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# **Indochinese Refugees: The Continuing Exodus**

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**A Research Paper**

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*GI 83-10131  
June 1983*

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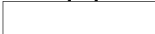

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# Indochinese Refugees: The Continuing Exodus




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**A Research Paper**

This paper was prepared by   
 Office of Global Issues. It was  
coordinated with the Directorate of Operations, the  
Department of State, and the Defense Intelligence  
Agency. 

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Comments and queries are welcome and may be  
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**Indochinese Refugees:  
The Continuing Exodus**

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**Summary**

*Information available  
as of 1 April 1983  
was used in this report.*

The massive outflow of Indochinese refugees under way since 1975 has diminished over the past year. The principal cause has been deterrence policies instituted by asylum and resettlement nations, along with an apparent growing shortage of small boats and engines. Arrivals have slowed since mid-1982 to about 2,000 to 3,000 a month. We believe that the slowing trend in refugee arrivals will continue through 1983, with the number of arrivals possibly totaling little more than half the 1982 figure of 50,000. [Redacted]

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We estimate that 2.4 million people have fled from the countries of Indochina since 1975. A massive and highly publicized outflow of refugees during the 1978-79 period was triggered by Vietnam's persecution of its Chinese minority, Hanoi's invasion of Kampuchea in late 1978, and severe food shortages in Kampuchea the following year. Although the number of refugee arrivals dropped dramatically after these peak years, arrivals continued at high monthly rates (between 12,000 to 13,000) through mid-1981. Other less dramatic factors continue to feed the refugee pool; these include oppressive political conditions, a deteriorating social climate in several countries of the region, and harsh economic policies that stifle opportunities for gain. Refugee numbers have also been swollen by so-called pull factors—that is, potential refugees' knowledge of asylum camps and resettlement programs with their promise of an improved life. [Redacted]

As the refugee flow continued into 1981, first-asylum countries (notably Thailand) instituted tough measures to discourage potential refugees. Thailand nominally has closed its land border, established minimal facilities or "austere" camps for new arrivals, and on occasion, turned refugee boats back to sea. To lessen the attractiveness of the pull factor, resettlement criteria have been redefined by the United States and other nations, leaving some refugees in limbo. Western nations are under pressure to quicken the pace of resettlement to reassure asylum countries that they will not be left with large numbers of refugees unwanted elsewhere. [Redacted]

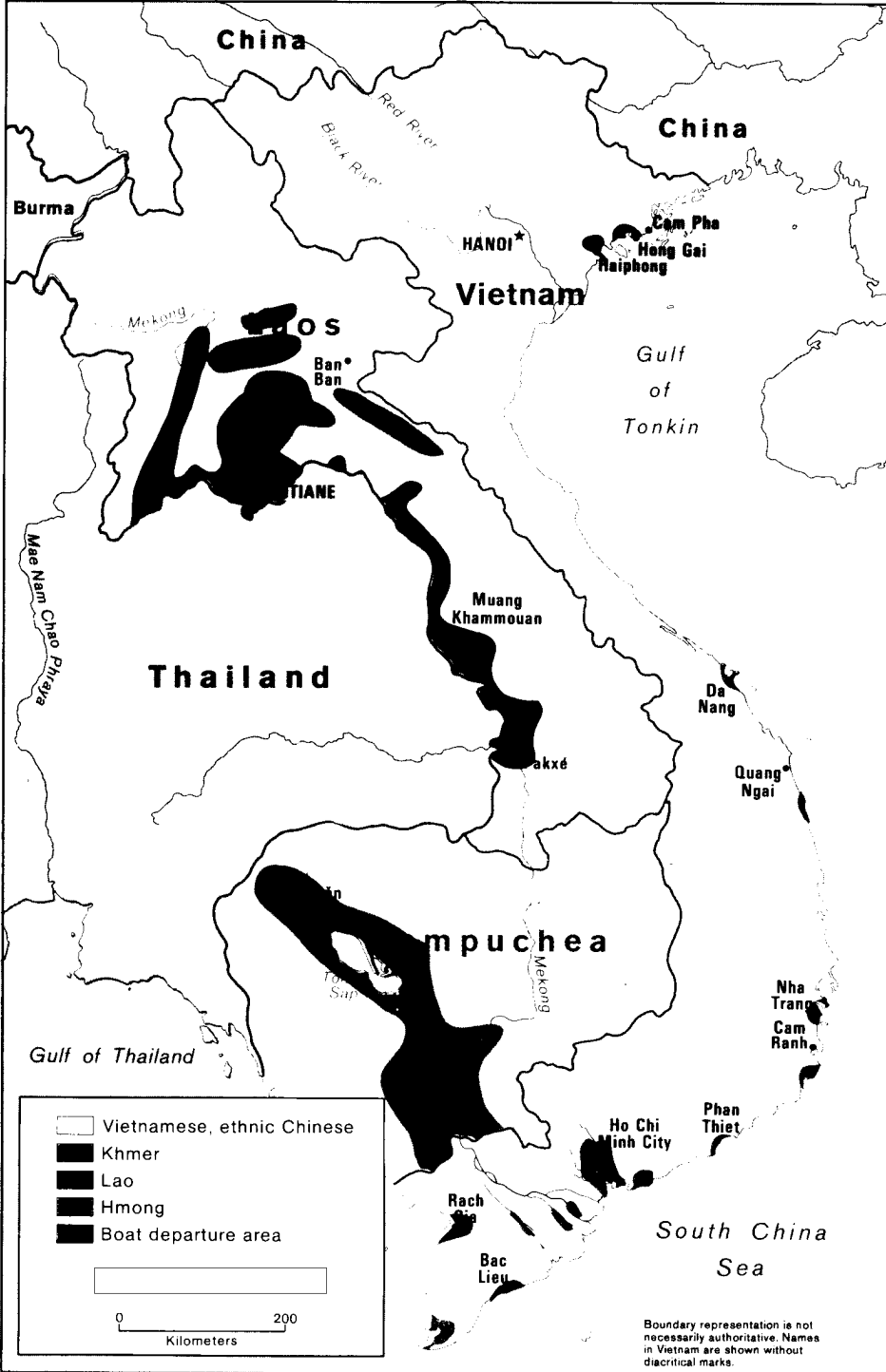
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Figure 1  
Indochina: Primary Refugee Emigration Areas



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**Indochinese Refugees:  
The Continuing Exodus** [redacted]

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More than 1.5 million refugees have left the Indo-chinese countries since early 1975 for asylum or refuge in nearby Southeast Asian nations. Another 780,000 or more Kampuchians seeking food and safety have over the years migrated to the Thai border, but have stayed inside Kampuchea.<sup>1</sup> We also estimate that from 100,000 to perhaps as many as 140,000 Vietnamese "boat people" may have perished at sea (table 1).<sup>2</sup> The refugee flow has risen and fallen in response to warfare, food shortages, and political-economic policies. Although the number of refugees has dropped significantly since mid-1982, the problems associated with receiving, caring for, and resettling them will continue to exert political pressures on the United States and other nations resettling refugees. [redacted]

This paper examines the background of the Indo-chinese refugee situation, the factors that cause people to leave, the problems associated with processing them in countries of first asylum for resettlement, and the probable trends in refugee numbers. Appendixes provide statistical data on the refugees since 1975 and more detailed accounts of the reasons for flight, clandestine boat departures, and the hazards involved. [redacted]

**Why They Leave**

Over the past seven years the flow of people seeking refuge in Southeast Asia has surged and declined in response to a series of major political events, national policies, and socioeconomic conditions in the Indo-china countries (appendix A). [redacted]

<sup>1</sup> Most of the Kampuchians in time returned to their homes. Some 200,000 or more, however, remain in a number of border encampments, most of which are loosely controlled by anti-Vietnamese resistance organizations. [redacted]

<sup>2</sup> This estimate is based on accounts by refugees and fishermen as to the percentage of boat losses, verified casualties on boats that arrive, loss rates adjusted for weather conditions during months of sailing, and average boat size. Other estimates made have ranged from 10 to 30 percent—or about 60,000 to 235,000 individuals. [redacted]

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**Glossary of Terms**

**Refugee.** Used generically to mean people who leave their native soil with little or no intention of returning and with hopes of being resettled elsewhere. [redacted]

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**Displaced person.** An individual, usually from Kampuchea, who flees his home and goes to the Thai border but remains on native soil. These people generally go in search of food, usually intend to return home, and seldom seek resettlement elsewhere. [redacted]

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**Illegal immigrant.** As used by some first-asylum nations, refers to recent arrivals seeking refuge. People so classified by the asylum nation are ineligible for immediate resettlement processing and may be subject to repatriation. [redacted]

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**First asylum.** The temporary accommodation of newly arriving refugees or displaced persons in a national facility outside the country from which they have fled. [redacted]

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**Resettlement.** The relocation of refugees from temporary first-asylum camps to permanent residences elsewhere, primarily in the United States. [redacted]

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The major reasons for their flight were:

- The Communist conquests of South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos during 1975 provided the first major impetus.
- Hanoi's virulent anti-Chinese policies that sent hundreds of thousands of ethnic Chinese fleeing northward on foot to China. Others, also mainly Chinese, fled by boat, with more than 200,000 leaving in 1979 alone (appendix B).

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**Table 1**  
**Statistical Synopsis of Indochinese Refugee and**  
**Displaced Person Flow, April 1975-June 1982**

	Annual	From Vietnam	From Kampuchea	From Laos
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,320,400</b>	<b>932,600</b> <sup>a</sup>	<b>991,000</b>	<b>396,800</b>
1975	242,300	106,500 <sup>b</sup> 17,200 <sup>c</sup>	7,000 <sup>b</sup> 15,000 <sup>d</sup> 3,400 <sup>e</sup>	21,000 <sup>b</sup> 72,200 <sup>d</sup>
1976	78,900	12,500 <sup>f</sup>	6,500 <sup>d</sup> 25,000 <sup>e</sup>	34,900 <sup>d</sup>
1977	91,800	17,300 <sup>f</sup> 10,000 <sup>g</sup>	3,000 <sup>d</sup> 25,000 <sup>e</sup> 5,000 <sup>h</sup>	30,500 <sup>d</sup> 1,000 <sup>g</sup>
1978	373,700	87,800 <sup>f</sup> 190,000 <sup>g</sup>	7,100 <sup>d</sup> 10,000 <sup>e</sup> 5,000 <sup>h</sup>	71,800 <sup>d</sup> 2,000 <sup>g</sup>
1979	346,600	1,000 <sup>d</sup> 205,200 <sup>f</sup> 57,000 <sup>g</sup> 1,800 <sup>i</sup>	10,000 <sup>d</sup> 15,000 <sup>h</sup> (200,000) <sup>j</sup>	54,600 <sup>d</sup> 2,000 <sup>g</sup>
1980	207,300	1,000 <sup>d</sup> 74,100 <sup>f</sup> 7,000 <sup>g</sup> 4,700 <sup>i</sup>	35,200 <sup>d</sup> 10,000 <sup>h</sup> (500,000) <sup>j</sup>	74,300 <sup>d</sup> 1,000 <sup>g</sup>
1981	139,000	900 <sup>d</sup> 74,400 <sup>f</sup> 8,600 <sup>i</sup>	28,800 <sup>d</sup> (50,000) <sup>j</sup>	25,300 <sup>d</sup> 1,000 <sup>g</sup>
1982	60,800 10,700 <sup>k</sup>	44,900 <sup>f</sup>	(30,000) <sup>j</sup>	5,200 <sup>d</sup>
Miscellaneous	780,000		780,000 <sup>k</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Does not include estimated 100,000 to 140,000 boat refugees lost at sea.

