airport within their 17-mile firing range, and anti-aircraft mis-

siles are being brought into the area so that Hanoi's gunners may be able to shoot down departing aircraft if the artillery itself doesn't shut down the airport.

Whether Communist forces will actually launch an attack against the airport soon, however, remains a subject of considerable speculation.

There continue to be numerous hints—though no evidence—that the evacuation of Americans and some South Vietnamese via a stepped-up airlift from Tansonnhut may continue unhindered for a while.

While Hanoi has said nothing about this, a number of U.S. officials refer obliquely to a statement by a Vietcong representative in Paris, on Wednesday that combined a demand for an

American pullout with a statement that there would be "no difficulty, no obstacle," placed in the path of such an exit.

The apparent imminence of a heavy attack around the capital area, however, has now caused a speed-up in the evacuation of Americans. Officials, however, are tight-lipped about the evacuation's progress.

The pace of the pullout until now has drawn sharp criticism from some U.S. lawmakers and administration officials aimed mostly at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon for not promoting a speedier exit.

U.S. military analysts believe that once the American population gets down to 1,000 to 2,000, these could be evacuated within several hours from downtown Saigon by dozens of U.S. helicopters, accompanied by

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some 4,000 U.S. Marines that are on aircraft carriers and amphibious ships in the South China Sea.

The United States also has three attack aircraft carriers, each carrying 70 or 80 jet fighter-bombers, in the area. Yesterday, the Pentagon acknowledged that the biggest carrier, the USS Enterprise, suddenly left port in the Philippines after just a few hours of what was to have been a five-day visit.

The United States has considerable additional air power in Thailand, Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines, as well as additional Marines on Okinawa.

As long as Tan Son Nhut airport is open, there also exists the possibility of taking several thousand South Vietnamese out of the country aboard jumbo jets.

But if there is to be any massive evacuation of South

Vietnamese involving the roughly 175,000 people that the administration believes may be marked for death or harsh treatment at the hands of the Communists, then it will have to come by sea.

The principal escape route generally has been considered the port of Vungtau to the southeast of the capital. But whether Vungtau will remain safe now is in some doubt.

North Vietnamese divisions moving down the coast past Phan Thiet are now said to have an open shot at Vungtau, some 75 miles south, if they want it. However, there are some indications that even those divisions may turn westward toward Saigon.

The South Vietnamese have roughly eight regular divisions left in the Saigon

and delta regions, three of them in the delta.

Some experienced U.S. military men believe that Saigon, while it has the chance, should bring two of those divisions up to help defend the capital area. It would mean giving up the delta, but these officers believe it could at least prolong Saigon's resistance.

Though Saigon's divisions are somewhat larger than the 8,000-10,000-man Hanoi divisions, the South Vietnamese regular forces are still outnumbered in the remaining two regions by almost 2 to 1.

There are also 100,000 local militiamen available to the Saigon government, but these units are lightly equipped and highly dependent on regular divisions supporting them.

By the end of this month, if Saigon's lines hold, South Vietnam may also be able to reconstitute one or two divisions from remnants of units that fled in the early phase of the offensive. Some specialists here believe there may be enough equipment on hand to partially re-equip them.

If Congress were soon to approve new military aid and an arms airlift were to start immediately, it would undoubtedly give Saigon's forces a morale boost and may also improve the odds a bit.

But even so, Saigon's chances are held to be extraordinarily thin by officials here, and virtually no official thinks that Congress will send any more aid in time to stave off a total collapse within the next three weeks.

Death of an Exhausted Regiment

By H.D.S. Greenway

Washington Post Foreign Service

HUNGNGHIA, April 18—

Little civilian traffic moves on this road now. An occasional bus comes to the little hamlets strung out along Route 1 behind us, and a Lambretta three-wheeled taxi hurries furtively by flying a brightly striped Buddhist flag which the driver hopes will identify him as neutral.

But for the most part the road belongs to the tanks and military trucks of the South Vietnamese army bringing ammunition up to the howitzers which are scattered in clusters along the way.

This is the end of the road. Beyond here the North Vietnamese are, astride Route 1 in the little hamlet of Hungloc, and sometimes you can see their flags flying over the houses. Ten miles beyond is Xuanloc, the provincial capital which the South Vietnamese have vowed to hold against the advancing North Vietnamese divisions.

Dust and smoke still hang in the air up ahead from the bombs dropped by the now-departed bombers and the North Vietnamese are letting us know they are still alive by sending in a few mortar rounds as they do every day.

It is rolling country of banana trees and rubber plantations around here with a few high hills held by the North Vietnamese. Everyone knows that the North Vietnamese might be watching us, and that is why the Lambretta drivers sometimes fly the Buddhist flag.

A few days ago the road behind us was clogged with refugees moving out on foot,

oxcart, Honda, trucks and even on tractors. Now those that are going have mostly left.

Most of the people here were Catholics who fled from North Vietnam in 1954 and were settled here under the orders of then-President Ngo Dinh Diem. There are churches in all the nearly deserted villages with garish plaster saints outside.

Just beyond, on the way to Xuanloc, where Route 20 branches off to the Central Highlands, the South Vietnamese suffered a series of defeats and there is the distinct realization that before long the North Vietnamese tanks may be ranging out over the countryside on their way to Bienhoa and beyond.

Two days ago the 52d Regiment of the South Vietnamese 18th Division ceased to exist as a fighting unit. How that came about can be pieced together by talking to the survivors here.

The death of the 52d began on the morning of April 16 when a company-sized outpost alongside Route 20 came under heavy attack. The regimental headquarters, a bit farther back down the road, came under very heavy artillery fire which blew up much of their ammunition and knocked out several of their howitzers and tanks.

The company fought all day long, but no sooner was one North Vietnamese unit pushed back when another, fresh unit took its place. A captain said that in his six years in the army he had never seen the North Vietnamese come at him in such numbers and in broad daylight. He said the North Vietnamese soldiers were young and green, but their numbers made up for their inexperience and their artillery fire was unceasing.

The company was finally overwhelmed in the late afternoon and a large North Vietnamese force pushed past then onto the surrounded regimental headquarters. With darkness falling, and with the South Vietnamese running out of

munition, the order was given to try to break out to friendly lines. Only 200 of the original 500 men that made up the 52d when the day began made it back here, and nearly a third of the survivors had lost their weapons.

It is indicative that the 52d began the fight with only 500 men. A full-strength South Vietnamese infantry regiment could number as many as 2,000 men. South Vietnamese units are almost never up to strength, and the 52d joined the Xuanloc defense 10 days ago with only

700 men. Two hundred casualties were taken in the defense of the Xuanloc perimeter and in trying to clear the road before the regiment's last day began. While the North Vietnamese are able to rotate their troops around Xuanloc to give them a rest, there was no rest for the 52d.

The South Vietnamese are few and the North Vietnamese many in this sector as elsewhere and the death of the 52d shows that even if the Army of South Vietnam's morale holds, that may not be enough.

Bloodbath: A Theory Becomes a Fear

Most Killing Reports Unverified

By Michael Geller and Marilyn Berger
19 April 75
 Washington Post Staff Writers

Top U.S. officials feel certain that at least some reports of murder and execution carried out by Communist forces in recently captured South Vietnamese territory are true, but there is still little evidence of what is happening and on what scale.

American officials keeping track of these reports, most of them unverified at this point, think it may take another month or two before more reliable information on the extent of killing carried out even thus far may be available.

And, if historical patterns are a guide, many officials believe it will take many more months for an actual "bloodbath" in the south to unfold if it is going to happen.

These specialists believe, for example, that Communist captors immediately get rid of the police—there are

reports that this has happened in places like Phuoclong, Banmethuot and Dangang. Then, the local population is generally encouraged to settle down and calm down. Later, local Vietcong, with lists of government supporters kept up to date over many years, single out those who are to be punished or killed.

Yesterday, Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger said he had "received reports which seem plausible to us of execution of certain categories of personnel" in Communist-controlled areas.

Though Kissinger added that at this point it is impossible to make a full judgment on what is taking place, he told the House International Relations Committee: "We expect the Communists to eliminate all possible opponents."

See KILLING, A9, Col. 1.

Vietcong Propaganda Is Factor

By William Tuohy
W. Post
19 April 75
 Los Angeles Times

SAIGON, April 18—Increasingly in this beleaguered capital, fears are being expressed about the nature and extent of reprisals by the Communists, if and when they take over.

While U.S. officials and Southeast Asia historians may debate the validity of the "bloodbath theory," many Vietnamese are very frightened.

The reason is clear: for years, the propaganda from the Provisional Revolutionary Government and from Hanoi has warned that those who support the Saigon government or work with the U.S. government would be dealt with severely.

One might not expect a Vietnamese secretary in the U.S. embassy's personnel section to fear for her life, yet she says, "I am terrified. I am afraid of what they will do, not only to me but to my family."

If this young woman's fears turn out to be unfounded, they are nevertheless shared by many. Such feelings pose an enormous problem, morally and logistically, to U.S. embassy officials, U.S. businessmen and news media-managers when it comes to deciding which Vietnamese employees should be eligible to board whatever evacuation flights may be in the offing.

In the Mekong Delta, a U.S. official says, "I've got 60 Vietnamese employees and their families and they are all counting on me to get them out."

In Saigon, an American reporter was approached by a former employee who has not worked for the American news organization for six years, but who still asks if he can be put on the newspaper's evacuation list.

See BLOODBATH, A9, Col. 1

(over)

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Viet Killing Reports Mostly Unverified

KILLING, From A1

During the Tet offensive in 1968, U.S. officials say, the Communists came in with lists to liquidate police officials while the battle was going on.

If a policeman was found at home he usually was tied up and forced to watch while his family was killed one by one.

Alleged atrocities in recently conquered territory include:

- A report from a Buddhist monk at Banmethuot who claimed to have witnessed a Communist roundup in the central market square of 300 local notables and their families. The heads of the families were reportedly shot on the spot. Their families were taken out of town and killed later.

- A report from a Vietnamese who claims to have been an eyewitness to a

rocket attack on a bridge that was being crossed by refugees from the II Corps area. The refugees were shot while trying to swim ashore. The eyewitness estimated that about 2,000 persons were killed.

- Another report from Banmethuot from a Vietnamese who said he was told by a friend in the Vietcong to get out while he could because they were planning to classify the inhabitants and take the class enemies to the "slaughterhouse."

A number of American antiwar groups, most notably the Indochina Resource Center, have in the past challenged accounts of previous alleged Communist massacres, especially the report that some 5,000 persons were executed in the city of Hue in 1968 because of their affiliations with the Saigon government.

BLOODBATH, From A1

To sense the fear in the air, one has only to look at the pathetic lines of Vietnamese women at the American consular office here with telegrams from ex-boy friends in the United States, hoping that such messages will somehow qualify them for travel documents, to sense the fear in the air.

So far, there have been no direct reports from the occupied provinces of reprisals, let alone bloodbaths.

"Of course, it would be illogical for the Communists to carry out reprisals this soon," said a Western expert. "For the moment, it is in Hanoi's interest to restore law and order and keep the cities functioning. Executions now would only create more tension."

There are conflicting views here on the extent of possible Communist reprisals in the event of the takeover of the rest of South Vietnam.

The most hopeful view, which is held by some Vietnamese, though usually not those who work for the government, is that Hanoi will be more lenient than generally believed if it gains its ends in the South.

"Hanoi wants to create an international, public image of lawful succession to power," said an experienced Vietnamese journalist. "They don't want to come in and kill a lot of people. And they won't have to, once they have control of the whole country."

The opposite view, however, maintains that the "blood debt" list that the Communists have often referred to is very large indeed, and that those debts will be called in, if not immediately, then in good time.

Those who hold this view of Communist intentions make varying estimates of the size of the blood debt list, ranging anywhere from 50,000 to 3 million.

Whatever the actual figures, most observers concede that the chief targets for a blood purge would be South Vietnamese senior police officers, particularly those involved in counter intelligence, senior army officers, hamlet officials and key public administrators in Saigon, some revolutionary

development cadres and top members of the landlords and business classes.

Teachers are high on the list of marked men, since the Hanoi government, valuing heavily the power of the word, believes they are a particularly dangerous class.

Political leaders and intellectuals are also expected to be singled out, but they may well avoid execution, it is said, as long as they recant past errors and offer no threat to a Communist regime.

Most ordinary soldiers and policemen may be spared punishment on the ground that they were forced to fight or serve in the Saigon government.

The 2 million South Vietnamese Catholics believe they will especially be marked for unfavorable treatment, particularly those who fled Hanoi after the Communist takeover in 1954.

Similarly, non-Catholics who chose to leave the North tend to think that they will come in for harsher treatment under a Communist rule than their native southern brethren.

It is conceivable that in the event of a military stalemate, the United States might negotiate with Hanoi for the removal of those South Vietnamese who worked with the United States and wish to leave.

But it is unclear whether the North or the present Saigon government would agree to such an evacuation. The belief here is that the very South Vietnamese officials who would like to take advantage of an evacuation are those who are holding the country together administratively.

Obviously, not everyone who worked for the Americans would be endangered. Dishwashers, cooks and drivers are thought to be in no danger. But many of higher-level workers, rightly or wrongly, fear they will be tainted by their association with the United States and treated harshly by the Communists.

"Basically, the Communists view this as a class war," sums up one expert here. "And if nothing else, most South Vietnamese from business leaders to cab drivers are capitalists of the most laissez-faire kind."

\$200 Million Viet Aid Voted by Senate Panel

1975

By Spencer Rich

Washington Post Staff Writer

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, responding to administration pledges to speed up removal of U.S. civilians from Vietnam, voted 14 to 3 yesterday to give President Ford \$200 million for humanitarian aid to South Vietnam and for the costs of evacuating Americans as well as endangered South Vietnamese.

The bill corresponds to a \$327 million measure approved Thursday by the House International Relations Committee. Both bills also give Mr. Ford authority to use U.S. armed forces if necessary to get the people out. Chairman John Sparkman (D-Ala.) said the Senate bill will go to the floor Monday or Tuesday.

Although today is the date by which President Ford on

April 10 urgently requested Congress to complete action on his emergency aid requests, none has passed either chamber. There are deep doubts about whether Congress should continue underwriting the war in any way, and there is considerable confusion about the administration's real intentions. Also, some lawmakers suspect that the slow pace of evacuation is an attempt by Ambassador Graham Martin to hold 5,000 Americans hostage to compel Congress to vote major military aid for the faltering Saigon regime.

The President's requested \$250 million for humanitarian aid has been acted on by both the Foreign Relations Committee and House International Relations Committee, although part of the

money has been designated for evacuation purposes.

However, his request for \$722 million in emergency military aid is becalmed. The Senate Armed Services Committee, on Thursday refused to provide the \$722 million authority, and the House Armed Services Committee yesterday was preparing to vote but lost a quorum during questioning of Army Chief of Staff Gen. Fred C. Weyand and adjourned without action, to meet again Tuesday.

The White House reportedly has asked the Senate unit to call another meeting.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee's approval of the \$200 million in humanitarian-evacuation aid came after members received what Chairman Sparkman, Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) and others called strong administration assurances of a definite plan and a stepped-up rate for withdrawal of Americans by normal commercial flights in the next few days, reducing the need of military intervention for rescue later.

Committee sources said the evacuation plan aims at reducing the 5,000 or more Americans and their immediate dependents still in Vietnam to 2,000 by Tuesday. Other sources said there were some administration hints of a further goal of reducing U.S. personnel to 1,000 by the end of next week.

Committee members had balked for three days at voting the evacuation and humanitarian money and the troop-use authority until they had assurances that rapid withdrawal of Americans would start immediately.

Two committee staffers, returning from Vietnam last week, had reported that Ambassador Martin was dragging his feet in organizing withdrawals. Many committee members interpreted this as an attempt to spur Congress into providing more military aid for Saigon.

(over)

Yesterday Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho) said copies of cable traffic from Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger to Martin had an "increasingly mandatory" tone and added, "Within a week we should have all American personnel who are not essential" out.

Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.) said, "The pace is beginning to accelerate" but he still wasn't wholly satisfied. Sen. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) said the committee is "taking it on faith the administration" is carrying out the revised plan of evacuation including the timetable; he reserved the right to oppose the \$200 million bill on the floor if that proved untrue.

In addition to the \$200 million authorization bill, the committee also approved.

- A Javits-Church resolution demanding that American citizens and dependents "be withdrawn from South Vietnam as rapidly as possible."

- A Javits-Percy-Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) resolution asking new talks to implement the Paris peace accords and steps to

"encourage and support those elements in South Vietnam who are desirous of seeking a political settlement."

Opposing the \$200 million bill were Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.), who has been opposing Vietnam aid for a decade, Joe Biden Jr. (D-Del.) and Dick Clark (D-Iowa).

Biden said that he didn't like the idea of giving the President power to use U.S. forces to take out South Vietnamese. "I don't want to get back in the war again," he asserted, saying he could envision scores of thousands of U.S. troops being needed to evacuate the 175,000 Vietnamese President Ford wants to take out.

Clark said the troop-use authority ought to be withheld to force Ambassador Martin to move faster on getting U.S. civilians out. Clark said more than "5,000 Americans and their dependents" remain in Vietnam and he hadn't seen any hard evidence that withdrawals were beginning in earnest.

The \$200 million in the Senate Foreign Relations bill is simply a ceiling; actual funds must be appropriated in a separate bill.

Half of the \$200 million is for humanitarian aid and relief — and this must be channeled through the United Nations and other international relief agencies, a restriction not in the House bill.

Percy said South Vietnam has "plenty" of ammunition "to keep them going till June."

The Senate bill is more restrictive than the House version on authority for the President to use U.S. troops to rescue endangered South Vietnamese.

The House bill authorizes use of U.S. troops to rescue Americans, their dependents, Vietnamese in danger of Communist reprisal, and Vietnamese eligible for U.S. citizenship by virtue of relationship to Americans. The Senate bill doesn't include the last category.

Both bills say the President, in seeking to rescue endangered Vietnamese nationals, can't increase the troops beyond the number needed to save the other categories—an attempt to avert any massive military operation to save endangered Vietnamese.

The Senate bill also imposes two other restrictions: In seeking to save endangered Vietnamese, the President can't keep U.S. troops in Vietnam longer than needed to save the other categories, and he can't move them to geographical areas that don't include the other categories.

Almost from the start of the current Vietnam crisis, there has been considerable confusion in the Senate as to the administration's real aims and plans.

One school of thought holds that the White House wants to maintain permanent large-scale military aid to South Vietnam, hoping it can hold out. Some in this camp believe that Ambassador Martin has deliberately delayed withdrawal of American civilians so the administration can demand that Congress put up money and grant troop-use authority (use of U.S. force in Vietnam is now barred by law) to protect the Americans and 175,000 endangered Vietnamese friends.

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.) said Thursday, "As long as they're (American civilians) there, it appears to be almost like the President

is using them as a bargaining chip to get his money here."

Some speculate that the White House may even relish the idea of getting back in with American troops and driving back the Communists. Sen. John V. Tunney (D-Calif.) said Thursday that Americans remaining in Saigon shouldn't be used as "trap bait" to lure U.S. forces back into combat.

Another school holds that the President probably doesn't want the United States reinvolvement, at least in a direct military way, but that giving him wide authority to use troops for rescue could entangle Americans there anyhow.

Church said yesterday, "Having been burned once by the open-ended Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, Congress must carefully limit any reintroduction of U.S. forces into Vietnam for any purpose other than giving protective cover to the evacuation of American citizens and their dependents."

Still another view holds that, while the President is sincere in wanting to evacuate Americans and their dependents, he is not serious about wanting another massive dose of weapons aid on top of the \$700 million already granted this year or about taking out as many as 175,000 endangered Vietnamese civilians.

According to this line of thought, such talk is designed primarily to make clear to the world and the U.S. electorate that it wasn't Mr. Ford who "lost" Indochina but a Congress refusing to vote the funds.

Civilians Flee Phnom Penh; Long Boret Reported Held

W.B.A.

Associated Press

1975

Cambodian civilians were evacuated en masse from Phnom Penh following the capture of the capital by the Communist-led insurgents, diplomatic and other sources reported yesterday. The exodus was seen partly as a plan by the Khmer Rouge victors to weed out and purge opponents.

Sources in Bangkok said former Cambodian Premier Long Boret and Brig. Gen. Lon Non, brother of self-exiled President Lon Nol, were among the officials of the defeated Cambodian government who are in the custody of the Khmer Rouge in Phnom Penh.

Thursday night, Khmer Rouge sound trucks touched off panic in refugee-clogged Phnom Penh by broadcasting warnings of an imminent attack. Thousands of civilians headed for the outskirts in a chaotic

exodus, diplomatic sources in Bangkok said.

THE INFORMANTS quoted wireless communications between the French embassies in Bangkok and Phnom Penh. French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues also confirmed the evacuation and told newsmen in Paris it began after Khmer Rouge troops warned citizens of possible bombing raids. France still has a vice-consul in Phnom Penh.

A denial of the evacuation came from the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug in Belgrade, quoting Cambodian sources in Peking as saying there was no unrest in Phnom Penh and that "reports of some foreign news agencies are not true because in the Cambodian capital reigns order and peace. The population is lending support to liberators and expresses joy."

The Bangkok sources quoted the French embassy in Phnom Penh as saying "everything was quieting down and getting better" by yesterday afternoon. They added, however, that the city seemed almost deserted.

THE SOURCES said as many as 2,000 people were reported to have fled into the French Embassy compound during the panic.

They said the Khmer Rouge sound trucks told the people to get as far out of the city as possible. The population reportedly had been swollen to 2 million in recent days, more than three times its normal size.

A number of foreign newsmen were among those taking refuge in the embassy, the sources said. One source said a number of people had left a neutral zone in the Hotel Le Phnom a quarter of a mile away

and made their way to the embassy. Another 300 persons were sheltered in the Lycee Descartes near the hotel.

ANOTHER source said Khmer Rouge representatives were reported to have visited the French Embassy several times and that their actions were "never menacing."

One of the sources said it was believed that Cambodia's new rulers wanted to thin out Phnom Penh's population to cope with any armed resistance by government diehards and to

search for military officers and other officials who may have hidden.

Sihanouk, nominal leader of the insurgents, was quoted as saying in a radio interview that Phnom Penh was a "bourgeois" stronghold that had to be "cleaned out."

Sihanouk also said he would take up residence in Angkor, in northern Cambodia, because of bad memories of his time in Phnom Penh. He was ousted in a coup in 1970 and formed an exile government in Peking.

Fighting Reported In Laos

1st Outbreak In Coalition's Year in Office

14 Apr 75
W. Post
From News Dispatches

VIENTIANE, April 18

—Communist military campaigns in Indochina have spread to Laos, where pro-Communist troops backed by North Vietnamese soldiers are battling rightist forces in three sections of the country, the Laotian defense minister said today.

Defense Minister Sisouk na Champassak said at a news conference that the fighting began Monday about 100 miles north of Vientiane, when the pro-Communist Pathet Lao troops overran five government positions. He said it is still continuing.

There has been no significant fighting in Laos since the coalition government, including representatives of the Pathet Lao, took office last April. The government was formed under a cease-fire accord signed in 1973, but sporadic fighting had continued until the government took office.

Sisouk is a rightist who espouses the "domino theory" that a Communist takeover of one Southeast Asian nation leads to Communist conquests in neighboring countries.

Besides the fighting in the north, he said fighting also was taking place in south and central Laos, a nation bordering on north South Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and China.

Sisouk said that according to the latest reports, 11 Pathet Lao troops and 2 government soldiers were killed in fighting near the Sala Phou Khoun mountain range north of Vientiane.

There are a number of government hilltop positions at Sala Phou Khoun overlooking the crossroad between the north-south Route 13 and the east-west Route 7.

