

**AGENDA ITEMS FOR MEETING BETWEEN
MS. ANITA BOTTI, CHIEF
DOMESTIC REFUGEE ADMISSIONS
BUREAU FOR POPULATION, REFUGEES AND MIGRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AND
THE FAMILIES OF VIETNAMESE POLITICAL PRISONERS ASSOCIATION**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 1996
4:00 p.m.**

1. Status of processing and timeline for resettlement of the special commandos. What are the guidelines for processing, how many have been approved, how many rejected? What about eligibility for the widows? Also, where will the refugee admissions numbers come from? We hope that the numbers do not come from those planned for the HO caseload.

2. The status of processing the over-21 unmarried sons and daughters of the former political prisoners. As you know, in December of 1994, the Department of State announced the exclusion of over-21 sons and daughters from the cases of the former political prisoners. ODP has not implemented the policy of "humanitarian exception" which Ms. Phyllis Coven assured us would be done. In light of this failure, we believe that ODP should return to its consistent policy of including unmarried sons and daughters. As we are sure you are aware, the former political prisoners whose sons and daughters were excluded have been miserable in their resettlement here.

3. We understand that the Bill, HR-2202, sponsored by Representative Lamar Smith of Texas, will be submitted to the Congress in April, 1996.

Minutes of DOS-USCC Meeting
March 6th, 1996 at 4pm.

Present: Anita Botti, DOS-PRM
Betsy Fitzgerald, DOS-PRM
Whitney Reitz, DOS-Processing
Dick Cohen, USCC
Khuc Minh Tho, FVPPA
Trinh Ngoc Dung, volunteer

In regard to the Commandos group, Anita Botti stated the Volags have resettled a number of them, and there is only a small number left to be processed - about 300. She understood that FVPPA is interested in taking them to Northern Virginia, but the problem there is long-term welfare mentality of the refugees, which upsets the State Coordinator so much, particularly the Ethiopian group in Arlington; she compares this to Orange county in California, and Seattle in Washington State. Jobs are available, but thousands of refugees do not work.

The resettlement program main thrust is to get the refugees employed as soon as possible, she said. Resettlement location priorities are given to family ties, refugees will go where their families are, regardless of communities where people are interested to help because those locations may not be good employment sites. She repeatedly asked for FVPPA help to get words to refugees and MAAs across the nation that Welfare Reform is in the works and money is tighter than ever. Refugees need to seek employment as soon as they can. Dick Cohen echoed Anita Botti by saying that USCC's policy is to emphasize best placement and early employment, and Arlington is not the best place. Arlington USCC track record is not very impressive, and Seattle, Washington state is also troublesome. Seattle should not accept refugees who do not think of working right away. Most resettlement agencies stay clear from Arlington for that matter. Unless refugees have blood relatives in the area, there would not be any free-case resettled in Northern Virginia. Furthermore, Virginia Governor Allan is very strict. VA has its own welfare reform legislative already in place. USCC prefers Kentucky since the employment rate there is 90%. Oh no not Louisville, Ky, Ngoc Dung interrupted. She cited a case who appeared at the ORR-FPP workgroup in Chicago. He said USCC got him and his daughter a church sponsorship in the remote area, which has no Vietnamese. The man and the church sponsor could not communicate.

Anita Botti asked "If you take them in, are you ready to put them up and feed them?" Khuc Minh Tho reinstated that FVPPA always wants to help and get HO people resettle where there is community support or community in which HO cluster. Botti and Cohen alluded that perhaps, at the next allocation meeting in New York on

Tuesday, March 12, they would sound Volags out to see which areas have best employment opportunities and are best suited to the commandos and will relate that to Tho to see if FVPPA can match them up with the local resettlement.

Tho raised the questions: (1) children of the FPPs who are over 21, Whitney Reitz said that there is no change; DOS-INS have to apply the same rule to every country, and Vietnam is no exception. (2) widows of the commandos. Reitz said that INS adjudicated case by case and none warrented approval. Applicants did not have enough document to prove it. Tho can talk to INS, (3) change in Immigration law in regard to family preference. Again, INS has the lead.

Lost Commandos

World Relief

Per your memo on March 28, 1996 - -

The criteria is for selecting sites for Commando Resettlement is base on the meeting at Department of States, on March 6, 1996. We discussed for selecting good places for them.

Our Assn also ~~was~~ like to resettle in Northern Virginia because our Assn. base in this area. We have very good connection with the Vietnamese Community, Former Pol. Pris Assn. and other organizations, churches etc. - -

We can get a lot of supports from them, but Anita - Dick said that area is not good for jobs for them and ~~we also suggest Washington~~ also Virginia is very strict on welfare reform.

Anita and Dick also said California north and south and Washington state are not good too. We welcome their experiences

They are
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to
settle

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