<sup>b</sup> To the West.

<sup>c</sup> To Southeast Asia.

<sup>d</sup> To Thailand.

<sup>e</sup> To Vietnam.

<sup>f</sup> Boat people.

<sup>g</sup> To China.

<sup>h</sup> To Laos.

<sup>i</sup> Orderly Departure Program.

<sup>j</sup> Kampuchea-Thailand border (within Kampuchea).

<sup>k</sup> Illegal aliens and displaced persons.

Note: All figures are rounded estimates based on Department of State data and may not reflect continuing adjustments of field data supplied by refugee authorities. Data prior to 1977 consist of estimates from different sources. Also, post-1977 statistics lack consistency because of unofficial entrants into Thailand, camp births, change in definitions of refugee categories, and other factors that lead to statistical errors and discrepancies.

- The invasion of Kampuchea in December 1978 by Vietnamese troops caused several hundred thousand Khmer to flock to the Thai border over the next several months to escape the fighting and to obtain food.

Since the massive food shortages in Kampuchea in 1979 and, to a lesser extent, in 1980 ended, there have been no events of comparable magnitude to spur flight. Nevertheless, a sizable refugee outflow has

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continued because of unfavorable military, political, economic, and social conditions—the “push factors”—in the Indochina countries. [redacted]

**Warfare**

In the past few years, military operations have been concentrated in western Kampuchea; they have become seasonal, with sharpest fighting in the November-to-May dry season. The groups most affected by warfare are the anti-Vietnamese resistance groups in Kampuchea and the the Hmong tribespeople of northern Laos. The Hmong have been attacked by both Vietnamese and Laotian troops as part of a long, small-scale, and bitter campaign of attrition. The campaign has attempted to bring this traditionally antigovernment minority under central government control and to break the back of its guerrilla operations. Use of chemical warfare agents by attacking Vietnamese forces has been reported by both Hmong and Khmer refugees. An indirect military factor is Vietnam’s draft system, which is causing the flight of eligible youth who do not want to serve under northern Vietnamese cadres nor to fight in Kampuchea. [redacted]

**Political Repression**

Political pressures continue to spur many to flee, with the single most important factor cited being adverse discrimination because of association with the now defunct governments of the former Indochina nations. Some Indochinese have served prison sentences. Those once part of or in some way connected with the former regimes in Indochina and who remain undetected fear arrest; those who were once part of the former government and who have been released from prisons and “reeducation centers” fear rearrest. [redacted]

The changed political situations in Vietnam and Laos mean that key positions have changed hands, creating resentment among the former elites and their clients. In southern Vietnam, for example, refugees report widespread resentment over the conqueror attitudes of the carpetbagging northern cadre posted in the south. Similarly, refugees from Laos report that ethnic Lao from the Mekong lowlands, who once staffed most Vientiane government offices, resent both Soviet and Vietnamese cadre now found at most levels of government. Other political factors and irritations include travel restrictions, surveillance and searches, and tight controls on dissent [redacted]

**Economic Pressures**

Ideologically inspired economic policies have in some cases produced harsh conditions—for example, attempted agricultural collectivization in southern Vietnam and the establishment of New Economic Zones in remote, virgin land areas—causing people to seek escape from the physical hardships imposed by these programs. Others less directly affected by government change have fled for opportunistic reasons, hoping to improve their economic lot and to regain a position or status enjoyed prior to 1975. [redacted]

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Food shortages have been the most important economic reason for flight and have been reported in all countries. By far the most severe shortages have been in Kampuchea. Hanoi’s December 1978 invasion of Kampuchea interrupted the harvest of the country’s main rice crop, and by mid-1979 food supplies were exhausted in many areas. From then through 1980, more than 750,000 people trekked to the Thai border in search of food, most of whom returned to their homes after the fighting had diminished and food and other aid had been obtained. Since then smaller numbers have gone to the border as national food production has slowly recovered, although production still remains below national needs and has had to be supplemented by international aid. Food shortages are periodically reported in both Vietnam and Laos; conditions in these countries, however, have not been as nationally devastating as in Kampuchea. [redacted]

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**Social and Health Factors**

In Vietnam, deterioration of the country’s social fabric has contributed to the refugee flow. In a land where education is traditionally held in high regard, higher educational opportunities are now largely denied to children of the politically tainted. An increased crime rate is attributed in part to poor economic conditions, [redacted] Another irritant is Hanoi’s restrictions on overt religious practices. Nationally, public health has suffered from shortages of doctors and medical supplies. Inadequate nutrition, because of chronic food shortages, affects much of the population. [redacted]

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**Figure 2**  
**Indochinese Refugees:**  
**A Perilous Journey to Freedom**



Franz Furst ©



Wide World ©

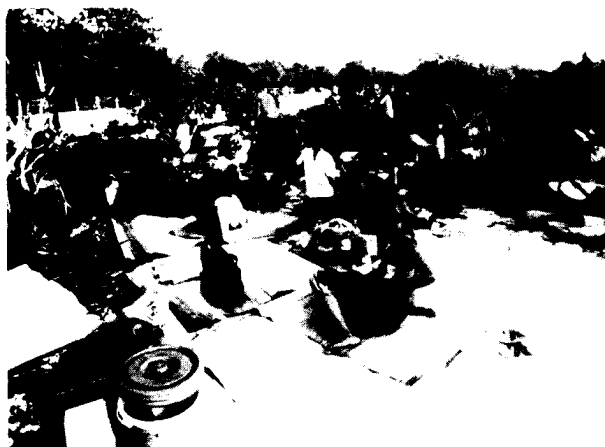


Wide World ©

*Refugees fleeing fighting in Kampuchea in 1979-80 fled in search of food. Because of fighting, the normal agricultural cycle was disrupted and food shortages were widespread. Some refugees died from starvation during their trek overland to Thailand. Thousands of Vietnamese perished at sea. Overcrowded boats sometimes sank in sight of the shore. The steelhulled Skyluck entered Hong Kong harbor in February 1979 carrying some 2,700 refugees. After about five months at anchor, the crew became impatient and ran the ship aground to ensure that the refugees would be taken ashore.*



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Liaison ©



*Some Kampuchean remain in camps near the Thai border but inside Kampuchea. Feeding points on the border were established for the allocation of food provided through and administered by international aid organizations. Refugee housing ranges from makeshift camps, with nothing more than plastic sheets on a framework of pole, to thatched roof shelters and more permanent and substantial houses.*

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Many Kampuchean refugees also cite concerns about health conditions. The health situation in Kampuchea is poor, and a recent Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) survey states that the majority of children below 12 years of age suffer from moderate to severe malnutrition. The Kampuchean population as a whole is highly susceptible to infection and disease because of the cumulative effects of a substandard diet over recent years. The FAO report also states that in all villages visited, the food, nutrition, and health situation was much worse than in the most remote and poorest areas of neighboring Thailand. [ ]

#### The "Pull Factor"

According to refugee camp workers and official assessments made of the refugee situation, refugee numbers have been influenced and augmented by the so-called pull factor, which refers to the existence of a means of assistance after flight, including probable resettlement. Knowledge of an asylum and resettlement system through letters from those who have fled and from VOA or BBC broadcasts has induced some to attempt flight, according to those who work with the refugees. At times potential boat refugees have been aided in their plans by humanitarian rescue ships operating in the South China Sea that broadcast weather data, sea conditions, and their positions. [ ]

The "pull factor" and its implications have presented both asylum and resettlement nations with difficult political and humanitarian decisions. Policy changes instituted by Thailand and resettlement nations, primarily the United States, over the past year or so have been directed at reducing the attractiveness of the pull and discouraging those potential refugees whose objective is to improve their economic lot as opposed to individuals' fleeing because of the threat of or actual political persecution. Both asylum and resettlement nations continue to urge potential Vietnamese refugees to leave through the legal but cumbersome Orderly Departure Program (ODP) (see appendix A for details). [ ]

#### First-Asylum Countries

Asian first-asylum nations, the principal destinations of Indochinese refugees, are reluctant hosts. Because the refugee flow continued at a high rate after the

**Table 2**  
**Refugees and Displaced Persons Assisted by First-Asylum Nations, 1975-82**

Country	Number Attended	Number Remaining in Camps
<b>Total</b> <sup>a</sup>	<b>2,223,700</b>	<b>221,700</b> <sup>b</sup>
ASEAN and East Asia	1,856,700	221,700
Thailand	1,378,200 <sup>c</sup>	168,700 <sup>d</sup>
Malaysia	181,300	8,500
Hong Kong/ Macau	121,500	13,700
Indonesia	78,000	13,100
Philippines	30,400	15,100
Singapore	28,100	500
Japan, South Korea, Taiwan	38,200	2,100
Communist East Asia	367,000	NA
China	272,000	NA
Vietnam	60,000	
Laos	50,000	

<sup>a</sup> Excludes 89,000 resettled directly to Western nations in 1975 and an estimated 100,000 to 140,000 boat refugees lost at sea.

<sup>b</sup> The difference in the two columns represents those refugees resettled, repatriated, or returned to their homelands.

<sup>c</sup> Includes 780,000 Khmer aided from Thailand but who stayed in Kampuchea.

<sup>d</sup> Excludes estimated 225,000 Khmers in camps and areas near the border but inside Kampuchea and who are aided by international organizations.

