

IT'S OVER

Most Yanks Got Out

Compiled From AP and UPI

SAIGON—The United States pulled out of Vietnam Tuesday. All but a handful of Americans fled the country aboard Marine helicopters by early Wednesday and left it up to the Vietnamese to find peace.

The Americans were ordered out Tuesday by new President Duong Van Minh to meet one of the Communists' major conditions for peace talks — an end to the U.S. presence. Political sources said the Communists and the Saigon government had agreed in principle to call a cease-fire.

President Ford then ordered Marines to evacuate the last Americans assigned to the U.S. Defense Attache's Office within 24 hours. Ford promised in his statement that force would be used only to protect lives.

Aboard the USS Blue Ridge, command ship for the evacuation, a correspondent said the Navy announced 4,582 persons, about 900 of them Americans, had been lifted out by the evacuation that began at mid-afternoon Tuesday. Forty ships of the U.S. 7th Fleet were gathered in the South China Sea for the task.

Former Vietnamese Premier, Vice Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, natty in his khaki safari suit with maroon scarf around his neck, stepped aboard the command vessel. He said nothing to reporters.

Naval spokesmen said Mrs. Graham Martin, wife of the U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam, arrived before the first official wave of helicopters left three carriers off Vung Tau for the evacuation run.

The few Americans remaining in Saigon apparently were mostly newsmen.

The departure ended an era that cost the United States 14 years, \$150 billion and more than 50,000 lives — the last of which in combat were two U.S. marines killed in a Communist attack on Saigon's airport early Tuesday that spurred the pullout.

The evacuation came 17 days (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES

AN AUTHORIZED UNOFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE U.S. ARMED FORCES OF THE PACIFIC COMMAND

15c

Vol. 31, No. 120

Thursday, May 1, 1975



A U.S. Marine points a rifle at South Vietnamese trying to climb over the wall at the U.S. Embassy Wednesday in desperate attempts to get aboard the evacuation flights. Marines guarding the embassy had a tough time keeping order as the Vietnamese panicked and tried to throw themselves over the walls and wire fences. (UPI)

SAIGON (AP) — The Saigon government surrendered unconditionally to the Viet Cong Wednesday, ending 30 years of bloodshed.

The surrender was announced by President Duong Van "Big" Minh in a five-minute radio address.

As he spoke, the city of Saigon fell quiet and shellfire subsided.

Minh said:

"The republic of Vietnam policy is the policy of peace and reconciliation, aimed at saving the blood of our people. I ask all servicemen to stop firing and stay where you are. I also demand that the soldiers of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) stop firing and stay in place.

"We are here waiting for the provisional revolutionary government to hand over the authority in order to stop useless bloodshed."

On the same Saigon radio broadcast, Gen. Nguyen Huu Hanh, deputy chief of staff, called on all South Vietnamese generals, officers and servicemen at all levels to carry out Minh's orders.

"All commanders," Hanh declared, "must be ready to enter into relations with commanders of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Viet Cong) to carry out the cease-fire without bloodshed."

South Vietnamese officers said they had no other choice.

The surrender came within hours of the evacuation of all Americans except a handful of newsmen from Saigon

Reaching the decision to pull out, Page 3. Other coverage on Pages, 6, 7, 12-13.

and the closing of the U.S. Embassy which was later looted along with the residence of U.S. Ambassador Graham A. Martin.

South Vietnamese officers complained that the U.S. evacuation had panicked the army and that many top officers and most of the air force had pulled out, leaving the armed forces depleted and Saigon an open city, as Communist-led forces closed in.

(A few people appeared to brave the around-the-dock curfew minutes after the announcement, UPI said, but shellfire continued and there was sporadic small arms fire in the heart of the city after the president's brief address.

(Minh spoke as Communist forces fought toward the very center of the city, which by mid-morning had seemed to be in a state of panic and imminent collapse.

(Police were ordered to raise white flags over their stations.

(The U.S. Embassy was burned by looters.

(They carried away desks, chairs and typewriters from the building the Americans had evacuated.

(Vietnamese still waited in the Embassy compound for evacuation. Among them was an American with his Vietnamese wife and children, UPI said.)

Despite the U.S. evacuation, it was certain that the Saigon army would fall anyhow whether the Americans stayed or not.

More than a dozen North Vietnamese divisions were ringing Saigon while the capital was defended by less than a division of green troops.

The Viet Cong had rejected a cease-fire and negotiations proposed earlier by Minh and demanded in effect an unconditional surrender to include these terms:

—The withdrawal of Americans.

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)