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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM : Cyrus Vance
SUBJECT : United States Initiatives at the United Nations Sponsored Geneva Conference on Indochinese Refugees

Secretary General Waldheim is calling a conference in Geneva July 20-21 to consider solutions to the Indochina refugee crisis. Vice President Mondale will be heading a high-level delegation, including at least eight members from the Congress, Attorney General Bell and Dick Clark and the Governors of New Jersey and Iowa. Bold new initiatives from the international community are clearly needed to reverse the crisis in the region. Below are major United States initiatives which we recommend the Vice President present at this conference to respond to the crisis and stimulate a greater international effort. We have discussed these initiatives with OMB and they have agreed that, in light of the urgency, I should communicate them directly to you.

INITIATIVE #1 INCREASED ASSISTANCE FOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Estimates of the cost of the FY-1980 care and maintenance program of the UNHCR in Southeast Asia exceed

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E.O. 12958

per 4/27/06 NSC/HCR/NLJC-06-034

in C2 NARA DATE 5/10/06

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\$350 million. In light of the Japanese pledge at Tokyo to pick up 50 per cent of UNHCR Indochinese program costs, we recommend that the United States reduce its planned contribution from 50 per cent of the total to 30 per cent. Even at 30 per cent, however, we are still faced with a requirement to contribute \$105 million in FY 1980 or \$64 million more than our current request. No other nation is likely to contribute this \$64 million.

RECOMMENDATION

That \$64 million be added to the State Department FY 1980 Budget Amendment to increase its planned contribution to the UNHCR for care and maintenance for Indochinese refugees for FY 1980 to \$105 million.

INITIATIVE #2: SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REFUGEE
PROCESSING CENTERS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

A central requirement for success at Geneva is to find an interim way to deal with the excess of refugees fleeing Indochina over the current rate of permanent resettlements worldwide. Our best present hope is to persuade Indonesia to provide a site for a holding center of 100,000 or more. We have also approached the PRC for such a center in China. These centers would admit refugees cleared by the United States and other resettlement nations but for whom there is no place in the current years quota. They would serve, therefore, as a way to extend guarantees to the first asylum states beyond immediate resettlement and to place the refugees in a

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holding status. They also have the advantage to first asylum states of being located in isolated areas where there is less friction with the local populace. The construction of such camps for up to 250,000 population and intra-regional transportation costs would cost an estimated \$200 million. A United States share of 30 per cent would require \$60 million.

RECOMMENDATION

That \$60 million be added to the State Department FY 1980 Budget Amendment as a United States contribution to the UNHCR for the construction of Refugee processing centers and associated costs such as intra-regional transportation.

INITIATIVE #3 MOVEMENT OF 100,000 REFUGEES TO A REFUGEE
PROCESSING CENTER USING US MILITARY
SEALIFT COMMAND RESOURCES

As Refugee Processing Centers (RPC's) are identified and construction progresses, it will become urgent to move refugees quickly out of impacted first asylum areas to the RPC's. We propose to use civilian ships chartered by the U.S. Military Sea Lift Command for this purpose: The estimated cost of the transfer of 100,000 refugees from the main first asylum camps to a possible Indonesian site in West Irian would be \$9.12 million. Costs would be met from funds provided under Initiative #2 above.

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RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the use of Military Sealift Command to move 100,000 refugees from first asylum camps to proposed new Refugee Processing Centers.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

INITIATIVE #4: RESCUE AT SEA

(TO BE EXTRACTED FROM
NEXT TWO PAGES)

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Issue - Use of U.S. Naval Shipping

We have identified three important, interrelated tasks for U.S. Navy ships: pick up refugees at sea, transport refugees from other camps to RPCs, and transport refugees to the U.S. For the first task, we envisage a combination of revising presently-scheduled training exercises and steaming routes so as to bring more ships of the Seventh Fleet into refugee waters, as well as ordering these ships to be more lenient in their interpretation of boats in distress (which they already pick up). This would be cost-free if DOD approves.