[ ]  
traumatic events of 1978-79, strict measures have been reinstated by some nations to deter arrivals. The cumulative refugee burden on first-asylum nations since 1975, based on Department of State statistics, is shown in table 2. [ ]

First-asylum nations are increasingly concerned by the continuation of the refugee flow, termed an "unceasing and costly problem" by Thailand's Secretary General of its National Security Council, Prasong Soonsiri. These concerns are bolstered by the decline in the numbers of refugees accepted for resettlement because of tighter restrictions that are being imposed on eligibility by the United States and some of the other resettlement nations. Adding to the

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problem is Vietnam's continued uncompromising attitude toward any type of repatriation program, assuming that some Vietnamese kept in camps for several years would opt to return. [redacted]

The most closely watched statistics in first-asylum countries are those indicating monthly departures, arrivals, and rate of decline. Although the overall camp population (based on Department of State statistics) in Southeast Asia declined by 35,000 during 1982 from about 258,000 to 223,000, and, with a further drop to 213,000 by the end of March 1983, many asylum countries in both public comments and in discussions with US officials urge an acceleration in the rate of departures. According to Embassy reporting, there are greater worries in both Hong Kong and Indonesia, particularly in the former, over the failure of resettlement to match the arrival rate in 1982. All asylum countries fear the political consequences of a large alien population, unwanted and ineligible for resettlement. [redacted]

**Thailand**

Thailand has been the major recipient of the Indochinese refugee outflow. Thai resources, heavily augmented by internationally funded aid, currently house 71 percent of the Indochinese refugees and displaced persons in camps throughout Southeast Asia and help provide assistance to the more than 200,000 Khmer located just inside the Kampuchean border. Thai and international agencies also assist those Thai, reported by Bangkok to number 80,000, living in areas affected by the refugee inflow. [redacted]

Thailand's cardinal goal, according to her top leadership, is "not to allow even one displaced person left on her soil." Bangkok officials both privately and publicly express fears of being left with thousands of "leftovers"—refugees who lack qualifications for resettlement and are unwanted. These fears, reinforced by recent reductions in the rates of resettlement and changes in refugee acceptance criteria, led Bangkok to introduce its humane deterrence policies in mid-1981 to discourage potential refugees from heading for Thai soil. Although other factors, including weather, availability of boats and engines, and antideparture measures, are important in determining numbers of refugees, boat arrivals did decline significantly in

1982, compared with 1981 figures. Overall in Southeast Asia, the drop was 42 percent; the decline in Thailand, however, amounted to almost 70 percent, which in actual numbers translated into some 12,000 fewer arrivals. Figures for early 1983 show this trend continuing. [redacted]

Thai policy is to grant temporary asylum to refugees who cross their borders or land on their beaches. On the other hand, Bangkok's "humane deterrence" policy discourages new arrivals by classifying them as "illegal aliens" and placing them in "austere" camps. The rationale is that through broadcasts and word of mouth the tougher policies will serve to discourage potential refugees from leaving. The Thai also unofficially reinforce "humane deterrence" by encouraging local officials to "push off" refugee boats and to push back overland refugees. In mid-1981, [redacted]

[redacted] a Ministry of Interior order directed province-level officials to push off newly arriving boats. Embassy reporting indicates that the incidence and pattern of pushoffs is inconsistent, although behind-the-scenes pressure to divert boat refugees elsewhere through persuasion or force seems certain to continue. [redacted]

Since mid-1981 Thailand has nominally closed its land borders to all except civilians forced across the border because of fighting, for instance, when Vietnamese military units attempt to clear out Kampuchean resistance forces in the border area. Overland refugees from Laos, who averaged 5,000 per month between 1977 and mid-1981, declined to a few hundred arrivals a month after the border closure. In some cases, the overland refugees, usually hill tribesmen from Laos, have been forced back by local officials, although most are given asylum and interned. Resettlement of this group is handicapped by a lack of ties and contacts in the resettlement countries; many have been in camps for a prolonged period of time, and most prefer to remain in Thailand in hopes of eventually returning to their homeland. Some quiet planning is under way in Thailand to determine through a pilot program with US assistance the feasibility of relocating some hill tribe refugees in Thailand. [redacted]

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Figure 3  
Thailand: Indochinese Refugee Camps, March 1983



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Although most Vietnamese refugees reach Thailand by boat, some 2,000 have come overland. These refugees have been housed for lengthy periods in primitive camps near the border. According to Bangkok, their detention under squalid conditions was to deter others from taking the hazardous land route to reach Thailand. Under pressure from officials of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNRHC) and other nations, Bangkok has recently allowed representatives of resettlement countries to begin processing this group for eventual immigration. [redacted]

Although Bangkok promotes repatriation of refugees, only Laos, through the UNHCR, cooperates and accepts returnees. The Thai unilaterally return Khmer who wish to repatriate but take them only to the border, where they may enter camps, just inside the Kampuchean border, which are controlled by Kampuchean resistance factions. No Vietnamese have been repatriated, and the most recent approach by Deputy High Commissioner Symser, UNHCR, to Vietnam's Foreign Minister Thach in late 1982 provided the comment that the refugee "chose the easy life, let them stay." Resettlement in Thailand is not permitted, although some Laotian hill tribesmen have unofficially settled in northern Thailand. [redacted]

Thailand, as the nation with the largest camp population, has been the most vocal in publicizing the refugee situation, particularly in pointing out the slow rate of resettlement by some countries. Periodic warnings and threats are made expressing Bangkok's lack of confidence in the "promises and commitments pledged by our friends" and of "drastic measures" that may be taken, such as sending refugees back to the border. The many thousand Khmer still in holding center camps, presumably to return to Kampuchea some day, and the numerous highlanders, mainly Hmong from Laos, are particular concerns because of their numbers (in excess of 100,000) and the probable difficulty of getting them resettled. Thai fears are founded on the reality of their previous experience with the Vietnamese refugees from the French Indochina War who have remained and multiplied.<sup>3</sup> [redacted]

<sup>3</sup> Vietnamese refugees from the first Indochina war (1946-54) still reside as aliens in the northeast and have become largely self-supporting. Children born to the original 45,000 refugees have boosted the group's current population to an estimated 75,000. [redacted]

**Malaysia**

The number of refugees arriving in Malaysia during 1982 totaled only 15,100, far less than the 60,000 or so landing on Malaysian beaches in 1978-79, and a decline of about a third over 1981 figures. Although Malaysia received unfavorable publicity in 1978 when it occasionally towed crowded and leaky refugee boats out to sea, Kuala Lumpur has followed more lenient policies since then. These liberal policies are likely to continue as long as the rate of resettlement keeps pace with new arrivals, even though Malaysia is currently the destination of about one-third of all refugees leaving Vietnam by boat. [redacted]

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Malaysia grants first-asylum to refugees, but its general policy is not to grant resettlement. There are exceptions. One has been the resettling of some 4,700 Kampuchean Muslims in peninsular Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur has also given asylum to about 80,000 (some estimates run as high as 140,000) Filipino refugees in East Malaysia. In contrast to Indochinese refugees who are confined to camps and not permitted to work, the Filipino refugees are a significant part of the region's labor force and are under little pressure to leave. [redacted]

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**Indonesia-Philippines**

Indonesia and the Philippines follow liberal asylum policies, in part because refugee camps are restricted to isolated island facilities out of the public eye and have not become political liabilities in either country. Indonesia's first-asylum camps are on the remote Natuna and Anambas Islands; its internationally funded regional refugee processing center is on Galang Island, off Sumatra's northeast coast. The Philippine's first-asylum camp is on Palawan Island, and its internationally supported refugee processing center is on the Bataan Peninsula. International organizations absorb most refugee program costs in each nation, and the Marcos administration has improved its image by following liberal asylum policies. [redacted]

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Indonesia does not allow refugees to resettle on its territory, partly because of Jakarta's longstanding distrust of ethnic Chinese in general, and partly because of its own population and employment problems. The Philippines resettles only refugees with [redacted]

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Figure 4  
East and Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugee Camps



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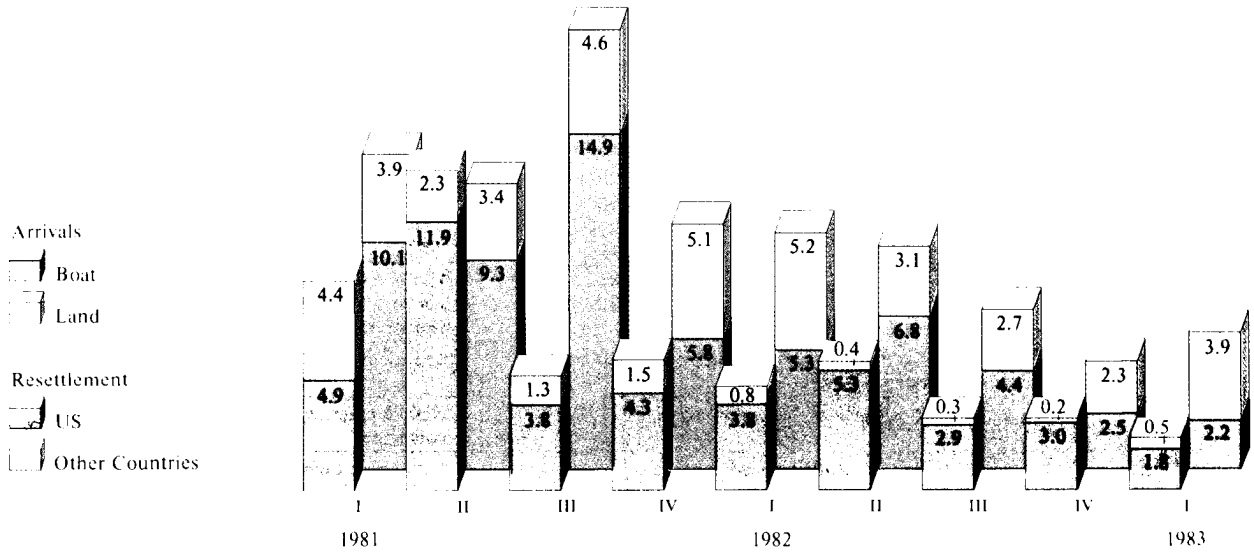
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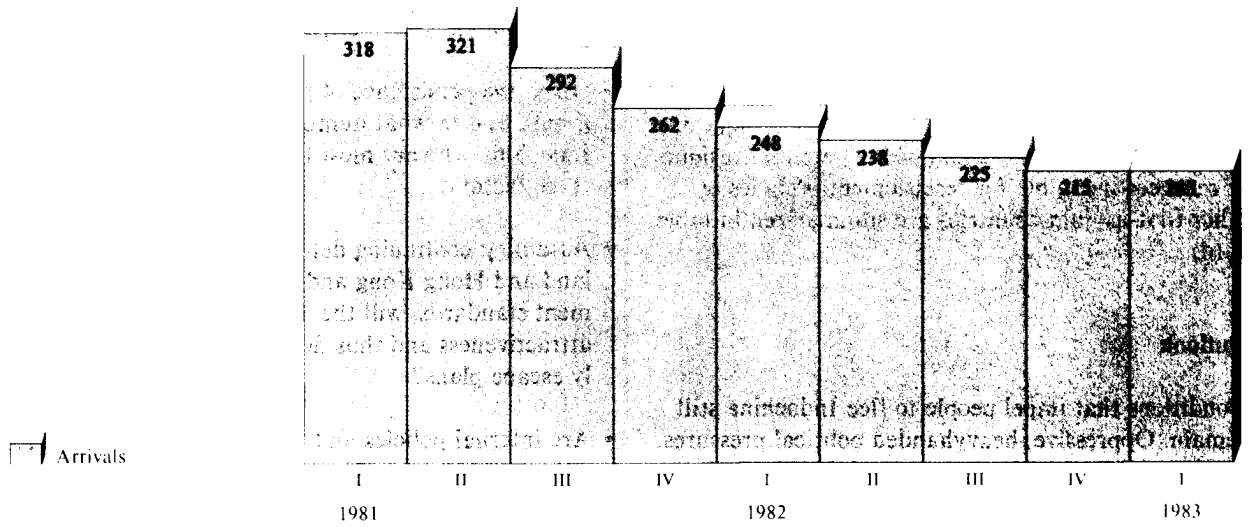
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**Figure 5**  
**Indochinese Refugee Trends, 1981-83**

