

Boat people jet on return to Vietnam home

HONG KONG -- Seventy-five Vietnamese returned by charter jet Thursday to the communist homeland they fled, beginning the first repatriation program for boat people no longer willing to languish in crowded detention centers.

The boat people were among about 11,000 Vietnamese who have sailed into this British colony since it adopted a tough new policy last year that for most of them rules out resettlement.

The 2 1/2-hour flight marked the first large-scale repatriation of boat people, who have sailed by the tens of thousands to seek asylum in non-communist southeast Asia.

Many of the returning 46 men, 19 women and 10 children boarded the U.N.-chartered Boeing 737 jet smiling, waving and shaking hands with local officials. Several wore new clothes; a few carried cassette tape players.

When their plane touched down in Hanoi on Thursday evening, they were met by Vietnamese, British and U.N. officials, Hong Kong radio reported. Relief officials aboard the airplane said there was no tension during the flight, it said.

"I'm happy to be back," Lan Bun See told reporters as he stepped off the plane. "This is my homeland. I feel . . . very happy." The group was whisked to the passenger terminal

by coach where they were rushed through immigration, reports from Hanoi said.

"This is an important start," said Security Branch official Michael Hanson, who watched the group leave Hong Kong. "We hope more people will take this route back to Vietnam" and relieve the crowded camps that are home to about 26,000 boat people in Hong Kong.

The repatriation was arranged under an agreement reached by Vietnam and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Hanoi promised not to prosecute its returning citizens and to allow the international organization to monitor their treatment back home.

The U.N. commission agreed to provide assistance to the repatriated Vietnamese. Returning adults received \$50 and their children \$25, according to U.N. officials, and other unspecified assistance will be offered.

Two U.N. officials flew back with the group and were expected to accompany the Vietnamese to their hometowns.

Hong Kong, about 500 miles north of Vietnam, long classified all arriving Vietnamese as refugees who could stay in the colony until resettled elsewhere. Fewer than two dozen of the more than 120,000 Vietnamese who have come to Hong Kong returned home between 1979 and 1988.

Pizza purists want protection for recipe

NAPLES, Italy -- One hundred years after a Naples chef presented the queen of Italy with a patriotic pizza, purists and politicians want to standardize the simple recipe for a genuine Neapolitan pie.

Representatives from the Italian Association for Real Pizza, the Association of European Pizza Makers and the province of Naples met Tuesday to define exactly what makes a "Neapolitan pizza."

On June 11, 1898, a young Neapolitan pizza chef set out for the royal palace on a mule with his wife and a sack of ingredients to try out a new recipe on Queen Margherita di Savoia.

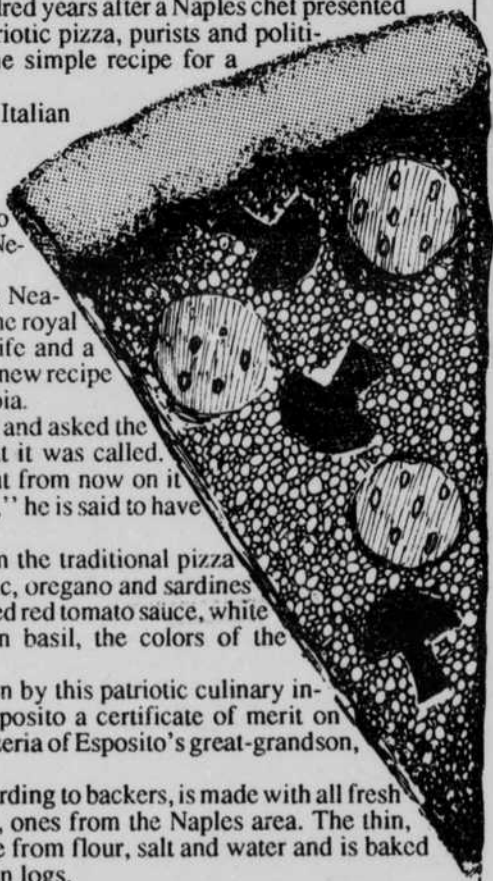
The queen enjoyed the dish and asked the chef, Raffaele Esposito, what it was called. "It does not have a name, but from now on it will be called as your majesty," he is said to have replied.

