REFUGEE ADMISSIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1991

STATEMENT OF

THE HONORABLE LAWRENCE S. EAGLEBURGER
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE

OCTOBER 3, 1990

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am here today to discuss the global refugee situation and to present the President's proposed refugee admissions levels for Fiscal Year 1991. I would like to begin with a brief discussion of the trends in refugee affairs over the past year. I will then turn to some specific areas of concern, including the U.S. response to Soviet emigration, the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indochinese refugees, and the current situations in the Persian Gulf and Liberia. Finally, I will summarize the proposed admissions levels for refugees for the coming fiscal year.

I. Recent Trends in Refugee Affairs

The ideal solution for any refugee situation is that the conditions which caused the refugees to flee be brought to an end. The opportunity to reconstruct a life in one's homeland, with one's own language and culture, is a far more humane solution than to become an outsider in a foreign land. The enormous changes in world politics since we consulted on refugee concerns one year ago have had a significant impact on this potential for voluntary repatriation of refugees.
The warming of relations between the superpowers has meant that many regional conflicts may be on the road to resolution. The progress in Afghanistan and Cambodia offers the possibility that refugees created by those conflicts may have the opportunity to return in safety and in dignity to their homes in the not too distant future. Repatriation programs have been planned for each, and have begun to be implemented for the Afghans.

There have also been major repatriation efforts over the past year in Central America for Salvadorans and Nicaraguans. By March of this year, more than 11,000 Salvadorans had returned home from Honduras. And we are in the midst of the repatriation of thousands of Nicaraguans to their home country following the democratic election in February and the establishment of the Chamorro government. Approximately 12,500 Nicaraguan refugees from both Honduras and Costa Rica as well as more than 8,000 Nicaraguans previously associated with the resistance in Honduras have returned home. While the pace of the returns is affected by the absorptive capacity of these countries, we are especially gratified that more than 30,000 Central Americans are now back in their home countries.

And in Africa, some 43,000 Namibians have returned home after long years in exile to help launch the world’s newest independent state.
Another major political change since last year has been the spread of democracy and freedom of expression in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. While this, too, may lead to large repatriations, especially to East European nations, the rapid change in governments has also unleashed long repressed ethnic tensions in those regions. The fear of ethnic strife, plus a legacy of official persecution, particularly in the Soviet Union, has prompted many Jews, Evangelical Christians, and other religious and ethnic minorities there to seize the opportunity to emigrate. This has presented us with some major challenges in our resettlement program, to which I will refer in a moment.

For the majority of the world's 15 million refugees, however, repatriation is not a viable option. Mr. Chairman, over the past year you and your colleagues in the Congress have paid particular attention to the needs of these refugees. Integration and acceptance by the country of asylum is available only to a limited number of these refugees. And resettlement to a third country is available to even fewer.

Many refugees who will not be resettled or repatriated have been in asylum for an extended period of time. They need food, water, shelter, the provision of sanitation facilities, and medical care. They also need international organizations to
monitor their protection. As refugees wait for political and social conditions to enable them to return home, the international community must be prepared to provide the resources necessary to sustain them.

A major thrust of Congressional attention to refugee affairs worldwide this year has been the dire financial straits of the international organizations which assist refugees and conflict victims. Severe fiscal crises have resulted from a rapid growth in the number of refugees, with a steady but not concomitant increase in international donor contributions. This situation reached a critical point in 1989 and mandated severe cutbacks in the program levels of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). A consensus has been reached, however, on the UNHCR budget for 1990, and we expect that budget to be fully funded. While the ICRC has cut its original program projections by one-third, it maintains a resilient will to respond when needed in a crisis, as demonstrated by the situation in the Persian Gulf.

Smaller but serious financial difficulties have threatened programs of the U.N. Border Relief Operation on the Thai-Cambodian border (UNBRO) and the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). U.S.
responses to these latter two organizations from both the regular Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) appropriation and the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) fund have been instrumental in ameliorating their fiscal crises.

In each of these cases, the United States has vigorously pressed other donors to carry their share of these needs. New demands on scarce resources, coupled with budgetary constraints in all donor nations, will continue to require careful planning and the setting of priorities by both international organizations and the governments which support their activities. We shall continue to build on the close working relationships we have established with other donors and each of the international organizations that work with refugees and conflict victims. In Fiscal Year 1991, the President's budget request includes a greatly needed increase in regional refugee assistance of some $46 million as well as a $25 million replenishment of the ERMA fund, which will help all of these refugee organizations.