The Pathet Lao advanced to only one mile from Highway 13, as government forces retreated, Sisouk said.

"I don't know if it is a North Vietnamese or Pathet Lao initiative and what they are pushing for," Sisouk said. "But these are flagrant violations of the cease-fire agreement which I strongly condemn."

The defense minister said at least 15,000 North Vietnamese troops were confronting government troops throughout the country, in addition to another 35,000 North Vietnamese forces who are guarding the Ho Chi Minh trail in eastern Laos.

He added that he did not believe the Pathet Lao were planning a full-scale resumption of hostilities in Laos, but that they were encouraged by Communist victories in South Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge victory in Cambodia to "multiply their acts of provocation, harassment and attrition."

Sisouk said he had pre-

tested the fighting to Deputy Prime Minister Phoumi Vongvichit, the ranking Pathet Lao member of the coalition government. Under the cease-fire accord of 1973, the government is made up of leftists, royalists and neutralists.

The defense minister said Phoumi replied that he had asked for details from Sam Neua, the Pathet Lao headquarters in eastern Laos.

Sisouk quoted Phoumi as saying he had no control over Pathet Lao troops outside the administrative capital Vientiane and the royal capital Luang Prabang, both neutralized cities under the Laos peace agreement.

He noted that none of the Royal Laotian Army's military district commanders had been able to leave his post to go to Luang Prabang during the recent Laotian new year holiday.

Until the cease-fire the region north of Vientiane

where this week's fighting occurred was held by Thai mercenary soldiers hired by the American Central Intelligence Agency.

The defense minister said the Pathet Lao fired more than 200 shells, mortar rounds and 122-mm. rockets at the positions, forcing the royalist soldiers to withdraw.

He said the reports of the fighting in southern and central Laos were sketchy, but that it appeared to be taking place east of Savan-nakhet and south of Pakse.

BALTIMORE SUN 18 APRIL 1975 Pg. 1

Saigon defenders soon *only end 18 April 75 page 6* to be outnumbered 2-1

By CHARLES W. CORDRY

Washington Bureau of The Sun

Washington—The North Vietnamese, with virtually their entire Army now in South Vietnam, are rapidly moving additional combat divisions toward Saigon and shortly will have a numerical superiority of about 2-to-1 over the capital's defending forces, military sources said here yesterday.

The odds confronting the South Vietnamese have become so grim that many military men privately are conceding that there is little prospect of American aid improving the military situation much, even if Congress were to approve it.

Intelligence reports from Vietnam this week have been saying the Communists can be expected to attempt attacks in the Saigon area in a matter of days. These, at first, probably would be sapper and small unit attacks, while main forces continued to move forward with their supporting artillery.

Attacks in the provinces nearest Saigon, the reports say, are designed to force commitment of scarce government reserves to wear them down before Hanoi's main forces have a go at Saigon itself.

Hanoi is now in a position, the reports say further, to take whatever actions are necessary to force the war to an early conclusion. The military balance decisively favors the Communists.

The questions, then, are only ones of timing and tactics, and whether some sort of political solution can be forced before South Vietnam collapses.

Something of the behind-the-scenes gloom showed through in a public comment yesterday by Gen. Fred C. Weyand, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, after further testimony to the Senate Armed Services committee on military aid (the panel later voted against more aid).

"I guess because I am a general," General Weyand said, "I have trouble in saying that the military situation is irretrievable."

Commenting on the continuing North Vietnamese buildup, military sources said there now is evidence that another Army division has moved across the border. That would mean 21 of Hanoi's 22 divisions are in the South.

Of greater immediate significance were reports here that a North Vietnamese corps headquarters has been set up in Quang Duc province just across the border from the military region around Saigon, and two divisions—the 312th

and 320th—are under its command at that border. They have moved rapidly from the northern part of the country.

Two more divisions of that corps—the 338th and newly arrived 308th—are reported moving southward. Still another two outfits—the 316th and 10th—are reported in Lam Dong province, also just across the border from the Saigon military region.

Even before the arrival of the two most distant, but rapidly moving outfits, the Communists will have a 2-to-1 edge over the defenders in combat divisions, backed by considerable quantities of long-range artillery pieces.

They also are moving anti-aircraft missiles into the battle area, as General Weyand confirmed yesterday.

BALTIMORE SUN

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only end 18 April 75 page 7

U.S. halts airdrops to Cambodia

Washington (AP)—The Pentagon said last night the United States airdrop of supplies into Cambodia has been stopped following the government's surrender to Communist-led rebels.

The last two rice airdrops into Cambodia were made hours after word of the surrender early yesterday, the Pentagon said.

A Pentagon spokesman said there were 10 airdrops on the last day of the Cambodian war, 4 of them with rice into the Phnom Penh area.

At the end, \$6 million remained in the Cambodian military aid fund.

The Pentagon stopped direct airlift flights into Phnom Penh last Friday when the last Americans were evacuated in Marine helicopters.

However, civilian crews flying U.S. Air Force C-130 transports resumed the supply lift Saturday with airdrops of ammunition, food and fuel into the Phnom Penh area and several other places in Cambodia where government garrisons still held out.

NEW YORK TIMES 18 APRIL 1975 Pg. 15

The Evacuation Issue

Early Draft

Congress Suspects Saigon Aid Bid
Is Meant Only to Get Americans Out

(8 April 75)

Page 6

By JOHN W. FINNEY
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 17—There is a growing suspicion among members of Congress that the Administration's words about a moral obligation to supply military aid to Saigon are really a charade; that the real object underlying the rhetoric is to gain time to rescue Americans still in Saigon. Neither the White House nor Congress can openly admit that what they are discussing is not how best to aid Saigon but how best to insure the safe withdrawal of some 5,000 Americans.

Knowledgeable officials do not believe that additional aid is going to influence the course of the battle now shaping in South Vietnam, but the hope that Congress will not reject the aid request out of concern for the Americans.

Those hopes received a serious setback today when the conservative Senate Armed Services Committee, by a one-vote margin, voted against authorizing additional aid. There still remained the possibility that Congress might vote some of the \$300-million in aid that had been previously authorized but still requires appropriation.

As Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger acknowledged in a moment of candor before the Senate Armed Services Committee this week, the purpose of the aid request is as much psychological and political as it is military.

In essence, the Administration is fighting for time, not so much to rescue South Vietnam as to rescue the Americans as well as wives of Americans and their children.

By holding out the offer of aid, which probably will never arrive in time to have any impact, the White House hopes to provide a signal of support that will hold the Saigon Government together long enough to permit the evacuation.

The alternative of asking for no additional aid, by Administration calculations, would have meant the collapse of the Saigon Government and the very conditions of chaos, panic and probably anti-American rampages that would have jeopardized a safe withdrawal.

The charade began last week when President Ford asked Congress to provide \$722-million in military aid. At the time the President said the aid would "stabilize the military situation, permit the chance of a negotiated settlement, and, if the very worst were to happen, at least allow the orderly evacuation of Americans and endangered South Vietnamese to places of safety."

The rationale began to become evident even before Mr. Ford had delivered his speech.

In a background session, "Administration officials" (that was the way the White House insisted the voice of authority had to be identified) linked the aid request to the safe evacuation of Americans.

The White House could not emphasize that linkage, lest such talk set off the collapse and panic it was trying to avoid. Instead, it has stressed the positive objectives without making clear how the aid would reach Saigon in time to stabilize the situation or why North Vietnam, with victory in its grasp, would be willing to negotiate anything but the surrender of the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

Yesterday, for example, Mr. Ford declared he was convinced that, with the additional aid, "the South Vietnamese could stabilize the situation in South Vietnam today."

That may have been a welcome appraisal intended for ears in Saigon. But not even the President's top advisers—Secretary of State Kissinger and Defense Secretary Schlesinger—have been so confident. The most they have been willing to promise is that the additional aid will give Saigon an uphill chance to survive 90 days.

The Administration found itself in a political box. The more it emphasized the goal of stabilizing the military situation, the more skeptical was the reaction in Congress.

Opposition Moderating

It was only when officials, in private sessions, began emphasizing the condition of the Americans that Congressional attitudes began to shift. There has been a moderation in the initial outburst of opposition. Some of the older liberals have been cautioning their more outspoken, younger colleagues to hold their tongues while the political game is played.

The Administration also finds that the evacuation issue can cut both ways. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for example, has been holding back on humanitarian aid as it pressed for more rapid reduction of the American contingent so that only a relatively small, manageable number would need to be rescued in the end.

To many in Congress, the Administration—and in particular, Graham A. Martin, the United States ambassador in Saigon—have been holding the resident Americans as hostages for a continuing commitment to the Saigon government.

There are also complaints that Congress is being forced to pay a ransom to Saigon to assure the evacuation. But there is a growing feeling in Congress that perhaps this is the symbolic price that must be paid to get the Americans out.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR 18 APRIL 1975, Pg 13

Congress tilts toward military aid

Byrd sees movement to help South Vietnam

By Godfrey Sperling Jr.
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

The beginning of a shift in Congress toward supplying military aid for South Vietnam is visible here.

- The best vote counter in the Senate — Democratic whip Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia — told a breakfast group of reporters that in just the last few days he has seen a significant movement of Democratic senators toward providing military aid.

He said this shift reflected his own position. "Up to now," he says, "I was opposed to giving any military aid. Now I think there should be such and that there should be \$300 million to \$500 million to be effective."

- In the House a secret meeting of liberal Democrats ended with a consensus: that they would have to provide military aid (much as they were against it) lest they become vulnerable to the presidential charge that those who voted against such aid were responsible for the fall of Southeast Asia.

Senator Byrd says that the behind-closed-

doors testimony of Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, Army Chief of Staff, has been persuasive in changing his mind. He says that he now thinks that with a quick infusion of military aid there is a "slim chance" of preventing a South Vietnamese collapse.

But privately, Democrats now are admitting they are feeling the sting of the President's criticism.

At the same time they are calling this "finger of blame" unfair and saying that the public will also see it as such. The Democrats are admitting that the President might be able to use this issue against them in next year's election.

Thus, whereas only a few days ago it appeared that Congress would provide not one cent in military aid for Saigon, the prospect that some such aid (perhaps hidden in an evacuation contingency fund) now has increased significantly.

Thus, too, it becomes clear that presidential politics is beginning to pay off for him with Congress on the aid issue.

[On April 17, meanwhile, the Senate Armed Services Committee began considering a compromise \$507-million authorization for additional military aid for South Vietnam. Senator Dewey F. Bartlett (R) of Oklahoma said the reduction from President Ford's \$722-million request was suggested by committee chairman John C. Stennis (D) of Mississippi.]

But the question being raised is this: what might the cost be to the President in terms of eroding what he continues to say he is seeking — a close-working, harmonious relationship with the legislative branch?

Senator Byrd calls the President's "finger of blame" pointed at the Democrats in Congress a cheap shot, manifestly unfair and partisan.

At the same time, he expresses a continuing friendliness toward the President, calling him "extremely likable, personable, down-to-earth," the kind of person who should be in the presidency.

Somehow, some way, the President so far continues to avoid a break with the very Congress he is attacking.

The President has said that "no one is to blame" for the collapse of South Vietnam — indicating he was not blaming Congress.

But he continues to get back to a persistent theme — that if Congress had voted that military aid he requested, the current tragedy in Vietnam would not have occurred.

NEW YORK TIMES 18 APRIL 1975, Pg. 14

Early Edit 18 Apr 75 page 3

Long Odds Against South Vietnam: Manpower and Weapons Deficient

By DREW MIDDLETON

After more than four weeks of fighting, the Vietnam campaign appears to United States military sources to be entering a final phase in which Saigon's hopes for preventing a defeat are minimal. The

Military Analysis North Vietnamese divisions closing in around the capital retain the tactical initiative they

seized at Ban Me Thuot in the middle of March, in this view, and the South Vietnamese have neither the manpower nor the weapons to reverse the situation.

The sources said an offensive against the city was almost certain to open before any American resupply effort—itsself dependent on Congressional sanction—and the reorganization of shattered divisions could have an impact.

The morale of the South Vietnamese combat forces in the Saigon sector, which remained high during the bitter fighting for Xuan Loc, may crack, the sources believe, once it is known that Americans are leaving and that munitions are unlikely to arrive in time.

There is a curious resemblance

between what is happening in South Vietnam and what happened in France in 1940. Many of the elements of that tragic period have appeared in the last month: initial military shock that destroyed the morale of many units, hundreds of thousands of refugees, the gradual physical disappearance of a once-trusted ally—Britain then, the United States now—and mounting disillusion with that ally, coupled with desperate appeals to it for arms.

Arms alone are not the answer, the military analysts concede. For two weeks Saigon's need has been trained combat units. Although both the South Vietnamese Defense Ministry and the Pentagon have emphasized the presence of 100,000 militiamen in the Saigon and Mekong River delta areas, experienced officers regard them as ineffective against veteran Communist divisions.

Ultimately the defense of the sprawling Saigon sector depends on about 48,000 to 50,000 regular troops. Some of the units have suffered serious casualties and all are short of equipment. In the present crippled state of the South Vietnamese Air Force, furthermore, they cannot expect effective support.

Against this garrison the

North Vietnamese have concentrated 10 to 12 divisions, or 100,000 to 120,000 men. The estimate is that fewer than half have been intensively engaged, so they are fresher and probably more confident than the tired Southerners. They are also better equipped.

A Long Request List

Reliable estimates of Southern material losses in the confused fighting of the last week are not available, but the list submitted to Congress by the Defense Department reflects the inadequacies.

South Vietnam urgently needs more than 100,000 rifles, 750 field guns, over 100 tanks, 330 armored personnel carriers, over 100 antitank missile launchers and hundreds of mortars, vehicles, radios and other items.

Some of this would be earmarked for the eight divisions Saigon is said to be frantically trying to organize out of the troops filtering in from the debacle farther north and from independent ranger units.

North Vietnam has meanwhile expanded its ascendancy in weapons. Infantry attacks are preceded by artillery and rocket barrages and accompanied by strong armored formations. Soviet-built field guns outrange most of Saigon's artillery and Soviet tanks are more than a match for older American models, although, American sources said, newer models with 90-mm guns have fought the Soviet tanks to a standstill.

Students of North Vietnam's military thinking argue that it wants to avoid a street by street struggle for Saigon, which would be costly in casualties and destructive of property as well as marring the image of liberators that Communist propaganda has attempted to paint.

Hanoi's tactics, the military analysts said, will be to seek the destruction of Saigon's remaining forces outside the city in the expectation that capitulation will follow.

If these tactics succeeded, "the whole situation will go very fast," one source commented, adding, "Collapse could come in a matter of hours, not days, if the regular units are broken in battles on the outskirts."

The employment of the South's two waning military assets, air power and armor, in the last week of fighting were criticized by an experienced officer, who felt that fighter-bombers should have been used more often in support of the hard-pressed ground forces and that tanks should have been husbanded.

South Vietnam began the campaign with a high degree of mobility. Losses of transport, shortages of fuel and spare parts and weaknesses in maintenance reduced this advantage. At the same time the Communists deployed hundreds of Soviet-built trucks and attained unprecedented mobility.

A Flag Stays Down

Uncertain Cambodian Embassy Conducts 'Business as Usual'

18 Apr 75 By Elizabeth Becker
Washington Post Staff Writer

The flag of the Khmer Republic was not raised yesterday over the Cambodian Embassy, 4500 16th St. NW.

And the diplomats inside said they did not even know the name of the new government that accepted the surrender of the Khmer Republic on Wednesday.

Drawing on their civil servants' sense of duty in the absence of official directives from Phnom Penh, now held by the Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea—the official name for the Cambodian rebel government—the six diplomats say they will carry on with business as usual.

"I couldn't be happier than to see peace established in my country, an end of hostilities," was the official statement made by press attache Peang-Meth Gaffar.

"We all feel relief that the blood-letting is over and that rice will grow again," he added.

Secretaries opened and closed the embassy on contrary orders. Diplomats were divided on whether the war was officially over. And everyone scurried about, saying "No comment" or its equivalent in French when asked about their situation in light of the defeat in Phnom Penh.

Both of the gracious brick buildings in the Embassy compound were guarded by extra police from the Executive Protective Service.

The diplomats avoided questions such as what the new government wants to do with its Embassy and staff, whether the United States will recognize the new Cambodian government and whether any of the diplomats will be considered traitors were avoided yesterday.

"Yes, I am the military attache and I am going to lunch," said Brig. General So Sotta when asked if he was working yesterday.

Un Sim, the Cambodian ambassador who arrived in Washington in June, 1973, was not available for comment, but his wife said they had made no plans.

Going on with business-as-usual was difficult if not impossible. Communication with the Cambodian capital was cut. Visitors were screened through most of the day as secretaries tried to sort the essential from the frivolous.

A salesman for a liquor and cigarette wholesale company wasturned away during the noon break.

"There have been no decisions about whether we will work for a new government, if we will leave the country. We are civil servants so I suppose the new government will pay our salaries," the press attache said.

The minister counselor, Vat Ho, said while climbing into his car that "but of course, I am a diplomat... a diplomat of the Khmer Republic, yes."

The embassy compound, Cambodian property, has now had three different government owners. The Royal Government of Cambodia, headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, occupied the premises from 1954 until 1965 when diplomatic relations were broken between the United States and Cambodia.

Relations were resumed in 1960 but the new ambassador was in residence for less than a year when Lon Nol's government took over and the prince's pictures were removed. Since the prince was the titular head of the successful rebel movement it is presumable that his portrait will replace those of Lon Nol still hanging in the chancery.

Mildred Foster, a neighbor who has lived at 1603 Alhison St. since 1926, said she hoped the Embassy would not be vacant again.

"They've been nice neighbors and it had been so dreary seeing the empty houses when the Cambodians were on the outs with us," Mrs. Foster said. "I hope it won't stand idle again. I do hate to lose my neighbors. When they moved in they said to come over and visit them anytime I was lonely."

WASHINGTON POST 17 APRIL 1975

Early Ed., 18 April 75 page 4-F

Looking For an Exit in Saigon

By Peter Arnett
Associated Press

SAIGON, April 16 (AP)—They want out.

The young Vietnamese woman at the U.S. consulate with a cable from a former GI in Denver that reads, "I love you Phuong, I want to marry you."

"Isn't this enough to get me a passport?" the woman asks. It isn't.

The Saigon lawyer with two daughters at Barnard College, New York, waiting at the Interior Ministry, a bagful of plasters in his hand for speeded-up paperwork.

"They will kill me if I stay here. I will pay anything to leave," he said. No one wants his money.

And there is the former Special Forces camp cook, the U.S. Agency for International Development mission driver, the uncle of the commander of a paratroop regiment outside Saigon, and on and on.

They all want out from imperiled Saigon, tens of thousands of Vietnamese who fear being left behind when the Americans finally leave their country.

How to get out?

There are three ways. The legal way, the illegal way and the American way.

The American way is "Operation Talon Vise," a reported U.S. military project that envisages rescuing 200,000 or more Vietnamese whose lives may be endangered by their association with 20 years of American policy in Vietnam.

But few Vietnamese can be found in Saigon who have any faith left in the American promise. Officials in Washington are not very optimistic either. They say a combination of events is forcing the U.S. government to virtually write off the project.

"Unless there is a ceasefire or an agreement by the North Vietnamese army to let the South Vietnamese leave peacefully, we will have a real mess," predicted one State Department official.

A Vietnamese colonel in logistics who was trained in the United States echoed the State Department official.

"Think it through," he said. "If the American plan went into effect, we would immediately lose all senior police, military and government officials, because they would be the first to go."

"On the list would be the command staffs of all the combat units around Saigon. Tell me, who fights the war while all these people leave?" he asked. "And who will keep government functioning? It is all a pipe dream."

With the American way barely a slim hope, many Vietnamese are trying for the legal way. This means getting a passport issued and an exit visa.

Even in normal times, only the privileged Vietnamese could travel abroad. Recently visas were restricted to businessmen, but now all

visas have been suspended except in exceptional cases.

Thousands of Vietnamese who claim to be the exceptional case have bogged down the Interior Ministry with applications. Stories are circulating around Saigon that massive bribes are required, but in fact, checks at the Saigon airport indicate that few passports are being issued at all.

Only President Nguyen Van Thieu has the authority to open the visa escape hatch.

"Thieu will have his own way out in the end, like Lon Nol," said the daughter of a Foreign Ministry official. "But we'll all be left behind."

President Lon Nol of Cambodia left Phnom Penh for overseas about 10 days before the complete American withdrawal from the besieged city.

The U.S. embassy has offered to speed up the paperwork on visas for relatives of Vietnamese girls who married GIs and who are now living in the United States. Each morning they throng the U.S. consulate, along with former girl friends of soldiers.

The U.S. embassy promises to complete necessary paperwork for legitimate applicants in 10 days to two weeks.

The third way out is the illegal route, fleeing the country without papers like the Hungarians and Cubans in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

There is no land route of escape because the neighboring countries of Laos and Cambodia are in Communist hands. That leaves the sea.

Some Vietnamese families are known to have left already, leasing large fishing boats and coastal vessels and sailing off to Singapore and the Philippines.

However, some have been turned back by Vietnamese navy patrols.

Many of the hundreds who plan to leave by boat are waiting "for the right time" a total collapse of government before they leave.

"When that time comes, the Vietnamese navy will be too busy rescuing their own families to worry about the rest of us on the high seas," commented one Vietnamese who has paid the equivalent of \$5,000 for a place on a large fishing vessel for his family of five.

Aboard ship, he said, will be a doctor and his family, arms to repel pirates, "and a diplomat to negotiate when we reach a foreign port," he said.

There is one final way out that lots of Vietnamese are talking about: suicide.

"My wife and I have made a pact that if all else fails, I will shoot her and the two children and then myself," said a lawyer. He told close relatives that his associations with past Saigon governments and the Americans "means death, or the equivalent, under the Communists."

WALL STREET JOURNAL *Early Read 18 Apr 75*
17 APRIL 1975 *page 1-F*

Ford 'Absolutely Convinced' Situation In Vietnam Can Stabilize With Arms Aid

By ROBERT KEATLEY

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — With an escalation of rhetoric, President Ford said yesterday that he is "absolutely convinced" Saigon can stabilize the military situation in South Vietnam if it got \$722 million more in American arms.

His subordinates claimed much less the day before. Appearing before congressional committees, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Defense Secretary James Schlesinger and Army Chief of Staff Frederick C. Weyand were all less positive. They agreed the Saigon regime would collapse without more aid, but had only "a chance" of surviving with it.

Mr. Ford, however, said new military assistance would let South Vietnam negotiate a peace settlement from a stronger position. He also claimed "the tragic situation" in South Vietnam today could have been avoided if Congress had voted enough arms aid in recent years.

"A relatively small additional commitment in military and economic aid compared to the \$150 billion we had previously spent" could have prevented the recent retreat by Saigon's army, he insisted in an appearance before the American Society of Newspaper Editors. The President was questioned by a panel of editors at the ASNE meeting here.

Improved Chances

Meantime, the chances of getting congressional approval for some additional assistance, though probably much less than the \$722 million Mr. Ford requested, seem to be improving.

Sen. Robert Byrd (D., W.Va.), the second-ranking Democrat in the upper house, said he was "much impressed" by the Ford administration's arguments for additional weaponry and concluded: "I think I could vote for some further military aid." Sen. Byrd's views often reflect political trends on Capitol Hill and may indicate significant, if reluctant, support for new appropriations.

The main reason for such a switch could involve domestic politics more than foreign policy. Mr. Ford has, in effect, told Congress that Saigon will fall without more help and thus has given the lawmakers responsibility for Saigon's survival, at least to a degree. Rather than shoulder the blame, legislators might vote some extra funds so that collapse of South Vietnam, which many consider to be inevitable, can't be called their fault.

