



PM/79/52

PRIME MINISTER

(You should also see Mr. Nott's views at 'A' below) JH 8/6

Vietnamese Refugees

Prime Minister

Do you agree that we should now take in the Roachbank refugees, in order to prevent Parliamentary and public criticism? JH 8/6

1. We have so far had an unsatisfactory response to your urgent request to the UN Secretary-General for a special meeting on refugees. Dr Waldheim has passed the matter to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees who is reluctant to call a meeting without firm pledges from participating countries that they would be prepared to take specific numbers of refugees. I intend to send Mr Blaker to Geneva to talk to Mr Hartling to inject some urgency.
2. Bilateral reactions to our largescale lobbying campaign have also been lukewarm; not least because the countries most likely to give us support (the United States, Canada, Australia, France, Germany) all consider that they have borne more than their fair share of the burden (list attached). I will follow up your talk with President Giscard, who saw this as a UN problem, by asking him to write to Dr Waldheim. And I am continuing to press the Americans.
3. I am, however, increasingly worried about the Roachbank refugees. The Americans have again approached the Taiwanese without results; as has Lee Kuan Yew. The only other people who have good contacts with the Taiwanese are the Koreans who have had some unconfirmed indications that the Taiwanese might take a few of the refugees. But this would be a token gesture, and the Taiwanese may simply be playing for time.
4. When the House of Commons reassembles on Monday, we shall probably be faced with an Opposition Private Notice Question about Roachbank. I do not believe that it will be easy to defend our position on the basis that we are still having talks more than two weeks after the Roachbank reached Taiwan. I should therefore be grateful for your agreement that we should



now say clearly that we will accept the Roachbank refugees, before we are faced with further public criticism which will undermine our broader strategy and before some personal tragedy intervenes, e.g. sickness or death, on board the Roachbank.

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5. I have consulted the Home Secretary, who agrees with this approach. I am copying this minute to him and to the Secretary of State for Trade, the Attorney-General, and Sir John Hunt.

Agree - on condition that you have a defence against taking the refugees on the third boat. now known to be expected in Japan / when necessary.

8 June 1979

(CARRINGTON)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

We can't go on like this and in

spite of, on discussions about the need to find a defence against taking more - none has been forthcoming. Indeed I wonder if the matter has been pursued at all?

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NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ACCEPTED FOR RESETTLEMENT BY THE
COUNTRIES SHOWN AS AT 1 MAY 1979 IS AS
FOLLOWS

<u>Country</u>	<u>Numbers Accepted</u> (rounded)
China	230,000
USA	217,000
France	48,800
Australia	19,500
Canada	14,400
Germany	3,500
Malaysia	1,600
United Kingdom	1,537
Switzerland	1,500
Belgium	1,300
Taiwan	1,000 (estimate)
Norway	900
New Zealand	800
Denmark	600
Netherlands	380
Austria	340
Italy	250
Israel	170
Japan	50
Luxembourg	30
Others	700
TOTAL	<u>545,020</u>