

Indochinese Refugee Reports

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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES
JOIN FORCES

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Several weeks after arriving in any city in Orange County, California, a new refugee attends an orientation meeting in which various individuals make presentations on services and programs available to refugees. Because of this meeting, all Indochinese refugees in Orange County start out with the same expectations for the assistance they will receive in adjusting to a new life and culture.

The meeting is sponsored by the Indochinese Forum, and the individuals making the presentations come from the county's departments of social services, health and mental health, from school districts, the Red Cross, the International Rescue Committee, the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the U.S. Catholic Conference -- in fact from all public and private agencies and mutual assistance societies currently working with refugees in Orange County. Orienting the recently arrived refugees to services is but one activity of the Forum's members, whose goal is to facilitate cooperation among all those involved in the resettlement process and to coordinate all county-wide programs for refugees, improving service and avoiding duplication.

Background

In the summer of 1975, the pastor of St. Anselm's Episcopal Church, a Church

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World Service affiliate in Orange Grove, foresaw a need to unify the county's resources in dealing with refugee resettlement. Father Haviv quietly began making contacts to enlist various individuals in membership.

It took about one and a half years for the Forum to assume its present shape, according to the Forum's director, Bunny Hetrick, who is also the Director of the Catholic Immigration and Resettlement Agency in Santa Ana. Since the Forum's inception, all public and private agencies in the county that offer refugee services have joined, as have a number of private individuals who are simply interested in and concerned about refugee affairs.

The Forum is governed by by-laws, is unincorporated and has no paid staff. Members are asked to pay \$100 in annual dues, but those who cannot pay or contribute are asked to attend and participate anyway. Currently the Forum operates on an annual budget of \$600-700, used primarily to cover the mailing of monthly meeting minutes to state, local and federal government officials, to Forum members, and to Ambassador Clark's office.

Information Exchange

The exchange of information that is vital to community-wide coordination and cooperation comes through a monthly meeting at which seven standing committees (Indochinese, Employment, Education, Health, Housing, Legislative and Transportation) present reports on activities during the previous month. Any subject pertinent to refugee resettlement may be raised for discussion, and Forum members seek to reach a consensus of opinion on how to resolve problems.

Each of the standing committees seeks members from the Indochinese Committee and has a bilingual member to provide any necessary interpreting.

At the monthly meeting the Indochinese Committee presents its report first. Says Ms. Hetrick, "We learn from them about the feelings and needs of the Indochinese community prior to making policy or developing plans for action."

Communication between members continues during the month through individual committee meetings. In addition, members are brought together in consultation on specific refugee cases through the use of an interagency referral slip which refugees take with them when referred from one agency to another. The slip provides the name of the referring counselor, the reason for the referral and a "response" section which is mailed back to the referring agency, giving information on the progress and current status of the refugee.

In addition to facilitating communication between all county agencies, the Forum seeks to provide feedback to the government. The IRAP monitor for Title XX of the State of California attends each monthly Forum meeting, and the HEW Region IX IRAP office tries to send a representative. Through the Legislative Committee, the Forum also has contact with local offices of congressional representatives. Director Bunny Hetrick has traveled to Washington, lobbying for refugee interests in Kennedy's and Clark's offices. The Employment Committee makes recommendations to the Manpower Commission on service needs and problems and provides specific feedback on the operation of CETA programs.

Action on Refugee Issues

Action taken by the Forum occurs mainly through the Committees. The Transportation Committee is currently developing plans for making bilingual bus schedules available. The Education and Employment Committees devoted fifteen months of intense work to prepare proposals for HEW FY'80 funding for all Orange County agencies. Although

each agency submitted its own proposal and requested its own funding, each proposal was accompanied by a package of information showing in table and chart form how that particular program related to all other county programs in ESL and employment training. In a show of unity, each agency requested that any change in funding by HEW take into account all programs as they relate to one another.