In short, the refugee world is an extremely dynamic one, with a continuous series of new challenges. We cannot always anticipate needs or predict how particular programs will develop. But the United States can -- and does -- provide strong and constructive leadership. Leadership comes not only
from the total amount of funds we provide annually, but as well from the numbers of refugees we resettle. We demonstrate leadership in the policy and program proposals we make to the refugee community, to refugee-hosting governments, and to other donor and resettlement nations. No other nation monitors world situations with the expertise and steadfastness that we bring to refugee and conflict victim issues.

I would like now to turn to four regional situations which are currently receiving priority attention.

II. Regional Developments

A. Soviet Refugee Admissions

Mr. Chairman, rarely does the State Department have an opportunity to announce a plan of action to resolve a major problem and return only twelve months later able to report a resounding success. I am proud to say that this is the case with regard to Soviet refugees.

For many years, the United States and other nations have advocated greater freedom of emigration for Soviet citizens. We have devoted considerable effort and resources to support the resettlement of persecuted religious and ethnic minorities
allowed to leave that country. The 50,800 Soviet refugees we will resettle this year in the United States sets a new record, and parallels unmatched levels of Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel.

Last year I described our plans to close the Rome-Vienna pipeline for Soviet refugee applicants and to transfer all processing to Moscow. We discussed a nascent Washington Processing Center, and a new system in which most of the paperwork for refugee applications would be handled in this country, with files shuttled back and forth to our Embassy in Moscow. We have now completed these changes, with the result that we can handle the same number of refugees at a substantially lower cost to the Migration and Refugee Assistance budget. This new system has proven so successful that we are now considering it as a model for other types of visa processing.

B. Indochinese Refugees

I characterized the Vietnamese refugee problem last year as long-standing and extraordinarily complex. It is no less so now than then. However, we still believe that the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) that resulted from the 1989 International Conference on Indochinese Refugees represents the best mechanism
for addressing humanely the concerns of all involved nations. Implementation of the CPA is a difficult task, but we have been steadfast in our commitment to the practice of first asylum and our opposition to forced repatriation of Vietnamese.

The most serious difficulty we have encountered has been Malaysia’s refusal to offer safe landing to Vietnamese boat people. The United States has protested -- and continues to protest vigorously -- Malaysia’s failure to abide by the CPA’s provision that all arriving Vietnamese boat people are to be offered first asylum. Other items of concern with regard to the CPA include: conditions in camps in Hong Kong; the relatively slow pace of screening; and the need for the quick and effective operation of committees in each first asylum country to provide special attention to unaccompanied minors.

At the same time, however, there has been progress in several key areas of the CPA. For example, resettlement of the longstayers has been a success, and we are ahead of the schedule agreed to at the conference. The Orderly Departure Program also has been vastly expanded with good cooperation from Vietnam, in particular in the implementation of last summer’s agreement for the resettlement of former reeducation center detainees. Refugee screening programs are underway in each first asylum
nation, too, representing a major new activity on behalf of Indochinese asylum seekers. And, voluntary repatriation programs under the CPA have enabled over 4,000 Vietnamese and nearly 2,000 Lao to return to their homes.

The major unresolved issue concerns the return of non-refugees to Vietnam. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Thorvald Stoltenberg, has held extensive negotiations with all concerned governments on this subject and has proposed an expansion of the existing UNHCR voluntary repatriation program to include those "who do not object" to returning home. At the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference in late July, Secretary Baker announced U.S. support for the High Commissioner's efforts and raised U.S. concerns with the Foreign Ministers of each of the first asylum countries. Moreover, the Secretary stated the willingness of the United States to join in a multilateral pledge to undertake "best efforts" to accomplish the return or resettlement of all Vietnamese asylum seekers by the end of 1992. At the conclusion of the Conference, the ASEAN nations confirmed their willingness to continue to support the CPA.

Recently, on September 22, the British and Vietnamese Governments, along with the UNHCR, announced an agreement on the return to Vietnam of Vietnamese in Hong Kong who have been
determined not to be refugees and who do not object. We expect the U.N. High Commissioner to provide the necessary safeguards to ensure that there is no force or coercion employed and that the existing system for UNHCR monitoring in Vietnam is expanded to cover all returnees.