Esposito had departed from the traditional pizza ingredients of the times: garlic, oregano and sardines or dried cheese. He instead used red tomato sauce, white mozzarella cheese and green basil, the colors of the Italian flag.

So impressed was the queen by this patriotic culinary invention that she awarded Esposito a certificate of merit on display now at the Naples pizzeria of Esposito's great-grandson, Vincenzo Brandi.

Real Neapolitan pizza, according to backers, is made with all fresh ingredients - and, if possible, ones from the Naples area. The thin, crispy layer of dough is made from flour, salt and water and is baked in ovens fired only by wooden logs.

According to the Real Pizza Association, 432 million pizzas are cooked each year in the more than 12,000 pizzerias in Italy.



Perez blames leftists

Police fire on mobs in Caracas

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) - Police opened fire on rock-throwing mobs in Caracas slums Thursday, and President Carlos Andres Perez blamed leftists for continuing Venezuela's worst unrest in 31 years of democratic rule.

Unofficial reports have put the death toll at more than 200 people killed since Monday in riots over price increases. The disturbances have occurred in the capitol and at least 11 cities nationwide.

About 100 people ran down hills in western Caracas to shout taunts and throw stones at the police and national guard units. The authorities opened fire, dispersing the protesters.

No report of casualties was given from the clash, which briefly closed two stations of the capitol's subway system.

Armored personnel carriers with cannons patrolled the area, and police sharpshooters fired at suspected sniper positions on apartment rooftops. Snipers and authorities had exchanged fire throughout the night, and Perez said an army major was killed in an ambush on the Pan-American Highway.

Media reports have said 1,000 people were injured and at least 4,500 detained in the clashes, and the president said complete figures would be released Friday.

Perez declared martial law and an overnight curfew beginning Tuesday, a day after increases in gasoline prices

and transit fares touched off the violence.

An estimated 15,000 troops and 7,000 police maintained order in the capitol Thursday, and the president pronounced the emergency "practically over."

But Perez, talking to reporters after a helicopter tour of the city, said he was "preoccupied and ashamed" of the "absurdity" of lost lives.

He said looters were only hurting themselves by destroying small businesses that served poor neighborhoods, and blamed "remnants" of leftist revolutionaries for continued gun battles in the capitol.

"These phantasmagorical remnants of subversives are still not convinced this is a democratic country," said Perez, who has been in office only a month.

He said some acts "were induced, and this has to be punished severely."

Mourners, some with black eyes and cuts from street violence, waited outside the central Caracas morgue Thursday for the bodies of loved ones to be released.

Officials said Thursday there were "at least 100 bodies in there now and 40 were taken out Wednesday."

Armando Rodriguez waited for the body of his 28-year-old brother, Francisco, who was killed by a stray bullet Tuesday while watching looters battle the army from the roof of his building west of Caracas.

"We were up on the roof, about 20

of us, when the army arrived and started firing in the air to scare the mob," Rodriguez said. "I don't bear any grudges, but I would like to see an investigation into my brother's death."

The opposition has blamed the riots on government austerity measures. Venezuela, affluent during of the 1970s thanks to its rich oil reserves, saw its fortunes slide along with petroleum prices in 1981.

Real wages have since fallen by one-third, inflation is expected to hit 70 percent this year - double the 1988 figure - and the foreign debt is \$33 billion, fourth largest in Latin America after Brazil, Mexico and Argentina.

The unrest is the country's worst since January 1958, when 100 people were killed during the uprising that ousted dictator Gen. Marcos Perez Jimenez.

Bus fare increases of 30 percent to 50 percent and price gouging by drivers were the immediate cause of the riots and looting.

Two weeks ago, Perez announced a sweeping reform package under pressure from international creditors that includes lifting ceilings on interest rates, doubling gas prices and letting the currency float, which means higher prices for imports.

Also Thursday, Perez announced plans for emergency credits for storekeepers who lost millions from the damage and looting.