The orientation of newly arrived refugees is one of the most visible scheduled activities of the Forum. Held on two consecutive days, the orientation lasts eight hours. Sponsors or outreach workers accompany the refugees, and translators in all languages are available. In addition to making a formal presentation, each agency representative answers questions from refugees about services. The Indochinese Job Center, in conjunction with the Employment Division of the Department of Social Services, compiled a slide presentation on the employment market in Orange County that is shown at each orientation. Various companies were interviewed for the presentation, and information on positions, starting salary, advancement opportunities and job activities are provided. "We try to portray Orange County as a total picture in terms of employment," says Dennis White, who is employed by the Indochinese Job Center and who is also Employment Committee Chairman.

Measuring Success

Has the Forum been successful? Says Hetrick, "It's hard to say, because needs and problems keep growing. At least people talk together and information flows back and forth regularly. And the Forum can speak with one voice when it concerns refugees in Orange County." Phong Nguyen, chairman of the Indochinese Committee,

points out, "Many people are unaware of the needs of so many refugees in Orange County. Now media and elected officials know who to go to for information -- they have more knowledge about our problems and about our culture." Presenting a unified stand on issues affecting refugees is a crucial accomplishment in the fastest growing county in California -- a county that claims a refugee population of over 20,000.

UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINORS

Indications that there were unaccompanied minors in refugee camps in Southeast Asia were first received in the summer of 1977, and at that time a very few were admitted to the U.S. under the category of "humanitarian concern." In December 1978, the State Department announced that the immigration category for these youth was being changed to 1B status -- one step below "immediate family," which allowed more to enter. Then in January of this year, the State Department announced that 500-600 such youth had been cleared for entry to the U.S. before September 30. Although no one knows for sure how many children who are unaccompanied in the camps also have no relatives in the U.S., some estimates run as high as 2,000 for the number who could be admitted this year.

Between May 1975 and December 1978, approximately 800 unaccompanied minors entered the U.S. At present two volags, the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and the U.S. Catholic Conference Migration and Refugee Service, have programs for placing unaccompanied minors in foster care in several states. In some cases where foster care proves to be unsuccessful or is initially unpromising, minors are placed in small group homes. Older children are sometimes allowed to live independently,

supervised by a local public or private child welfare agency.

On February 7, 1979, HEW issued an action transmittal designating unaccompanied minors as those children who: have not attained the age of majority in their state of residency; have no known immediate adult relatives in the U.S.; are lawfully admitted in parole status; and meet the definition of an Indochinese refugee. The transmittal specifies that these children are to receive the same range of child welfare services as other children placed in foster care, including foster care maintenance (or room and board payments), medical assistance, social services, and administrative costs. These services are currently reimbursed 100% through IRAP funds.

Resettlement agencies who arrange for sponsorship of the minors are in the position of a sending agency, which, under the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), would normally entail continued legal responsibility for the minors. The interstate placement of unaccompanied refugee minors differs critically from other compact placements, however, because the national voluntary agencies responsible for the placement are not legally responsible for the child's continued care and supervision after the placement is complete. Because state law varies, the placement can be considered complete either upon arrival of the child in the state, or when the local child welfare agency in the jurisdiction where the child resides has petitioned the appropriate court for legal custody of the minor.

The HEW action transmittal of February 6, 1979 states that before a child is placed by a resettlement agency, the local office of the volag should consult with the state or local public agency so that arrangements are made to establish legal responsibility for the care and maintenance of the child. Enacted uniformly by 44 states, the ICPC requires notice and ascertainment of the suitability

of a placement before it is made and allocates in specific fashion the legal and administrative responsibilities during the continuance of an interstate placement. Procedures designed for use with the placement of unaccompanied Indochinese refugee minors were adopted on April 24, 1979 by the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children during its annual meeting on April 24. The basic ICPC procedures and forms were modified and streamlined to ensure the quick and smooth placement of these children under the Compact.