In addition to possible arms aid, other funds related to the South Vietnam situation will probably be voted.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has drafted a bill authorizing \$200 million for evacuation of Americans and some South Vietnamese from the country in event of a Communist take-over. According to Chairman John Sparkman (D., Ala.), the bill would permit the U.S. to extract up to 174,000 Vietnamese whose lives might be endangered if they remained behind. This would include certain government officials,

employees of the U.S. government and private companies and others known to oppose communism.

The White House backs this proposal in principle but disagrees on one important item: it says \$200 million isn't enough to finance a successful evacuation. Assistant Secretary of State Philip Habib yesterday told the Senate committee that "Secretary of State Kissinger said the President accepted the concept of such a contingency fund . . . if the funds were adequate. My understanding is that the funds are not considered adequate."

Just how much the administration wants wasn't stated, and chances of getting large sums remain uncertain. House Speaker Carl Albert (D., Okla.) said that even a \$200 million request "would get a fairly cold reception" in the House, though Senate prospects seem brighter.

There is widespread support on both sides of Capitol Hill for humanitarian assistance and refugee relief. Mr. Ford last week asked for an initial sum of \$250 million for these purposes, and Congress seems likely to vote some money, though not necessarily that amount.

However, the talk about special evacuation funds has confused the situation. Some legislators consider the Senate committee's \$200 million proposal a substitute for the President's \$250 million request for humanitarian aid. Whether the Congress will eventually vote on three fund requests (these two plus military aid) or only two remains uncertain.

Meantime, the battlefield news from Indochina remained grim.

The Phnom Penh government, having lost its airport and with Communist forces inside the city, offered to surrender. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the nominal leader of the Khmer Rouge, however, declined the offer. As Mr. Ford noted during his session with the editors, the prince probably doesn't have the political power needed to accept a surrender; he is considered only a figurehead leader who really doesn't control forces fighting in his name.

Abandoned City

In South Vietnam, Saigon's forces abandoned Phan Rang, one of the few coastal cities it still held, and suffered some reverses near Xuan Loc, which controls an important road leading into the capital. Communist artillery also closed down Bien Hoa air base, the government's largest military field.

But the Xuan Loc battle continued heavy and, so far, indecisive. American officials believe the Nguyen Van Thieu government would gain a breather if it could hold that city and force the North Vietnamese into at least a temporary retreat there. If Xuan Loc falls, however, many U.S. officials here believe Saigon will collapse quickly.

In any case, there's little belief here that any Saigon government can survive for long. The best that U.S. officials hope for is a battlefield stalemate, followed by a peace settlement essentially on Hanoi's terms.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR 17 APRIL 1975

early bird 18 Apr 75 page 2-F

Viet 'hostage' theory spurs Congress

By Robert P. Hey
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

Many key members of Congress believe that proposals to give military aid to South Vietnam must appear to be going through Congress, to ensure that the South Vietnamese do not violently turn on Americans in Saigon in frustration.

This "hostage" theory, as it is called, gained credence after the Senate Foreign Relations Committee met April 14 with President Ford. Several members came away with the distinct impression that the President and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger hold this view.

Thus some members since have spoken of a renewed willingness to provide additional aid — possibly even military aid — to Saigon. Privately, however, most congressional sources flatly insist Congress will not give more military aid now to South Vietnam.

However, many key members of Congress continue to believe the administration does not insist that this additional military aid be provided.

They cite lack of private administration pressure for passage: "I haven't had a call in three weeks from the State Department on the issue," says a key Republican source in a typical comment, "but when they want something, I can't get away from them."

What the Senate decides in the next few days will set the congressional trend. Though both houses are holding several hearings, even a top House source concedes: "The action is in the Senate now" — and the House is waiting to act on whatever the Senate recommends on Vietnam aid.

Fund approval advances

The first step was tentative approval Tuesday night, April 15, by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of \$200 million to be used for the withdrawal of Americans from Saigon. The proposal would permit President Ford to use the money, if necessary, for defensive military purposes to aid the withdrawal.

This is a "contingency fund," said Sen. Jacob Javits (R) of New York, at a breakfast meeting Wednesday with reporters.

Congress understands the exquisite delicacy of removing many Americans quietly from Saigon without appearing to abandon South Vietnam. It believes President Ford is on the right track by unobtrusively removing all nonessential Americans — so that the total remaining in South Vietnam is reduced nearly to 1,000 from today's under 5,000. Congress has been pushing him in this direction for days.

Some members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee were impressed with the President's promise to force U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin to speed up his pullout of nonessential Americans, made during their Monday meeting. When it is accomplished, presumably in about one week, Senate sources say, the remaining 1,000 Americans in South Vietnam will be a manageable number to evacuate at one time should events so dictate.

However, some members of Congress believe the administration has not thought beyond the evacuation of Americans, and has no concrete plans for evacuating a substantial number of South Vietnamese.

This newspaper has learned that in closed-door testimony Tuesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee, State Department Southeast Asia expert Philip Habib said that in order to evacuate the 200,000 Vietnamese the administration says might be killed by the Communists, one of two conditions would be essential: a stabilized military situation or prior approval for the evacuation by the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong.

Mr. Habib also told the committee, sources say, that this mass evacuation could not be accomplished during chaos, such as accompanied the fall of some South Vietnamese cities. Should chaos occur, he said, the U.S. would

have to do the best it could to evacuate as many Vietnamese as possible.

But committee sources believe that if the military situation were stabilized, the U.S. would not feel the need to evacuate the Vietnamese.

As to arranging an agreement with the Viet Cong, during questioning Mr. Habib said the Viet Cong had not contacted the United States about arranging for such an evacuation. When asked if the U.S. had initiated such a contact with the Viet Cong he responded indirectly, by asking the inquiring senator how he would go about making such a contact, and what he would offer the Viet Cong in return.

WASHINGTON STAR - 16 APRIL 1975 Pg. 6 (17)

Aid Shuffle Helps Saigon

Early kind 18 Apr 75 Page 2-4

Some items on the \$722 million list of emergency military aid for South Vietnam have already been sent to Saigon, although Congress seems likely to reject the aid request.

According to informed sources, some of the most urgent arms supplies on the list have been sent by a juggling of military aid books. They have been charged to the remaining funds in this fiscal year's military assistance appropriation for South Vietnam.

Such things as medical supplies from the 1975 fiscal year aid program have been held up so that more critical things can be rushed to bolster the defenses of Saigon, the sources said.

The administration is hoping that Congress will vote for the \$722 million in emergency military aid which President Ford asked Thursday, and then the books can be straightened out by putting the critical

items into that appropriation while reinstating the scheduled fiscal year 1975 supplies.

BUT IF CONGRESS balks at the emergency aid, as virtually all Capitol Hill observers expect, then it might not make much difference anyway. Saigon would then be expected by officials here to fall and whether the last drops of FY75 aid went for armaments or medical supplies would not leave complications for future bookkeeping.

The \$722-million figure was put on a list of urgent needs worked out in Saigon two weeks ago by Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, the Army chief of staff, and Erich von Marbod, the Pentagon supervisor of aid to Indochina. Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger testified before Senate

committees yesterday on the need for the aid.

Kissinger gave figures showing that \$396 million of it would be used "for ammunition, fuel, spare parts and medical supplies to sustain up to 60 days of intensive combat, and to pay for the cost of transporting those items."

INFORMATION given by him and Schlesinger showed that \$140 million would be used to re-equip and reconstitute stragglers from the rout in northern South Vietnam into four divisions, \$120 million to upgrade 12 ranger groups into better-armed army regiments, and about \$66 million to turn some territorial forces into infantry regiments.

Even with the new firepower and reorganized troops, South Vietnamese forces will be outnumbered about 3-to-2, Kissinger said. — Henry S. Bradsher

WASHINGTON STAR 16 APRIL 1975(17)

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Resistance Stiffens in Vietnam

It is still too soon at this stage of the battle to predict the outcome of the fighting around Xuan Loc, 36 miles northeast of Saigon. What can be said is that the battle is of critical importance to the defense of the capital. The North Vietnamese have committed a large force, including elements of three divisions. And so far, the South Vietnamese army, with about the same number of troops, is holding its own and inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy.

In the delta area to the south of Saigon as well, the North Vietnamese are applying heavy pressure, trying to cut Saigon's communications with South Vietnam's main food-producing region. Here, too, the early signs are encouraging. According to reports, government troops have beaten off repeated Communists assaults in southern Long An and northern Dinh Tuong provinces, aimed at cutting Highway 4 which links Saigon to the south. A thrust toward the major city of Can Tho is said to have been repulsed, again with heavy Communist casualties.

After the dismal performance of the Saigon forces in the opening phase of the North Vietnamese offensive, they now appear to be standing their ground and giving at least as much as they are receiving. If this continues to be the

case, a reassessment of the general prophecies of imminent doom could be in order.

There are a number of sound military reasons for a stiffening of the defense in South Vietnam. The Communists, in trying to follow up rapidly after the collapse of resistance in northern South Vietnam, are quite certainly over-extended. They will need time to consolidate their gains, bring up supplies and regroup before attempting a major assault on the capital. This should provide a precious breathing-spell to tighten Saigon's defenses in a situation where a further major retreat would spell almost certain disaster.

Although the will to stand and fight is growing among the defenders, the long-range outlook remains bleak. The Communists, who already outnumber and outgun Saigon's troops, are receiving reinforcements from North Vietnam at the rate of 1,000 men a day. The American Congress, despite the pleas of the administration, seems adamantly opposed to sending any more badly-needed military aid to South Vietnam. And with no political solution to the conflict remotely in sight, even the most desperate and determined resistance is not likely to stop a Communist advance in the end.

Letter to the Editor

Vietnam: Looking Back—And Ahead *Washington Post 18 April 1975*

In my opinion your editorial efforts to assess the blame for the debacle in South Vietnam have missed the point. The failures behind what is happening now are failures of perception in which many, if not most of us, share—not the least including The Washington Post.

Because their colonial past had left them weak and the destruction and demoralization of the war and the Japanese occupation had further exaggerated that weakness, the countries of Southeast Asia were especially severe casualties of World War II. And because they started so far behind they were slower than most countries to recover from the war and its aftermath.

Through local Communist and pro-Communist political parties and through armed and other subversion the USSR and the Chinese People's Republic, sometimes separately, sometimes in tandem, have persisted in their efforts to extend their influence in the area, despite occasional setbacks. The impetus this has given to internal political conflict and chaos has also slowed development.

Considering this background, with our help and that of some of our allies, most of the countries of Southeast Asia—including South Vietnam—have made remarkable economic progress and have contributed importantly to the spectacular growth in recent years of the strength, stability and self-reliance of countries of the Pacific Basin—the area most geopoliticians agree is the one that will most affect our—indeed the world's—future.

Until it began to weaken on Vietnam, the U.S. had made a major contribution to the area, helping to bring independence, to stimulate and assist economic development, to encourage the use of free-market economies and to promote self-reliance and self-expression. It had wisely—though, sometimes belatedly—realized that helping those who could help themselves and encouraging the maximum of self-motivation, self-choice and self-help, was the key to helping development of these countries. The fragility of some of them, for example that revealed by the recent rout in South Vietnam, only underlines the importance of our role.

No one should be deluded that these areas will not be closed to the U.S. as they come under Communist control or that this will not mean an increased threat to the pluralistic way of life for ourselves and our friends in Southeast Asia, who belong to some of the most pluralistic of societies.

Preoccupation with blame, recrimination and the debate on the past will only make a bad situation worse. Concentrating on and quarreling over the poor Vietnamese orphans, for example, will only add to the image of a U.S. that is cutting and running in Southeast Asia.

What is needed is a new sense of U.S. interest, determination and involvement in an area that every post-World War II President and Congress have realized is important—a concept which until

recently, the press and public supported. What is needed is new words and new actions that will convince the Thais, Malaysians, Singaporeans, Filipinos and Indonesians, as well as others interested in the area—but mainly ourselves—that while the U.S. may have stumbled badly in Indochina it has no intention of abandoning its strong friendship and relationship of mutual assistance with countries in that area. There is a need for dispelling some discernible doubt on that score.

Francis J. Galbraith,
Former U.S. Ambassador to
Indonesia and Singapore.

Washington.

On Leadership

I read with much interest the article by Joseph Califano Jr., entitled "Where Have all the Leaders Gone" appearing in the April 7 Washington Post.

In assessing the breakdown of our leadership and condemning the mutual recrimination of the President and Congress, Mr. Califano misses several important points.

Thus far Congress has not articulated any foreign policy in regard to Southeast Asia other than by cutting the President's military assistance budget for 1975 and by refusing to act either negatively or positively on the President's emergency request made on January 28 for \$300 million for Vietnam and \$228 million for Cambodia. At the very least the congressional leadership should bring these ques-

tions to the floor for a determination by the full bodies. The Senate has not even held hearings on Vietnam, and the Cambodia aid bill has lain on the calendar for over two weeks with no action.

Our foreign policy has undergone fundamental and dramatic changes during recent years. With few exceptions, until the presidency of Lyndon Johnson, the Chief Executive determined our foreign policy. However, beginning with President Johnson and culminating with the passage of the War Powers Act in 1973 under President Nixon, the legislative branch has taken it upon itself to be at least a co-participant with the President in foreign affairs.

With its new powers Congress must also be ready to bear the attendant burdens and responsibilities. This includes criticism and scrutiny.

I believe the Congress, the President and the American people must determine the extent of our commitment to the assistance of our allies. We must determine whether our commitment to the defense of liberty is, and should be, as strong as that of Russia and China is in support of tyranny.

The decisions we reach may ultimately reveal whether we acted in the spirit of Winston Churchill, who believed a country must take risks in the defense of liberty, or in the spirit of Neville Chamberlain, who espoused "peace in our time" but brought us Munich.

Dewey F. Bartlett,

United States Senator (R-Okla.).

Washington.

An 'Insolvent' Foreign Policy

U.S. foreign policy, in the words of Walter Lippmann, is the "Shield of the Republic." A strong shield protects the fortunes, the liberties, and the lives of the people. A solvent foreign policy is the essential Welfare Program that a wise and compassionate government provides for the people.

Whatever peace and prosperity the people may seem to be enjoying, if the nation's foreign policy is not solvent, they are on the road to war, and mayhap to ruin. An insolvent foreign policy plunged America into World Wars I and II.

It requires no foreign policy expertise to see that our insolvent policy is once again setting the stage for a world war.

A foreign policy is insolvent when a nation's power (its resources and military means) is no longer adequate to fulfill its overseas commitments; when all its alliances are in disarray and some have crumbled; when allies and friends begin to question not only its capacity to fulfill its commitments but its fidelity to them; when it is widely perceived by other nations to be growing relatively weaker in power than its adversaries and less resolute in its national purposes; when it begins to trade with its enemies as friends; and with its friends as enemies when many of

fulfilling the economic and military commitment it has made to an ally in battle, it accepts and even courts defeat, and abandons its ally to the mercy of the common enemy in the name of "morality"; when faced with the threat of another conflict, the government itself is torn by dissension about the conduct of its diplomacy, the condition of its arsenal, and where the vital interests of the nation lie.

Above all, a foreign policy is insolvent when the people, sick of political recriminations, and confused about what commitments have been made in their name that may require them to fight and die, begin to seek surcease from sacrifice in disarmament and "peace" in isolationism.

As a nation averts its face from the shameful and bloody shambles we call Vietnam and turns to the crisis in the Middle East, I am reminded of the last line in the "Memoirs" of the late Arthur Krock:)

I have contracted a visceral fear.

It is that the tenure of the United States as the first power of the world may be one of the briefest in history.

Thanks to an insolvent foreign policy, this is a visceral fear many Americans have now come to share.

Clare Boothe Luce

Washington.

The Refugee Strategy: 'A Fabrication'

The Post has printed another "vicious fabrication" in T. D. Allman's allegation that the U. S. deliberately followed a "refugee strategy" in Vietnam. At a time when you're calling for an end to mutual recriminations, why revive this old canard that U. S. policy "always has rested on the deliberate production of refugees"?

The massive refugee flow was a tragic but unplanned consequence of the way the war was fought—on both sides. True, our firepower created refugees but were the Tet offensive, the 1972 Easter offensive, and the present cataclysm (long after all U. S. troops had left) the product of U. S. strategy? And the fact that almost all refugees fled to the government side has long frustrated those who would have us believe that only U.S. shoring up of our puppet governments was what frustrated popular preference for the other side.

Allman's citations of USAID, General Westmoreland, and myself are grossly misleading. Of course, we sought to attrit the VC population base; control and support of the people is what the war was all about. But the way we sought to do it was by bringing security and economic revival to the countryside, not by forcing the farmers into the cities. Forced draft urbanization was never part of our policy, regardless of what Professor Huntington wrote (and as I told him at the time). In fact, once the tide turned our way in 1969-71 after Hanoi's Tet offensive was crushed, refugees began returning to the countryside.

The Pentagon Papers contain every secret policy directive issued from Washington from 1950 through 1968. Find me a single one that called for "depopulating the countryside." We made many mistakes in Vietnam, but this was not one of them.

R. W. Komer,
(former chief pacification
adviser to the GVN, 1967-68)

Alexandria.

How can a reader commend you for publishing such a needed, thoughtful, and balanced editorial as yours on "The Evacuation of Vietnam" on April 11, when next to it you place such a blatantly Hanoi-biased bit of propaganda as the article by T. D. Allman on "The Refugee Strategy"? Since my name was mentioned in the latter, which I look upon as a piece of shoddy, yellow journalism not worthy of your pages, I feel that I must respond to it since you saw fit to display it prominently.

The Allman piece is so filled with artful "disinformation" that I will limit myself only to the part in it referring to myself and the implications he draws from this. I trust that other Americans will respond to his calumny about them.

Allman credits me with stampeding a million Vietnamese to flee from North to South Vietnam 20 years ago. Perhaps I should feel flattered that anyone should believe that I have such persuasive powers. Instead, I am angry at his implied belittling of the intelli-



gence and strong character of the Vietnamese people. There were far deeper, more profound reasons for the flight of these huge masses of the Vietnamese people 20 years ago than a few words that any foreigner among them could say. The same holds true for the great exodus from Vietnamese homes we are seeing today.

The Vietnamese have deep roots in their homes. Anyone who has lived among them cannot help but be struck by the closeness with which they hold their ancestors. Any uprooting from their ancestral homes is a climactic experience, a separation from a most meaningful and cherished part of their lives. Only great fear, terror about harm to a family can cause a Vietnamese family to move away from what is so dear to it. Today, as they did 20 years ago, the Vietnamese refugees are not fleeing from possible bombing by Americans. There were no American bombers then. There are none today. These Vietnamese are fleeing from Communist rule. This rule is an experience that the Vietnamese have seen at first hand. After 30 years of war, they are deaf to propaganda from any side. They judge only from what they have seen for themselves. And they're running away from the Communists, not towards them.

Admittedly, the leaders in Hanoi must feel a great loss of face that their behavior towards the Vietnamese people has caused so many to flee from them when given the chance. I can understand why they have lackeys provide alibis for them in the Western press. The great flight today, as 20 years ago, is taking place in front of the whole world, not behind the bamboo curtain of their authoritarian rule where what is seen and heard is under their control.

In the face of military victories, to-

day's reaction of the Vietnamese people must be an excruciating humiliation to those who claim to lead the people. The recoiling reaction of the masses of Vietnamese people underscores the falseness of the self-appointed position of the Politburo in Hanoi and the leadership of the E. Dong Party as spokesmen for the people. Self-appointed? The Vietnamese people have had little or no say in picking such spokesmen in the controlled and rigged elections of North Vietnam. Nor can the Vietnamese people believe that this Communist leadership stands for any values recognized as being Vietnamese. A foreign ideology and organization of society are being forced upon them by a determined group of "true believers." Or does Mr. Allman, or anyone else, actually think that Marx and Lenin, with their ideas and systems of control, are Vietnamese in origin?

The Vietnamese might appear to be hapless in the face of the overwhelming tragedy overtaking them, but they are not stupid. They might well turn upon Americans for deserting them in the agony of their desperate hour of need. Yet, this cannot be translated as meaning that they welcome Communist rule, as Mr. Allman implies. It astounds me that he tried to sell so shoddy an argument to Americans. After all, most of us are the descendants ourselves of refugees and slaves. We know how great is the longing for individual liberty among those who don't have it.

Give us honest information as we to determine what best to do at a moment of history. We are close to our 200th anniversary as a nation. Help us be true to the principles towards which we have striven.

E. G. Lansdale,
Maj. Gen., U.S.A.F. (Ret.)

Alexandria.

104 More Americans Evacuated

By Don Oberdorfer

Washington Post Foreign Service

CLARK AIR BASE, The Philippines, April 17 — Another 104 Americans and Vietnamese dependents arrived from Saigon today as part of a quiet, continuing exodus from America's longest war.

U.S. Air Force C-141 Starlifters brought three loads of people and materiel to this vast installation, the largest American overseas air base, where 26 months ago the last prisoners of war landed from North Vietnam to signal the emotional climax of direct U.S. combat involvement in the Indochina conflict.

Those who arrived today were mostly U.S. contract personnel who had labored in the cities and countryside of Vietnam on construction and maintenance jobs. Some had Vietnamese wives and children with them, and most said they had little or no notice of their hasty departure from Saigon.

A New Jersey man said that as recently as Monday his maintenance group was told it would remain in Vietnam indefinitely. But as the military situation continued to worsen, sudden orders sent him to Clark on the first leg of a long trip home.

Most of the Saigon expatriates arriving here were placed on other air force flights within a few hours to continue their trips to the United States.

Meanwhile, about 250 Vietnamese who arrived over the past week are being kept almost incommunicado in a three-story barracks as stateless persons—the first of perhaps hundreds of thousands of refugees whose future will pose knotty problems for the U.S. diplomatic service.

These Vietnamese managed to get out of Saigon on air force flights without passports or other formal travel documents. The Philippines has not agreed to receive them, but is closing official eyes to their presence for humanitarian reasons. American officials from President Ford down have said the United States will give fleeing Vietnamese a place to live—but so far no legal procedures have been worked out to make this promise a reality.

Some of this first group of stateless refugees are female servants, common-law wives and children of Americans in Saigon. A few have legal passports themselves but lack documentation for their accompanying children and relatives.

The air force is feeding and housing the refugees free of charge, and the State Department is interviewing them as the first steps toward establishing an American identity. Orders have come down to keep the refugees away from the press at all costs, and guards have been posted around their barracks. Their movements are limited.

The reason for the unusual procedures appears to be uncertainty in high levels of government about their status and fear of establishing precedents. It is also believed that officials' fear news of the presence of the refugees may anger the Saigon government, and perhaps create a large demand from other Vietnamese for similar evacuation opportunities.

Air force officials have prepared to feed and house as many as 5,000 stateless refugees at one time, if the present trickle should become a flood.

The steady, low-key exodus from Saigon continues at this logistical base which long supported the bone and sinew of the Indochina war,

THE WASHINGTON POST

A 16 Friday, April 18, 1975

Viet Police Erupt at U.S. Mission

By Philip A. McCombs

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 17—A Vietnamese police major broke up the long line of Americans and Vietnamese waiting in line before the U.S. Consulate here Thursday morning. "You can't leave this country!" he shouted in Vietnamese. "I'll arrest you all!"

Marine guards quickly escorted several hundred Americans with their Vietnamese children, wives, and fiancées inside the U.S. Embassy compound and locked the gate, leaving the major and five other policemen outside.

The police then went away and the incident ended. Observers said it seems unlikely the police were acting in an official capacity, but the incident is indicative of the explosive atmosphere in Saigon those days and the resentment with which Vietnamese tend to view the American reaction to events.