C. Displaced Persons in the Persian Gulf

The August 2 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq has generated a tremendous number of displaced persons. Exact figures are difficult to determine, because more people flee Iraq and Kuwait every day. However, the following estimates can be considered accurate to date:

- Over 540,000 people have fled to Jordan from Iraq
- About 40,000 have crossed the Turkish-Iraqi border
- Almost 70,000 have entered Syria from Iraq
- Over 20,000 have crossed the Iraq-Iran border
- And well over 240,000 people have fled to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states from Kuwait.

Those fleeing are generally not refugees suffering persecution, but rather third-country nationals who until August 2 were employed in Iraq and Kuwait. In most cases they have escaped with few personal resources, and will return home
penniless. The overwhelming numbers of displaced persons impose a severe resource burden on countries such as Jordan and Turkey.

Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and other countries have undertaken impressive efforts to care for these displaced persons. Although conditions in some of the camps were initially harsh, there have been no deaths due to starvation or epidemic disease. In Jordan, the worst camps have been closed and the residents have been moved to new camps with adequate sanitation and shelter. In Turkey, the only victims of hunger and disease are newly arrived displaced persons who developed their conditions while still in Iraq.

The international response to this emergency has grown rapidly and is now effectively meeting the challenge. The Red Crescent societies in Jordan, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia have been in the forefront in helping care for the displaced persons. They are now backed up by an array of international agencies and personnel. In Jordan, the U.N. Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) coordinates the work of several U.N. agencies. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the League of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies (LICROSS) are also playing major roles. U.S. and European non-governmental organizations have become active as well.
Perhaps the most critical element in this emergency is the effort to transport the displaced persons back to their home countries. Egyptians make up the largest number of these individuals. Saudi Arabia and the EC have now largely assured steady movement of Egyptians through Jordan and back home. India is stepping up repatriation of its citizens to more than 3,000 per day. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is coordinating transportation arrangements for the other displaced persons, mostly those from South Asia whose governments cannot cover the costs. IOM scheduled the movement of 50,000 persons through the end of September. As a result of those efforts, the number of persons in Jordan has dropped to below 50,000.

The international donor community has committed over $200 million to this relief effort, including cash, aircraft, food, and other supplies. The United States has committed up to $28 million -- $10 million for transportation and up to $18 million in food and other aid. The efforts of the host governments and generous international assistance have stabilized the situation for now. However, the potential for a future crisis remains. Over 2 million foreign nationals remain in Kuwait and Iraq. If and when they make it across the borders, most will require the same short-term care and transportation assistance as those who fled before them.
D. Liberian Refugees

I would like to draw attention to an area of the world where there is a grave humanitarian situation that has not received adequate attention of donor nations. I refer to the Liberian refugee crisis, which began some eight months ago. Since June, the number of refugees seeking protection in the neighboring nations of Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone has doubled. There are now more than 500,000 Liberians in asylum -- more than one-fifth of the country's population. Although assistance organizations have launched new efforts to care for these refugees, the response of the donor community has been extremely disappointing. The United States has committed over $5 million in funding, including 30 percent of the initial UNHCR appeal, and nearly all the food that has been made available for these refugees. The rest of the international community has so far contributed only $4.3 million toward this emergency appeal of the UNHCR. We continue to urge other donor nations not to ignore their responsibility toward these refugees. We are concerned in particular about food deliveries to the refugees in the Forest Region of Guinea; logistical problems have hampered efforts to reach this area. Malnutrition rates there are high, which affect children most severely. And, in each case, the impact on the citizens of the neighboring countries of asylum has been substantial. We have asked the United
Nations to develop a coordinated plan to reach all affected persons over the coming 6-9 months, as the situation inside of Liberia remains unstable and uncertain.

Mr. Chairman, I have touched on some of the more visible refugee programs that the United States funds. But there are still millions of victims of persecution and war whose circumstances we have not had time to describe. Let me assure you that the United States remains committed to protecting and promoting their well-being no matter how long their exile. My hope is that next year we will be able to report a decrease in the number of refugees worldwide, as many of those now in asylum are repatriated safely to their home countries.

I would now like to turn to the President's proposal for refugee admissions in Fiscal Year 1991.

III. Refugee Admissions

Historically, part of the American response to refugee situations worldwide has been to offer resettlement opportunities to a sizable number of refugees. Those who have been resettled in this country have a long tradition of bringing
special talents to the American "melting-pot." This tradition is at the core of today's hearing on the President's proposed refugee admissions level for Fiscal Year 1991.