American Public Welfare Association during the past fourteen years has provided secretariat services to the Association of Administrators of the ICPC. These secretariat services include facilitating communication among member states, legal consultation, and mediation of interstate disputes. During the past several months, representatives of the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Lutheran Council, HEW representatives and the Secretariat of the Compact have held several meetings regarding implementation of ICPC procedures. The American Public Welfare Association, in its role as Secretariat, will be a central source of information concerning the use of the compact for the placement of unaccompanied refugee minors. For further information, contact: Bruce Gross or Deborah Vaughn, ICPC, APWA, 1125 15th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. Telephone: (202) 293-7550.

Recent Developments

FY'79 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS

On July 17 the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4289 making 1979 supplemental appropriations for the Departments of State and HEW. Because the bill is considered privileged, it

can be called onto the Senate floor for a final vote at any time without prior scheduling. At the time of publication, no Senate action had been taken.

The House passed the bill as it was reported out of a House-Senate conference on July 11. The conference report maintained the higher level of Department of State funding than had passed the Senate earlier. (\$108,910,000 for refugee and migration assistance and \$17,200,000 for the emergency fund). HEW supplemental appropriations remain unchanged: \$51,700,000 for Indochinese refugee assistance.

REFUGEE ACT OF 1979

On July 10, the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously approved the Refugee Act of 1979, S.643, by a vote of 17-0. The full committee approved preliminary staff mark up of the bill, which had lifted the two-year limitation on federal funding for social services. The limit remains on cash and medical assistance. Sen. Mathias (R-Md.) added a provision requiring the General Accounting Office and HEW to provide an annual report on the monitoring of all refugee programs. The committee is expected to file a report on the bill within two weeks, after which time it can be scheduled for a floor vote in the Senate.

The House has still not acted on its version of the bill, H.R. 2816. The Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Naturalization, and International Law must mark up the bill before referring it to the full Judiciary Committee. Staff members declined to say when that action might be taken.

PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS ORGANIZE FOOD AIRLIFT

Soliciting contributions from pri-

vate individuals and corporations, as well as from California's Indochinese refugee population, two individuals have organized an airlift of six to eight tons of food and medical supplies to be delivered to refugees in Malaysian camps on a plane chartered by the Intergovernmental Committee on European Migration (ICEM). Richard Walden of Los Angeles and Llewellyn Werner of Sacramento have organized the collection of dehydrated food, drugs, and tarpaulins to be used for cover during the rainy season. Expenses are expected to total between \$10-20,000 for travel, fuel, moving and storage.

This effort, dubbed "Operation California," is the first cargo of emergency supplies to be sent to refugees in Malaysia from the U.S. and was arranged in cooperation with the American Red Cross and its Malaysian counterpart, the Red Crescent Society. If their effort is successful, Werner and Walden agree that it will demonstrate the ability of private individuals to aid refugees.

U.S. GOVERNORS TAKE STAND ON REFUGEES

At an annual conference held this year in Louisville on July 8-10, the nation's governors unanimously approved a four-point policy position on refugees recommended by the Task Force on Indochinese Refugees of the National Governors' Association.

Stating full support of the Refugee Act of 1979, the governors nevertheless urged that Congress delete the bill's two-year limitation on full federal reimbursement to the states for cash and medical assistance. In a move that will please state and local education officials, the governors also called on Congress to appropriate funds for payment of \$450 to local

school districts for each refugee child enrolled, an amount authorized in the Education Amendments of 1978. The governors commended President Carter for doubling the monthly quota of refugees entering the U.S. and echoed calls by other national and world leaders for Malaysia and Thailand to continue to offer temporary asylum to refugees.

At the closing plenary session of the conference, Governor George Busbee, chairman of the NGA's Committee on International Trade and Foreign Relations, announced that Secretary of State Cyrus Vance had appointed Governors Robert Ray of Iowa and Brendan Byrne of New Jersey as members of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Conference on Indochinese Refugees to be held in Geneva on July 20-21. Governor Ray is chairman of the NGA's Task Force on Indochinese Refugees, and Byrne is a member. The governors had supported the conference in their policy positions and recommended participation by state government officials.