An Air America helicopter was seen to circle low over downtown Saigon streets in recent days as an American leaned out shooting motion picture film footage. At least some Vietnamese office workers who saw this became nearly hysterical and said they are sure it is part of the planning for an American evacuation. The U.S. embassy refused to comment officially on such activities.

The Vietnamese wives, children and in some cases fiancées of American citizens can leave the country legally, and those lined up in front of the embassy this morning—as people have been doing for weeks now—were waiting for necessary paperwork to get out.

The embassy incident began about 6:40 a.m., when two police jeeps carrying six policemen drove up. The major, whose nametag said, "Tam," got out and quietly began asking questions of the first Vietnamese people in line.

"How does this work?" he asked. "Can anybody get in? What kind of paperwork do you need?"

One of the first women in line explained things to the major, and as the discussion continued he grew more and more agitated.

Finally he began accusing the Vietnamese people in the line of "avoiding the war." Some onlookers said they had the impression that the major believed a Vietnamese couple could leave the country immediately, perhaps by helicopter, simply by getting through the embassy gates.

The major then began telling people that he wouldn't allow them inside the embassy unless they could prove to him that they were married to Americans.

He spoke only in Vietnamese and at no time addressed himself to any of the Americans in line.

A Marine guard at the gate said later that he let the Americans and Vietnamese inside "to save as much harassment as we can." He said that by closing the gate he hoped to make latecomers disperse rather than form a line outside.

Today was the first such incident, and the first time the line was not allowed to form outside the high, modernistic U.S. embassy building here.

Indochina Roundup

Philippines

18 April 75
U. Post

Asks Asian Summit

MANILA — Philippines President Ferdinand E. Marcos, reacting to the fall of Cambodia, called yesterday for an urgent summit meeting of the five-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to consider their security.

Marcos proposed talks with the leaders of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. He set no time for the meeting, and a government spokesman said Manila was prepared to host the meeting.

Marcos said Wednesday night that the U.S. Congress's refusal to extend additional assistance to its Indochina allies "suggests strongly" that the United States no longer considers Southeast Asia vital to its interests.

World Reaction

While many nations prepared to recognize Prince Norodom Sihanouk's Khmer government in Cambodia, the Soviet Union reacted cautiously.

In a Tass news agency dispatch on the second page of the government daily newspaper Izvestia, the fall of Phnom Penh was reported but no mention made of Sihanouk or his Khmer government.

Instead, credit for the "victory of Cambodian patriotic forces" was given to Khieu Samphan, regarded for the past year as the actual leader of the insurgent troops.

The dispatch, from New York, did not allude to the American and South Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1970.

Some observers attributed the Soviets' relative silence on the issue to the Soviet backing in recent years of the deposed Cambodian government of Lon Nol, while Peking supported the insurgents.

Australia and New Zealand promised humanitarian aid for the new government. Australia extended recognition within hours of the fall of Phnom Penh, and New Zealand said it would offer recognition soon.

British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan told the House of Commons that Britain was urgently studying the question of recognition and wanted to see a government take power in orderly fashion.

Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Rumihiiko Togo said Japan would offer recognition soon. One condition, he said, is support for the new government from the ASEAN grouping.

South Korea had no official reaction. On Wednesday, President Park Chung Hee had suggested that the fall of Cambodia and South Vietnam might tempt North Korean President Kim Il Sung to act against the south.

Thai Defense Minister Pramarn Adireksarn said the 380-mile Thai border with Cambodia had been closed to prevent infiltration and said the government would meet to discuss recognition of Sihanouk.

Sri Lanka recognized Sihanouk earlier this week. Portugal said yesterday it will reopen relations with Cambodia and Denmark said it would automatically continue relations with a new Cambodian government.

Peace Request

SAIGON—The South Vietnamese government called on the 12 signatories of the 1973 Paris peace agreement for help in ending the Vietnam war.

In Hanoi, the North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry rejected as slanderous charges by the United States that Hanoi had violated the Paris pact.

Aid Requests

ROME—The World Food Program allocated \$6 million worth of high-protein food for Indochina at the request of United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim.

In New York, Waldheim appealed to all governments for \$100 million in immediate relief for Indochina.

For the Record

- A Vietcong spokesman in Peking said the Communists would not take reprisals against Vietnamese who worked with the United States in Vietnam.

- Two officers of the International Commission of Control and Supervision, caught behind Communist lines near Banmethuot March 10, were returned to Saigon. A Vietcong spokesman said the officers, an Iranian and an Indonesian, were not considered prisoners.

- Greece became the 74th nation to recognize North Vietnam.

- Australia granted a one-year residence to a woman claiming to be Prince Norodom Sihanouk's daughter. The government said it could not confirm her contention.

From staff reports and news dispatches

Khmer Rouge: Victors' Incongruities Begin With Sihanouk

By Lewis M. Simons

Washington Post Foreign Service

BANGKOK, April 17 — Who are the so-called Khmer Rouge, the rebels who in five years of civil war have defeated an American-supported government and its military machine and are now about to take control of Cambodia?

Oddly, even as they already are becoming an internationally recognized government themselves, very little is known about Cambodia's Communists. To most Westerners, including those U.S. intelligence experts who have studied them for years, they retain a blurred, mysterious image.

They are shadowed by seeming incongruities and, at least in theory, split internally by distinct ideological and geopolitical differences. Yet, they have obviously been able to contain these difficulties well enough to

win one of the most impressive military victories in modern warfare.

Perhaps the single greatest incongruity about the Khmer Rouge, or Red Cam-

News Analysis

bodians, is the great and apparent difference between those people who have waged this war in the jungles and the man who speaks most often on their behalf—Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

A pudgy, long-time playboy, the 55-year-old prince professes to be a devout Buddhist and an anti-Communist. Although he has spent the last five years in exile in no less a bastion of doctrinaire communism than Peking, just this week, according to a news agency report from the Chinese capital, Sihanouk said the

new Cambodia "will not be a Communist state, it will be democratic."

Just how much weight this kind of remark carries with the insurgent leadership as they prepare to take power in Phnom Penh is hard to know. At other times, Sihanouk has acknowledged that in the long run the Khmer Rouge would have little use for him. "They'll spit me out like a cherry pit," he said once.

The signs indicate that he's right. Information gathered from villagers who fled from insurgent-captured territory in Cambodia reveals that the Communists have established communes and agricultural collectives, killed and tortured a number of Buddhist monks and put the rest to work at various forms of hard labor.

This kind of performance would seem to be unacceptable to a man like Sihanouk,

who has never renounced either his royal title or his religion.

Anyone who ever knew the mercurial prince when he was simultaneously chief of state, movie director, saxophonist, gourmet, womanizer and bon vivant, would have a hard time imagining him living contentedly among the hardliners whom he calls Khmer Rouge but who refer to themselves as "patriots."

And yet, so far, both the "patriots" and Sihanouk himself contend that he will remain head of the government and the party, GRUNK and FUNK, the popularly used French acronyms for the Royal Government of Khmer National Union and the Front of Khmer National Union.

But even if this is technically the case at the moment, it is clear that Sihanouk is by no means a

power among the Cambodian Communists.

Just who really is in charge remains a mystery, just as where GRUNK's headquarters is located is not known. Some observers believe the government-to-be has been operating out of the central Mekong River town of Kratie. But others believe it is a movable headquarters, always operating close to the military front.

The name most commonly associated with Khmer Rouge leadership is that of Khieu Samphan.

Described as physically slight and effeminate in manner, Khieu Samphan is a top leader of the military, government and political party organizations. He is a member of FUNK's politburo, GRUNK's deputy prime minister and minister of national defense, and commander-in-chief of the Cambodian People's Na-

tional Liberation Armed Forces.

If there is anyone calling the shots above Khieu Samphan's head, and most observers believe there is, no one seems to know who that person might be.

A year ago, Khieu Samphan went on a three-month tour of Communist and non-aligned countries in Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The fact that he was known to be out of Cambodia at the height of the 1974 dry season offensive has led several observers to believe that at least on the military side, someone else is in charge.

Like many Khmer Rouge leaders, the 43-year-old Khieu Samphan became a Communist while studying in France. He earned a doctorate in economics and returned to Cambodia in 1959.

From then on, he promoted communism in the

country and ran into difficulty with Sihanouk, who was stridently anti-leftist at that time. Shortly after he got back to Phnom Penh, he was beaten and stripped naked in the streets of the capital by Sihanouk thugs.

Seven years later, when Khieu Samphan disappeared from Phnom Penh to join the Communist underground, Sihanouk put a price on his head. It was initially believed that Sihanouk had him and two other Communists killed. When they reemerged years later, they became known as the "three ghosts."

Another major figure among the Khmer Rouge is Ieng Sary, a special adviser to Khieu Samphan who, for several years, acted as a watchdog over Sihanouk in Peking.

Ieng Sary, who is married to a French-educated Communist like himself, is reputed to have trekked through the

jungles from Phnom Penh to Hanoi in 1971. He is considered pro-North Vietnamese.

Under the blanket label of Khmer Rouge, he Communist leadership appears to be split three ways: those, like Ieng Sary, who are pro-Hanoi; those who are home-grown products and those were former members of the Cambodian elite and fluctuated between being pro and anti-Sihanouk as the prince ran up and down the political scale.

Some observers believe the latter group, who were the most recent arrivals under the Khmer Rouge umbrella, currently may be the key people.

These same observers believe that once the Communists take charge in Phnom Penh, the differences among these three groups, and any number of subdivisions along regional, class and other lines, could broaden into a serious split.

Khmer Rouge Celebrate Their Victory

W. Post 18 Apr 79
From News Dispatches

Victorious Khmer Rouge forces began taking over the administration of Cambodia yesterday. In one of their first acts, they demanded that generals and officials of the defeated Cambodian government report to them under the white flag of surrender.

The climax to five years of rebellion came peacefully in Phnom Penh, and the only shots heard were those fired into the air by the triumphant insurgents, according to reports filed from the Cambodian capital by Cambodian employees of the Associated Press and United Press International.

The agency dispatches reported that the insurgents rode into a city bedecked with white flags, some of them stopping to embrace soldiers of the old government, their former enemies, and inviting them aboard armored personnel carriers for a victory parade.

At 11 a.m. the captured radio station issued an appeal for calm and directed the troops of the old government to lay down their arms. The message was issued jointly in the name of the Khmer Rouge and several military and religious figures associated with the former government, including Gen. Chhim Chhuon, commander of the Phnom Penh garrison.

At the Information Ministry, which is close to the radio station, Gen. Hem Ket Dara, commander of the Khmer Rouge forces in the Phnom Penh area, established his headquarters. His aides said that henceforth their organization would be known as the National Movement Front.

The whereabouts of Khieu Samphan, overall leader of the rebels inside Cambodia, was not known.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, head of state of the new government, and another key Khmer Rouge

leader said their state would be neutralist and non-aligned. They scoffed at concern expressed by U.S. officials that a "bloodbath" of reprisals would follow their conquest of Cambodia.

In Washington, where the U.S. government had been the chief backer of the defeated government, President Ford issued a statement saying, "The United States views the fall of the government of the Khmer Republic with sadness and compassion."

"I wish to express my admiration for the Cambodian government leaders and people, who showed great courage until the end, and to their armed forces who fought valiantly with their remaining supplies."

According to the dispatches filed from Phnom Penh Thursday, sporadic fighting continued in the immediate outskirts until about 8 a.m. At that time, all resistance in the northern sector, an area of a main Khmer Rouge thrust, ended. Soon afterwards army vehicles with loudspeakers began touring the city telling people to display white flags.

The first rebels came into the city from the north. They parked their armored vehicles near the municipal stadium and strolled triumphantly south in groups of three or four along a boulevard by the Tonle Sap River.

A correspondent for the Japanese news agency Kyodo said some of the rebel soldiers told him, "We have come to liberate you from the Americans, the imperialists and the traitors. You are now free. There is no more fighting or bloodbath in this city. Families are reunited."

The AP staffers reported that thousands of people gathered in the streets to wave at the incoming troops. Some surrounded small groups of rebel soldiers and followed them about.

Other people cheered and waved white strips of cloth from windows and roofs, the AP report said. It added that Al Rockoff, an American free-lance photographer, climbed on the hood of a jeep filled with Khmer Rouge soldiers, and the jeep drove up and down the streets.

North Vietnam's leaders said that the Khmer Victory has ushered in a new era of "genuine independence, sovereignty and neutrality," for Cambodia, the North Vietnam News Agency said.

(over)

The Pentagon said its emergency airdrop of food and ammunition to Khmer Republic forces had ended at 11 p.m. Wednesday Washington time. That last airdrop would have been made about an hour after the Khmer Rouge took over the Phnom Penh radio.

The last drop elsewhere in the country, the Pentagon said, was Kompong Chhang at 4:30 a.m. yesterday Washington time.

There were unconfirmed reports from Bangkok that Premier Long Boret had flown to Kompong Chhang from Phnom Penh. There was speculation that he and some other former government leaders might attempt to carry on a resistance movement.

Elsewhere, the surrender of the remaining enclaves of the Khmer Republic seemed almost complete, although the status of one of the largest—Battambang in northwestern Cambodia—was not clear.

A Thai newsman reported from the Cambodian border town of Poipet that the Khmer Rouge appeared to be in effective control. He reported that the takeover had apparently been carried out without resistance.

The rebels, carrying AK-47 and M-16 rifles with strips of red cloth tied to the barrels, had taken up positions in important buildings in Poipet, the reporter said.

Thailand sealed its border with Cambodia to prevent a flood of refugees from coming across. Several plane-loads of Cambodians, totaling about 100 persons, did manage to get to Utapao airport in Thailand as the surrender came.

Among the officials of the former government in Cambodia who reportedly heeded the Khmer Rouge directive to surrender at the Information Ministry in Phnom Penh was

Gen. Lon Non, brother of President Lon Nol.

The president left the country several weeks ago in what was then described as an attempt to bring about a negotiated settlement. Lon Nol is now in Hawaii. An aide said yesterday that he had no comment of the fall of the country.

Lon Non's name was listed on the joint appeal for calm and order for the Republican troops to surrender. Last Saturday it was erroneously reported that Lon Non had left the Cambodian capital on the American evacuation.

Also surrendering were senior monks from the main Buddhist pagodas in the capital. The monks had been among the staunchest opponents of the Communist-led Khmer Rouge movement.

Former Premier Sirik Matak, a key figure in the legislative ouster of his cousin, Prince Sihanouk, five years ago, told newsmen at the Hotel Le Phnom, "I am not leaving my country. I was invited to run away but I refused. I really do not know what will happen to me and my family, but I must stay with my people."

Sirik Matak is on the original list of seven, so-called "super-traitors" whom Prince Sihanouk has said are under a sentence of death. The others included Lon Nol, Long Boret, and former Premier Im Tam. Three others on the list left the country before yesterday's collapse of Phnom Penh.

The list of "super-traitors" was subsequently expanded by Sihanouk first to 14, then 21. But in Paris yesterday, Sihanouk's special envoy to Europe said that only the original "seven historic traitors" would be held accountable for their

past actions. He added, however, that in some other cases there would be trials. "We will judge in a humane way," the envoy said. You're seen that there is no blood-bath in Phnom Penh."

The envoy, Chau Seng, told a crowded news conference that the new government would be neutralist and nonaligned and will allow no foreign bases on Cambodian territory. He said Cambodia will not be a satellite of China or any other neighbor.

Seng denied there was any friction between Sihanouk and the Khmer Rouge who were fighting against him before his overthrow in 1970. But he indicated that the prince would be little more than a symbol.

Asked if there might be elections in the future, he said, "That would not be impossible."

The first tasks of the new government, he said, would be to get life back to normal in the capital.

Reporters inquired about the fate of the several foreign journalists who have disappeared in Cambodia since the fighting began. Seng said, "We are not keeping any journalist prisoner in the liberated zones."

In Peking, Prince Sihanouk held a reception and described the conquest as "the most beautiful page in Cambodian history."

This, he said, was despite the cost of 1 million Cambodian lives. Western sources have estimated the number killed at about 250,000 of Cambodia's 7 million population.

Sihanouk made one brief visit to the Khmer Rouge forces in 1973 and has a shaky position as head of the Royal Cambodian Government of National Union,

as his state-in-exile has been called. Observers have expressed doubt that he wields any real power over his former enemies, the Khmer Rouge.

Nevertheless, at the reception he said that the Khmer Rouge had asked him to be head of state for life.

He also said that he could not tell precisely when he would return to Phnom Penh because his mother was near death. "Maybe in a couple of days, maybe in a couple of weeks," he said.

Cambodia will follow a policy of peaceful coexistence, the prince said. "We shall always struggle against all attempts to sabotage the independence won so dearly."

As the end approached in Phnom Penh Wednesday night, some 2,000 persons, 90 per cent of them Cambodians, sought refuge at the Hotel Phnom—which the International Red Cross had declared a "demilitarized international zone." One person who was refused refuge was Gen. Sak Suthakan, who took over last Saturday as the head of the government.

Early Friday, Reuter quoted informed sources in Bangkok as saying Sak Suthakan was among 120 Cambodians arriving in three planes at the U.S. airbase of Utapao at dawn. A Thai foreign ministry spokesman had said no Cambodian ministers would be permitted in.

Agence France-Presse, in the sole dispatch from Phnom Penh early Friday, reported that late Thursday Khmer Rouge patrols with loudspeakers rolled through the capital warning the population to evacuate because of a threat of shelling. There was no further explanation.

N. Viet Troops Sighted 12 Miles Outside Saigon

W. Post
'Big' Minh Urges Deal With VC

13 Apr 75
 From News Dispatches

SAIGON, April 17—

North Vietnamese regular troops were sighted less than 12 miles from Saigon Thursday.

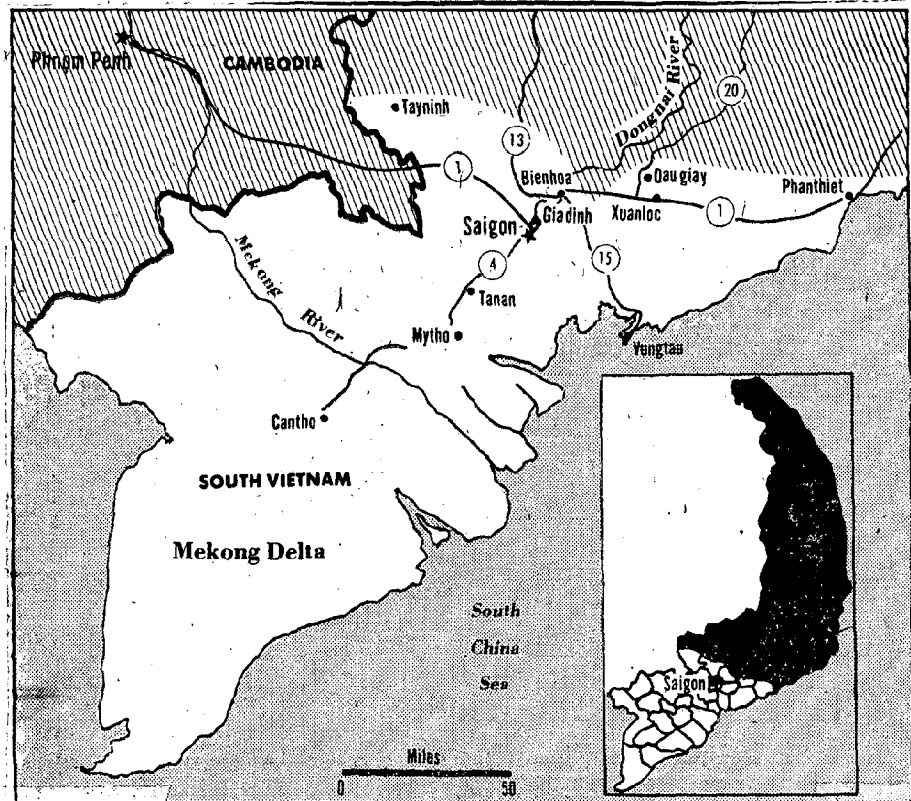
Gen. Duong Van ("Big") Minh demanded meanwhile, that President Thieu resign before Saigon "becomes another Phnom Penh."

Minh said he is ready to head a new government of national reconciliation with the Vietcong, "because that has always been my stand."

American officials were preparing a special processing center at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut air base to expedite the evacuation of non-essential U.S. citizens and their Vietnamese families, as ordered by President Ford.

Military sources said elements of a North Vietnamese unit were spotted just northwest of Giadinh, 10 miles northwest of Saigon. It was the first time Communist regulars have been reported in that area within Saigon's northern defense perimeter since the Tet offensive of 1968.

Attacking North Vietnamese troops, who outnumber government defenders 4 to 1, also pushed a South Vietnamese unit in retreat down Highway 1 northeast of Saigon to a point only 23 miles from the capital.



By Joseph P. Mastrangelo—The Washington Post

Numbers designate highway route numbers, and diagonal lines the Communist-held areas.

Troops believed to be from the 7th North Vietnamese division and estimated at 10,000 men routed a government force of 2,500 men in the Xuanloc sector 38 miles northeast of Saigon. The government still held Xuanloc, a strategic province capital, however.

Earlier Thursday, the sources said, South Vietnamese warplanes destroyed three Communist 130-mm. long-range artillery pieces only 31 miles from Saigon.

Northeast of Saigon, battered government forces fought to hold positions along Highway 1 as hordes of refugees streamed past them toward Saigon.

To the southwest of the menaced capital, Communist forces moved 130 mm.

artillery pieces to the southernmost section of the Mekong Delta and used them to shell a South Vietnamese transport ship, military sources said.

Gen. Minh, a political rival of Thieu, said that if the president remained in power, South Vietnam would collapse.

Minh, who led the 1963 coup that toppled the government of the late Ngo Dinh Diem, spoke at a luncheon for reporters near Saigon.

"The present situation is not hopeless," Minh said. "Non-Communist Vietnamese can still negotiate a relatively good political solution with the Communists within the framework of the Paris peace accords."

"But the urgent problem now is that the government of President Nguyen Van Thieu should resign, for the national interest, and in Saigon, there should be a new government which can implement the agreement."

"The remaining time is short," Minh said. "With the continuation in power of Thieu, very soon Saigon will become another Phnom Penh."

He said that if Thieu refuses to go, "The people will make him go . . . and in that case, I may participate at the people's request. I will play the role the Vietnamese people want me to play."

Minh is considered the leader of the political "Third Force" composed of elements who opposed the Thieu government and the Communists.

In Saigon, military sources did not say how many North Vietnamese troops were spotted north of the capital or in which direction they were traveling. They were believed to have come from the nearby Plain of Reeds, a marshy area which has long been a Communist sanctuary.

Other sources said North Vietnamese regulars were spotted at the northern edge of Giadinh province near Hocmon district town. About 25 miles southwest of Bienhoa and about eight miles northwest of Tansonnhut air base, on the western edge of the capital.

The 130-mm guns knocked out by the South Vietnamese air force Thursday were believed to have been used Monday and Tuesday to shell the Bienhoa air base, 14 miles from Saigon.

They are perhaps the most feared weapons in the Communist arsenal because of

their accuracy and destructive power. They have a range of 17 miles.

Military sources said that the warplanes were in the air waiting for guns to fire. Guiding in on muzzle flashes, the planes swept in and bombed the guns, the sources said.

Military sources said that other long-range 130-mm artillery pieces had been moved by the Communists to the Camau region of the Mekong Delta 185 miles southwest of Saigon.

They said a navy transport ship was hit Wednesday by 130-mm rounds which killed or wounded 15 soldiers and sailors aboard the vessel. The ship, hit as it entered the Namcan naval base, sustained 60 per cent damage.