Thousand Persons  
Arrival and Resettlement Rates



**Refugee Camp Population**  
(Includes First Asylum and Refugee Processing Center)



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**Table 3**  
**Other First-Asylum Country Policies**

	Asylum Policy	Resettlement/Repatriation
China	Offers asylum and permits its ships to assist refugee boats.	Most Chinese refugees forced from Vietnam after 1977 have been resettled, including some 2,500 Khmer and 2,500 Laotians. Some dissatisfied with life in China have gone to Hong Kong, posing as new refugees. Most returned to China.
Hong Kong	Grants asylum but has tightened policies because of continued high-arrival rate. In mid-1982 established "closed" camps and denied new arrivals permission to work pending resettlement. Refugees landing in Macau sent to Hong Kong.	Resettlement not allowed, although 9,000 Vietnamese stranded in 1975 allowed to resettle locally. Threatens repatriation if arrival rate greater than resettlement rate; camp population, in contrast to other countries, increased slightly in 1982.
Republic of Korea	Grants temporary asylum to refugees rescued at sea.	Allows resettlement of Vietnamese related to Koreans, essentially Vietnamese wives of Koreans who served in Vietnam.
Singapore	Restricts asylum to 90 days; limits camp population to 3,000.	Resettlement not permitted.
Laos	Has sheltered Khmer refugees.	Many Khmer repatriated with UNHCR assistance.
Taiwan	Permits temporary asylum.	Allows resettlement of ethnic Chinese eligible for family reunification; resettled 4,700 since 1976.
Vietnam	Provided asylum (1976-78) to Khmer fleeing Pol Pot regime.	Most Khmer repatriated through auspices of UNHCR.

"strong" pre-1975 ties to Philippine nationals; by June 1982 only 1,800 had been resettled. Although both nations will probably continue their liberal policies for the near term, the Indonesian Government has begun to voice concern with US officials over the continuing high arrival rate, particularly in light of fewer arrivals elsewhere and of the potential residue of refugees ineligible for resettlement. Policies of other first-asylum countries are summarized in table 3.

#### Outlook

Conditions that impel people to flee Indochina still remain. Oppressive, heavyhanded political pressures, burdensome economic systems, and deteriorated social climates act as catalysts, causing individuals and families to risk the hazards of flight and the unknowns of resettlement. The massive number of refugees generated since 1975 and the persistence of

flight, despite sizable yearly variations in numbers, pose several questions as to probable future trends in refugee numbers. More specifically:

- Given the persistence of push factors, in what groups and in what number are there people still in Indochina who are most likely to be affected by these factors?
- Assuming continuing deterrence policies in Thailand and Hong Kong and more restrictive resettlement standards, will the "pull factors" lose their attractiveness and thus delay or postpone indefinitely escape plans?
- Are internal policies and factors that deter flight as well as slowly improving economic conditions in the Indochina countries likely to become increasingly important in slowing the refugee outflow?

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**How Many More?**

The push factors are particularly important to the estimated 1.19 million ethnic Chinese still in Vietnam, mostly living in the central and southern parts of the country. Although Hanoi continues to view the Chinese with suspicion, there is no evidence of plans to renew an anti-Chinese campaign that would spur their departure. The Chinese made up most of the more than 9,000 refugees who reached Hong Kong in 1982 and about 20 percent of the boat refugees who arrived in Southeast Asian countries. [redacted]

An estimated 100,000 persons remain in Vietnam who once were associated in an official capacity with the Saigon government or the US/Allied presence up to 1975. This number, based on the number employed prior to 1975 less those estimated to have fled, when combined with that for the close relatives makes a pool of 500,000 to 700,000 potential refugees. This group includes Saigon government military officers, police and security officers, government officials, legislators, and people working for the US and Allied forces, most of whom have been—or are—imprisoned for their associations (some of those released have been rearrested). Another group of unknown number consists of disaffected southern Vietnamese who were willing to try working with the post-1975 government that was run initially by southern revolutionaries. [redacted]

In Kampuchea, much of the rural population is a potential pool of refugees or displaced persons, as the 1979-80 food crises demonstrated. Food shortages persist, but international relief efforts at the Thai border and an internal program have helped narrow the gap between rice supplies and needs. Kampuchea's agricultural situation, however, remains perilous and the size of the crop is highly dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon. Harsher internal political conditions—another forced resettlement program that moves people into the countryside or increased numbers of Vietnamese settlers in Kampuchea—could trigger a significant outflow of refugees. [redacted]

In Laos, the largest pool of potential refugees is composed of lowland Lao who left in large numbers until mid-1981. Since then the effect of Bangkok's strict refugee policies and Vientiane's retreat from

unpopular programs designed to rapidly impose socialism have caused a major decline in arrivals from an average of 2,500 in 1981 to 425 per month in 1982. [redacted]

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**Policy Factors**

First-asylum nations, particularly Thailand and Hong Kong, will probably maintain or tighten antirefugee measures because they perceive that these measures have been effective. We believe that restrictions on new arrivals and treatment of them will be used—or threatened—as a means to counter a slackened interest by some resettlement nations in maintaining country quotas. [redacted]

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The United States continues to lower the number of refugees it will accept (from 168,000 in FY 1981 to 64,000 in FY 1983). New acceptance criteria effective in April 1982 established six priorities that Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officers use case-by-case to determine refugee eligibility for resettlement. Priority is given to those with close family ties in the United States, former employees of the US Government, and those in immediate danger of loss of life, including political prisoners and dissidents (appendix D). The new guidelines lessen opportunities for resettlement—the pull factor—for those having no strong connections with either the United States or the Indochinese regimes supported by the United States before April 1975. Refugees who do not meet priority 1 through 5 criteria are placed in priority 6 and have no immediate prospect of being considered for resettlement. (Some might qualify for resettlement under another nation's program.) [redacted]

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The intent of the revised criteria was to send word through the efficient refugee grapevine and VOA broadcasts to potential refugees that unhappiness with the regime and a desire for economic betterment were in themselves insufficient reasons to guarantee resettlement in the United States. Guidance furnished to US missions in Southeast Asia stressed the hope that Hanoi would expedite the ODP and that "those persons without ties to the US and with less than compelling reasons to flee will tend to remain in the Indochinese states." [redacted]

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The effects of the revised INS criteria, the decision to examine each refugee case-by-case, and the small number of INS officers in the field have slowed the pace of acceptance to the United States. From January through April 1982, under the old guidelines, the monthly resettlement rate averaged about 7,000 per month; in the October 1982–February 1983 period, the number has averaged about 2,500 per month—a rate that, if continued, would admit only half of this year's 64,000 refugee quota. [redacted]

### Short-Term Refugee Projections

We believe that large-scale outflows comparable with those in the 1978-79 period will probably not recur in the near term. The circumstances triggering the 1978-79 exodus of Chinese from Vietnam and the combination of events in Kampuchea—the harvesttime invasion, an emotionally and physically devastated population, and poor agricultural conditions—that produced the massive flow of Khmer refugees in 1979 and 1980 are unlikely to be duplicated. In addition, policy changes and other factors in the Indochina countries, coupled with increased hazards experienced in transit, are of increasing importance in deterring refugee flight:

- For Vietnam, boat departures in 1983 continue to decline, and we believe that the percentage drop may be similar to the 42-percent decline recorded in 1982. This seems to result from more restrictive asylum and resettlement policies and from:
  - Stricter enforcement of antideparture measures by Vietnam as it seeks to improve its international image.
  - Greater difficulty in securing at greatly inflated prices small boats and engines.
  - A continuing high level of pirate attacks.
  - Slow improvement in economic conditions, particularly in Vietnam, that may be reducing the incentive to leave for those primarily motivated by desires for improved living standards.
  - The earlier departure of those most determined to leave.

- For Kampuchea, food supplies are believed to be minimally sufficient, with conditions poorest in the southeastern part of the country. Given tightened internal controls on movement and the distances involved for those most in need, the number of Khmer arriving at the Thai border seeking food has declined during the latter months of 1982 and early 1983. We believe that this trend will continue through the year. The heavy fighting in February–March along the border may discourage for a time treks to the border.

- For refugees from Laos, toughened Thai deterrent policies have reduced the exodus to a trickle. Barring an unanticipated turn of events in Laos—another anti-Hmong campaign, for example, or government reversion to hardline Communist policies—the number of refugees leaving Laos is likely to remain low in 1983.

- For the United States, the trends suggest a continuation of the delicate balancing of objectives: tightened restrictions on resettlement to the United States to minimize the economic incentive for potential refugees; humanitarian efforts to protect the integrity of the definition and status of the refugee; and, to allay asylum-country fears, joint efforts to increase resettlement rates and reduce overall camp populations. [redacted]

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Appendix A

Country Studies

Vietnam: A Political, Economic, and Social Refugee Mill

From April 1975 through December 1982, well over 1 million residents of Vietnam fled the country and sought asylum elsewhere (appendix C, table C-1). Almost 600,000 were Sino-Vietnamese (ethnic Chinese), most of whom were expelled from Vietnam during 1977-78. Another 310,000 were ethnic Vietnamese—primarily boat people—and about 4,000 were ethnic Khmer, who moved from southern Vietnam into Kampuchea in 1975. We estimate in excess of 100,000 to as many as 140,000 were lost at sea. The greatest exodus occurred in 1978 when 277,000 fled; the smallest outflow was in 1976 when about 12,500 fled.

Why They Leave

Refugee reports indicate that there is rarely a single reason why people flee Vietnam. Traditional ties to home and family are no less strong than in most societies, and most Vietnamese attempt to accommodate to the country's changing fortunes. Decisions to leave home are made only after long consideration of conditions inside Vietnam, as well as perceived opportunities elsewhere. Leaving the country requires many sacrifices and—in the case of illegal flight—considerable risks. The reasons given by refugees for leaving Vietnam fall into three broad categories: political, economic, and social.