News

INS INCREASES SOUTHEAST ASIAN STAFF

Leonel Castillo, Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner, announced on July 4 that twenty additional officers would be sent to Southeast Asian refugee camps to speed processing of an increased number of refugees who may soon be admitted to the U.S. An attorney general parole order, approved by the Congress, will be necessary to authorize the entry of 14,000 refugees a month. President Carter had pledged the increase during the Tokyo summit conference in June.

At present INS has seven staff persons in Hong Kong, Bangkok and Manila who interview refugees in camps to determine their admissibility to the U.S. The additional officers will arrive in

Southeast Asia in late July or early August.

Info

RELIEF AGENCIES ISSUE CALL FOR HELP

Relief agency representatives, members of the Citizens Commission on Indochinese Refugees, met in New York on June 25 to begin planning a major lobbying effort on behalf of refugees. Leaders of the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish agencies involved in resettlement efforts issued a joint press statement calling for public support of refugee programs to assure that there will be enough sponsors for refugees. They called for the United States to double its quota to 14,000 a month and to establish transit camps as temporary measures to prevent further loss of life. They also demanded that the U.S. expedite transportation, by military transport if necessary, of those refugees who have already been cleared for entry by the INS. Members agreed to lobby Congress for \$10 million in emergency funds to cover transportation funds.

Resource Exchange

Info

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS FOR REFUGEES

The fact that 95% of all employable adult refugees currently hold jobs disguises a need for long-term career development and job skills upgrading, a fact that was the focus of the Indochinese Manpower Development Conference held on April 5th and 6th in Chicago under the sponsorship of Truman College in cooperation with the Region V HEW Office of Family Assistance. Speakers on the first day included Mr. Gene Niewoehner, Region V IRAP coordinator, who stressed the need for follow-up after job placement to encourage job advancement, and Dr. Pho Ba Long of the Center for

Applied Linguistics, who contrasted Vietnamese and American attitudes to employment. Dr. Long emphasized that Vietnamese view the company as an extension of the family and would never go on strike, since loyalty to the employer is inherent in Vietnamese attitudes. Dr. Robert Harris, Director of Special Programs of the National Alliance of Business, advised those working with refugees to seek positions with smaller companies where greater advancement is possible. Dr. Lam Pham, Director of the Indochinese Program of Truman College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago, stressed the positive benefits of short-term employment measures which initially give confidence and stability to a refugee who is then able to consider more long-range goals.

A job search clinic focused on job-finding skills on the second day, and a workshop detailed successful employment programs for refugees.

Eighty-five percent of the participants called for holding another such conference in 1980, which Dr. Pham says would be contingent on funding. A partial transcript of the conference, resolutions passed at its conclusion, and a list of participants are available for \$2 by writing to the Committee for a National Indochinese Manpower Development Conference, c/o Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60640.

FOR TEACHERS, PARENTS AND CHILDREN

The Bilingual/English as a Second Language (BESL) Center in New Holland, Pennsylvania offers several resources to schools involved in the education of Vietnamese children. A series of handouts, available at no charge, include a parent's newsletter in Vietnamese and English that explains various aspects of American education, children's stories and narratives on American traditions and holidays as well as on

Vietnamese culture and history. Annotated bibliographies of books available for loan from the BESL library on Cambodian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Thai and Vietnamese language and culture can also be ordered at no charge.

BESL staff specialists offer in-service consulting, including materials evaluation, aid in setting up a bilingual or ESL library and training in teaching methods. Dr. Carolyn Ebel, Director of the Center, explains that schools or projects working with Indochinese would have to assume consultant costs and travel fees for these services, because the Center is funded as a Spanish project.

The BESL Center is funded through Title VII funds, authorized under the Bilingual Education Act of the Education Amendments of 1978. Requests for a brochure on BESL services and for the list of handouts and relevant bibliographies should be addressed to: Dr. Carolyn Ebel, Director, BESL Center, 100 Franklin Street, New Holland, PA 17557, Telephone: (717) 354-4601.