The sound of big artillery guns rumbled through the curfew-stilled night in the capital Thursday, but military spokesmen said the fire was "outgoing," meaning government gun positions firing at suspected targets or movements.

The sounds of artillery were common every night in Saigon during the years of the big American commitment here, but had not been heard in almost two years.

When the 9 p.m. curfew set in, Saigon police and military security units carried out a special practice alert, taking up positions throughout the city. Loudspeaker trucks moved through the streets urging people to remain calm.

It was announced that a siren would wail three times to warn the capital's population of any attack. The three siren calls would each last 30 seconds.

If the sirens start, the motorists were to park their cars. Cyclists should dismount and everyone have shelter against the walls.

If the warning comes at night, all lights should be extinguished, domestic gas supplies shut off and people should take to their shelters. The authorities said that those persons who did not have shelters should get under the bed or go to the ground floor of their homes and shelter under the staircase.

In an unusual move, the director here of the U.S. Information Agency, Alan Carter, appeared on Vietnamese television to deny rumors flooding the city that the entire U.S. embassy would be evacuated on April 19 if Congress refuses to approve additional military aid for South Vietnam.

Carter, who spoke in English which was translated by the announcer, said it was understandable in the circumstances that some

U.S. citizens and dependents would have wanted to leave "somewhat earlier than they had intended."

It was also logical that the embassy had slowly reduced its non-essential staff over the past few weeks and was now doing so on a somewhat accelerated basis, he said, but he added that the Saigon embassy was still one of the largest U.S. missions in the world.

He also denied rumors that the U.S. consulate is issuing passes to Vietnamese citizens for the purpose of evacuating them and that the long-lines of Americans and Vietnamese outside the consulate meant they were being evacuated.

On Friday, U.S. authorities were expected to begin speeding up processing of the non-essential Americans for evacuation to the United States.

The Americans, most of them with Vietnamese wives and children, will be flown home on U.S. military flights.

For the last 48 hours, U.S. embassy officials have been burning documents and arranging the transport back to the United States of tons of archives.

U.S. officials in Saigon shied away from calling the move an "evacuation" in an apparent effort to avoid damaging the morale of South Vietnamese citizens.

Thieu's government censored all references to a possible South Vietnamese evacuation, leaving large white spaces on the pages of Saigon's English-language daily newspaper Thursday.

Officials refused to say how many persons were involved, but the total U.S. evacuation was expected to include about 3,000 American citizens.

Administration sources in Washington said the number of Americans in Vietnam could be reduced to about 1,000 in two or three weeks. Sources in Saigon said there were fewer than 4,000 Americans left in Vietnam.

A Western source said British officials urged the 120 remaining Britons in Vietnam to "make every effort to leave the country without delay while public transport services still exist."

The U.S. evacuation plan was opposed by some U.S. embassy personnel in Saigon on the grounds that it would harm the morale of a population already shaken by the rapid Communist advances.

A U.S. source said fewer than 50 Americans with Vietnamese families have been leaving daily during the past week, but the number was expected to double with the opening of the processing center.

WASHINGTON POST

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For the Record

- A Vietcong spokesman in Peking said the Communists would not take reprisals against Vietnamese who worked with the United States in Vietnam.

- Two officers of the International Commission of Control and Supervision, caught behind Communist lines near Banmethuot March 10, were returned to Saigon. A Vietcong spokesman said the officers, an Iranian and an Indonesian, were not considered prisoners.

- Greece became the 74th nation to recognize North Vietnam.

- Australia granted a one-year residence to a woman claiming to be Prince Norodom Sihanouk's daughter. The government said it could not confirm her contention.

From staff reports and news dispatches

NEW YORK TIMES 18 APRIL 1975, Pg 14

*Early Bird 18 April 75 Page 7***4 U.S. Ships Ready for Evacuation Role**

By PAUL L. MONTGOMERY

At least four American cargo ships under charter to the Defense Department are off South Vietnam or on the way there with orders to stand by for possible evacuation of refugees, shipping executives said yesterday.

Edward J. Heine Jr., president of United States Lines, said two of his line's ships—refurbished after a harrowing voyage with refugees from Da Nang two weeks ago—were standing by south of Saigon, while a third was scheduled to leave Thailand for the area imminently. Central Gulf Lines of New Orleans also said one of its ships was on the way from Thailand.

Under Navy Charter

Mr. Heine held a new conference yesterday at the offices of his public relations concern, Howard J. Rubenstein Associates, to tell of the role of his three ships in the hectic evacuation from Da Nang and Cam Ranh early this month. He said he had been released by the Defense Department from a operation. Later, executives of Central Gulf and Seatrain Lines, which had one ship each under military charter in the area, gave details of their experiences.

The five cargo ships under charter to the Navy's Military Sealift Command and operate

on orders from Washington, not from the owners. They are the Pioneer Contender, the Pioneer Challenger and the Pioneer Commander of the United States Lines, the Transcolorado of Sea Train, and the Greenport of Central Gulf.

Mr. Heine said his three ships had carried 34,450 refugees from Da Nang and Cam Ranh in the beleaguered north to Phu Quoc Island in the Gulf of Siam. None were designed to carry passengers and he said the masters of the vessels described "incredible" crowding and disorder on the voyages.

The Pioneer Contender packed on 16,600 people for the trip from Cam Ranh to Phu Quoc, which Mr. Heine said was a record for refugee evacuation on a single ship. He said the vessel's decks were awash with human waste and that a number of refugees had died.

Vessels Refurbished

The Commander and the Contender, Mr. Heine said, have been cleaned and refurbished for possible further evacuation work and are standing by at Newport, the American-built facility 15 miles south of Saigon. The Challenger was scheduled to leave Sattahip, Thailand, for Newport soon and a fourth military charter, the American Racer, was on the way to Subic Bay in the

Philippines and could go on to Vietnam, Mr. Heine said.

Hugo F. Hansen, vice president of Central Gulf Lines, said in New Orleans that the Greenport had carried 7,000 refugees from Cam Ranh to Phu Quoc on a one-day trip that began April 3. He said the crew had tried to feed the children on board and had had problems with adults who also wanted food. He said many of the civilians on board were armed, but that there were no major disorders.

The Greenport is at Sattahip and was to leave yesterday for Newport, prepared for further evacuation, R.M. Hansen said.

A Seatrain spokesman said the Transcolorado has taken 8,000 refugees from Da Nang and Cam Ranh to Vung Tau in the south in a chaotic voyage with several stops between March 31 and April 9. He said that 50 South Vietnamese marines had to be taken on board to restore order, and that five people had died during the voyage. He said five suspected Vietcong were discovered among the passengers and were taken off under guard.

The spokesman said the ship had also picked up 3,586 refugees from the United States Navy cargo vessel Durham and unloaded them at Vung Tau. The Transcolorado is preparing to leave Saigon for Subic Bay.

(OVER)

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Saigon's Need for Shorter Lines

By DREW MIDDLETON

The survival of the South Vietnamese Army as a credible defensive force now appears to depend on an early disengagement from its present positions and a retirement to lines

Military Analysis closer to the capital. The most critical aspect of a swiftly deteriorating military situation is an acute shortage of reserve units to plug holes in the defense perimeter. The command in Saigon is forced to weaken one critical but inactive sector to strengthen others under attack.

The situation has worsened as a result of these developments:

• **The North Vietnamese** have mounted powerful and successful drives in the Xuan Loc sector, 30 miles east of Saigon.

• **The Bien Hoa airfield**, the base for over half of South Vietnam's remaining fighter-bombers, has been virtually neutralized by persistent shell and rocket fire.

• **Strong columns of truck-borne infantry** have been observed approaching Bien Hoa and the Saigon River corridor that runs south to the capital.

Effort Seen as Too Late

In this situation, in the view of the American analysts, the efforts of the South Vietnamese Government to reorganize 22,000 troops salvaged from the disasters in the northern provinces and the Central Highlands will not succeed in time to affect the present battle.

The reorganization may have moved faster than expected, as Pentagon sources maintain, but it has not yet reached the point where the forces are ready to intervene. They still need tanks, armored personnel carriers and artillery, according to a qualified source.

With the Communists probing the defenses north and east of Saigon with strong forces, the Government has no choice but to gamble desperately with what reserves it has. One such gamble was made yesterday.

Its Forces Unable to Plug Gaps, May Have to Pull Back

The Third Armored Brigade, which has been guarding the northern approaches to Saigon, was shifted 50 miles to Trang Bom, 15 miles west of Xuan Loc, in the hope that it could contain two Communist drives of tanks and infantry developing northwest and southwest of that battered city.

The brigade's success at Trang Bom, the military analysts emphasize, could make up for the weakening of Saigon's northern defenses caused by its transfer. Until yesterday it had been counted upon to contain any offensive against Bien Hoa.

Long Lines of Trucks

From operational reports reaching Washington, it is evident that the Communists intend to exploit the situation. With heavy artillery and rocket fire limiting fighter-bombers based at Bien Hoa, reconnaissance planes report long columns of truck-borne infantry moving south.

The fall of Phan Rang, on the coast 160 miles northeast of Saigon, will have only a peripheral effect on the outcome of the campaign, in the view of the American sources. The loss of the air base at Phan Rang further reduces the flexibility of the South Vietnamese Air Force, but otherwise the operation is expected to have little influence on the situation around Saigon.

Air force losses from anti-aircraft missiles, shelling and sabotage continue to be heavy—far heavier, some American sources believe, than Saigon is willing to acknowledge.

A major problem facing the air force is what it will do if Bien Hoa falls to Communist ground attack or is made untenable since the main airport at Saigon, Tan Son Nhut, is already overloaded.

Hanoi's deployment in strength of weapons systems that have been used sparingly

if at all has been an important, perhaps decisive, factor in its successes of the last 48 hours.

The Seventh Division's attacks around Xuan Loc were accompanied by more tanks than the South has reported in any single engagement thus far, the American sources said.

Heavy Guns in Use

At Xuan Loc and Bien Hoa the Communists have used 122-mm. and 130-mm. field guns and what one report described as massive and 130-mm. field guns and what one report described as massive rocketry. The North thus has superiority in weapons as well as the superiority in manpower it has enjoyed for this last week.

For all tactical purposes, the American analysts said, seven-day battle for Xuan Loc is over. Communist exploitation depends upon the ability of the armored brigade at Trang Bom to hold its increasingly difficult position.

Granted North Vietnam's superiority in men and weapons all along the front, it is quite possible, the sources said, that its high command will be content to pin down the armored brigade and apply pressure elsewhere. The most likely area, they believe, is Bien Hoa, whose fall would bring rich rewards: the elimination of the South's main air base, the isolation of the troops between Xuan Loc and Bien Hoa and attainment of a good position for an advance on Saigon.

In this tactical situation, it is difficult to see how the South Vietnamese forces can extricate themselves and fall back—or, as an officer put it, what they can fall back on.

Some defensive positions have been constructed around the eastern and northern faces of Saigon, it is reported, but they require strong air and artillery support and fresh, confident troops.

The terrain south, southwest and west of the capital offers some protection, but it is unlikely that Hanoi would launch an attack across country laced with canals and waterways when it has a clear run from the north.

BALTIMORE SUN - 17 APRIL 1975 Pg. 5

Senate panel delays aid action

Early Bird 18 April 1975 page 2-1

By THOMAS PEPPER
Washington Bureau of The Sun

Washington — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday put off action on President Ford's request for emergency aid to South Vietnam, in part because some members say the U.S. ambassador there is trying to slow down the pace of an American withdrawal.

Meanwhile, House leaders said that a parallel measure pending on their side of the Capitol would not come up for floor action until next week. This would mean a delay in Mr. Ford's proposed deadline of Saturday, but Representative Carl Albert (D., Okla.) the House speaker, said the President had told him a slightly later date would be acceptable.

Earlier yesterday, Senator Clifford P. Case (R., N.J.), ranking minority member of the Foreign Relations Committee, told reporters that he understood Mr. Ford was still holding out for his original request of \$722 million in additional military aid and \$250 in additional economic and humanitarian funds.

Administration sources said that no new figure—closer to the amounts currently being considered in Congress—had yet been formulated as a counter-proposal.

The matter was still being studied last night, the sources said.

They indicated that the administration had sent a new letter to Capitol Hill yesterday, but the contents could not be learned.

Senator Dick Clark (D., Iowa), emerging from a two-hour meeting of the Foreign Relations Committee late in the afternoon, said the rate at

which American citizens are being evacuated from Vietnam "didn't turn out to be as good as we thought it was."

Referring to the U.S. ambassador in Saigon, Graham A. Martin, a strong supporter of continued U.S. backing for the government of President Nguyen Van Thieu, Mr. Clark said: "Martin is still dragging his feet. The proposals that he's put forward are not satisfactory."

Referring to a goal mentioned on Tuesday—whereby the number of American citizens in South Vietnam would be reduced to about 1,000 within two weeks—Senator Clark said Mr. Martin's proposed rate of evacuation is "not even close to that figure."

The ambassador has talked in terms of paring down to about 3,000 Americans during the next two weeks, Mr. Clark said.

Senator Case said the panel has asked to see the administration's specific plan for evacuating Americans and hoped to get it in time for another committee meeting scheduled for 2 P.M. today.

Referring to Mr. Ford's statement that the administration was reducing the number of Americans in Vietnam to an essential minimum, Senator Case said the committee wants to know specifically what the President means by "essential."

Committee Democrats said they were opposed to approving any bill until they received firmer assurances from the President about the rate of withdrawal. "Otherwise," one Democrat said, "we lose all our bargaining power."

Some members said the figures administration officials released on Tuesday appear to have involved simply a re-categorizing of people, rather than an actual or planned evacuation.

Mr. Clark said that Tuesday's figures—given out by Henry A. Kissinger, the Secretary of State, and James R. Schlesinger, the Secretary of Defense—were just not accurate.

Senator Charles A. Percy (R., Ill.) said he would have to withdraw a comment he made yesterday morning in Chicago, to the effect that he was "encouraged" by the rate of evacuation. This was based on erroneous information, he said.

But Senator Jacob K. Javits (R., N.Y.) attributed the confusion to inadvertence. "Nobody misled anybody," he said.

Senator John Sparkman (D., Ala.), the committee chairman, released the text of a draft bill giving Mr. Ford a \$200 million contingency fund for use primarily to evacuate Americans from South Vietnam.

The bill would permit the President to use the money for military aid to the Saigon government and for the evacuation of some South Vietnamese if he found such actions helpful in getting U.S. citizens safely out of the country.

The bill stipulates that no U.S. troops could be used for this purpose beyond those required for the evacuation of Americans or in areas other than where Americans are present.

Senator Sparkman also released the text of a proposed resolution urging an immediate cease-fire and resumption of political negotiations between the Saigon government and Communist-led insurgents.

The resolution, sponsored by Senators Javits, Percy, and Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.), goes on to say that future U.S. aid to all parts of Vietnam "will be dependent on the degree of good faith efforts

(over)

made by them to obtain a cease-fire and political solution to the conflict."

The Senate armed services and appropriations committees were also meeting yesterday, amid indications they might be agreeable to a higher aid figure than the Foreign Relations Committee.

"I'll have something to recommend, but I don't know what it is yet," said Senator John C. Stennis (D., Miss.), chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

On the House side, the International Relations Committee was still wrestling with legal questions about what kind of authority the President needs to deploy U.S. Troops in Vietnam.

Committee members, who are less united in their approach than their Senate counterparts, said they would begin drafting a bill this morning.

NEW YORK TIMES
17 APRIL 1975 Pg. 1
**VIETCONG DEMAND
FULL U.S. PULLOUT**
18 April 1975
By FLORA LEWIS

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, April 16—The representative of the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government issued a call here today for "immediate and permanent" withdrawal of what he said were 25,000 American military personnel "disguised as civilians" in South Vietnam.

In a series of statements and at a press conference, he said there would be "no difficulty, no obstacle" placed in the way of their departure.

"If the U.S. really wants to save their lies," a statement said, "it should withdraw them totally and immediately."

But Dinh Ba Thi, interim head of the government's mission here, would not respond to efforts by reporters to determine exactly what would happen to Americans and other foreigners if they remained in areas that fell under Vietcong control. He referred only to a previous statement saying their lives and property would be protected if they obeyed "the policy of the revolutionary power."

The statements accused "the Ford Administration of advancing plans for evacuations from Vietnam only as a 'pretext for renewed American military intervention.'"

The prediction by Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger that the lives of 200,000 South Vietnamese would be endangered if they remained in their country was denounced as "a pure fabrication" and a "calumny."

Ambassador Thi avoided direct answers for the most part, repeating continuously the words in the statements. He

said he had "no precise information" on whether the Da Nang airport would be opened to shipment of relief supplies piling up in Vientiane, Laos.

He confirmed that his government had agreed "in principle" to permit French relief flights into Da Nang, but said that if "technical difficulties" made that impossible, "the P.R.G. will find other means" of receiving the contributions.

Overruling Indicated

It has been reported from Vientiane that a new demand was issued for the supplies to be flown into Hanoi, then sent through North Vietnam by road. This would appear to be a North Vietnamese decision overruling the Vietcong agreement with the French.

Mr. Thi would not say whether the Vietcong government was prepared to enter negotiations with the United States for evacuation of American citizens and whether it would negotiate with Gen. Duong Van Minh if he set up a new Saigon Government.

General Minh's son, Duyen Minh Duc, held a press conference here earlier today in which he said his father, known to Americans as Big Minh, called for "the departure of President Nguyen Van Thieu" and "urgent formation of a peace government—to resume negotiations with the P.R.G."

He indicated that his father was willing to head such a government and considered after contacts with the Vietcong that "such a negotiation is possible."

Many Talks Held

While he has the rank of ambassador, Mr. Thi is widely considered to have less author-

ity than some Vietcong officials in Paris who have been engaged in an intensive contacts over the last few weeks with antiwar Americans, French officials, West European diplomats and French and Vietnamese scholars.

Some of these people have also met with North Vietnamese representatives here. They report that the Communists all stress the desire to take up negotiations provided under the 1973 Paris agreements for a coalition council in South Vietnam to be followed by elections. They also report an expressed reluctance to press for a forceful and complete Communist take-over of Saigon.

The non-Communists and anti-Communists who have been involved in these conversations offer several explanations of why they think the Communists still want a negotiated political settlement when they may have a military victory within their group.

These include the following:

Q Awareness that great numbers of South Vietnamese are frightened of a Communist victory and thus might panic and cause overwhelming problems of civil control once the war ends.

Q A desire to avoid the fierce battle and devastation that could be caused by an effort to conquer Saigon.

Q Awareness that chances for postwar aid would be affected by whether the Vietcong set up their own Saigon government or join a three-way coalition as provided by the Paris agreements.

Q A nationalist desire to move away from dependence on Moscow and Peking by achieving the kind of full international recognition and implied guarantees that could be expected to follow adherence to the Paris agreements.

Q A feeling in Hanoi that Mao tse-tung erred by marching into Peking in 1949, thus enabling Chiang Kai-shek and two million followers to flee and establish a rival government on Taiwan. Hanoi is said to feel that the error led to the long isolation of Peking and to the continuing problem of having two Chinese governments.

Whatever the reasons advanced, all those who have talked with the Vietnamese Communists said they were convinced that the Communists preferred a negotiated settlement and at least a period of coalition government to outright military victory.

BALTIMORE SUN - 17 APRIL 1975 Pg. 4

U.S. sorts out *Early Bird, 18 April 75 page 2-3* evacuation list

By ARNOLD R. ISAACS
Sun Staff Correspondent

Saigon—Section chiefs in the large United States Embassy in Saigon began yesterday to survey personnel lists and determine which Americans will be sent home as "nonessential."

An embassy spokesman said it had not been decided how many will leave, but the reduction will have to be drastic if the total American presence in Vietnam is to be cut to 1,000—the figure mentioned in congressional testimony by Henry A. Kissinger, the Secretary of State.

The cutbacks are being ordered to lessen possible difficulty in an evacuation if one is needed.

Sources said the embassy almost certainly will begin in the next few days to advise private Americans to leave the country if possible.

"We can advise—we can't order them out," one source said. "But we'd certainly like to see the number reduced so there are fewer people we have to worry about."

The exact number of Americans in the country is not known. At the end of March, there were 5,886 Americans working for the government or government contractors or registered with the U.S. Consulate as private citizens living in South Vietnam.

However, there were others not registered—several hundred have shown up in the last few weeks—while an undetermined number already have left the country.

Involved in the embassy survey are approximately 1,100 American government employees in the embassy, the AID mission and the defense attache's office, and another 1,000 civilian employees of AID or Defense Department contractors.

"There will probably be a lot leaving next weekend and into next week," one official said.

The defense attache's office, which administers the military aid program, and its contractors account for the largest single group of Americans in Vietnam. On March 31 there were 50 military officers and 800 civilians in the attache's office itself. No precise figures are available how many have left since then.

The next largest official group was in the AID mission, with about 350 Americans, and then the embassy staff of 134 State Department officers and a sprinkling from other agencies such as the U.S. Information Agency.

The official American presence had been on the way down before the current emergency.

According to embassy figures, as of October 31, there were 1,900 American government employees and 2,200 contract employees.

The Defense Department contractors are engaged mainly in servicing and maintaining aircraft and other military equipment.

Early Bird
NEW YORK TIMES
17 APRIL 1975 Pg. 18
**Thai Government
Orders Evacuees
Out Within 30 Days**
18 Apr 75 page 2-4
By ANDREW H. MALCOLM
Special to The New York Times

BANGKOK, Thailand, April 16—Thailand's Foreign Minister, in a further indication of this country's shifting foreign policies, announced today that all Cambodian refugees flown here by the United States in recent days must leave Thailand in 30 days.

The Foreign Minister, Chatichai Choonhavan, also announced that the foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations would meet in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on May 13 to discuss the Indochina situation.

This, he said, might be followed by a meeting of heads of state of the five member countries—Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines.

The announcements, made at a news conference here, were seen as part of a broad-scale policy reassessment by many nations in the area in light of recent developments in Indochina.

Countries such as Thailand, once firmly aligned with the United States, are taking more flexible diplomatic stands following the defeat of American policies in Cambodia, the setbacks in South Vietnam and statements from Washington that Southeast Asia is not crucial to American interests.

In recent weeks this country has ordered an end to United States ammunition airlifts to Cambodia from American bases in Thailand and has requested that all American troops here, estimated at 25,000, leave within a year.

Last weekend the United States flew several hundred people here from Phnom Penh, including Americans, other foreigners and Cambodians associated with American companies or programs who might face reprisals.

The Cambodians have been confined to the U Taphao air base, a sprawling facility 100 miles southeast of Bangkok. Today the Foreign Minister said these refugees totaled 878 of whom 438 were children under 12.

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER - 17 APRIL 1975

Early Bird 18 April 75 page 1-E
Gen. Brown trips again

We thought Air Force Gen. George S. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had learned something last November, when he made those offensive remarks about Jews and was reprimanded by the Commander-in-Chief, Gerald R. Ford.

At least Gen. Brown said he had learned a couple of lessons. One was about "how little I previously knew" about the corporate structure of banks and newspapers, and another, "to avoid even the appearance of dealing with anything else" than the strategic direction of the armed forces.

Yet here comes Gen. Brown, tripping over his tongue again. Responding to reporters in Jakarta, Indonesia, the general indicated that resorting again to U. S. force in Indochina is still a live option. Then, apparently nudged by the U. S. ambassador, he added to

his answer:

"Oh yes, the ambassador reminds me, we have a law in our country which prohibits the use of military force anywhere in the world without congressional approval and specifically against the initiation of military action in Vietnam or Cambodia."

It seems to us that Gen. Brown ought not to need a reminder of what he should already know. Nor should he need a reminder that these are political questions, beyond his scope as a military leader.