The President's proposal for 131,000 worldwide refugee admissions in Fiscal Year 1991 includes the following regional levels:

- **AFRICA** 4,900
- **NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA** 6,000
- **EAST ASIA** 52,000
- **EASTERN EUROPE** 5,000
- **soviet union** 50,000
- **LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN** 3,100
- **TOTAL** 121,000

In addition to the total funded admissions level of 121,000, we propose to continue the successful Private Sector Initiative program with an authorized ceiling of 10,000, available for refugees from any region of the world. Thus, the worldwide total of the President's proposal is 131,000.

Mr. Chairman, a detailed justification of each of the admissions levels has been provided in the document entitled *Proposed Admissions for FY 1991*, as submitted for the record.
Ambassador Lafontant Mankarious has included in her prepared statement a regional description of the admissions programs we envision. I would like to review for you how we intend to fund these admissions levels.

As I have noted, the President's proposal for a worldwide admissions level of 131,000 refugees includes 10,000 admissions from any region of the world to be sponsored privately under the ongoing Private Sector Initiative (PSI) program. PSI refugees require no federal funding and are only admitted if the requisite private sector funding is provided. The question, therefore, with the budget process not quite completed, is how we will fund all the numbers in the remaining 121,000 ceiling.

The President's proposal for 121,000 funded refugee admissions reflects the fine-tuning of the refugee admissions program that the consultations process provides; each of the regional admissions totals has been revised since earlier estimates were included in our Fiscal Year 91 budget presentation. As a result of this process, the total of 121,000 funded admissions represents a net increase of 11,000 above the budget request level, most of which falls within the ceiling for the Soviet Union. In Fiscal Year 1990, up to 8,000 Soviet refugees were resettled through private funding by the Jewish community. We fully appreciate the magnitude of that effort,
and recognize that it cannot easily be repeated in Fiscal Year 1991. We have therefore raised the funded level of Soviet refugees in Fiscal Year 1991 to 50,000.

The 121,000 figure is of course a ceiling, not a quota. Nevertheless, we believe that through cost-saving measures and new approaches to financing transportation costs, funding appropriated at the President's original budget request level can finance the projected 121,000 admissions. Let me be clear: Our ability to make use of these additional numbers will be dependent on (i) the appropriation of funds at the President's requested level for Fiscal Year 1991, (ii) successful participation of refugees and their sponsors in financing a portion of transportation to the United States, and (iii) our ability to implement other cost-saving measures. Subject to these constraints, we are fully committed to covering the full 121,000 admissions within the authorized ceiling.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide this update on some of our ongoing refugee policy concerns, and our plans for refugee admissions in the coming year. Your Committee's continued support of our refugee programs worldwide is integral to our success. Thank you.
Statement by

Chris Gersten
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement
Family Support Administration
Department of Health and Human Services

before the

Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am pleased to have this opportunity to present the views of the Department of Health and Human Services in this consultation on refugee admissions for fiscal year 1991.

The Department fully supports the President's proposal to authorize up to 131,000 refugee admissions in FY 1991, of which 121,000 admissions would be publicly funded and 10,000 would be contingent on private-sector funding.

States, voluntary refugee resettlement agencies, refugee mutual assistance associations, and other participants in the refugee program have continued to do a good job in helping new refugees adapt to life in the United States. During the last few years, a number of special initiatives by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, with the collaboration of other participating agencies, have contributed to effective refugee resettlement, helping to increase refugee employment and keep dependency rates down. These initiatives have included projects in high-
dependency States directed toward employment and self-support, planned secondary resettlement of refugees from areas in which they were relying on cash assistance to communities with good employment opportunities, special efforts to help assure the availability of needed services to former re-education center detainees from Vietnam and to Amerasians from Vietnam, and initiatives to improve services to refugee women.

At the end of FY 1989, the national dependency rate of refugees who had been in the United States less than 24 months was 48.5 percent, a reduction from the figure of 52.1 percent a year earlier. This means that over half of the refugees who had arrived in this country were self-supporting within less than two years after their arrival. In fact, 35 States had dependency rates below 33 percent, indicating that in those States more than two-thirds of the refugees were becoming self-supporting in less than two years.

We know that particular areas are impacted by high concentrations of refugees and that some refugees find it difficult to become independent. However, experience shows the United States has the ability to successfully resettle the number of refugees specified in the President's proposed admissions ceiling for FY 1991. Moreover, refugees are ultimately net contributors to the economy. Once fully resettled, refugees run businesses, pay taxes, purchase goods and services, and help bolster the economy.
Mr. Chairman, I would be pleased to try to answer any questions that you and Members of the Committee might have.
Testimony of

Gene McNary

Commissioner
U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

before the

Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy
Senate Committee on the Judiciary

concerning the

Refugee Resettlement Admissions Program
for Fiscal Year 1991

October 3, 1990
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Room 226
10:00 AM
Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss the proposed U.S. refugee resettlement admissions program for Fiscal Year 1991 and the role of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in implementing this program. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1980 and its incorporation of the international definition of "refugee" into U.S. law. We at INS are proud of our role in the processing of refugees throughout the world for resettlement in the United States.