Political Reasons. Discontent with Vietnam's political system is cited by many refugees as a prime reason for leaving the country. More specifically, refugees

\* This section is based largely on refugee responses to interviews at first-asylum refugee centers. Responses to the question "Why did you leave?" should be weighed against the accuracy of translation and faithfulness of interpretation of refugee's statements made through a language barrier; the less-than-optimum conditions under which the information is reported and recorded; and the inferior/superior relationship between the refugees and their rescuers and benefactors in which one is a supplicant and the other holds the key to his future. Consequently, refugee responses to some questions may be intended to please interrogators.

tell of political discrimination based on past association with the former government of South Vietnam and its allies. The discrimination translates into reduced employment opportunities and access to certain jobs, lack of educational opportunities, poor health care, and denial of the full rights of citizenship. Others who fled include those who had served sentences in reeducation camps or prisons and who feared rearrest and reimprisonment; as a group they are subject to postrelease surveillance and monitoring. Extreme examples of dissatisfaction—the immola-

tions in 1980-81 [redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1

former reeducation camp inmates were being rearrested and returned to the camps for "special reconstruction assignments." [redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1

Many Vietnamese left Vietnam to avoid conscription for military service, especially after Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea in December 1978 and China's invasion in February 1979. Draft eligibility applies to all males 17 to 45 and to females 18 to 25; all must register. As of 1 October 1982 the callup to active duty for males was widened to 17 to 30 (from 18 to 25) to increase Army strength for service in Kampuchea, according to recent refugee arrivals. Almost two-thirds of the male refugees were in the draft-eligible years and 41 percent in the prime-draft (or nearing draft-eligible) years.

† Draft-eligible males in southern Vietnam who are conscripted train under northern military cadre, and historic and mutual north-south antipathies—aggravated by the current victor-vanquished relationship—are magnified in training camps. Desertion rates in such camps have run as high as 50 percent. In addition, subsequent service—often as replacements in PAVN combat units in Kampuchea—is usually under the command of northern cadre, who reportedly discriminate against southerners in duty assignments.

[redacted] morale among southern replacements in Kampuchea is generally low, partly because of a high casualty rate, and desertion rates there have run as high as 30 percent. [redacted] 25X1  
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**Economic Reasons.** Field reports based on interviews with refugees often include statements that some left Vietnam "for economic reasons." Examples cited include job discrimination, food shortages, tightened controls and high taxes on small enterprises, and the high cost of consumer goods. These economic problems stem from political decisions made in Hanoi and have forced many who are not politically favored to engage in black-market activities to make ends meet.

Inability to obtain employment in Vietnam is another often cited reason for leaving. Refugees report that, in a nation with high unemployment, job restrictions imposed on those formerly associated with the South Vietnamese Government and its allies limit them and their extended family members to living in poorly planned and ill-equipped rural New Economic Zones. Although faced with the implicit threat of discovery and arrest, some are forced to engage in black-market or other illegal activities in urban areas to maintain themselves.

Chronic shortages of rice and other foods have also induced some Vietnamese, mostly southerners, to leave the country. These shortages stem from both natural factors (poor weather and insects) and man-made ones (such as doctrinaire agricultural policies and deteriorated logistics). Moreover, a politicized distribution system aggravates the situation for some people. [redacted] families without relatives in PAVN receive fewer rations, indicating that food is more readily available for the politically favored. Associates with the former Saigon regime tend to fare least well, although in practice most of the civilian population must endure short rations since military needs are met at their expense.

**Social Reasons.** Vietnam's political system has produced not only a sputtering economy but also a social climate characterized by poor educational opportunities, declining public health, increasing crime, and restrictions on religious practice.

Educational opportunities are poor throughout the educational system, and refugees regard teacher quality as "mediocre" and "poor" at the secondary level

and "sorely lacking" at the university level. In southern Vietnam, university-level education is essentially limited to the politically well-connected, although even the politically qualified may encounter difficulty gaining admission to universities. We estimate that Vietnam is providing higher education to only about one-fourth of its potential college students.

The health situation in Vietnam is substandard and contributes to the overall poor quality of life in Vietnam. It is a factor in the continuing exodus. Overall, the nation's general level of nutrition is below standard.

[redacted] stated that malnutrition in the province was "high" and estimated that 50 percent of the population was affected by medical problems caused by poor diet. Instances of "shocking" child malnutrition in southern Vietnam have been reported by both diplomatic and nongovernmental travelers. In mid-1981 *Saigon Giai Phong* published rations that for some young children provided only about two-thirds of recommended Southeast Asian dietary allowances.

A high incidence of tuberculosis, a disease aggravated by poor diet and malnutrition, [redacted] in Hanoi as "alarmingly high." In early 1982 a medical delegation reportedly stated that "a full 2 percent" of Vietnam's population has active tuberculosis. Nearly half the refugees arriving in Hong Kong have shown signs of the disease. Vietnam also suffers a general shortage of medicines, medical equipment, and hospital supplies. Supplies are so short, [redacted] that torn surgical gloves were "commonly" repaired for further use.

An increase in crime and social vices (for example, robberies, begging, and prostitution) that tend to rise under poor economic conditions has been reported in Vietnam. [redacted] the standard of living there as "lower than in the bleakest days of the war." Corruption among officials, often described as "rampant," is increasing and has

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been given wide coverage in the Hanoi-controlled media, with attention focused on apprehension and conviction of guilty individuals. [redacted]

Although few refugees cite restrictions on practice of religion as a reason for leaving, Hanoi is clearly harassing overt religious practice, particularly Buddhism. Catholics have also suffered; in April 1982 a Saigon Army officer refugee stated that priests were being restricted and a bishop had been jailed. [redacted]

Family reunification, often cited as a reason for leaving, is a direct outgrowth of the close-knit, extended Vietnamese family. The phenomenon is self-perpetuating: as more Vietnamese become resettled outside the country, they become the nuclei and act as magnets drawing the rest of the family out of Vietnam. Until the spring of 1982, some families would pool assets to finance clandestine flight by one member, often a draft-eligible male able to handle the risks of flight and with a good chance of landing a job once resettled. This person would become an "anchor," sending part of his wages back home to finance escape by other family members whom he would then sponsor for resettlement. Changes in US resettlement priorities in April 1982 have essentially ended this practice inasmuch as an anchor would need to qualify for resettlement under one of the other priority categories. [redacted]

**Ethnic discrimination.** Hanoi's policies discriminate against ethnic Chinese and include heavy taxation of commercial and trading activities as well as travel restrictions and prohibitions against Chinese language study. The proportion of Sino-Vietnamese in the outflow has changed from year to year (see note, appendix C, table C-1); currently, only about 15 percent of new arrivals are Sino-Vietnamese. Reasons vary. According to the refugees, most wealthy Chinese—those most able to buy passage out of Vietnam—have already left. Those remaining are relatively less willing or able to pay the costs of flight, currently about US \$3,000 per adult. In addition, recent refugees claim the Chinese are less ready to accept the hazards of small boat flight, tending to favor departure via the government-sanctioned ODP. Hanoi's antiethnic Chinese policies have been effective: the Chinese population in Vietnam has declined from a 1977 peak of some 1.63 million to a currently estimated 1.19 million [redacted]

**Hanoi's Refugee Policies**

Official government policies toward those wishing to leave Vietnam have ranged from one of active promotion of exodus, through apparent indifference, to actively discouraging flight. Apparent indifference reigned from the fall of Saigon through the beginning of the Chinese expulsion (May 1975 through March 1978), then changed over the next 18 months as Hanoi promoted expulsion of its ethnic Chinese population. Since September 1979 Hanoi has stopped promoting departures and has banned illegal emigration. The effect of these changing policies is roughly reflected in yearly arrival figures (appendix C, table C-2). [redacted]

**Orderly Departure Program (ODP).** The ODP permits limited numbers of Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese to leave the country legally. Originally proposed by the UNHCR, Hanoi agreed to the proposal in May 1979 in response to international outcries against the massive exodus of boat people. The ODP is aimed primarily at family reunification and "humanitarian" cases; Hanoi has never pushed it enthusiastically. An estimated 40,000 to 50,000 persons are believed to have signed up for legal emigration when the program was launched, but by December 1982 only 25,870 had been allowed to leave—about 7 percent of the 385,000 refugees estimated to have left Vietnam from July 1979 through December 1982. ODP participants in 1982 were predominantly ethnic Chinese from urban areas in Vietnam, especially Ho Chi Minh City. [redacted]

Departures in 1982 under the ODP were slightly below Hanoi's stated goal announced by Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach of about "1,000 Vietnamese every month," averaging about 890. These departures are also sharply below clandestine boat departure rates, which averaged about 3,780 per month for 1982. [redacted]

Hanoi will find it difficult to achieve its goal of having ODP departures exceed clandestine departures. One reason is Hanoi's policy of declaring some people—for example, persons with essential skills, government officials, and draft-age males—ineligible for the ODP. Another reason is an apparent change in ODP-associated regulations. ODP applicants are required to have relatives in the country to which they wish to

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immigrate—but with the proviso, [redacted] that those who left Vietnam illegally are ineligible to sponsor Vietnamese. Although these “Catch-22” regulations apparently have not yet been enforced, their existence probably will deter potential ODP applicants. [redacted]

Other factors tend to make the ODP unattractive: costs (including bribes) are about the same as for clandestine departure, repeated contact with government authorities is essential, and the process is time consuming, taking as much as one year from start to finish. In addition, all personal property is confiscated during the ODP process, leaving the emigre with little more than his clothing at departure time. Clandestine departure, in contrast, involves little or no contact with authorities, can be arranged and completed in a matter of weeks, and allows retention of some property. [redacted]

Despite the low ratio of ODP departures to clandestine means, the United States and other resettlement nations urge departure through the legal mechanism, citing advantages of safety and the increasing uncertainties of resettlement once in an asylum country. [redacted]

**Repatriation.** Hanoi’s record on repatriation of Vietnamese who left as refugees has been negative. Early policy was clearly negative, as evidenced by the treatment accorded some 1,500 Vietnamese who had voluntarily returned in mid-1975, only to be manacled and interned on arrival. Some were reportedly in jail as late as 1979. [redacted]

Hanoi has at times hinted that its policy may eventually ease. [redacted]

[redacted]