Another American general, Dwight D. Eisenhower, once noted that when a man puts on the uniform he also accepts certain restrictions. If Gen.

Brown cannot accept those restrictions, perhaps he should doff his uniform and then make whatever public statements he wishes about civilian affairs.

WASHINGTON POST - 17 APRIL 1975 Pg. 1

U.S. Embassy Faulted on Evacuation

Early bird 18 April 75 page 2-1
By Spencer Rich and George C. Wilson

Washington Post Staff Writers

Saigon may be strangled by the North Vietnamese as early as May 1 in the climax of what is now an "irretrievable" military situation for the South Vietnamese, according to a secret Senate report obtained yesterday.

Civilian and military intelligence officials agree that "only decisive military action by the United States could reverse the situation," the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report adds, without recommending any such action.

The emphasis instead, the report suggests, should be on evacuating Americans from Saigon while there is still time.

But, complains the report, U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin in Saigon is "actively" resisting such a "dangerously overdue" evacuation to the point that Central Intelligence Agency officials are making withdrawal plans of their own.

"Serious embassy planning for full-scale evacuation of Americans and Vietnamese began only last week," say Senate Foreign Relations Committee staffers Charles F. Meissner and Richard M. Moose in their report dated April 14.

"The anxiety of the American community," the report adds, "is compounded by the absence of a cohesive, well-understood evacuation procedure and by what outsiders perceive as an air of unreality pervading the highest level of the (American) embassy" in Saigon.

Meissner and Moose conducted a series of interviews with CIA and military officials in Cambodia and Vietnam from April 2 to 13 and reported these other findings to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a report labeled "secret."

• Current intelligence indicates that the North Vietnamese wish to consolidate their hold over the area

around Saigon by May 1. By that time four or possibly five additional NVA (North Vietnamese Army) divisions from North Vietnam and the occupied territories are expected to arrive in the Saigon area . . .

• "Intelligence analysts cannot decide whether the North Vietnamese will attack the city directly, or seek to cut its land and sea routes, thereby strangling the city. The objective of ei-

ther strategy would be the same: to force the South Vietnamese government into a negotiated settlement on Hanoi's terms . . .

• "Intelligence services report the presence of a number of Communist sapper units in Saigon. Large-scale panic could easily be induced by bombs or rockets (the Communists could soon be in range for either), the collapse and flight of a nearby ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) unit or a sudden influx of refugees . . .

• "Virtually all Vietnamese military and civilian leaders agree that (South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van) Thieu must go if the armed forces are to be rallied to Saigon's defense and the nation readied for what they regard as the inevitable political showdown with Hanoi . . . The Vietnamese military does not consider" extra military aid as critical "in the short run" as removing Thieu.

Meissner and Moose made a series of suggestions in their 16-page report—some of which were discussed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday. The staffers' suggestions in the report include:

• Exerting congressional pressure on the U.S. embassy in Saigon "to accelerate evacuation."

• Cutting red tape so Vietnamese can get out of Saigon faster and be moved directly onto U.S. territory rather than continue to be delayed at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines.

• Launching "a fresh U.S. effort" to negotiate an end to the war.

Ambassador to Cambodia John Gunther Dean, Meissner and Moose said felt "deeply disappointed that Washington had not supported his efforts to bring about a controlled solution to the Cambodian conflict. Dean believes that the Cambodians might have found a way out had we committed ourselves to a negotiated settlement—even if it were tantamount to a Phnom Penh surrender."

The staffers assert in their report that American officials "are beginning to appear, both to the Vietnamese and Cambodians, more hung up on negotiations than the people whom we are supposed to be helping."

Their report states that discussions with representatives of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Vetcong) indicated that a way might be worked out to provide American humanitarian aid to South Vietnamese living in areas now controlled by the Communists.

'Irregularities' Eyed**End to 'Babylift' Ban Seen***W. Post 18 April 75*

The temporary suspension of "Operation Babylift," which had brought Vietnamese and Cambodian children to the United States, will be lifted within a day or so and at the latest within a week, Deputy Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner James F. Greene said yesterday.

The airlift was suspended by the immigration service Wednesday after "irregularities" were noted in the immigration of 29 children from Cambodia. Closer examination by federal offi-

cials revealed that some of the children may not be orphans and may lack the necessary parental release for adoption.

Greene told a news conference that the entire operation had been suspended, even though no similar problems had developed with Vietnamese children, because the immigration service had a self-imposed limit of admitting 2,000 children and about 1,650 already have been admitted.

Greene said he wants an accurate count before the

remaining South Vietnamese children whose adoptions are being expedited, are brought to the United States. Greene estimated that only 300 children are left in South Vietnam in the "pipeline" — that is, holding exit visas from the South Vietnamese government and with parents cleared to adopt them here.

Asked if Cambodian children whom the courts refuse to clear for adoption would be returned to Cambodia, Greene replied, "That's a pretty remote prospect."

Xuanloc: Bad Spot For a Good Fight

18 Apr 75
By H. D. S. Greenway

Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 18 (Friday) — The battle for Saigon has begun and is being fought now on the outer defenses of the capital, 30 to 40 miles away.

Although the government's spirited defense of Xuanloc has given the South Vietnamese army a badly needed shot in the arm, there is growing opinion among military experts here that Xuanloc cannot be held much longer and that its defense may prove a hindrance to the defense of the capital.

The fear is that the South Vietnamese may have committed too many of their reserves into the defense of the provincial capital, 37 miles northeast of Saigon, and that the Xuanloc defenders can be cut off and isolated as the North Vietnamese push in behind them and on toward Bienhoa and Saigon.

Xuanloc was never really a gateway to Saigon. It was more of an eastern extremity in the capital's outer defenses and vulnerable to encirclement.

To lose the now flattened real estate that was Xuan-

loc is not important. But to lose the two South Vietnamese divisions now committed to its defense would now be a disaster for Saigon.

The northern defenses of Xuanloc have already begun to disintegrate and the North Vietnamese have begun to move down Highway 20, which leads from the Central Highlands, into the South Vietnamese rear.

News Analysis

Highway 1, leading from Xuanloc to the capital, has been cut for several days. Much of the South Vietnamese 18th Division, airborne and ranger units as well as a good part of their armored reserves could be outflanked and trapped in Xuanloc.

Experts here already think the North Vietnamese have enough men and material around Saigon to begin an all-out, coordinated attack. Within the next two weeks they could have more than 12 divisions committed against Saigon's five—six if the defeated soldiers from

(over)

the north can be pulled together into fighting units in time.

Some South Vietnamese intelligence sources have long predicted that the attack against Saigon and the Delta would come at the end of April or the beginning of May and, despite the windfall success in the north, the North Vietnamese would stick to their original schedule even though it meant that the Saigon government might be given a chance to pull itself together a bit.

Many of the armored units around Tay Ninh northwest of the city have been withdrawn to defend Xuanloc. Military experts say that Tay Ninh, 60 miles from the capital, is even more vulnerable and dangerously isolated than Xuanloc. A more practical defense line could be drawn further south, closer to Saigon in the northwest without the Tay Ninh salient that could so easily be pinched off by North Vietnamese troops moving in from Cambodia.

With the northern defenses of Xuanloc beginning to crumble, military sources fear that the North Vietnamese will slip south of the Dongnai River before dropping south at Bienhoa, in order to make a stab at the big American-built air and military base at Bienhoa itself. The terrain in that area is, as one military source said, "good tank country."

Were such a move coordinated with a drive straight south down Highway 13, the North Vietnamese could come at Bienhoa from both sides of the Dongnai River and could then bring their artillery within range of the capital itself.

Experts here are very pessimistic about the government's ability to stop such a drive on Bienhoa, which really is a gateway to Saigon, only 17 miles away. A strike at Bienhoa would also close the Vungtao road, to the sea.

To the south, along Highway 4 to the Delta, the North Vietnamese 5th Division is becoming ever more menacing—with reinforcements, artillery and anti-aircraft guns and missiles—moving into Longan, the province just south of Saigon. Two jet fighters were recently shot down by heat-seeking missiles in that region.

A North Vietnamese move toward Saigon from the south would not only cut off Highway 4, over which most of the capital's food travels, but it could also bring artill-

ery to bear on Saigon's airport.

In short, what we are beginning to see is an encirclement of the capital, much as was seen in Phnom Penh. Besides the already active pressure in the northeast and south there are North Vietnamese divisions waiting to the north and west as well. The Soviet-made guns that the North Vietnamese use have a longer range than the American guns used by the South Vietnamese.

With more divisions moving down the coast, the danger is that the North Vietnamese could take Vungtao and bring the shipping channels of the Saigon River under artillery fire and thus complete the encirclement of Saigon.

Against this threat the South Vietnamese have an advantage of air and mobility. Also, it usually takes a ratio of two or three to one to overcome well prepared defenses.

But it does not appear that the South Vietnamese are taking full advantage of their defensive position. A recent inspection of the northeastern lines showed that the South Vietnamese troops were very thin and light on the ground and that they were not digging the defensive positions that would help equalize their numerical inferiority.

Without a solid defense in depth, the highly mobile units, such as the airborne, will be thrown in to help plug a breach in the line on the same terms as the attackers without any of the advantages that usually accrue to a defender.

If the South Vietnamese dissipate their advantages, as they are now doing, military experts would not give them much chance of holding the line for long.

Intelligence sources fear that North Vietnamese and Vietcong sappers will soon try to disrupt the capital itself. Thursday tonight a joint exercise with police, self-defense forces and soldiers was conducted in the empty streets of Saigon after the 9 p.m. curfew.

Already the sounds of guns can be heard in the capital and the tension rises as virtually everyone here knows that the game is all but played out.

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18 APRIL 1975 Pg. 14

**News Dispatches
By U.S. Journalists
In Cambodia Cease**

Early Bird 18 April 75

Dispatches from American news sources in Phnom Penh ended early yesterday when communications lines were broken a few hours after the surrender of the Cambodian Government.

The last message from a Cambodian reporter for The Associated Press, received by the agency's Hong Kong office at 5:36 A.M. New York time yesterday, made no mention of five American journalists still thought to be in the captured city. Among them is Sydney H. Schanberg of The New York Times.

The Associated Press's Cambodian reporter, Mean Leang, had been denied access to the Hotel le Phnom, where the journalists were believed to be.

Agence France-Presse reported from Saigon that a message, thought to have come from the French Embassy in Phnom Penh, said Mr. Schanberg was among five American newsmen at the hotel. There was no report on the whereabouts of Dith Pran, Mr. Schanberg's Cambodian assistant.

The Associated Press said yesterday that another American, a freelance photographer, Al Rockoff, had been seen riding on an insurgent jeep.

In Paris, a spokesman for the Cambodian Communists said at a news conference that their

(See NEWS, Pg. 2)

NEWS -- CONTINUED

Minister of Information would decide, case by case, whether the journalists would be allowed to work in Cambodia.

The Red Cross in Geneva reported that it had had no direct contact with André Pasquier, its representative in Phnom Penh since Wednesday. It could offer no word on the journalists in Phnom Penh.

*Early Bird
April 18, 75
p. 2*

NEW YORK TIMES
18 APRIL 1975 Pg. 1
**SENATE UNIT BARS
WAR AID TO SAIGON**

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 17—The Senate Armed Services Committee dealt a serious blow to President Ford's Vietnam policy by rejecting additional military assistance for the Saigon Government.

Across the Capitol, the House International Relations Committee approved legislation giving the President limited authority to use United States forces to evacuate Americans in South Vietnam. But the Senate Foreign Relations Committee withheld action on a similar bill because its members were dissatisfied with the pace at which Americans and their dependents were being evacuated.

As a result of the committee actions, it was apparent that Congress was willing to go to considerable lengths to assure the safe evacuation of Americans but not disposed to give further help to the Government in Saigon or to evacuate a large number of Vietnamese.

Ford Sought \$722-Million

The cornerstone of President Ford's Vietnam policy, as related to Congress in his State of the World message last week, was his request for \$722-million in immediate military assistance. The money, to cover a wide range of supplies and armaments, was essential, he said then, to "stabilize" the Saigon Government and allow for a negotiated settlement of the war.

On the key vote today, the
(See SENATE, Pg. 2)

SENATE -- CONTINUED

Armed Services Committee rejected additional aid of \$215-million by a vote of 8-to-7. It was one of the few times in years that Senator John C. Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, the committee chairman, had lost a vote in his committee on an important issue.

Asked whether the committee might reconsider its action, Senator Stennis said, "No, that's it."

Despite the action by the Armed Services Committee, it would still be possible for Congress to appropriate \$300-million in military assistance that was authorized last year but not appropriated. Key Senators said, however, that even an appropriation of that amount was in doubt.

In view of his committee's action, Senator Stennis said, the possibility of any appropriation for military aid is now "more remote."

Senator John L. McClellan, Democrat of Arkansas, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has publicly stated his opposition to any military aid.

The swing vote on the Armed Services panel was that of Senator William Lloyd Scott, Republican of Virginia.

In mid-afternoon, William Kendall, a White House lobbyist, called Senator Scott out of the committee meeting and made one last effort to persuade him to vote for additional aid. After a conversation of several minutes, Mr. Kendall informed the White House that Mr. Scott could not be swayed.

Later, Mr. Scott said that "given the situation in Vietnam, I think we would just be wasting money."

The legislation approved by the House International Relations Committee, in addition to allowing the use of troops to evacuate Americans, would allow the Government to spend more than \$350-million for evacuation and humanitarian relief.

The money must still go through the appropriations process, and a somewhat smaller amount is likely to be appropriated.

Mr. Ford asked for \$250-million in economic and humani-

tarian aid, but none specifically for evacuation.

Under the bill, which was endorsed by the White House, the relief money would be passed through international organizations, such as the United Nations and the Red Cross.

Troops could be used only if they were needed to evacuate Americans, although it would be permissible to evacuate some Vietnamese who are dependents of United States citizens.

The bill, approved by a vote of 18 to 7, will probably be considered by the full House next week.

The measure put off by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee because of its disagreement with the present rate of evacuation would place somewhat more stringent restrictions on the use of troops and would authorize only \$200-million.

Meanwhile today, Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, the Army Chief of Staff, confirmed that North Vietnam was moving surface-to-air missile sites into the area around Saigon. Senators said that the sites were likely to be in place by May 1.

The implication of this installation is twofold: First, it means that once the sites are installed it will be more dangerous for Americans to be flown out of Saigon. Second, it increases the peril of supplying Saigon by air.

Senators of both parties on the Foreign Relations Committee expressed serious dissatisfaction with Administration's efforts so far to evacuate Americans.

"We are holding their feet to the fire," said Senator George McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota, in explaining how the committee was withholding action on its legislation in an attempt to force the Administration to come up with a concrete plan for evacuation.

Committee members said that there were now about 6,000 Americans and dependents in Saigon. Senator McGovern said that the count of the "hard core" to be evacuated had actually increased by 124 persons in the last 10 days, primarily because of the inclusion of American wives of American citizens.

Despite President Ford's promise yesterday and again today that "nonessential" Americans would be evacuated immediately, senators reported that only 85 Americans were withdrawn yesterday.

"I feel that is inadequate," said Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York. And Senator Dick Clark, Democrat of Iowa, declared, "That can hardly be called progress. If we still have 3,000 to 4,000 Americans there 10 days from now and if North Vietnam attacks Saigon, who is going to say the President should not use troops to rescue them, and it will require a lot of troops."

Senators and House members also remained opposed to the Administration's proposal for evacuation of tens of thousands of Vietnamese who have fled the United States in Indochina.

*Early Bird
April 18, 75
p. 2*

Friday, April 18, 1975

THE WASHINGTON POST

Viet Arms Aid Dealt Defeat In Senate Unit

By Richard L. Lyons
and Spencer Rich

Washington Post Staff Writers

President Ford's appeal for humanitarian aid to South Vietnam was endorsed yesterday by the House International Relations Committee, but his bid for expanded military aid suffered a stunning defeat in a series of 8-to-7 votes in the usually hawkish Senate Armed Services Committee.

By an 18-to-7 vote, the House committee approved \$327 million authorization for the fiscal year ending June 30 to be divided between humanitarian aid to South Vietnam and evacuation of Americans and South Vietnamese. This was \$77 million above President Ford's request. He had made no request for evacuation funds. The bill also gives him authority to use troops if necessary to get the people out.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee failed again to complete action on its version of the humanitarian aid-evacuation bill. The slowdown is an expression of senators' anger at what they consider the slow pace of evacuation. Committee members said administration figures yesterday showed only 120 Americans

leaving South Vietnam in the previous 24 hours.

The Senate Armed Services committee, long a stronghold of Vietnam war sentiment, refused to follow the lead of chairman John C. Stennis (D-Miss.), and turned down five separate attempts to boost the authorized ceiling on emergency weapons aid to Vietnam.

The committee votes clearly signal that a substantial portion of Congress considers the war in Vietnam as all but lost, and that the time has come to cut the nation's losses.

There is at present a \$300 million ceiling on emergency weapons aid to South Vietnam, although no actual funds have been provided. President Ford proposed to raise the ceiling to \$722 million and fund the entire amount.

Stennis went into yesterday's meeting without hope

of getting the full \$722 million ceiling. He opened the voting with a proposal for \$515 million but that went down, 8 to 7.

The eight voting against the increase were Virginians Harry Flood Byrd Jr. (Ind.) and William L. Scott (R), Stuart Symington (D-Mo.), Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), John Cul-

ver (D-Iowa), Gary Hart (D-Colo.) and Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.).

The seven voting for the raise were Stennis, Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), Thomas J. McIntyre (D-N.H.), John G. Tower (R-Texas), Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.), Robert Taft Jr. (R-Ohio)—just recuperated from a long illness—and Dewey Bartlett (R-Okla.).

Further moves to put the ceiling, at \$449 million, \$401 million, and \$370 million all failed on 8-to-7 votes, and a move for \$350 million was beaten, 10 to 5, several senators including Stennis saying they opposed this as "too low."

"That's it. That disposes of it as far as the committee's concerned," said a disappointed Stennis. But he voiced hope that the Appropriations Committee might at least vote some funds under the existing, still unfunded \$300 million ceiling.

In the Senate, meanwhile,

the focus was on what members termed the inadequate pace of withdrawal of U.S. civilians and their dependents from Saigon.

Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.) told a news conference that ambassador Graham Martin was still dragging his feet, and that time was short since he had been informed that "possibly as early as May 1" North Vietnam will have missiles planted in range of the Saigon airfield, capable of shooting down evacuation and supply planes. Gen. Fred C. Weyand, after testifying to the Stennis committee, confirmed to reporters that missiles are being moved up but gave no date. He called the military situation "precarious and grim."

Meanwhile, Senate Democratic Whip Robert C. Byrd (W.Va.) characterized as untrue and "deplorable" statements by President Ford and Vice President Rockefeller blaming Vietnam's current military plight on congressional aid cuts. He said the President should "call an immediate halt to the gutter politics of blame-placing."

House floor action is expected Tuesday on the aid-evacuation bill, with which administration officials were described as "generally in accord." It authorizes \$150 million to be divided without limitation between aid and evacuation. It also removes limitations from \$177 million previously authorized but not appropriated for humanitarian aid

during this fiscal year. This would produce a total of \$327 million in spending authority, but none of it could be used until approved in a separate appropriation bill.

The President had asked for \$250 million in aid. The bill could be considered as giving him this amount plus \$77 million for evacuation. But as worded, the entire \$150 million in new authorization could be used for evacuation if needed.

Most of the day-long House committee meeting was devoted to debate over what restrictions, if any, to place on use of troops for the evacuation. All-out opponents of U.S. military involvement in Indochina opposed any use of troops for fear it could entangle the United States in another war there. But what prevailed was the need to evacuate about 3,500 American citizens and the moral obligation to help Vietnamese loyal to the United States who might be killed by conquering Communists, and virtually no limitation on the use of troops was imposed.

The House bill states that several provisions written into laws during the last two years forbidding U.S. military operations in Indochina shall not apply to use of U.S. troops for evacuation.

It defines those eligible for evacuation as American citizens, dependents of American citizens and of permanent residents of the United States, Vietnamese nationals eligible for immigration to the United States

because of their relationship to American citizens, and "other foreign nationals to whose lives a direct and imminent threat exists."

This fourth category of Vietnamese in danger of Communist reprisals has been estimated at about 175,000, including dependents.

The only limitation on troops is that the number may not exceed those required to evacuate the first three categories, which would be considerably fewer people.

Beaten by margins of better than 2 to 1 were amendments that would have limited the number of U.S. troops to 20,000 or their stay in South Vietnam to 15 or

30 days, that would have forbidden use of U.S. troops to evacuate Vietnamese nationals, and that would have administered the humanitarian aid by international organizations such as the United Nations.

The argument for channeling the resettlement aid money through the United Nations or private international groups is that it could reach suffering Vietnamese throughout the country, whether under Communist or Saigon control. But senior committee members opposed turning the money over to the United Nations, saying there would be no assurance it would reach the needy in Vietnam.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee version of the humanitarian-evacuation bill carries a ceiling of \$200 million compared with the House bill's \$327 million. Sen. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) said the committee again refused to approve it because the State Department still hasn't come up with an adequate and detailed schedule of withdrawals of U.S. citizens and their wives and children, and no plan at all to get endangered Vietnamese civilians out.

Case said only 120 persons — 85 American civilian personnel, plus 35 dependents — had come out in the last 24 hours.

Vietnamese Hold Key to Evacuation

Attack, Panic Threaten Rescue

By Michael Getler and George C. Wilson

Washington Post Staff Writers

Although President Ford has said the United States has a "profound moral obligation" to thousands of South Vietnamese, Saigon and Hanoi, more than Washington, hold the key to getting them out of South Vietnam.

If either the South Vietnamese or the North Vietnamese—for different reasons—go all out to stop the evacuation of the 175,000 persons considered most vulnerable to Hanoi's retribution, U.S. contingency plans now on paper won't work.

There are two main reasons:

- If the evacuation is op-

posed, either by attacking Northern armies or panicking Southern forces, it would take far more U.S. troops than Congress is expected to allow to make secure an evacuation route.

• It would also require many more troops—possibly up to five or six divisions in some estimates—than the United States could get to Southeast Asia fast enough to handle such a vast emergency undertaking, even if Congress approved it.

As a result, according to many experienced U.S. defense planners, it is the Vietnamese who hold the key

to getting at least some of their civilians out of the country.

If the South Vietnamese army protects an evacuation corridor, or if the North Vietnamese, for one reason or another, decide not to prevent such an evacuation or are too busy elsewhere, then it could work.

In that case, the some two dozen U.S. Navy ships and private transport vessels under Navy contract already in the area could be used to pick up evacuees from one or two ports southeast of Saigon.

The roughly 4,000 U.S. Marines already in the area on Navy ships or in the Philippines could be used to protect a smaller area around the loading docks to prevent panic and to keep order aboard the vessels themselves.

It is estimated that at most the United States could rush another one or two divisions to the area on short notice and that anything more would take many weeks.

Troops from the 82d Air-

borne Division at Ft. Bragg, N.C., and elements of a single Marine Corps division on Okinawa and an understrength Army division on Hawaii would probably be the first used if there was a need to beef up quickly the Marine force already there.

Yesterday, however, Congress was still debating how much, if any, leeway to give the administration in deploying any U.S. troops for evacuation of South Vietnamese.

Meanwhile, the Navy is building up supplies aboard the vessels that could suddenly find themselves jammed with thousands of fleeing civilians, according to sources here.

Sources say that no final and specific evacuation plan for the South Vietnamese has yet gone to President Ford from the Pentagon, and thus no additional U.S. forces have been alerted. For one thing, there is not yet any clear authorization from Congress.