**FY 1990 Accomplishments**

I would like to provide you with an update on the substantial accomplishments of our refugee program during this fiscal year, particularly as reflected by our expanding operations overseas.

While INS overseas offices have a variety of responsibilities, one of the most important is the processing of refugees. The INS overseas officer corps currently consists of 21 officers in our Bangkok district, with suboffices in New Delhi, Manila, Singapore, Seoul, and Hong Kong; 10 officers in the Mexico City district, with suboffices in Monterrey, Guadalajara, Cuidad Juarez, and Tijuana; and 19 officers in our Rome district, with
suboffices in Frankfurt, Vienna, Athens, London, Moscow, and Nairobi. The percentage of time each office devotes to refugee processing depends on the refugee workload as well as the staffing pattern and priorities within the office. Permanent overseas staff is, of course, augmented by temporary duty personnel from INS' stateside offices, as needed.

This year, we have successfully relied on temporary details to meet major processing demands represented by Soviet refugee flows and the Orderly Departure Program in Vietnam. Using a series of temporary duty personnel in addition to permanent staff in Rome, INS processed more than 44,000 Soviet refugees for travel to the United States during FY 1990. In Moscow, the Service has also relied on details to increase our staff there by six interviewing positions. As of mid-August, INS cumulative statistics for FY 1990 show that approximately 38,000 Soviets have been interviewed in Moscow, with nearly 22,500 granted refugee status.

In Bangkok, up to five temporary duty personnel have been used to supplement district staff to meet INS processing responsibilities under the Orderly Departure Program (ODP). Each month, 6,000 Vietnamese are processed through the ODP; 70 percent of these ODP interviews are refugee adjudications and are the responsibility of INS. As of October 1, 1990, ODP monthly interviews will be increased to 7,500 each month.
New Asylum Regulations and FY 1991 Implementation

Shifting to INS' domestic responsibilities under the U.S. refugee program, I am particularly pleased to report to you that new asylum regulations were signed by the Attorney General and published on July 27, 1990. These regulations authorize creation of a corps of specialized adjudicators under the direct supervision of INS Washington Headquarters who will devote 100 percent of their time to the sensitive task of deciding asylum claims. These adjudicators will be based in 7 cities around the country, and will make circuit rides to other sites as workload requires.

On October 1, 1990, INS began to phase in this new operation, with full implementation expected by April 1991. In preparing for this October 1 implementation, the Service trained more than 100 INS officers in a two week course at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Facility in Glynco, Georgia. The course included instruction in U.S. law, interviewing techniques, country conditions, and international and asylum issues. Instructors for our asylum training came from within and outside the U.S. Government, including representatives from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The new asylum regulations also call for the establishment of a documentation center to provide information on conditions in refugee producing countries. The training and the documentation
center will enhance the professionalism of both asylum adjudications and the interviews of refugee applicants.

Since early 1989, in anticipation of the new asylum regulations, the Service has undertaken an intensive effort to improve the training of asylum and refugee adjudicators through the creation of a comprehensive training syllabus and the organization of formal training courses. These materials emphasize the unique nature of refugee and asylum adjudications as a process different from other INS examinations or inspections. Special attention is given to the need to elicit information and explore all avenues of inquiry in order to fully develop potentially approvable claims.

**INS' Role and Involvement in Refugee & Asylum Affairs**

The role of the INS within the U.S. refugee program is an integral part of the international response to the plight of 15 million refugees worldwide. The priorities within the community of nations are, respectively, the voluntary repatriation of refugees to their homelands; local resettlement of refugees in countries of first asylum if repatriation is not possible; and, resettlement in "third countries," such as the United States, if other solutions are unavailable. It is to this last group, persons who have no hope of repatriation or regional solutions, that the U.S. refugee resettlement program responds.
Within the U.S. refugee program, the INS is responsible for determining eligibility under three statutory avenues of application:

-- the U.S. asylum program provided for in Section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), for persons seeking asylum in the United States or at a U.S. port of entry;

-- the U.S. refugee resettlement admissions program, defined in sections 101(a)(42) and 207 of the INA for persons outside the United States and outside their countries of origin who are (a) "refugees" under the Immigration and Nationality Act; (b) identified as needing third country resettlement; and, (c) qualified according to U.S priorities and ceilings.

