

Refugees searching for a home

by Bob Jasinkiewicz
Staff Writer

FAYETTEVILLE The war Ft. Bragg thought it left behind in Vietnam is beginning to haunt this sprawling military community like the ghost of other wars gone by.

Approximately 50 Vietnamese refugees from the Communist victory in Southeast Asia have already settled in the area with relatives and sponsors and more are expected to follow.

For the most part, the refugees were involved with the American military in Vietnam and, like other refugees from previous wars, are attracted to the area because of the Army base and the ease of assimilation into a transient community.

Unlike the initial hostility received in other parts of the country, the refugees' presence in Fayetteville has apparently been taken in stride, largely because the effect on the local job market is expected to be negligible.

Five refugees seeking work have registered

with the Fayetteville Employment Security Commission. Commission manager Charles Burgess said. But because of language problems and a lack of marketable skills, their immediate prospects appear dim in the area, which has an unemployment rate above 7 per cent, he said.

Huyah Tuan Nghia, 18, and Hua Le Quan, 20, who are now living with Huyah's aunt and uncle, are working for a food service company at Ft. Bragg, Burgess, a retired Army colonel, said. They had originally sought agricultural employment.

That Thieu Ton, 37, is a currently receiving employment counseling, Burgess said. Sponsored by his wife, who came to the United States in 1966 and is now an American citizen. That had worked as an announcer for the Voice of America in Saigon but has little hope of finding a similar job here.

Although two other refugees have been referred to prospective employers, they have had no definite offers for employment.

The Employment Security Commission must submit to the State Department a list of

occupational codes on the refugees, without using their names, Burgess said. The codes are used for statistical purposes, "not for the purpose of checking up on them," he added.

Despite Burgess' optimism, another of the Employment Commission's employees described the refugees as being basically frightened by their new surroundings and their inability to communicate.

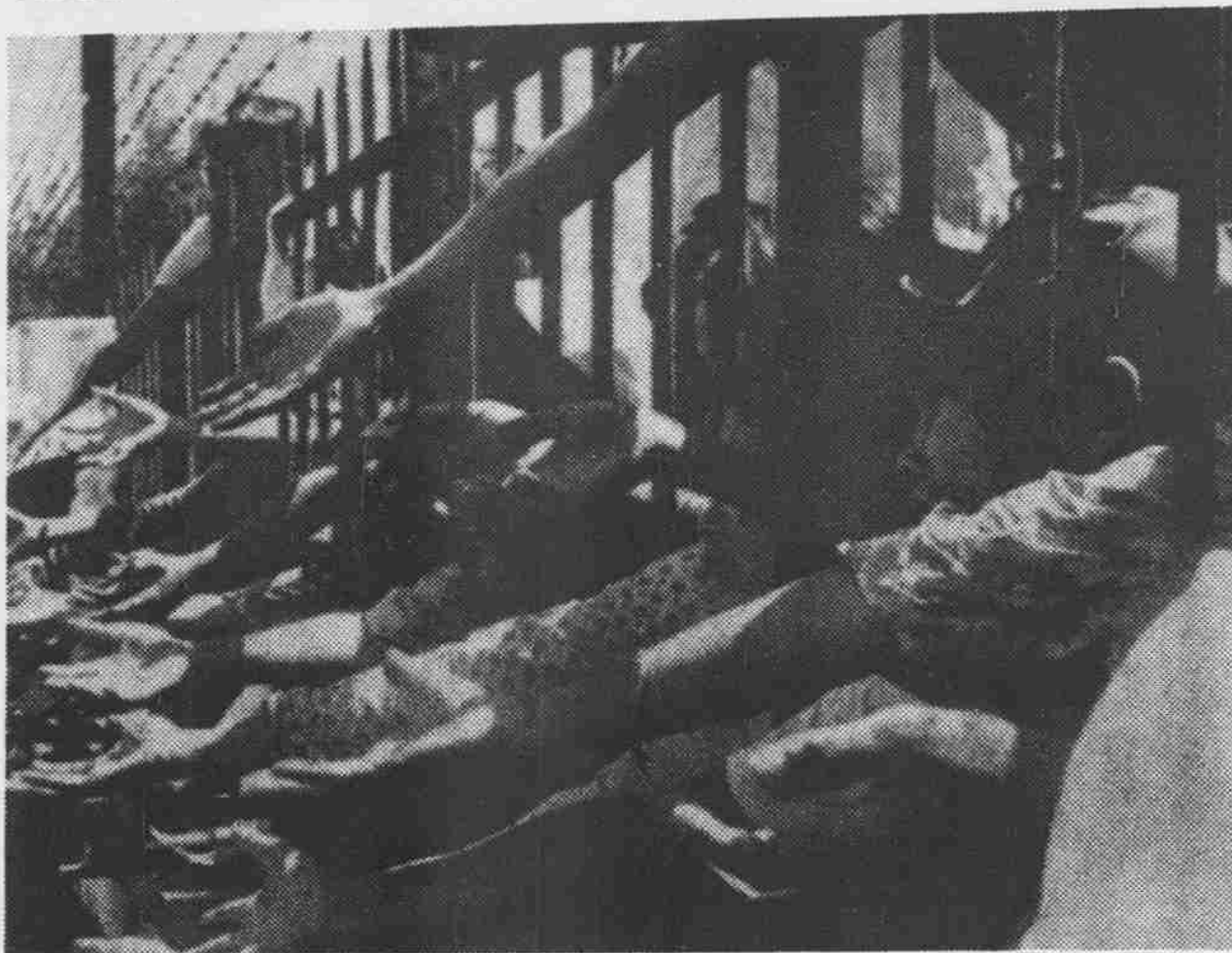
"They're about as frightened as if you were suddenly plopped down in the middle of China," he said.