There also seems to be some uncertainty here about how President Thieu plans to select those who are to be

evacuated, identify them to loading authorities, and keep the rest of the population from rushing toward the ships. Some U.S. planners believe as many as 3 million to 4 million South Vietnamese have ample reason to want to leave.

Finally, there is no public indication of where the evacuees would go.

Nearby countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and others might allow some to land temporarily.

But there does not yet appear any indication whether countries other than the United States would allow large-scale permanent immigrations.

Yesterday, for example, it was reported from Bangkok that several hundred Cambodians evacuated last week by the Americans to the U-Tapao air base in Thailand would have to leave Thailand within two weeks.

As matters stand now, the view among defense specialists is that as the number of Americans in Saigon is reduced from the current 3,900 to 1,000 or 2,000, remain-

quickly lifted out of the capital, using only the helicopters and Marines already on station aboard U.S. aircraft carriers off the coast.

If Saigon's airport comes under attack and is closed, the only way sizable numbers of South Vietnamese could be brought out is by sea. A land corridor would have to be formed and protected from Saigon to ports such as Vungtau, 40 miles southeast of the capital, where U.S. ships could then carry the refugees to safety.

If Saigon's armies keep the North Vietnamese away and don't themselves turn on those chosen to escape, then the evacuation could work with relatively few U.S. troops, in the view of some officials.

On the other hand, there is very little sense of certainty that such a mass evacuation will not get completely out of hand.

It is the prospect of securing such a long land corridor and possibly the airport that has caused some estimates of required U.S. forces under the worst conditions to be as high as five or six divisions.

Phnom Penh Forces Surrender

Capital Hails Rebel Troops

U.S. Post 17 April 75
PHNOM PENH, April 17 (Thursday)

(AP)—Phnom Penh surrendered to the Khmer Rouge insurgents Thursday and welcomed the Communist-led rebels with white flags and banners on every building in the city.

People stood on the sidewalks waving to the incoming, black-clad insurgents.

On Wednesday, the government had offered a conditional surrender through the Red Cross only to have it rejected by Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

[The Cambodian embassy military attache in Bangkok, Thailand, said he had learned by radio early Thursday that "the government surrendered at 7 a.m. There was no immediate confirmation nor any cable contact with Phnom Penh early Thursday.]

As the appeal for a cease-fire was issued through the International Committee of the Red Cross, Pochentong airport, four miles west of the city and its only link to the outside world, fell to the Communist-led insurgents as they continued to advance in the city.

Ten persons were reported killed and 30 wounded by howitzer shells the rebels fired at the city center, some of them hitting the downtown post office.

The surrender offer, made by Gen. Sak Sutsakhan, head of the newly formed Supreme Council, and Premier Long Boret, offered Sihanouk's Royal Government of Khmer National Union (GRUNK) a five-point plan "to end the present fratricidal struggle" in Cambodia.

Sihanouk responded by telegram from his exile in Peking to the Red Cross in Geneva. "Please excuse FUNK [Khmer National United Front], GRUNK, FAPLNG, [People's National Liberation Armed Forces of Cambodia] and myself for being unable to accept this unacceptable message," the telegram said.

"FUNK, GRUNK and FAPLNG repeat that if second-rank traitors wish to save their lives, they should immediately lay down their arms, raise the white flag and rally unconditionally to FUNK, GRUNK and FAPLNG, which are already in many quarters of Phnom Penh.

"As to the first-rank traitors, forming what they call the 'Supreme Council,' we advise them to flee Cambodia if they can, instead of wasting time digging bunkers.

"As the main war criminals responsible for the present useless bloodbath in the final battle for Phnom Penh, which have already virtually lost, these members of the so-called Supreme Council deserve nothing less than the gallows.

That is all we have to say to them."

Sihanouk then asked the International Red Cross to "cease interfering in the internal affairs of Cambodia."

Earlier, a spokesman for Sihanouk in Phnom Penh. "We are determined now to take Phnom Penh by force," he said.

Radio Phnom Penh, the official voice of the Cambodian government, gave no indication tonight that the administration had asked the Red Cross to sue for surrender. Wednesday, Gen. Sutsakhan had ordered his troops to fight "to the last drop of blood," saying that the situation around Phnom Penh's defenses was "boiling hotter and hotter."

The radio's only reference to the situation later was a report that insurgents had been driven back from the United Nations bridge spanning the Bassac River on the southern side of the city. It broadcast, however, an appeal for unity and asked citizens for material support of the soldiers.

"Even if you can contribute only a bag of rice, it shows clearly that you are behind them," the radio said.

Meanwhile, fuel tanks blazed from Khmer Rouge attacks and black smoke blanketed the city. Premier Long Boret, in an interview Tuesday night with Agence France-Presse, described the situation as "extremely critical." He stressed the precarious military position after government troops abandoned the left bank of the Bassac River. (over)

Phnom Basset, 17 miles northwest of the capital.

Earlier Tuesday, the premier had stopped the administrator of Kandal Province, Gen. Dien Del, from committing suicide after the provincial government was evacuated.

Battle-scarred bodies were brought by barge up the Mekong and Bassac Rivers Tuesday night. Corpses filled whole vessels which were unloaded in the northern part of the city. The dead were the last defenders of the narrow tongue of land which lies between the Mekong and Bassac Rivers south of the United Nations bridge.

The Khmer Rouge attack on the Pochentong airport began shortly after midnight Tuesday. The air base's military depot caught fire and the transportation brigade base, some 500 yards away, was occupied and went up in flames. The infantry military training center was also occupied, reports said.

In Bangkok, a Cambodian embassy spokesman denied that the airport had been seized. He acknowledged, however, that there were no civilian flights from the airport.

But he said a volunteer force of 25,000 public works and railroad workers and 3,000 students were being flown to other isolated government-held cities to relieve soldiers needed for the defense of Phnom Penh.

He said the government still had troops about eight miles east of the United Nations bridge which could be used to strike the insurgents from the rear. Insurgent forces who penetrated Phnom Penh's southern defense were believed to have

been strengthened recently by about four regiments.

After the day's fighting, a disquieting calm descended over Phnom Penh. Thousands of government soldiers abandoned the front to join the hordes of refugees blocked at the city's gates by military police.

The capital is bursting at the seams with hundreds of thousands of refugees. Shacks have sprung up on the streets and some refugees are sleeping on the sidewalks.

Wounded and emaciated children fill every bed of the city's seven hospitals and spill over onto the floors.

Road blocks around the capital were reinforced to check the flow of refugees, who are causing panic among the capital's population and troops assigned to the shrinking defense perimeter.

The government called for volunteers to replace police sent to the front lines to reinforce war-weary troops. Guerillas, their black shirts partially covered by bandoliers of ammunition, were reported less than half a mile from the Presidential Palace and Phnom Penh's main power generators.

The clandestine rebel radio station urged Cambodians to change sides and fight with them.

The Cambodian government Wednesday endorsed a move by the United Nations to declare the capital's main hotel, Le Phnom, a neutral international zone which would extend for several hundred yards around the building. Red Cross officials moved into the building, where about 100 foreigners are already quartered.

The deserted U.S. embassy was reportedly set ablaze.

The government's cease-fire proposal

was the first addressed directly to Sihanouk's rebels. It was reportedly hammered out in late-night discussions at the home of Long Boret, with the Cambodian leaders even choosing revolutionary phrases in hopes of appealing to Sihanouk.

As released by Sihanouk, the five-point offer that he rejected called for "any realistic solution which can end the bloodshed," and offered an immediate cease-fire. The Cambodian government further committed itself to "avoiding all acts of reprisal or discrimination" against people engaged in the hostilities and asked that the insurgents make the same commitment.

Power was to be transferred under U.N. and Red Cross supervision.

Sources in Peking, meanwhile, said Sihanouk had warned Tuesday that other nations should not wait "too long" to recognize the Kmer National Union. In a meeting with Swedish ambassador Kaj Bjork, the prince warned that some countries unfriendly to his alliance would not necessarily be accepted, mentioning specifically Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

Sweden and Turkey have announced their recognition of the Sihanouk government, and Peking sources said that Iran is expected to follow suit.

In Canberra, Foreign Affairs Minister Don Willesee said he had told Sihanouk that Australia would recognize the Khmer Rouge if it gains control of Phnom Penh.

Sihanouk, 52, told Peking sources that he is planning a tour of countries friendly to his government. He said he has received invitations from more than 20 countries and he plans to speak at the United Nations.

NEW YORK TIMES - 17 APRIL 1975 Pg. 1

U.S. Considers Corridor To Evacuate Vietnamese

Early April 17 April 75 page 1

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 16—Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, the Army Chief of Staff, told a Senate committee today that the Pentagon was considering establishing a corridor from Saigon to the sea to evacuate tens of thousands of Vietnamese.

Creation of such a corridor, one of several evacuation plans being considered, could involve a major commitment of American forces.

Pentagon officials said that, under hostile conditions, at least one Marine division—about 20,000 men—plus air power from Navy carriers would be required to protect the corridor.

At the same time, State Department officials said that the United States was expected to announce tomorrow that 980 Cambodian refugees would be admitted as temporary residents. [Page 18.]

Meanwhile, the rift between President Ford and Congress over aid to South Vietnam and the evacuation of Americans widened.

The President rejected as inadequate a Congressional plan that would give him \$200-million for emergency assistance and restricted authority to use troops for evacuation purposes.

Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said they had been misled about the rate at which Americans were being evacuated and put off, at least until tomorrow, further action on legislation.

An accommodation over the amount of money to be made available still appeared possible, but there was a sharp philosophical difference on the question of evacuation.

The members of Congress
See EVACUATE, Pg. 2

EVACUATE ... CONT'D

want a rapid removal of Americans and would permit the use of troops to carry out the evacuation. But they do not want to allow troops to evacuate Vietnamese.

The Government seems prepared to leave a sizable contingent of Americans in Saigon for the foreseeable future and wants to evacuate a substantial number of Vietnamese.

President Ford told the American Society of Newspaper Editors today that he had "ordered the evacuation of all nonessential United States personnel in Vietnam."

He said that the Government was "phasing down on a daily basis" the number of Americans and that "the present plan is to keep those there who have positions of responsibility."

The President refused to disclose the rate of withdrawal or the number of Americans still in Saigon.

Senators said that the Pentagon telephoned today to correct the statement of Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger that 3,850 Americans remained in South Vietnam. The number, the Senators said, was significantly higher.

Moreover, Senators of both parties complained that the White House had provided them with no plan for the evacuation.

"To know what we are legislating about, we need to have more information," said Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York.

Senator Dick Clark, Democrat of Iowa, said it was clear that Graham Martin, the United States ambassador in Saigon, was "dragging his feet" on the question of evacuation.

Plan Is Rejected

The legislation tentatively approved by the Foreign Relations Committee yesterday and rejected by the White House today would have allowed American troops to protect Vietnamese only as they were incidental to an American evacuation.

In large measure, these restrictions reflected concern that a major evacuation of Vietnamese could result in a resumption of military involvement in Vietnam.

That concern was underscored by General Weyand's closed-door testimony today before the Senate Appropriations Committee defending the request for \$722-million in military aid for the Saigon Government.

General Weyand, who returned last week from a fact-finding mission to South Vietnam, reportedly told the Senators that, without additional aid, the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu would collapse within a month.

Vung Tau Is Chosen

Although no final evacuation plan has been formulated, General Weyand, according to committee members, said that one proposal would be the establishment by United States troops of a 40-mile corridor from Saigon to Vung Tau on the coast.

From Vung Tau, the Vietnamese would be evacuated to an unspecified point by American ships.

Mr. Ford told Senators on Monday that he hoped to evacuate 175,000 Vietnamese.

One potential program, General Weyand reportedly said, is that Vung Tau is overflowing with refugees who fled from the north.

On the aid question, the Senate Armed Services Committee will begin consideration tomorrow the request for military assistance to Saigon. The International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives plans to take up the request for \$250-million in humanitarian and economic assistance and authority to use troops for an evacuation.

Philip C. Habib, an Assistant Secretary of State, told the House committee today that the \$150-million the panel is considering for humanitarian relief would be inadequate.

Monroe Leigh, the State Department's legal adviser, told the committee that it would be difficult to fashion restraints against the use of troops since it was "virtually impossible to foresee all contingencies."

One group of committee members prefers leaving existing laws intact, in effect preventing the use of troops to evacuate Vietnamese. Another segment believes that the use of troops should be permitted with few, if any, restrictions.

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BALTIMORE SUN - 16 APRIL 1975

Politics Frustrates MIA Search Teams

By ARNOLD ABRAMS

Camp Samae San, Thailand.
As Communist forces perch on the threshold of victory in Indochina, a few American officers wait here wondering whether they will ever fulfill their last mission: determining what happened to colleagues who never returned.

There were many such men, and they have been reduced to grim acronyms. Of the approximately 46,000 U.S. servicemen lost in Indochina, some 1,400 are classified KIA-BNR (killed in action, body not recovered) and more than 900 remain MIA (missing in action).

There is little reason to believe any of the missing Americans—mostly airmen—are still alive. But for more than two years a group of their military compatriots, members of a Thailand-based unit called the Joint Casualty Resolution Center, have been trying to resolve unanswered questions about their disappearance. Like most aspects of the Indochina conflict, such questions cannot be answered quickly or clearly; in fact, they may never be answered at all.

The search has been severely hampered by the logistical difficulties of reaching the missing men's last known positions, largely scattered about insecure combat areas and bombing targets in North Vietnam.

But, even more important, the quest for clues has been thwarted by political issues that have made the men who never returned mere pawns in a propaganda contest.

Those men have been used by the North Vietnamese, who withheld information about them to force curtailment of the supply flow from Washington to Saigon—a flow that the Communists viewed, with considerable justification, as encouraging South Vietnamese violations of the 1973 Paris peace agreements. Those men also have been used by Washington, with equal justification, as evidence of intransigence and inhumanity on the part of the North Vietnamese, who were committed by the 1973 accords to assist American search and recovery efforts.

The result has been a bitter standoff, with JCRC efforts brought last fall to a virtual halt through lack of safe access to their missing colleagues' known or suspected crash sites.

Not since November has an American search team ventured into the field, and now nobody can even venture a guess when—or if—another recovery operation will be mounted.

"We have not accomplished much thus far," says a JCRC spokesman, noting that the remains of only 40 servicemen have

been recovered and identified. "But this cannot be blamed on lack of will or expertise. We simply have not had access to most sites, and there is no point in sacrificing the living for the dead."

So the unit sits tight at Camp Samae San, adjacent to the giant Utapao Air Base below Bangkok. Here, some 100 officers and assorted civilian personnel maintain computerized files, analyze available information and, in the case of four operations teams, train for the day when field work will resume.

"We know that we may be stuck here, unable to do much more," says Maj. Robert Wielatz, a former B-52 pilot who is the JCRC air operations officer. "But we are pros, and we act on the assumption that someday we'll be going back out into the field."

There is another motivating factor: Major Wielatz and most other JCRC personnel have extensive Indochina combat experience.

"It could have been me missing out there," he says. "And if that were the case, I would want someone like me at this end—a pro who is doing everything he can to help."

Only one thing seems certain: the pros' efforts to answer questions about the missing in Indochina will continue—as have similar efforts for World War II and Korean war casualties. For families who can do little more than wait, that is not much consolation, but it is the best anyone can offer.

Arnold Abrams is managing editor of Asia Magazine.

Marquis Childs

BALTIMORE SUN - 16 APRIL 1975

*Early Bird
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Saigon Is No American Dunkirk

Washington.

The great question is why American intelligence was so poor that with the swift train of events in Vietnam a hastily improvised Dunkirk must be put together to rescue 6,000 Americans and up to 150,000 to 200,000 South Vietnamese. The obvious answer is that wishful thinking, the illusion that the Thieu regime could hold even after the collapse of the northern provinces, prevailed throughout the Ford administration.

The official justification is that evacuating Americans would have triggered the end of any stability in Saigon. But that will not do, and one may ask where were all those contingency plans that are a by-product of the Pentagon mills.

The rescue operation is being projected in an atmos-

phere of feverish anxiety close to despair. Congress has every reason to consider safeguards put around authorization to deploy American troops who would hold an exit channel.

The wary on Capitol Hill see the following peril:

Five thousand marines are airlifted into the Saigon region. By this time, if the worst comes, infuriated South Vietnamese take revenge on Americans for what they consider betrayal. This will compound the threat of advancing Communist troops.

The marines suffer substantial casualties. The 5,000 are not enough. Another contingent is sent in. A large naval complement, including aircraft carriers, is ready to give support. This is another war with emotions deeply stirred at the sight of defenseless Americans being shot and killed.

The rescue operation, projected by a high official yesterday, was made to sound like another Dunkirk. To see it in the same terms even remotely is evidence once again of the delusion persisting for two decades. That is the belief that Western values and Western modes of conduct are relevant to a corner of Southeast Asia largely feudal and tribal in origin.

Dunkirk was a heroic operation put together with every kind of volunteer craft to rescue close to 340,000 British troops stranded on the beaches across the English channel. They were rescued as the Nazis swept western Europe so that back in Britain they could fight another day. It was a superb illustration of British resolution, with Churchill's clarion call at the lowest point in the war as inspiration.

Many dark uncertainties hover over the Vietnam project. In the chaos of breakdown how could 100,000 Vietnamese loyal to President Nguyen Van Thieu and the American cause be sorted out of the mass and rescued? And once brought out, what would be their fate?

The anonymous official said a substantial number would be brought to the United States. Other countries, he said, would be asked to take some. This conveniently ignores the unemployment widespread throughout the industrialized world.

A large number of South Vietnamese face death or imprisonment in a Communist takeover if they are not res-

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Daly Stymied

TOKYO — World Airways President Ed Daly, two of whose planes were forced to leave Saigon empty yesterday morning, asked President Ford to cut red tape and help people escape from Saigon.

"Get some of your gutless military personnel and State Department types out. Get some loyal and dedicated men in who can make a contribution," he said.

Daly charged that a U.S. air attache in Saigon told South Vietnamese officials to shoot down one of his planes if it left Tan Son Nhut airport. The planes were to have carried orphans to Tokyo, Daly said.

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16 APRIL 1975

Evacuation Plans 3-F

SAIGON—Britons in Saigon have been advised to leave Vietnam if their work there is not essential, and Japan has told its nationals to leave as soon as possible.

About 95 Britons and 250 Japanese remain in Vietnam, according to the British Foreign Office and the Japanese embassy in Saigon.

Meanwhile, 44 orphans were flown to the Philippines aboard a C-141 Starlifter, and Australia said it will fly 77 orphans to Melbourne on Friday.

cued. Many have believed in the assurances that have come from Washington and the Thieu regime. They stand to lose everything, including their lives and the lives of their families, if they are not taken to safety.

But a great deal of hard thinking must go into their plight if there is to be such an operation. Consider the condition of 100,000 Vietnamese, few of them speaking English, set down in American communities where, as in California, the jobless rate is close to 10 per cent.

The hope, a frail hope, is that a Saigon area defense may hold until a political solution can be achieved. That might be justification to vote for the \$722 million in military aid even though it is demonstrably not an actual need and could well be too late.



Martin

NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MARINES SWOOP INTO BESIEGED PHNOM PENH, EVACUATE CIVILIANS
Release No. BAM-111-75
Tel: OX-4-4309

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 17, 1975 (USMC) -- A ground combat force of U.S. Marine infantrymen and two squadrons of Marine helicopters, launched from U.S. Seventh Fleet carriers steaming in the Gulf of Siam, teamed up Saturday (April 12) to evacuate nearly 300 Americans and foreign nationals from the embattled capital of Cambodia.

The rapid evacuation from Phnom Penh was termed an impressive success because of surprise and good planning, along with "teamwork and coordination under rather difficult circumstances" by Adm. Noel Gayler, commander of U.S. Pacific forces, a news dispatch from Camp Smith, Hawaii, reported.

Code-named "Operation Eagle Pull," Marine riflemen, under the command of Col. S. H. Batchelder Jr., were lifted in Marine helicopters from the USS Okinawa to a soccer field near the American Embassy during the early morning hours. The choppers were escorted to the improvised landing zone by aircraft of the U.S. Seventh Air Force. Marine CH-53 Sea Stallions, flying from the USS Hancock, later gave support to the ground and air elements of the Marine Amphibious Unit which conducted the evacuation.

- more -

2-2-2-2-2

As the troop-carrying choppers landed, the combat equipped Marines charged out of them, immediately ringing the LZ with a defensive perimeter. No shots were fired during the more than two hours the Marines manned the lines.

As the last civilians to be evacuated were leaving, a Marine security guard permanently assigned to the American embassy hauled down the U.S. flag before boarding a chopper.

No incidents marred the swift evacuation. However, three rounds of high caliber enemy fire exploded in the LZ as the last Marine chopper launched. There were no casualties and none of the aircraft received damage.

- USMC -

A 12 Thursday, April 17, 1975 THE WASHINGTON POST

Life in Danang Said Becoming Normal Again

By Colin McIntyre

Reuter—

SAIGON, April 16—Life is returning to normal in Communist-controlled Danang, South Vietnam's second largest city, according to a South Vietnamese businessman who spent nine days there recently.

Schools have reopened, restaurants and cafes are full and there is just about enough food to go around, he said. Theaters have also opened again and are showing North Vietnamese films with titles such as "The Revered Flag" and "Battlefield in Quangduc."

North Vietnamese currency is being used alongside the South Vietnamese piaster and already commands an inflated black market rate as people hedge against a future currency change, the businessman said. Many shopkeepers are reluctant to sell their stock for the same reason.

As far as he knows, there have been no massacres of South Vietnamese soldiers, civil servants or refugees, contrary to an almost universal belief in Saigon that this would inevitably follow any Communist takeover.

This rare glimpse of life "on the other side" came from a middle-aged businessman who arrived in Danang on March 29, the day the city fell to the Communists, and left on April 8.

He said he was politically neutral and agreed to talk to two foreign correspondents only after some persuasion—and on the strict understanding that his name would not be used.

Asked how he was able to leave the northern port city, once a huge U.S. military air base, he said the Communist authorities were allowing free movement for people carrying the necessary identity documents and were telling people, "You can even go to Saigon, but we'll be there soon."

He said he told the new authorities he was returning to his hometown of Quangnai, south of Danang. But once aboard a south-bound fishing boat, he traveled down to Nhatrang on the central coast and from there to Saigon.

The businessman said he originally left Quangnai in a huge refugee column that pulled out behind departing government troops. Along the way, he became separated from his family. Returning to Quangnai, he found his hometown in complete civil disorder, with the Communist troops unable to exert control because they were under strict orders not to fire on civilians.

He then went to Danang to search for his family, where he found the city swollen to twice its normal population of 500,000 by refugees.

After he was there a few days, however, he said he noticed that the refugees were gradually being returned, by bus, to their homes.

In Danang, there was looting of government and private warehouses, while some enterprising townsfolk did a brisk business selling abandoned motorcycles, bicycles and other property.

Looted rice was being sold for 1,000 piasters (about \$1.30) for 220 pounds. Small motorbikes abandoned at the docks by panic-stricken evacuees were going for just 5,000 piasters (about \$7).

Communist guerrillas patrolling the city did not intervene at first, he said, but on March 30 and 31 about 10 looters were shot and several others were seen being led away with hands bound.

One of the first actions of the new authorities was to announce the establishment of a "committee of military control in Danang" dedi-

cated to "independence, democracy, peace and neutrality."

Its first published circular declared: "To insure order and security in the city and the lives and welfare of all classes of people, and to restore normal activity in it, we are organizing a committee of military control of the city of Danang."

The nine-member committee that was named was headed by Ho Nghin, alias Ho Huu Phuoc, who was identified as a member of the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front.

