



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Agree with Foreign Secretary's
recommendation that, exceptionally,
the guarantee should be given even
though the ship is Singapore registered?

How many on
10,000

20 November 1980

are we?

Agreed
mg

Dear Michael,

Ant - 20/11

mg

Vietnamese Refugees: M V Logos

The British owned vessel MV Logos arrived in Songkla, Thailand on 7 October after picking up 93 Vietnamese refugees in the South China Sea. She reached Bangkok on 23 October and is still there. She was due to sail for Sibu (East Malaysia) on 17 November. The Master was not prepared to do so until the refugees had been disembarked; but the Thai Government have now said that they will oblige the vessel to leave by 25 November.

The Logos is a missionary training ship-cum-floating book exhibition, whose owners are Educational Book Exhibits Limited of Bromley. The vessel is registered in Singapore. A representative of the owners has told us that a regional flag was consciously chosen in order to give the operation a more acceptable local profile.

The Thai Authorities, in accordance with their invariable practice, have refused to allow the refugees to be disembarked without a resettlement guarantee. It is well established international practice that in such cases the flag state should accept responsibility for the issue of any guarantee. Representations have therefore been made to the Singapore Government, both through official channels (most recently by our High Commissioner to the Minister for Law in the absence of the Foreign Minister), and by the owners themselves. The Singaporeans have adamantly refused to accept any responsibility.

In these circumstances, we face a choice between maintaining our principles in these matters intact, which will mean continuing to argue, with the owners and others, that the matter is not one for HMG to resolve, and that by doing our best with the Singapore Authorities, we have done all that is possible; and deciding to deem the

/Logos

Michael Alexander Esq
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London SW1



Logos to be an altogether exceptional case in which we should be justified in giving a guarantee.

The arguments in favour of the former course are clear enough; this would be the first time that we had given a guarantee in respect of a non-British registered vessel, and the precedent could be awkward. Indeed, we might face criticism from Bermuda, where a similar case was resolved by their eventually agreeing to accept responsibility. Refugees accepted in this way would, moreover, further reduce the numbers who could be accepted from Hong Kong, where the situation remains serious.

On the other hand, there is no other government willing to accept responsibility, and the fact that the vessel's owners and operators are British places some responsibility on us for putting an end to the human suffering and dislocation involved. The Archbishop of Canterbury is concerned with the enterprise, and his support may be sought by the owners, who have already mobilised a degree of Parliamentary support. The owners point out that as a charity, one of whose objects is 'the direct relief of sickness or poverty by assisting any sick or necessitous persons', they are a unique case and that a decision to help them need not therefore be taken as a precedent. Moreover, a group known as 'Project Vietnam Orphans' has offered to accommodate any of the Logos refugees for up to a year if they are permitted to come here; this would reduce the burden on the normal reception facilities.

The best estimate we have of the likely resettlement breakdown of the refugees is that some 30 may qualify for resettlement in the United States or elsewhere, leaving about 60 who might have to come to Britain. However, if Britain were to issue a guarantee, they could be temporarily accepted into one of the UNHCR-sponsored transit centres in South East Asia if it proved difficult to accept them here immediately.

For the reasons outlined above, provided the Home Secretary concurs, Lord Carrington recommends that the necessary guarantee should be given as a matter of urgency. The question of accepting the refugees or transferring them to a transit centre could be explored once they have been disembarked. Our disappointment with the attitude of the Singapore Government should be

/placed on



placed on record in a formal note, which would also make it clear that our decision should not in any way be taken as a precedent. I shall be grateful to know as soon as possible whether the Prime Minister agrees; because of the Thai deadline, we should like our answer to reach Bangkok by 22 November.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Boys Smith (Home Office), Stuart Hampson (Department of Trade), David Wright (Cabinet Office) and Bill Becket, Law Offices Department.

yours ever
Roderic Lyne

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary



Vietnam
MADBA
5/11

~~Mr Parisson~~ ←

Your Ref

← MA
2/11

with compliments

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Peter Chambers

8454 5/11

262405 TRSY G
896706 EBE G

REF 768 5/11/80

IS FORWARD :-

DATE : WEDNESDAY 5TH NOV 1980

ADDRESS :-
RIGHT HON MARGARET THATCHER M.P.
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
WHITEHALL, LONDON,
ENGLAND.

COPIES TO :-
THE FOREIGN SECRETARY
THE HOME SECRETARY
E.B.E. LIMITED, BROMLEY

TEXT :-

FROM MASTER, M.V. LOGOS, INTERNATIONAL BOOK EXHIBITION AND
CHRISTIAN TRAINING SHIP, OWNED BY EDUCATIONAL BOOKS LIMITED,
BROMLEY.

1. MOST GRATEFUL YOUR KIND CONSIDERATION URGENT SITUATION 93 VIETNAMESE BOAT REFUGEES CONFINED ON BOARD SHIP 4 1/2 WEEKS AWAITING GUARANTEE RESETTLEMENT.
2. CONCERNED DELAY PROVIDING GUARANTE TO THAI AUTHORITIES.
3. SHIP MUST SAIL LATEST MORNING 17TH NOVEMBER TO MEET COMMITMENT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME OFFICIAL RECEPTION BOOK EXHIBITION EAST MALAYSIA. IMPOSSIBLE SAIL WITH REFUGEES ABOARD.
4. INCREASING PROBLEMS CRAMPED CONDITIONS AND FEEDING.
5. INCREASING LOCAL SECURITY RISK DUE REFUGEES WORRIED PRESENT UNCERTAINTY.
6. UNDERSTAND HOME OFFICE AWARE OFFER RESETTLEMENT UK BY PROJECT VIETNAM ORPHANS.
7. WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR PERSONAL ATTENTION ENABLE EARLY ARRANGEMENTS DISEMBARK REFUGEES.
8. MOST GRATEFUL YOUR HELP IN THIS MATTER.
9. SIGNED CAPTAIN DENYS WYNNE SYLVESTER COLLINS, (FAREHAM) AND FOLLOWING BRITISH MEMBERS OF STAFF ONBOARD:-

LOIS ASH
NEIL BAIRD
KEN BOULLIER
W LINDSAY FLINTOFF
MARJORIE MURPHY
SUSAN OWST
MARK SWEENEY
SUSAN SWEENEY
RAYMOND TRAINOR
A FREDERICK WILLIAMS
TIMOTHY WILSON

GODALMING
CARDIFF
CHORLEYWOOD
BOLTON
LIVERPOOL
HULL
WIGAN
WIGAN
LEEDS
LONDON
WORTHING

REGARDS

262405 TRSY G
896706 EBE GM

M.V. LOGOS
Vietnamese Refugees
Spoken to F.CO. : 12/12
please chase in 1 week if no
advise received -
7/5
Print 5/11
Kingling back 12/12
Again 22/12