

29 April 1975

Call From Frank Nihill--HongKong

RE: Saigon Exodus

Nihill called from Hongkong at about 1130 local Washington time and reported as follows:

An Air America C-46 piloted by Captain Tom Sailor, Co-Pilot Saddler, arrived Hongkong about 1800L their time with 20 persons on board other than Saddler and Sailor which included: 4 Chinese (2 with Taiwan Visas and 2 with Hongkong CI's), 1 Philippino and 6 Air America Vietnamese employees, plus 9 Vietnamese who had no relation with the Company but managed to get aboard the aircraft before its take-off. Nihill also noted that Captain Harrington had arrived in Hongkong in a Volpar.

From Nihill's conversations with Sailor he also recounted the following, which is hearsay: two of the UH-1H helicopters [redacted] were apparently stolen by VNAF personnel and flown away from the airport; some(?) aircraft had been flown to Thailand; there had been some Air America helicopter shuttles from Vung Tau (?) out to carriers; apparently two aircraft had made it to Phu Quoc.

MAAL is getting in touch with the American Consulate in Hongkong for advisory assistance with respect to the Vietnamese nationals. The pilots arrived at Hongkong with no onward plans thus will be in Hongkong awaiting instructions.

I advised Nihill that our single most important problem with the above is the matter of the Vietnamese citizens and what Air America's responsibility and position with respect thereto may be. The Hongkong Immigration Authorities have permitted the entry of the 4 Chinese, 1 Philippino and the 6 Air America Vietnamese citizens which have been housed in a Hongkong hotel. The Immigartion Authorities as yet have not permitted the entry of the 9 "stowaway" Vietnamese.

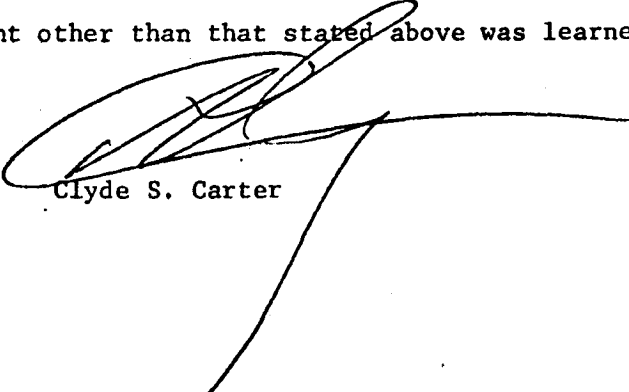
NOTE: Vis-a-vis Hongkong authorities, Air America is legally responsible for the Vietnamese being in Hongkong and we should anticipate bearing all costs with respect thereto as well as receiving direction from the Hongkong Government for their ultimate onward movement. I requested Nihill to monitor this aspect closely and keep us promptly advised.

I also advised Nihill that the scheme of things had called for the ultimate ferry of the aircraft to Tainan (from Saigon) where they would be readied for ultimate ferry to Roswell, New Mexico.

MAAL is to put together a teletype message to the Washington offices on this matter and request instructions.

No information on persons or equipment other than that stated above was learned from Nihill.

APPROVED FOR
RELEASE DATE:
13-Oct-2009



Clyde S. Carter