Danang Radio—where the announcers were changed but technical staff stayed on—ordered all government officials and soldiers to report to the control committee headquarters, where they had to disclose exactly what they had been doing under the Saigon government. They were then issued identity documents.

Former local administration officials were asked to continue working—for two cans of rice a day in lieu of pay. But as of April 8, city offices were still closed and Danang was being run on a day-to-day basis by worker's committees assigned to each district.

As the situation gradually returned to something approaching normality, a 10 p.m. curfew was announced and outdoor theaters in several parts of town showed a film of the 1973 May Day rally in Hanoi.

Two large rallies were held in Danang's sports stadium—one voluntary for the general public and the other compulsory for workers' committees and Communist officers. Other meetings were organized at the district level.

The schools were ordered to re-open and to continue as before until new orders were drawn up. Textbooks considered particularly anti-revolutionary were discarded.

As far as the mood of the people was concerned, the businessman said it was a mixture of enormous relief that the fighting was over and very real anxiety over what the future might hold.

"Of course, they are worried," he said, "worried about economic hardship, a changed lifestyle and political restrictions. At the moment, however, they are just glad to be out of the war."

Airlifting of Babies Ordered Suspended

By Bill Richards and Elizabeth Becker

Washington Post Staff Writers

Federal immigration officials yesterday ordered an immediate, temporary halt to the "Operation Babylift" bringing Vietnamese and Cambodian children to the United States.

The officials cited "irregularities" and legal questions arising from the transfer of the children, including 28 from Cambodia who arrived in the Washington area Monday.

Although private adoption agencies began placing those Cambodian children in temporary foster homes yesterday, Immigration and Naturalization Service officials said they were notifying government adoption agencies throughout the metropolitan area that the youngsters' adoptive status is cloudy.

"We're going to launch a full investigation to determine what these children's backgrounds are and how they got into the United States," said James Green, deputy commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. "We're going to make certain there isn't any quick adoption of these children before we know who they are."

Meanwhile, officials from the District and Maryland said that without court documents relinquishing the rights and responsibilities of the parents of the Cambodian children, they wouldn't be considered adoptable in their jurisdictions.

In Virginia a child becomes adoptable either through the consent of the parents or "a pretty strong showing that the consent is being withheld contrary to the best interests of the child," according to Fairfax County Juvenile Court Judge Richard J. Jamborsky Jr.

"Parents must have their rights and responsibilities terminated in the circuit court," said Barbara Hawk of the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services. "The question of the Cambodian children is very complicated. I honestly don't know the answer for them, and maybe nobody knows." Jurisdiction for whether children can be legally adopted is up to the state governments.

Among the irregularities cited by officials for the suspension of the flights are

(over)

questions about the authenticity of many of the children's orphan status. There have also been reports that some high Vietnamese officials paid bribes to get their children out of the country and that children leaving Cambodia were promised a U.S. education for getting onto the plane.

Officials from Immigration and the Agency for International Development said yesterday that it appears the 28 children here do not have any documents authorizing their adoption by parents or guardians.

One of the major problems, said Green, is trying to determine how the children

were identified for adoption and who, brought them out of Cambodia. "As far as we know," he said, "there was no one in authority on the plane when they took off."

The flight was under the direction of AID, but officials of that agency said yesterday that they were still not clear about the circumstances under which the children left Phnom Penh April 9.

"Our information, which was cabled out of Phnom Penh the day after they left, was that their parents were all dead," said Arthur Gardner, head of AID's East Asia bureau.

Gardner said that AID officials were trying to contact members of the U.S. embassy in Cambodia who fled from the country last Saturday and are now in Bangkok. He said a cable from the Cambodian embassy before it fell indicated the children had all been screened by U.S. and Cambodian officials.

The 28 children yesterday afternoon left their temporary dormitory that had been set up for them by the Red Cross at the Leesburg Presbyterian Church in Loudoun County. They held hands with adoption agency personnel and their new foster parents. They waved and laughed for a crowd of reporters and television crews gathered in the parking lot and playground of the church.

Red Cross officials said they were all in fairly good health and had been eating a diet of rice and soy sauce prepared to make them feel at home. According to some federal officials, none of the children was being placed in foster homes where Khmer,

the language of Cambodia, is spoken.

Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman (D-N.Y.), a member of the House subcommittee on immigration, questioned officials from both immigration and AID yesterday about the children's status.

She said she had requested immigration officials to photograph all the children to insure that they could be easily found if they do not qualify for adoption. "If they have parents, and there is a question about whether anyone gave permission for adoption," she said, "they'll have to be returned."

Unlike children from Vietnam who were officially designated orphans before they left Saigon and who had American parents already assigned for them, the 28 Cambodian children here arrived without release statements from their parents, according to an Immigration Service spokesman.

The Vietnamese children had parents assigned to them who were responsible for the children when they arrived. No parents had been chosen for the Cambodian children because they were not official orphans and therefore they could not be given anything but a temporary permit to stay in this country, according to the spokesman.

Immigration officials said the number of children in the United States on an emergency status for adoption is nearly up to the 2,000-child limit authorized by the U.S. Attorney General. They said they would not request a higher ceiling until questions about the children already here are cleared up.

Ford Insists U.S. Aid Cut Lost Vietnam

17 April 75

By Carroll Kilpatrick
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Ford yesterday refused to blame Peking and Moscow for the debacle in Vietnam and asserted that if the United States had maintained its aid commitment, "this whole tragedy could have been eliminated."

The President made his comment in a question-and-answer session at a luncheon meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors here.

He disclosed formally for the first time that he had ordered an evacuation of "all nonessential U.S. personnel in South Vietnam" and said that "we are phasing down on a daily basis such U.S. personnel who have no responsibilities."

He refused to give any figures on the number being withdrawn.

If the United States had agreed to make available "reasonable sums" for military and economic aid to South Vietnam over the next three years, it could "have met any military challenges," the President maintained.

The amount of aid required would have been "just a relatively small additional commitment" compared to the \$150 billion the nation spent in Vietnam in the last decade, he argued.

Since the United States did not provide the additional assistance, "we are faced with this human tragedy," Mr. Ford said. "It just makes me sick every day I hear about it, read about and see it."

The President's strong words came at the same time that he pledged cooperation with Congress on foreign policy and predicted that he and the legislators could cooperate in continuing "a successful foreign policy."

Asked if the Chinese and

Russian supplies to Hanoi were not in violation of the spirit of detente, Mr. Ford said: "I don't think we can blame the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China in this case. If we had done with our allies what we promised, I think this whole tragedy could have been eliminated."

"I am absolutely convinced if Congress made available \$722 million in military assistance by the time I made—or sometime shortly thereafter—the South Vietnamese could stabilize the military situation in Vietnam today."

The President has struggled for months to persuade Congress to provide additional assistance to Vietnam and Cambodia and last week requested \$722 million in assistance for Vietnam.

Mr. Ford said that this country is not now in direct negotiations with Hanoi to seek a cease-fire in Vietnam. He said he did not believe that deposed Cambodian chief of state Prince Sihanouk was in a position to negotiate a Cambodian settlement.

Sihanouk is in Peking but his influence with the Khmer Rouge, the Communist-led insurgents in Cambodia, is not regarded as significant.

The United States will do what it can to bring about a Cambodian cease-fire, Mr. Ford said, adding that he is working through the signatories of the Paris accord of 1973 to bring about a cease-fire in South Vietnam.

On domestic issues, the President told the editors that the nation must make a "two-pronged" attack on inflation and recession.

"I don't think you can ignore one and overemphasize the other," he said.

The President said he was "very concerned" about the "dangerous trends of our growing dependence and worsening dependence on overseas shipments of oil."

"The situation is going to get worse, not better, unless we find a way to develop all domestic sources including the outer continental shelf," he said.

Only last year, he said, domestic oil production was at the rate of roughly 10 million barrels a day and imports averaged 6 million barrels a day.

But now domestic production has decreased to about 9 million barrels a day and imports have increased to 7 million barrels a day, he said.

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Vietnam Aid Fund Stalled in Committee

By Spencer Rich and
Richard L. Lyons

Washington Post Staff Writer

The Ford administration yesterday criticized a proposed \$200 million emergency aid fund for Vietnam as inadequate, but the Senate Foreign Relations Committee balked at approving even that amount until withdrawal of U.S. nationals from Vietnam is speeded up.

The dispute plunged the President and Congress into deeper conflict over Vietnam and made it unlikely that Mr. Ford's requests can

be cleared through both chambers by Saturday, as he had urgently sought.

The President's position was disclosed by Sen. Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) and other senators as the Foreign Relations Committee met to continue work on its \$200 million "contingency fund," which received tentative committee approval Tuesday. "The President doesn't look upon it with favor," said Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.), who wanted to give the bill final approval anyhow.

Assistant Secretary of State Philip C. Habib told the House Committee on International Relations that the \$200 million figure is simply "not adequate" compared with Mr. Ford's request for \$722 million in emergency weapons aid and \$250 million as a first installment on humanitarian and economic aid to South Vietnam.

Angry over reported delays on evacuation of Americans, the Senate committee refused to take final action either on the \$200 million or

on a related resolution calling for an opening of peace talks and efforts to encourage "elements in South Vietnam who are desirous of seeking a political settlement."

Chairman John Sparkman (D-Ala.) said, "We have not yet received the information we requested nor the assurances an adequate plan is in effect that would get them out."

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) said the committee had been "misinformed" about the pace of withdrawal of

U.S. citizens who might come under fire, and Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) said there were actually 4,100 Americans still in South Vietnam. Members had been informed Tuesday that the figure was several hundred lower. They said yesterday that they want a full report plus a schedule of planned withdrawals.

Sen. Dick Clark (D-Iowa) said, "We're very disappointed in the evacuation. (Ambassador Graham) Martin is still dragging his feet."

The senators fear that if a sizable number of Americans remained, a major U.S. force would have to go in to save them if South Vietnam began to crumble, kindling a whole new U.S. participation in the war.

The bill before the committee, which Sparkman said will be voted on as soon as further assurances are received on evacuation, authorizes creation of a \$200 million contingency fund to be used by President Ford to aid in withdrawal of Americans and some Vietnamese as rapidly as possible.

It permits the President to use the armed forces to accomplish this rescue mission, and also to take out Americans' immediate dependents and "endangered" Vietnamese who might be subject to Communist reprisal, provided withdrawal of the Vietnamese is confined "to areas where United States forces are present for the purpose of protecting citizens of the United States and their dependents while they are being withdrawn."

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Sparkman said part of the \$200 million could be used for weapons aid to South Vietnam, provided the President finds that such weapons aid is needed to protect U.S. nationals or to speed their evacuation.

At the root of the conflict over Vietnam is the asserted desire of the administration to keep supplying South Vietnam with major weapons shipments, so that it can continue the war until such time as a settlement, leaving both sides independent, is reached. Many members of Congress, on the other hand, don't wish to maintain a high level of aid, on the theory that South Vietnam is probably doomed anyway and the money will be wasted, especially if the unpopular Thieu regime remains in power.

Any use of U.S. forces would be subject to the provisions of the War Powers Act, which means that forces would have to be withdrawn after 60 days unless both chambers of Congress authorize them to stay.

The Foreign Relations Committee actually doesn't have jurisdiction over weapons aid to Vietnam. That lies with the Armed Services Committee to provide a ceiling on spending and the Appropriations Committee

However, many members of Foreign Relations view the \$200 million contingency fund, to be used for relief, evacuation, medicine, food and weapons aid as needed, as a substitute for the total White House request.

The White House, deeming the \$200 million inadequate, is pressing for Armed Services committees in both chambers to act separately and authorize the \$722 million it requested for weapons aid. (Technically, a \$300 million authorization that hasn't yet been funded is already on the books, so the committees need raise the ceiling by \$422 million.) Then the White House wants the Appropriations committees to provide the full \$722 million.

Both the Senate and House Armed Services committees will meet on this proposal today.

The House Committee on International Relations will also meet today on the \$250 million request for humanitarian aid, and Sparkman's committee will meet again on the \$200 million contingency fund.

An International Relations Committee member said the panel was told at a closed session by State Department officials yesterday that the reason for the high estimate of 200,000 or so Vietnamese to be evacuated as endangered is, chiefly the large number of their dependents. He said only 17,000 Vietnamese are U.S. employees but they have 150,000 dependents.

Even if the Armed Services committees increase the weapons aid authorization to \$722 million, it is highly doubtful that the actual appropriations eventually voted will be that high—even though Army Chief of Staff Fred C. Weyand, just back from Vietnam, made a strong impression on Senate Appropriations members at a closed session yesterday. He reportedly said Saigon can hold out

and possibly obtain some political settlement of the war if it receives more military aid.

After the meeting, Democratic Whip Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.), Bennett Johnston (D-La.), Henry Bellmon (R-Okla.) and John L. McClellan (D-Ark.), the committee chairman, said it appeared the committee might vote some funds for further military aid.

"They are fighting, they are resisting, and as long as they're showing the will and the ability to do so, there might be some prospect for additional military assistance," said Byrd. "I think I could vote for some," though not the whole \$722 million, he added.

McClellan, who has opposed further aid as a waste, said, "I can't say (Weyand) presented any arguments that were particularly compelling" in favor of more aid. "I'm still of the opinion any military aid would only delay the inevitable" North Vietnamese takeover, but added later that he might go for a "small amount."

Up to \$1 Billion Seen Needed for Viet Relief

The director of the principal U.S. aid agency said that as of yesterday all appropriated funds for humanitarian assistance have been exhausted and that between \$750 million and \$1 billion would be needed to care for

the victims of war in South Vietnam.

The administration is seeking an immediate \$250 million to provide relocation centers in South Vietnam for residents fleeing their homes as Communist forces advanced. Daniel Parker, administrator of the Agency for International Development, told representatives of federal, state and voluntary agencies concerned with foreign disaster relief that the \$250 million would be part of a total requirement that may reach \$750 million or even \$1 billion.

Parker said there are now 500,000 registered refugees, with an additional 500,000 persons expected to register. He said the United States hoped to place them in 10 refugee camps in South Vietnam, all of which had to be started from scratch and must be completed before the rainy season begins in late May.

"Our concern," he said, "is not only with orphans but with all refugees and those other people in Vietnam afflicted by the war."

Last week Parker appealed to the public to halt all collections of food, clothing, medicine or other supplies for shipment to Indochina since much of that was already available and there is no assurance that supplies will reach affected areas. Parker said cash contributions to volunteer agencies would be the most useful form of relief assistance.

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Town Taken By Vietcong

17 April 75
By Philip A. McCombs
Washington Post Foreign Service

SAIGON, April 16—The government's military position worsened Wednesday when a division of Communist troops using tanks and artillery overran and captured the provincial capital of Phanrang 200 miles northeast of here on the South China Sea.

[Government troops were pushed back at two points near the provincial capital of Xuanloc, 40 miles to the east of Saigon, where heavy fighting has been going on for more than a week, news agencies reported. An armored brigade was sent to reinforce the forces at Xuanloc. It was taken away from threatened Tayninh Province. The northwest approach to Saigon.]

Military observers believe the loss of Phanhang opens the way for a similarly strong Communist attack on the coastal city of Phanthiet south of Phanrang.

After that, the way south along the coast is clear of major government positions all the way to the port of Vungtau southeast of Saigon. Any threat to Vungtau would have strong psychological repercussions among Saigon's population, since the port is viewed by people here as a major sea escape route in the event of a Communist victory.

In Saigon, officials of the French embassy have been meeting privately with political opponents of President Nguyen Van Thieu. The meetings follow reports from Paris that the French government is trying to lay the groundwork for a political settlement here. Last week French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing suggested to his Cabinet that Thieu should leave office to promote such a settlement.

The opposition figures who have met with the French include former head of state, Gen. Duong Van (Big) Minh, Thich Tri Quang, leader of the anti-Thieu Buddhist faction, and the Buddhist lay leader, Sen. Vu Van Mau. The substance of the discussions has not been disclosed.

It is not clear to what extent the French embassy may be coordinating its activities with U.S. officials, who are reluctant in the present supercharged atmosphere to do anything publicly that would appear to undermine Thieu.

Many officials and diplomats here, including some Americans, are thought to believe that Thieu's exit is essential within the next two weeks if there is to be any chance of a political settlement.

"If you don't see any political change here within the next 10 days to two weeks, the Communists are likely to give up any

ideas they may have of a political settlement and simply make a direct military drive for Saigon," said a well-placed observer.

A political settlement including Thieu's departure, which various Communist leaders have indicated they would like, would presumably take place under the 1973 Paris cease-fire agreement which contemplates the establishment of a tripartite government in the South made up of representatives from the Saigon and Communist sides plus independent or "third-force" elements that favor neither side.

A Communist military takeover of Saigon appears inevitable in the absence of such a political settlement. A political settlement might provide for the orderly withdrawal from Saigon of Americans and of Vietnamese who would rather not live under the Communists.

Thieu has publicly vowed he will stay in power and continue to fight the Communists, who for their part have made it clear that under no circumstances will they negotiate with him. Thus it appears to observers here that Thieu's removal from office—forcibly or otherwise—is essential if there is to be a political settlement.

[Duong Van Duc, the son of General Duong Van Minh, said in Paris that his father's political bureau had been in touch with the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government and that negotiation was possible. Duc said his father's program called for the departure of President Thieu and formation of a government of peace which could negotiate with the Vietcong government.]

Meanwhile, American civilians and some officials continued to leave Saigon. Estimates of the number of Americans still in South Vietnam vary widely with some sources putting it below 4,000 and others as high as 6,000. The embassy is moving many of them out as quickly as possible while continuing to deny that any "evacuation" is under way.

An evacuation, in the embassy parlance, would be an immediate and full-scale removal of Americans from Saigon, including most or all officials. It is thought that such an evacuation would almost certainly be opposed by South Vietnamese civilians and military, possibly by force.

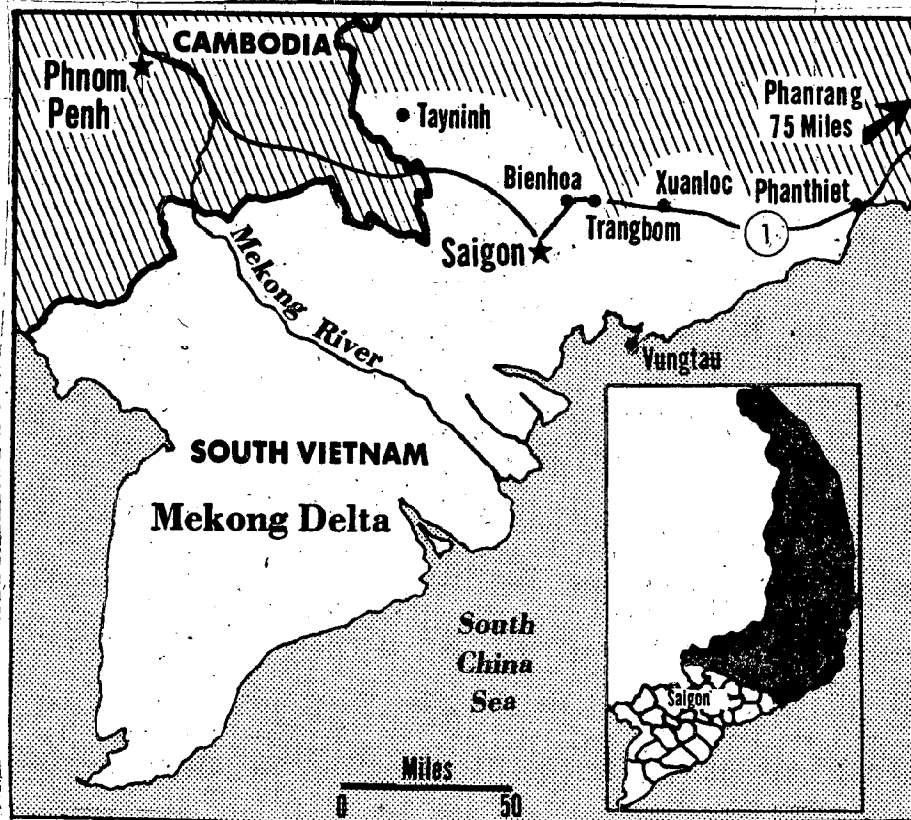
Preparations appear to be under way for such an evacuation, however. Helicopters of the airline that serves the U.S. government here, Air America, have been seen circling the apartment buildings inhabited by U.S. personnel in downtown Saigon and other official U.S. buildings.

In at least two cases, helicopters made practice landings atop such buildings, and work is under way to strengthen the roofs of some buildings.

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Phanrang Falls; Xuanloc Defenders Retreat



By Joseph P. Mastrangelo—The Washington Post

South Vietnamese gave ground in fighting around Xuanloc and lost Phanrang.

(Cont'd on page three)

Washington Post, 17 April 1975, page three

As part of the U. S. embassy's campaign to get more Americans to leave, officials said they were cutting off Post Exchange privileges for retired American military personnel living in South Vietnam. There was no report on how many persons the action affected.

At a meeting of retirees in a Saigon movie theater, Maj. Gen. Homer Smith urged the men and their families to leave the country, offering them free air transportation.

"I think very seriously that you had better think very seriously about leaving

South Vietnam. Never before have you had a better opportunity because never before have you been offered free transportation for you and your families."

The U.S. embassy has arranged with the Vietnamese government to expedite the granting of exit visas to Vietnamese wives of American citizens, and sources report that charter flights sponsored by the embassy are expected to arrive here soon to take people out.

So far, the government refuses to allow Vietnamese citizens—with the exceptions of wives of Americans and a very few others—to leave the country, and the tensions among tens of thousands of persons here who would like to leave but cannot, contribute to Saigon's present explosive atmosphere.

The decisive Communist military victory in Phanrang today indicates to military observers here that Communist forces continue to move south in strength following their capture of most of the northern two-thirds of South Vietnam during their six-week-old offensive.

Phanrang was originally thought lost several weeks ago, but its virtual abandonment by the government was later seen to have been caused by panic and unpreparedness rather than by any strong Communist military thrust in the area.

The government subsequently brought large forces back into the area and fought strongly, but those forces were decisively defeated today, according to unofficial reports. The government has not yet officially conceded the loss of Phanrang, where a major airbase is located.

Saigon Units at Xuanloc Fall Back at Two Points

From News Dispatches

SAIGON, April 16—South Vietnamese troops gave ground Wednesday at the pro-

vincial capital of Xuanloc east of Saigon as the heavy fighting there entered its second week.

Government forces were said to have

pulled back from a district town 10 miles northwest of Xuanloc, while Saigon units were driven from a key position seven miles to the west on the highway leading to Saigon. Xuanloc is 40 miles east of Saigon and is regarded as a key position in the capital's defense perimeter.

To counter the Communist drive against Xuanloc, the government Wednesday moved the 3d Armored Brigade 50 miles from Tay Ninh Province to the eastern front.

Moving the brigade is, military analysts said, a calculated gamble that could go wrong for the South Vietnamese. At its previous position at Hieuthien, the brigade served as a blocking force on Highway 1 as it runs toward Cambodia from Saigon. Shifting it east of the capital leaves a large hole in Saigon's northwestern defense line, the analysts said.

The Saigon command said Wednesday that two A-7 fighter-bombers had been downed by portable Soviet SA-7 missiles 40 miles southwest of the capital where the Communists have been trying to cut Saigon's highway link with the Mekong Delta. The SA-7s have not been used so close to Saigon before.

The Associated Press reported from Washington that the government is trying to quickly reform 22,000 soldiers salvaged from the retreat in the north into a new Marine division and 25 army battalions.

South Vietnam's new premier, Nguyen Ba Can, appointed an American freelance photographer, Wallace Driver, 50, to be his personal consultant on relations with the foreign press.