**Deterrents to Flight**

Hanoi did little to stem its refugee exodus until mid-1979, when antideparture measures began to be enforced (appendix B). Refugee sources estimated as early as 1976-77 that only 20 percent of attempted clandestine departures succeeded. During 1980-81 heavy press and radio coverage of the trials and sentences of captured escape organizers and boat crews made the Vietnamese public well aware of the government’s antideparture campaign and penalties for getting caught. Penalties ranged from a year or less in jail for some women to death for some organizers and crews. Refugee sources who left Vietnam by boat between October 1981 and March 1982 reported that the success rate for clandestine departures was still only 20 percent, including both those detected in the planning or land phase and those stopped at sea. A recent refugee estimate is that 60 percent of all boats departing Vietnam are seized by the authorities. [redacted]

Depending on destination, boat arrivals usually show a seasonal pattern related to sea and wind conditions. The onset of the southwest monsoon with stronger winds and rougher sea in May-June through September normally deters boat traffic headed south; in contrast, the April-September period with its following winds and currents favors boats headed north to Hong Kong. Conditions usually are improved in the South China Sea after the abatement of the southwest monsoon during September-October and continue generally fair to good during most of the dry season when the weaker northeast monsoon predominates. [redacted]

**The Brain Drain**

The cost to Vietnam of the refugee exodus has been high in terms of skilled workers and professionals. Analysis of data covering arrivals in 1981 suggests that since 1975 Vietnam may have lost about 50,000 professionals and nearly 200,000 skilled workers and technicians. The official newspaper *Nhan Dan* complained in November 1981 that the United States and China have “maliciously used all sorts of bait to bribe and incite skilled workers and competent technical cadres to quit their jobs and flee abroad.” Some of the more serious losses included ethnic Chinese miners who worked northern Vietnam’s anthracite mines,

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Chinese dockworkers (Moscow sent Soviet stevedores in 1979 to unload Soviet ships in Haiphong), and doctors, computer technicians, and Western-trained Ph. D.'s from southern Vietnam. [redacted]

The exodus of skilled workers is only partially offset by students graduating from secondary, technical, and higher education institutions. [redacted]

[redacted] the Vietnamese university system (including students at overseas institutions) was graduating only 5,000 students annually as of 1981. This figure is well below Hanoi's official figures and is sharply below estimated annual refugee losses. [redacted]

[redacted] the quality of current graduates is low because college-level education in Vietnam is beset by poor organization, unstandardized curriculums, and poorly balanced study programs. [redacted]

Hanoi's complaint about losses of skilled people is muted, however, perhaps because the government itself aggravates the situation by internally diverting personal skills. Vietnam's armed forces is currently the fifth largest in the world and includes many skilled people conscripted from productive civilian work and diverted to nonproductive military support. [redacted]

**Kampuchea's Refugees: Hunger and Hatred**

From April 1975 through December 1982, more than 990,000 Khmer left their homes in the wake of political oppression, warfare, and acute food shortages. In contrast to refugees from Vietnam and Laos who fled their national territories, only a fifth of the Khmer have actually left Kampuchea and officially entered refugee camps or holding centers. About 107,000 of Kampuchea's refugees fled during the oppressive Democratic Kampuchean (DK) regime of Pol Pot (1975-78); the rest left during the fighting that followed the December 1978 Vietnamese invasion. Most Kampucheans went to the Thai border in 1979-80 as displaced persons seeking food and have since returned to their home villages, although about 225,000 remain encamped along the Thai border inside Kampuchea and most of the other 77,000 are classified as "illegal aliens." [redacted]

**Why They Leave**

Most of the Kampuchean arriving at the Thai border since early 1979 have been driven there by hunger. Others cite reasons rooted in a centuries-old national antipathy for the Vietnamese. [redacted]

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The political reasons most often cited for leaving include "hatred" and "fear" of the Vietnamese, stemming from longstanding Khmer-Vietnamese ethnic animosity and more recently, from the murder, robbery, and rape of Kampuchean citizens by People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) troops. Dislike of the nominally Kampuchean Heng Samrin (People's Republic of Kampuchea or PRK) regime is also cited. [redacted]

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Draft evasion also ranks high as a reason for leaving. Both PAVN and PRK soldiers periodically round up Kampuchean military-age males and females, garnering some as young as 10 and others as old as 50 for national service. Service may either be military, with training reportedly in Vietnam as well as in Kampuchea, followed by frontline duty, or nonmilitary, such as road construction. [redacted]

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Other political reasons cited by refugees include restrictions on internal movement, "surveillance," and "hatred of enforced socialism," exemplified by attempts to push peasants into cooperatives. Many people at the border also express dislike for the DK forces. Despite DK efforts to project a positive new image, the excesses of 1975-78 scarred almost all Khmer, and few willingly affiliate with the DK. Refugees have expressed fear that Pol Pot might return to power and note with some apprehension similar PRK-directed movements of people from towns into the countryside. [redacted]

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Poor rural security, particularly from resistance activities along Route 6 north of the Tonle Sap, makes field work risky and may cause some people to leave. In areas near the Thai border, PAVN and PRK troops have moved people out of border areas ahead of antiresistance operations. Military activity near the border, however, has deterred some people from leaving home. Refugees report that antipersonnel mines in

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border sectors have caused significant military and civilian casualties, and PAVN troops themselves have commented on the dangers of such mines. [redacted]

**Phnom Penh's Refugee Policies**

Since formation of the anti-PRK coalition in June 1982, PAVN and PRK forces have clamped down on movement to and from the Thai-Kampuchean border. Until the coalition was formed, Phnom Penh followed a generally pragmatic, relaxed policy toward Kampucheans wishing to travel to the border. Most travelers were in search of food supplies; some were smugglers and black-market operators who brought consumer items in demand and otherwise unobtainable in Kampuchea. Bangkok permitted no one to cross into Thailand as refugees. After the coalition was formed, however, travel was sharply curtailed, as Phnom Penh and Hanoi sought to avoid strengthening the anti-PRK resistance within Kampuchea. [redacted]

**Repatriation**

Phnom Penh has accepted "in principle" but has not yet officially sanctioned the voluntary repatriation of the 77,000 Khmer classified as "illegal aliens" in Thailand. Bangkok has been pushing this concept as a means of reducing its refugee load and has unilaterally moved thousands of Khmer, especially since about 24,000 have indicated interest in voluntary repatriation. Phnom Penh, however, apparently fears that too many resistance members would slip into the country legally during a formal repatriation program and continues to drag its feet. [redacted]

**Laotian Refugees: Resentment and Reprisals**

From April 1975 through June 1982, more than 400,000 Laotians sought asylum in Thailand; a few fled to other countries. Almost two-thirds were ethnic Lao; most of the rest were Hmong montagnards. The flow of refugees from Laos into Thailand has dropped markedly in the wake of Thailand's deterrence policies, declining to an average of 200 to 300 a month since late 1982. [redacted]

**Why They Leave**

Reasons cited by refugees for leaving the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) differ according to their ethnic backgrounds. Ethnic Lao generally leave

because of political and economic conditions, whereas Hmong montagnards usually flee government military action designed to break up guerrilla warfare activities prevalent in Hmong-inhabited areas. [redacted]

Lao refugees who cite government policies as a reason for leaving are mostly from the towns and lowlands along the Mekong River, where they are in contact with Vietnamese and Soviet cadres. Both cadres actively participate in running the LPDR Government, and many Laotians cite resentment of Vietnamese and Soviet "domination" as a prime reason for leaving the country. Refugees also cite resentment over the privileged status enjoyed by Vietnamese cadres. Less frequently stated reasons include flight to avoid Vietnamese harassment and the threat of arrest or rearrest. [redacted]

To avoid military service is another reason cited for leaving. Escape from Laos to Thailand, however, often results in pressure by anti-LPDR resistance groups active in Thai refugee camps to join guerrilla units operating in Laos. [redacted]

Most Hmong departures are because of military operations by the Vietnamese and LPDR Government forces to eradicate antigovernment guerrilla bases. The war of attrition against the Hmong has been under way since 1975 and has included use of the well-publicized "yellow rain" CBW agents. Hmong refugees often state that they fled because of Vietnamese military operations that use CBW weapons. In addition, some Hmong leave to join family members who have already left Laos. [redacted]

**Vientiane Government Policies**

Official government policy prohibits flight. Nevertheless, the loss of about 11 percent of a population of 3.5 million persons indicates the degree of the discontent in Laos and until recently the relative ease in fleeing the country. Vientiane is aware that some military-age refugees have returned to Laos as members of anti-LPDR resistance forces. [redacted]

The regime is taking forceful steps to halt the outflow. Recent refugees report that villagers caught while attempting to flee are subject to arrest and that the

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LPDR military units have mined points along the banks of the Mekong River. Persons fleeing Laos by swimming the Mekong have been fired on by border guards and troops. As a further deterrent, the government confiscates the property of those who have left.

[redacted]

The refugee exodus has been costly in lost manpower and skills, and Vientiane lacks trained personnel to run the country. The exodus of skilled people and professionals has adversely affected both the nation's economy and the administration of its government. Vientiane has attempted to replace lost skills by sending able young Lao abroad for study—mainly to Vietnam and Europe—but many who return soon flee to refugee camps in Thailand.

[redacted]

[redacted] "low salaries, rising prices, and chronic rice shortages were the reasons so many officials fled to Thailand." [redacted]

**Repatriation**

Vientiane officially encourages repatriation of both ethnic Lao and Hmong refugees. The UNHCR assists in repatriations and attempts to assure that force is not used. Only 1,800 Lao and Hmong have officially repatriated to Laos, of which half were sent back between April 1975 and April 1980 and the rest after the UNHCR began assisting. Repatriates have been about 80 percent ethnic Lao. Most Hmong elect not to return, although in practice some return clandestinely as members of armed resistance forces.

[redacted]

Officially, the Vientiane government is friendly and publicly welcomes returning refugees.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Despite the public expression of welcome, however, the reception given repatriates is cool and laced with suspicion. Returnees are classified into four categories and processed according to their apparent antiregime activities and attitudes. All apparently are sent to reception centers or "rest camps" for a minimal period of political indoctrination. Those further suspected of significant antiregime activities are sent to detention centers for interrogation, and others thought to be actively working with the anti-LPDR resistance are sent to camps for three to six months of political "reeducation." Persons with "prior records" with the LPDR are sent off for "detention and hard labor."