For combined use in all three tasks, we recommend that the U.S. Military Sealift Command charter four ships (presently available) which can carry at least 5,000 refugees each. They would be used in a variety of ways, including patrolling refugee sea lanes to pick up boats; moving about 100,000 refugees from present camps to new RPCs; ~~and bringing about 20,000 refugees back to the U.S.~~ This would make an excellent initiative for Geneva as well as having a very positive impact on first asylum countries. A drawback would be the strong possibility that Vietnam would deliberately launch flotillas of additional small refugee boats to intercept our ships and be taken aboard if they were able to calculate the latter's position. Therefore, we should avoid precision as to what our ships will be doing, when and where. Another drawback would be if we

were locked into permanent use of ships for this purpose. Therefore we should try it for the critical period, both in terms of weather and refugee numbers, in the four months beginning August 1st.

The cost of the operations summarized above would be \$19.2 million for a four-month period. DOD is required by law to be reimbursed from State disaster relief funds.

Recommendation:

That you authorize the Department of Defense to engage four ships to assist with Indochinese refugees for a period of 120 days, at a total cost of \$19.2 million. This would require an additional appropriation request of \$19.2 million from the State disaster relief fund.

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INITIATIVE #5: INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR REFUGEE
RESETTLEMENT

There is an urgent need to establish an International Fund for Refugee Resettlement under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to promote and expedite refugee resettlement in developing countries. Many developing countries could absorb large numbers of refugees but are not able to place a priority on refugee resettlement at the cost of programs for their own population.

The Fund, to be capitalized at \$200 million over three years, would result in substantial savings to the United States. We would only pay for part of the costs of resettling refugees while reducing pressures for the United States to increase still further the number of refugees it accepts for resettlement.

We plan a 30 percent contribution to the Fund, requiring \$60 million over three years. If other nations respond with significant offers we would plan to request our first tranche of \$20 million in January supplemental and add \$20 million each in our budget for FY-1981 and FY-1982.

RECOMMENDATION

That you authorize the Vice President to propose the establishment of an International Fund for Refugee Resettlement and, if justified by international response, indicate that the Administration will request \$20 million in a January supplemental budget request and for the two years following.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

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~~THE CONSEQUENCE OF YOUR
DECISION TO INCREASE THE
REFUGEE FLOW TO 14,000
PER MONTH WILL COST
AN ADDITIONAL \$ MILL
IN OUR FY 1980
BUDGET
REQUEST~~

INITIATIVE #6: MOVE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE ADMISSIONS UP
TO 14,000 MONTHLY AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE

We are pushing hard to increase the regular flow of refugees admitted to the United States up to the 14,000 announced by you in Tokyo. We expect to admit 12,000 in July, 13,000 in August and 14,000 in September. While the numbers are available from previous parole authorizations, this is 14,000 more movements at \$1,100 per person than are presently budgeted. This can be funded by \$5.5 million in the Refugee and Migration account upon passage of the supplemental and \$9.9 from the refugee emergency fund; a total of \$15.4 million.

RECOMMENDATION

That you authorize a drawdown of \$9.9 million from the refugee emergency fund for accelerated processing of refugees.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

INITIATIVE #6: ACCELERATED MOVEMENT OF 20,000 REFUGEES
TO THE UNITED STATES USING A U.S. MILITARY
INSTALLATION TEMPORARILY AS A ^{TRANSIT} ~~PROCESSING~~
CENTER

The Indonesians have indicated that a dramatic US gesture to ease their burden in camps would be viewed favorably in bringing them along on our proposal to establish a holding center for 100,000 refugees in Indonesia.

*Eliminated
supplemental
and on President's
decision to raise
ceiling to 14,000/mo*

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Additionally, the Malaysians have been pressing hard for some sort of camp in the United States. Thus, we plan to accelerate movement under the new 14,000 monthly parole by moving 20,000 refugees, over and above our regular flow, immediately to a camp on a U.S. military installation. This would be a temporary move and we would expect to have all these refugees out of the camp by November. Movement from October on through normal processing from Asian camp direct to U.S. sponsor would continue at the rate of 12,400 monthly to average 14,000 per month for FY-1980.

This project would require \$21.5 million in FY 1979, but because movements are front ended, the net cost for the project in FY 1979-80 would be \$19.5 million. FY 1979 requirements would be met by a drawdown on refugee emergency funds of \$7.3 and a reprogramming of funds reducing our contribution to the UNHCR for FY 1979 for care and maintenance by \$14.2 million.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the accelerated admission of 20,000 Indochinese refugees to be processed through the use of a United States military installation and that you approve FY 1979 funding for this purpose through a drawdown on refugee emergency funds of \$7.7 million and reprogramming of \$14.2 million intended for the UNHCR.

Approved _____ Disapproved _____



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