-- exceptional refugee admissions, based on a Presidential determination, pursuant to section 101(a)(42)(B) of the INA, made available to certain specified groups of persons still within their countries of origin.

INS adjudicates these refugee and asylum applicants on a case-by-case basis according to the statutory definition of refugee. Based on the 1967 United Nations Protocol Relating to
the Status of Refugees as incorporated by Congress into the Refugee Act of 1980, this standard requires an applicant for refugee status to demonstrate a "well-founded fear of persecution" on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. Within the context of our international refugee responsibilities, INS adjudicates refugee applications based on statutory requirements, along with an assessment of conditions in an applicant’s country of origin. An INS officer considers these factors, along with information developed through a personal interview with the applicant.

Since January 1990, INS has conducted certain refugee adjudications pursuant to the Lautenberg Amendment, which passed as part of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act for FY 1990. That amendment created categories of Soviets and Indochinese who can qualify for refugee status based on an assertion of fear of persecution and an assertion of a credible basis for concern. Persons who may apply pursuant to this legislation include Soviet Jews, Soviet Evangelicals, Ukrainian Catholics and Ukrainian Orthodox, as well as nationals of Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos.

Early this year, in an effort to ensure that INS overseas offices were aware of the importance of the Lautenberg Amendment, I went to Moscow and Deputy Commissioner Ricardo Inzunza traveled to Bangkok to personally initiate its implementation. As part of
our efforts, INS Headquarters personnel were sent to Rome, Moscow and Bangkok to provide training and guidance regarding its implementation. The success of INS efforts is reflected in the increased approval rates for Soviets and Indochinese who qualify for consideration.

**In-country Processing of Refugee Applicants**

The Refugee Act of 1980 included an innovative provision whereby, after consultation between the President and the Congress, certain groups could be adjudicated for U.S. refugee status while remaining in their countries of origin. In-country refugee status determination is currently available to Soviets applying in Moscow, Vietnamese applying in Ho Chi Minh City. It is also available to Latin American or Caribbean political prisoners or persons in immediate danger of loss of life. Such processing will account for more than 27 percent of the refugees resettled in the United States this fiscal year. In FY 1991, the percentage of refugees benefitting from in-country processing is likely to exceed 60 percent of the available refugee admissions numbers. This is mainly due to the full implementation of our program in Moscow.

In 1980, in-country processing was authorized to serve as an extraordinary remedy for refugees in particularly compelling circumstances. As the concept of in-country processing continues
to evolve, we must remain vigilant that persons who are in the most vulnerable circumstances -- whether still inside their countries of origin or already outside -- receive priority attention from both the international community and the U.S. refugee resettlement program.

**Expansion of Public Interest Parole**

Another issue which those of us involved in the U.S. refugee program continue to review is the expansion of the use of public interest parole for persons determined not to be refugees. Introduced by the Attorney General in August 1988 for Soviets found not to meet the refugee definition, this parole authorization was reaffirmed in December 1988 and expanded to the Orderly Departure Program (ODP) in Vietnam in January 1989.

Public interest parole has served and continues to serve U.S. interests. However, we believe that its use as an alternate immigration channel for large groups who cannot enter the United States as refugees or qualify for immigrant visas under the preference system should not be continued over the long-term. Instead, we prefer an alternative, namely along the lines of the "special immigrant" legislation proposed by this Administration, and introduced in the House as H.R. 2646. Such an alternative permits the entry of large groups of individuals who, while not qualifying for refugee status, are of interest to the United States.
We endorse both the overall refugee admissions ceiling of 131,000 and the separate regional ceilings, as proposed by the President. We believe that these ceilings are both responsive to evolving refugee situations in the world and reflect the need for refugee resettlement in the United States.

Thank you. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
HEARING ON REFUGEE PROGRAMS
Wednesday, October 3, 1990
226 Dirksen Senate Office Building, 10:00 a.m.

Witness List

Hon. Lawrence S. Eagleburger
Deputy Secretary of State

Accompanied by:

Mr. James H. Hall
Acting U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs

Ambassador Princeton N. Lyman
Director
Bureau for Refugee Programs
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Commissioner Gene McNary
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Mr. Chris Gersten
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Office of Refugee Resettlement
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