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### Appendix B

#### A Profile of Boat Refugees

About half of the 1 million refugees who have fled Vietnam since 1975 faced the hazards of illegal boat travel. The typical boat refugee was young (72 percent are age 25 or less), male, and described as a student (tables B-1 and B-2). We estimate that perhaps 100,000 to 140,000 failed to survive; losses were greatest in 1978-79 when large numbers of people left in severely overloaded boats and in unfavorable weather. [redacted]

#### Official Complicity in Boat Flight

*Thank God corruption is so widespread. Without it we would never have been able to leave.*

*Former ARVN lieutenant colonel who arrived in the Philippines as a refugee in early 1982. [redacted]*

At the central government level, Vietnam condemns illegal departure and attempts to suppress it. Penalties for flight and sentences given apprehended refugees and escape organizers are severe and well publicized. At lower operating levels, however, official policy gives way to practical venality.<sup>6</sup> Illegal boat flight is generally expensive and usually fueled on gold; an estimated 20 to 30 percent of all illegal departures have involved some degree of complicity by local security forces with bribes usually paid in gold. [redacted]

An example of official corruption is a November 1981 departure organized by a North Vietnamese major, on duty in the Mekong Delta, who apparently bribed some well-placed National Police Directorate officials. In return for an unspecified payoff, these officials:

- Prepared and issued the refugees the documents necessary for travel in the Mekong Delta.

<sup>6</sup> In contrast, during 1978-79 a government-sanctioned semiofficial departure industry flourished. Government control of boat departures was well documented in reports by many of the 253,600 refugees who exited during the peak September 1978-79 period. Much of the gold and other valuables used by the refugees to buy passage went into the government till; the total probably ran into the hundreds of millions of dollars. [redacted]

**Table B-1**  
**Indochinese Refugee Occupations**  
**(Based on 1,794 Interviews, 1981)**

Type	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>100</b>
Student, age 6 to 25	787	44
Clerical, trade skilled	347	19
Infant, age 0 to 5	182	10
Farmer and fisherman	156	9
Unemployed	92	5
Professional	90	5
Housewife	75	4
Unskilled laborer	46	3
Military/security	19	1

- "Escorted" the group past police checkpoints to the departure assembly point.
- Assembled the refugees into departure groups.
- Loaded them into small boats and towed them to larger seagoing departure boats.
- Paid off security patrols at least once along the route downstream to the sea.
- Obtained the release of some would-be refugees arrested by security forces who were apparently not in on the plan. [redacted]

The proportion of departures involving official complicity has been dropping. Data compiled on boat arrivals indicate that in 1980 about 30 percent of all boat departures from Vietnam involved some degree of official complicity; in 1981 the proportion was about 20 percent. The decline reflects the likelihood that most of those who could afford the payoffs have left; those remaining tend to have fewer resources and must accept the greater risks inherent in totally clandestine departure. [redacted]

**Table B-2**  
**Indochinese Refugees, by Age and Sex**  
**(Based on 817 Interviews, 1981)**

Age	Total	Males			Females		
		Number	Percent	Percent of Total	Number	Percent	Percent of Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>64.1</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>35.9</b>
0-4	73	33	6	4.0	40	14	4.9
5-14	213	132	25	16.2	81	28	9.9
15-24	303	214	41	26.2	89	30	10.9
25-44	196	126	24	15.4	70	24	10.9
45-59	20	13	3	1.6	7	2	0.7
60 and over	12	6	1	0.7	6	2	0.7

**Clandestine Departure Organizations**

Most clandestine departures from Vietnam are arranged by professional escape organizers, some of whom were active as early as 1978. These black market travel agents arrange for payoffs, boats, supplies, and crews. While the risks are substantial—arrest and conviction could result in a death penalty—so are the profits. From late 1981 to early 1982 the average boat carried 47 passengers and typically yielded the organizer 150 to 160 taels<sup>7</sup> of gold (184 to 197 troy ounces). Refugees have reported that some organizers offer “flee now—pay later” credit terms: one tael of gold buys passage on a boat with the balance held and payable by a third party in Vietnam once the refugee reports safe arrival. After expenses, the organizer realizes a profit of perhaps 50 percent.

The need for tight security keeps departure organizations small and efficient. The largest reported escape organization had 10 members, and the average escape attempt took about one month to plan and negotiate. Prospective refugees are usually kept in small groups

<sup>7</sup> The *tael* is a nonstandard unit of weight used throughout East Asia. Although at least five different varieties and weights have been described, the most common tael in current use weighs 37.8 metric grams, or 1.215 troy ounces. In Saigon, however, a tael has been used that weighs 38.3 grams, or 1.231 troy ounces. Standard metric-to-apothecary conversions: one gram = 0.0322 troy ounces; one troy ounce = 31.1035 grams.

until shortly before departure, then moved to an assembly point near the boat. Assembly points are usually houses, but may be unsheltered sites concealed in vegetation. Boats are usually boarded late in the day and move out to sea after dark.

**Departure**

Based on data from 256 boats leaving Vietnam in 1981, about 40 percent departed from the western Mekong Delta area in southern Vietnam, some 37 percent from the Ho Chi Minh City area, about 14 percent from the eastern Mekong Delta area, and 8 percent from northeast of Ho Chi Minh City to as far north as Da Nang Province. From northern Vietnam the primary departure point is the Haiphong city area. Minor departure areas include Hong Gai and Cam Pha ports, and smaller ports scattered along the irregular coastline northeast of Haiphong. More recently departure points have been altered in response to government-control efforts. Minh Hai Province, Vietnam's southernmost province, is a current favorite.

Refugees leave Vietnam in boats of varying size and condition. In 1978-79, when Hanoi actively promoted boat departures, several large steel-hulled boats each

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heavily overloaded with 2,000 to 3,000 or more refugees were used, as were many smaller, wooden boats that carried 500 to 1,000 passengers each. After antideparture measures were tightened in late 1979, clandestine departures again became the rule and small, difficult-to-detect boats became essential. The length of the boats have decreased from an average 13 to 14 meters in 1979 to the current 11 to 12 meters, and passenger loads have declined from an average 96 to 54 per boat. [redacted]

Despite the boat refugee exodus, small craft probably remain generally available in Vietnam. The country's annual average inventory of small boats was about 98,000 in 1966-71 (the last years for which reliable data are available), and since early 1975 we estimate that only about 10,500 such boats have been diverted to refugee transportation. Losses to refugee use have thus averaged about 1,400 boats annually, well within the replacement capabilities of the hundreds of boatyards along Vietnam's 3,400-kilometer coastline. Recent refugee reports indicate that boat costs rose dramatically during 1982, however, suggesting a growing scarcity. [redacted]

Small difficult-to-obtain engines power most boats, and in June 1982 a refugee reported that they are a "major constraint" to flight by boat. According to the refugee, a "well-worn" one-cylinder diesel engine may cost 7 taels of gold. Other reports state that nonmarine engines—from agricultural implements and motorcycles, for example—have been fitted into refugee boats, although most fail after two to three days of marine use. In addition, most boats were designed for coastal fishing or use on inland waterways. As such, most have a low freeboard and are ill-suited to use on the open ocean. [redacted]

The typical refugee pays 4 to 5 taels of gold (4.9 to 6.2 troy ounces) for his passage; children are usually charged half-fare. Some boat passengers pay nothing; freeloaders seek out a departing boat, muscle their way aboard, then threaten to report the illegally departing group to police if forced off. [redacted]

### Hazards of Flight

Assuming that the refugee escapes the decoy organizations that Hanoi operates to trap the unwary and safely avoids checkpoints manned by Public Security Office (PSO) personnel on routes to departure points, he must still pass through Vietnam's internal waters, territorial sea, and contiguous zone—in each of which Hanoi claims control over both refugees and international shipping. On 12 November 1982 Vietnam's internal waters were extended as much as 72 nautical miles off southern Vietnam and 100 nautical miles off northern Vietnam, with the territorial sea and contiguous zone extending another 12 nautical miles each beyond. [redacted]

PSO and Border Guards Command (BGC) units are charged with stopping illegal refugee flight. Both operate ashore, on rivers and canals, and in coastal waters. Coastal security units have received direct orders to stop illegal flight. The effectiveness of marine patrols is nonetheless blunted by poor equipment, and fuel shortages limit patrol activity. During 1981, for example, only one refugee boat in five reported significant contact with security forces. In late 1982, however, refugees claim a much higher ratio of contact. Despite replacement or rotation of some PSO cadres, corruption among security forces is common and refugees report routine bribing of officials. Patrolling is also down during poor weather and many refugees flee through this security loophole. [redacted]

Drowning claims most refugees lost at sea. Boats are small, overcrowded (often from freeloaders), marginally seaworthy, and in heavy seas are highly susceptible to foundering. Accidental loss of passengers is greatest among small boats sailing the South China Sea and Gulf of Tonkin during rough weather. Dehydration may occur after fresh water supplies run out; reserve supplies are unavailable because of limited storage space. [redacted]

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Piracy is traditional around the South China Sea. Not only are small craft attacked; large ocean-going ships moving slowly through crowded Straits of Malacca traffic channels have also been attacked and boarded. Refugee boats—slow-moving and essentially defenseless—are highly vulnerable to attack by both professional pirates and opportunistic fishermen. Victims are almost always Vietnamese boat people; the attackers most often Thai, sometimes Malaysian, and occasionally even Vietnamese. In 1980-81, some 80 to 90 percent of refugee boats arriving in southern Thailand and Malaysia reported attacks, usually by two or more pirate boats. Most occurred in Thai waters, where boats were attacked on average three to four times each; one refugee reported 13 attacks. In Malaysian waters refugee boats averaged one to two attacks each; incidents elsewhere are less frequent. Some refugees report being stopped in Vietnamese waters by Vietnamese patrols and relieved of valuables. [redacted]

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Robbery is a prime reason for piracy, as occupants of one refugee boat may yield valuables worth more than a pirate trawler's fish catch. Attacks often involve physical violence, including mayhem, rape, and murder. [redacted]

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In mid-1982 a UNHCR-funded, antipiracy program was launched using Royal Thai Navy equipment. The effectiveness of the program has not yet been determined. Press reporting and accounts by new arrivals, however, indicate that pirates were still operating "with impunity in early 1983." [redacted]

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## Appendix C

## Statistical Data on Indochinese Refugees, 1975-82

**Table C-1**  
**Approximate Ethnic Composition of**  
**Indochinese Refugees, 1975-82**

	Total	From Vietnam <sup>a</sup>	From Kampuchea <sup>b</sup>	From Laos
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,541,400</b>	<b>933,600</b>	<b>211,000</b>	<b>396,800</b>
Chinese	662,500	601,200	26,300	35,000
Vietnamese	339,300	328,700	9,600	1,000
Khmer	181,300	3,700	174,600	3,000
Lao	225,800	0	500	225,300
Highlanders <sup>c</sup>	132,500	0	0	132,500

<sup>a</sup> Does not include an estimated 100,000 to 140,000, boat refugees lost at sea.

<sup>b</sup> Does not include approximately 77,000 Khmer "illegal aliens" in Thai holding centers.

<sup>c</sup> Primarily Hmong (Meo) and Yao from Laos; also Thai Dam from the Vietnam-Laos border area.

Note: The ethnic composition of Vietnam's boat refugees has varied with Hanoi's policy shifts. In 1977 it was about half Chinese and half Vietnamese as Hanoi pushed its New Economic Zone Program to move members of both groups out of cities and into the countryside.

