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TAGS: PREF

SUBJECT: HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE (HAC) REPORT
LANGUAGE: MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE (MRA)

1. SUMMARY. THE HAC REPORT ON THE FY-89 FOREIGN OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS BILL (PASSED BY THE HOUSE AND EXPECTED TO GO TO HOUSE/SENATE CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER) INCLUDES NO SPECIFIC REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, BUT REGISTERS COMMITTEE CONCERN OVER INCONSISTENCIES IN THE HHS AND STATE REQUEST LEVELS FOR FY 89 REFUGEE ADMISSIONS (PARA 3) AND HMONG PUSHBACKS IN THAILAND (PARA 5). IT EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES RESETTLING IN ISRAEL (PARA 6), THE AFRICAN REFUGEE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (PARA 7), AND THE VIETNAMESE AMERASIAN PROGRAM (PARA 8). END SUMMARY.

2. (BEGIN TEXT OF REPORT LANGUAGE) THE COMMITTEE HAS PROVIDED A TOTAL OF USDOLS 361,950,000 FOR MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE. OF THIS AMOUNT, USDOLS 23,500,000 HAS BEEN EARMARKED FOR REFUGEE ENTRANT ASSISTANCE, USDOLS 27,500,000 HAS BEEN EARMARKED FOR SOVIET, EASTERN EUROPEAN AND OTHER REFUGEES RESETTLING IN ISRAEL, USDOLS 8,000,000 HAS BEEN EARMARKED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

OF THE OFFICE OF REFUGEE PROGRAMS AND USDOLS 15,000,000 HAS BEEN EARMARKED FOR THE ADMISSION OF VIETNAMESE

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AMERASIANS. PRIOR YEAR LANGUAGE CONCERNING EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF REFUGEES AND SECURITY CLEARANCES HAS ALSO BEEN INCLUDED.

3. REFUGEE ENTRANT ASSISTANCE:

THE EARMARK OF USDOLS 23,500,000 FOR REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AND THE PROVISION OF FUNDS ABOVE LAST YEAR'S LEVEL IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT SUFFICIENT RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO ACCOMMODATE AN ANTICIPATED 68,500 REFUGEE ARRIVALS IN FY 1989. DESPITE THE FACT THAT CONGRESS WAS OFFICIALLY CONSULTED ON AN ANTICIPATED ADMISSIONS LEVEL OF 68,500 REFUGEES IN FY 1989 AND THAT THE AMOUNT REQUESTED FOR THE MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT SUPPORTS A LEVEL OF 68,500 ARRIVALS, THE ADMINISTRATION'S BUDGET REQUEST FOR RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE ONLY SUPPORTS A LEVEL OF 51,000 ARRIVALS. THE COMMITTEE FINDS THIS GLARING INCONSISTENCY IN THE BUDGET REQUEST TO BE ASTONISHING AND HAS PROVIDED FUNDS REQUIRED TO MAKE UP THE SHORTFALL IN THE RESETTLEMENT ACCOUNT.

4. THE COMMITTEE EXPECTS THAT FUTURE BUDGET REQUESTS AND REFUGEE ESTIMATES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REFUGEE PROGRAMS WILL BE CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER SO THAT AN UNDUE BURDEN IS NOT PLACED ON STATE AND LOCAL REFUGEE PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES.

5. FORCED REPATRIATION OF HMONG IN THAILAND:

THE COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT REPORTS OF INSTANCES OF FORCED REPATRIATION OF HMONG REFUGEES IN THAILAND TO LAOS. THE COMMITTEE URGES THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND TO ADMIT THE HMONG TO THE REFUGEE SCREENING PROCESS AND TO ALLOW THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE HMONG AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO THEM.

6. ISRAELI REFUGEES:

THE COMMITTEE'S EARMARK OF USDOLS 27,500,000 FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF SOVIET, EASTERN EUROPEAN, AND OTHER REFUGEES RESETTLING IN ISRAEL IS IN RESPONSE TO THE INCREASED NUMBER OF REFUGEES RESETTLING IN ISRAEL.

7. SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA:

SINCE THE 1960'S THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REFUGEE PROGRAM FOR SOUTH AFRICANS AND NAMIBIANS HAS PROVIDED TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AT THE POST-SECONDARY LEVEL IN THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA. THE COMMITTEE RECOGNIZES THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION OF THIS PROGRAM IN DEVELOPING A CADRE OF PROFESSIONAL AND SKILLED FUTURE LEADERS FOR SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA. THE TWO MAJOR CONTRACTING AGENCIES FOR THIS PROGRAM ARE THE PHELPS-STOKES AND THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE. THE COMMITTEE COMMENDS THEM FOR THEIR EFFORTS, AND ENCOURAGES THEM TO CONTINUE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY PROGRAMS IN BUILDING HUMAN RESOURCES FOR FUTURE LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA. THE COMMITTEE EXPECTS THAT USDOLS 4,000,000 SHALL BE AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF REFUGEES FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA.

8. VIETNAMESE AMERASIANS:

THE COMMITTEE HAS PROVIDED BILL LANGUAGE THAT EARMARKS USDOLS 15 MILLION IN MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

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FUNDS TO BE USED FOR THE CONTINUING INCREASE IN RESETTLEMENT OF VIETNAMESE AMERASIANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR REFUGEE BENEFITS. THE COMMITTEE IS CONCERNED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT BUDGETED SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR THE LARGE NUMBER OF AMERASIANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS THAT SHOULD LEAVE VIETNAM IN FY 1989 IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH TWO YEAR TIME FRAME ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS LAST YEAR FOR RESETTLEMENT OF ALL VIETNAMESE AMERASIANS DESIRING TO LEAVE. THE COMMITTEE HAS PROVIDED ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO THE EMERGENCY REFUGEE AND MIGRATION ASSISTANCE FUND SO THAT THIS EARMARK WILL NOT CURTAIL OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITY WITHIN THE MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE ACCOUNT.

9. EMERGENCY REFUGEE AND MIGRATION ASSISTANCE:

THE COMMITTEE HAS PROVIDED USDOLS 30,000,000 FOR THIS ACCOUNT TO MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE RESULTING FROM ADMISSION OF ADDITIONAL SOVIETS, EASTERN EUROPEANS, AND VIETNAMESE AMERASIANS. THE ADMINISTRATION IS CURRENTLY CONSULTING WITH THE CONGRESS ON THE ADMISSION OF AN ADDITIONAL 15,000 SOVIETS ABOVE THE ORIGINALLY ANTICIPATED ADMISSIONS LEVEL FOR 1988. IN ADDITION THE LEGISLATION ALLOWING AN UNLIMITED NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE AMERASIANS ADMISSIONS THROUGH FY 1989 COULD RESULT IN AN INCREASE OVER CURRENTLY ANTICIPATED ADMISSIONS LEVELS. THE PROVISION OF THESE FUNDS IS MEANT TO ENABLE THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO MEET ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN FY 1989 IN REFUGEE ADMISSIONS FROM ALL GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS. (END OF TEXT) WHITEHEAD
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