ISLAND PROCESSING CENTERS

During his talks with leaders of the ASEAN countries meeting in Indonesia last month, Secretary Vance raised the issue of Southeast Asian nations making additional islands available for processing large numbers of refugees, thereby alleviating the strain on existing refugee camps. According to a Washington Post story on July 4, a high-ranking State Department official accompanying Vance indicated that two islands in Indonesia and one in the Philippines may be ready as transit camps "in a matter of weeks." The islands were not named for fear of raising local opposition. A staff member in the office of Dick Clark, coordinator for refugee affairs, indicates that talks concerning use of these islands are "still ongoing."

INTERNATIONAL EVENTSEFFORTS TO RESTRICT AID TO
VIETNAM

According to an article by Elizabeth Becker in the Washington Post on June 27, the U.S. is asking charities, international organizations and other countries to consider decreasing or cutting off aid to Vietnam until Hanoi changes the repressive policies responsible for the large refugee exodus. Approximately \$1.7 billion has been promised to Vietnam by various non-communist countries, banks and international organizations. The Soviet Union contributes \$2.5 billion in economic aid. Becker also asserted that the U.S. is most interested in seeing Sweden alter its aid policy toward Vietnam. Senator Charles Percy requested that a letter from Mats Bergquist, political affairs counselor of the Swedish embassy in Washington, be included in the Congressional Record of June 27. The letter reports that Sweden has decided to accept 1250 more refugees this year, in addition to the 250 it had earlier pledged to resettle. Bergquist also reported that Sweden will donate \$3.4 million to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and that the Swedish Save the Children Association, a private agency, has donated \$900,000 to refugee programs. Contacted by phone, a Swedish embassy official reported that Sweden has earmarked \$90 million in aid to Vietnam for the Swedish fiscal year running from July 1, 1979 to July 1, 1980.

The Washington Post reported on July 5 that the European Common Market has decided to divert aid earmarked for Vietnam to food programs for the refugees. A staff member of the European Communities Delegation in Washington reports that of 86,000 tons of cereal to have gone to Vietnam, 8,000 tons of rice will go to refugees, the equivalent of 21,000 tons of cereal. Of 15,000 tons of milk, 1500 will go to refugees.

CURRENT INDOCHINESE POPULATION IN THE U.S. BY STATE

As of June 30, 1979

1. Alabama	1,655
2. Alaska	263
3. Arizona	1,547
4. Arkansas	2,054
5. California	58,037
6. Colorado	4,335
7. Connecticut	2,026
8. Delaware	201
9. District of Columbia	1,782
10. Florida	6,381
11. Georgia	2,042
12. Hawaii	3,622
13. Idaho	488
14. Illinois	7,315
15. Indiana	2,295
16. Iowa	3,879
17. Kansas	2,550
18. Kentucky	1,313
19. Louisiana	8,033
20. Maine	354
21. Maryland	3,087
22. Massachusetts	1,908
23. Michigan	3,756
24. Minnesota	5,445
25. Mississippi	852
26. Missouri	3,324
27. Montana	562
28. Nebraska	1,901
29. Nevada	1,024
30. New Hampshire	166
31. New Jersey	2,027
32. New Mexico	1,072
33. New York	5,199
34. North Carolina	1,610
35. North Dakota	404
36. Ohio	3,634
37. Oklahoma	4,254
38. Oregon	5,318
39. Pennsylvania	9,305
40. Rhode Island	1,094
41. South Carolina	956
42. South Dakota	530
43. Tennessee	2,055
44. Texas	18,839
45. Utah	1,863
46. Vermont	52
47. Virginia	7,325
48. Washington	7,531
49. West Virginia	193
50. Wisconsin	3,216
51. Wyoming	112
52. Guam	389
53. Puerto Rico	36
54. Unknown State	499
55. Virgin Islands	17
	210,437

This statistical report is compiled from two sources: the annual Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Alien Report as a base and weekly updates of new refugees arrivals obtained through the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM). Only the January INS report gives any indication of refugee movement among the states. The current INS base figure used is from the INS January 1978 report.