In 1978-79, as Hanoi actively expelled its ethnic Chinese, the ratio changed to about 80 percent Chinese and 20 percent Vietnamese, although refugees fleeing to China and Hong Kong were nearly all ethnic Chinese. By late 1979 the Chinese expulsion policy stopped, and since 1980 the ethnic composition of the boat people from southern Vietnam has been 80 to 85 percent Vietnamese and 20 percent or less Chinese. Boat refugees arriving in Hong Kong and Macau since 1980 have remained predominantly Chinese; according to the US Consulate in Hong Kong, ethnic Chinese form about 92 percent of arrivals. Recently, there has been an upsurge in the number of Vietnamese arrivals.



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**Table C-2**  
**Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugees**  
**All Arrivals in UNHCR Camps, 1977-82<sup>a</sup>**

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<b>Total</b>	<b>94,000</b>	<b>358,650</b>	<b>545,660</b>	<b>682,250</b>	<b>200,430</b>	<b>119,280</b>
January	3,400	6,650	17,700	7,230	10,120	5,020
February	2,160	2,030	11,690	15,940	9,000	3,490
March	3,110	3,330	22,860	14,820	8,950	5,480
April	2,220	7,090	37,960	9,350	14,250	5,140
May	4,550	9,690	51,300	17,990	15,840	6,510
June	3,600	16,520	58,390	21,090	12,020	5,450
July	6,140	9,200	30,070	17,030	6,540	3,810
August	5,030	7,380	11,980	7,820	4,400	3,580
September	6,810	11,150	13,560	7,410	4,460	2,100
October	6,480	21,430	6,930	19,280	6,270	5,020
November	5,760	36,860	4,280	11,080	6,760	2,480
December	3,760	20,320	3,090	9,510	4,430	2,040
Other land <sup>b</sup>	41,000	207,000	274,000	519,000	88,830	58,500
ODP	0	0	1,850	4,700	8,550	10,660

<sup>a</sup> Monthly data for 1975-76 unavailable.

<sup>b</sup> See note, table C-5.

Source: Based on data supplied by Department of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs.



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**Table C-3**  
**Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugees**  
**Boat Arrivals, 1977-82 <sup>a</sup>**

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,270</b>	<b>87,790</b>	<b>205,200</b>	<b>74,090</b>	<b>74,900</b>	<b>44,870</b>
January	150	1,740	10,500	2,710	5,620	4,140
February	620	1,410	8,360	4,970	4,030	2,890
March	670	2,050	17,190	5,480	5,150	4,500
April	660	4,920	32,320	6,430	10,790	4,600
May	1,840	5,360	46,320	10,350	14,800	6,030
June	2,040	5,000	43,450	10,170	10,130	5,220
July	1,200	5,760	20,500	6,230	4,740	3,590
August	1,160	4,340	8,790	6,090	3,140	3,120
September	2,740	8,060	8,990	2,700	3,570	1,850
October	2,720	12,080	3,450	8,290	5,430	4,770
November	1,710	19,730	2,560	6,410	4,170	2,280
December	1,760	17,340	2,770	4,260	3,330	1,880

<sup>a</sup> Monthly data for 1975-76 not available.

Note: Figures do not include 100,000 to 140,000 refugees lost at sea.

Source: Based on data supplied by Department of State, Bureau of Refugee Programs.



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**Table C-4**  
**Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugees**  
**Land Arrivals in UNHCR Camps, 1977-82**<sup>a</sup>

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,750</b>	<b>270,860</b>	<b>338,610</b>	<b>603,460</b>	<b>117,470</b>	<b>63,750</b>
To Thailand	35,750	63,860	64,610	84,460	28,640	5,250
January	3,250	4,910	7,200	4,520	4,500	880
February	1,540	620	3,330	10,970	4,970	600
March	2,440	1,280	5,670	9,340	3,800	980
April	1,560	2,170	5,640	2,920	3,460	540
May	2,710	4,330	4,980	7,640	1,540	480
June	1,560	11,520	14,940	10,920	1,890	230
July	4,940	3,440	9,570	10,800	1,800	220
August	3,870	3,040	3,190	1,730	1,260	460
September	4,070	3,090	4,570	4,710	890	250
October	3,760	9,350	3,480	10,990	840	250
November	4,050	17,130	1,720	4,670	2,590	200
December	2,000	2,980	320	5,250	1,100	160
To other Southeast Asian countries <sup>b</sup>	41,000	207,000	274,000	519,000	88,830	58,500

<sup>a</sup> Monthly data for 1975-76 not available.

<sup>b</sup> See note, table C-5.

Source: Based on data supplied by Department of State, Bureau of Refugee Programs.



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**Table C-5**  
**Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugees**  
**Non-UNHCR Arrivals, 1976-82**

	Total	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,213,330</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>207,000</b>	<b>274,000</b>	<b>519,000</b>	<b>88,830</b>	<b>58,500</b>
Sino-Vietnamese from northern Vietnam to China	265,000	0	10,000	190,000	57,000	8,000	0	0
Laotian montagnards to China	7,000	0	1,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	0
Khmer to Vietnam	60,000	25,000	25,000	10,000	0	0	0	0
Khmer to Laos	35,000	0	5,000	5,000	15,000	10,000	0	0
Khmer displaced from interior Kampuchea to Thai border but remaining in Kampuchea	780,000	0	0	0	200,000	500,000	50,000	30,000
Khmer transferred from Thai holding centers to UNHCR refugee status	66,330	0	0	0	0	0	37,830	28,500

Note: Monthly land refugee data in table C-4 cover only arrivals of new Indochinese refugees in UNHCR camps in Thailand. In addition to these, Indochinese refugees also arrived in other Southeast Asian nations; these estimates are available only by year and are provided above. Small numbers of refugees migrated elsewhere—for example, from Laos into Burma. Other minor migrations undoubtedly occurred, for example, small numbers of people from Vietnam into Kampuchea; these are estimated to total perhaps 10,000 since 1975.

Source: Based on data supplied by Department of State, Bureau of Refugee Programs.



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**Table C-6**  
**Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugees**  
**Orderly Departure Program Arrivals, 1979-82<sup>a</sup>**

	1979	1980	1981	1982
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,850</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>8,550</b>	<b>10,660</b>
January	NA	NA	400	900
February	NA	NA	180	560
March	NA	2,540	0	750
April	NA	NA	0	980
May	NA	NA	630	980
June	NA	0	400	1,090
July	NA	0	770	1,040
August	NA	1,170	580	720
September	NA	180	1,070	950
October	NA	40	1,720	870
November	NA	0	850	780
December	NA	770	1,950	1,040

<sup>a</sup> Program initiated in 1979.

Source: Based on data supplied by Department of State, Bureau of Refugee Programs.

**Table C-7**  
**Southeast Asia: Indochinese Refugees**  
**Refugee Camp Population, December 1982**

Country	Number	Status/Group
<b>Total</b>	<b>221,700</b>	
Thailand	168,700	
	90,100	In land camps; Khmer, Lao, Hmong, Vietnamese.
	78,300	In holding centers; Khmer, Lao, Vietnamese.
	300	In boat camps; Vietnamese.
Malaysia	8,500	
	4,800	In boat camps.
	3,700	In transit center.
Indonesia	13,100	
	7,300	In boat camps.
	5,800	In Galang RPC (for resettlement processing).
Philippines	15,100	
	3,900	In boat camps.
	11,200	In Bataan RPC (for resettlement processing).
Hong Kong	12,700	
	8,900	In open camps.
	3,800	In closed camps.
Macau	1,000	In boat camps.
Singapore	500	In boat camps.
Taiwan, South Korea, Japan	2,100	In boat camps.

Source: Based on data supplied by Department of State, Bureau of Refugee Programs.

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## Appendix D

### US Refugee Resettlement Categories and Priorities: Immigration and Naturalization Service Classifications

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#### Old System (to 30 April 1982)

##### Category:

*I-A: Spouses, sons, daughters, parents, grandparents, unmarried siblings, unmarried grandchildren of persons in the United States.*

*I-B: Unaccompanied minors whose parents are still in an Indochina country or deceased.*

*II: Former US Government employees; those "so integrated into US Government offices as to have seemed to be US employees"; for at least one year after 1 January 1962.*

*III-A: Employees of US organizations or of US citizens for at least one year.*

*III-B: Employees of former Indochinese governments once "closely associated" with US policy and programs.*

*III-C: Persons educated or trained under US auspices.*

*III-D: Persons who received individual US combat decorations.*

*III-E: Persons who "played a meaningful role in the life of the former societies of Indochina."*

*IV-A: Married siblings, unmarried grandchildren of persons in the United States.*

*IV-B: Minors under 21 with relatives in the United States and no closer relatives elsewhere outside Indochina; may be accepted by United States regardless of other resettlement offers.*

*IV-C: Persons with education or work experience that would help resettlement; those "showing initiative" in refugee camps; those who had "particularly difficult" experiences at home or during escape; those having "obviously compelling" reasons for being granted parole.*

*IV-D: Other relatives of persons in the United States.*

*IV-E: Remaining refugees, by date of registration with the UNHCR.*

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#### New System (effective 30 April 1982)

##### Priority:

1. *Refugees in "immediate danger" of death and with no alternative to resettlement in the United States and those of "compelling concern" to the United States (for example, political prisoners, dissidents).*
2. *Former US Government employees and persons "so integrated into US Government offices as to have seemed to be US employees"; for one year prior to claim for refugee status.*
3. *Spouses, sons, daughters, parents, grandparents, unmarried siblings, unmarried minor grandchildren of persons living in the United States. Anchor relative must be US citizen, permanent resident alien, refugee, or asylee.*
4. *Employees of US organizations for at least one year prior to claim for refugee status; persons trained under US auspices; employees of former Indochinese governments who were associated with US policy and programs; persons "who played a meaningful role in the life of the former societies of Indochina."*
5. *Married siblings, "unmarried grandchildren who have reached their majority," married grandchildren of persons living in the United States, distantly related family members dependent on family support; minors under 18 with relatives in the United States and no closer relative elsewhere outside Indochina.*
6. *Others whose admission to the United States "is in the national interest," and minors under 18 unaccompanied by relative or guardian in camp whose parents are still in Indochina or deceased and without relatives in a resettlement country.*

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A prime difference between the two systems involves the first category/priority. Under the old system, thousands of refugees qualified for Category I resettlement because they had relatives in the United States. Under the new system, Priority 1 will cover about 100 persons annually, according to INS estimates.

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The new system shifts most refugees into lower priorities. Coupled with strict interpretations of criteria by INS staffers interviewing refugees, the new system has resulted in significantly fewer refugees being approved for US resettlement.



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