Soldier disappears in Germany

FRANKFURT, West Germany -- The U.S. Army said Thursday it is baffled by the disappearance of a "good, clean-cut" American soldier who had access to classified information and vanished near the East German border.

An Army spokesman, Lt. Col. Jake Dye, said there was not enough information to say if Spec. 4 Michael A. Peri had defected. Dye acknowledged a portable computer was missing from an intelligence office where Peri worked.

Peri, of Laguna Niguel, Calif., has been listed as "absent without leave" since he failed to show up for work Feb. 21 at the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Fulda, 65 miles northeast of Frankfurt.

Two days later, officials searching for Peri found his U.S. Army vehicle undamaged near the border town of Obersuhl, about 35 miles northeast of

Fulda. "Peri was authorized to drive the vehicle and had logged it out properly," Dye said.

Stars and Stripes, the Army's unofficial newspaper, quoted Dye as saying "the circumstances of that vehicle being found so close to the border are definitely suspicious."

Dye told The Associated Press later the newspaper was putting it "a little too strongly," but he didn't deny making the statement.

Peri worked as an electronics warfare signal specialist and was responsible for operating equipment that identifies and locates non-communications signals, such as radar. He has been stationed in West Germany since March 4, 1988.

Asked about the possibility Peri defected, Dye said, "We certainly have no reason to believe that. There were no signs of distress according to

his colleagues and family. We just don't have any indications."

Peri had an "active normal social life" and a "perfect record as a good clean-cut soldier," Dye said.

"In fact, he had been promoted and nominated for 'Soldier of the Month' twice in the year he has been here," Dye added. "That's what makes it so baffling. From all indications, everybody in his unit has the same feelings. They're all very surprised."

Dye confirmed the Stars and Stripes report that a portable computer was missing from the office where Peri had worked. But Dye said Peri "had not progressed very far in computers except for basic word processing."

A search of Peri's living quarters showed he had left his personal belongings behind, Dye said.

Major West German spy network cracked

BONN, West Germany -- Investigators have cracked a major spy ring in which West German computer "hackers" acquired sensitive U.S. military information and sold it to the Soviets, a broadcasting network said Thursday.

"Thousands of computer codes, passwords and programs were delivered to the Soviets," the Norddeutsche Rundfunk network said in a press release. "They opened the door for the KGB to gain access to

some of the most important computer centers of the Western world."

The network said that among the computers was the U.S. Defense Department's general databank known as Optimus, a NASA computer, as well as computers tied to nuclear weapons and energy research in New Mexico and Illinois.

The information would give the Kremlin access to U.S. military supply depot statistics and to several European institutes that deal with atomic and aerospace research, the

statement said.

It said three suspects were in investigative custody, and it quoted Federal Prosecutor's Office spokesman Alexander Prechtel as saying the three "are suspected of illegally obtaining information and selling it to an East Bloc intelligence agency."

The network said authorities believe that three West German hackers were recruited by the KGB in 1985 and "were paid with cash, drugs . . . to provide the codes and passwords to the Soviets."

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Earthquake rocks Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic -- A moderate offshore earthquake shook parts of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico Thursday, geologists reported. There were no reports of damages or injuries.

The U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colo., recorded the quake at 5.5 on the Richter scale, spokeswoman Pat Jorgenson reported from Washington.

The quake, which was centered 80 miles southeast of Santo Domingo, occurred at 3:14 a.m. (2:14 a.m. EST), she said.

Light tremors were felt in Santo Domingo and at the resort town of La Romana, 80 miles to the east.

The Civil Defense said as of mid-morning there were no reports of damages or injuries in the Dominican Republic.

William McCann, director of the University of Puerto Rico's Seismic Network, said there was some movement felt on Puerto Rico's west coast.

"We don't expect damage due to the depth of the tremor," McCann said.

The Puerto Rico Geophysical Observatory estimated the epicenter was 80 miles below the surface of the Caribbean.

The Richter scale is a gauge of the energy released by an earthquake, as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph. A magnitude 5 quake can cause considerable damage.