So in spite of the peace, memories of war will continue to linger on. And if you're into Vietnamese food as well as German, Chinese, Japanese, or Korean - you'll find

them all here at places like the Saigon Restaurant on the outskirts of Ft. Bragg.

When asked about any social problems the refugees may face, Burgess replied that the only real difficulty is the language barrier, which the Vietnamese should overcome in time.

"We're living in a peculiar area of the country," he said, explaining his expectations for the refugees' lack of many social problems. "This is probably the most cosmopolitan area of North Carolina because of the large military presence. I spent a year in Cambodia myself, and I've drunk with them, ate with them and partied with them.



UPI Telephoto

Refugees in Viet Nam

Which way to Phillips?

Junior transfer students will finally have an orientation program after years of wandering about the campus with a bewildered freshman look on their faces.

Approximately 100 student counselors will advise transfers about the campus under a junior transfer orientation program designed by the Orientation Commission. Ray Meiggs, member of the commission announced Tuesday.

The counselors will also organize social activities such as cookouts and pool parties for the transfers, Meiggs said.

The counselors will be in charge of 10-15 transfer students each, and eight area supervisors will coordinate the activities of

the counseling groups.

"The program is flexible and informal and is aimed at getting away from the overwhelming size, characteristic of so many functions," Meiggs explained.

More counselors are needed for the program, he said. Counselors should have transportation available next fall and must return to Chapel Hill August 23.

Persons interested in being counselors should contact the Orientation Commission, Box 17, Carolina Union; or

Ray Meiggs, Phi Delta Chi, 204 Finley Road (968-9116); or

Debbie Lowenstein, B-41 Carolina Apts., Carrboro (967-5274).

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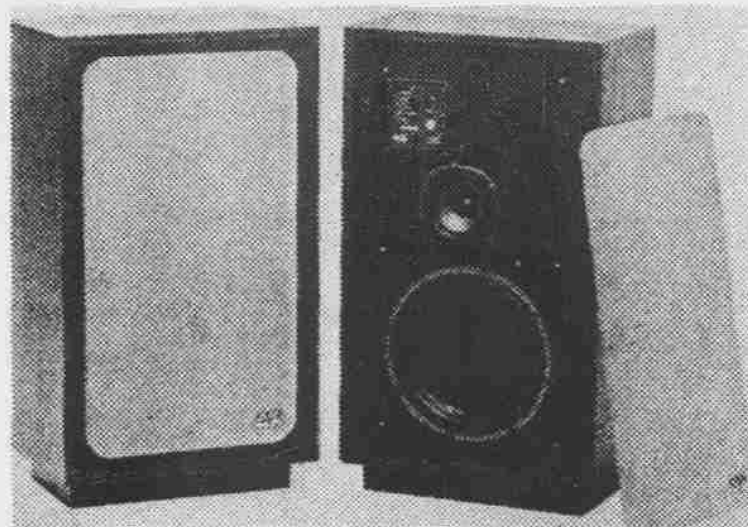


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