

# Es Viets, Texans s try for peace at conference

United Press International  
HOUSTON — One key to defusing the "potential disaster" of Indochinese refugee resettlement in Texas will be finding them jobs outside the overcrowded fishing industry, a refugee told a federal peace-making meeting Wednesday.

"We are talking about the whole Gulf Coast as an area of potential disaster," Dr. Nguyen Van Chau, director of Resettlement Inc. of Beaumont, warned refugees, fishermen, politicians and social workers gathered for the meeting.

"We have to work very fast. We want to investigate all alternatives, even farming, all types of business we could bring in for Indochinese to get (them) out of areas of sharp conflict like shrimping, crabbing."

Chau said there are 1,500 Indochinese refugees involved in Texas' fishing industry. He warned that number soon could double with the influx of more refugees, who like the hot climate and who work cheaper than Americans.

"The problem is not racial prejudice," said Emery Waite of Kemah on Galveston Bay. "It's economic survival for the fishermen."

"We've got too many boats now," agreed Bo Cunningham of Seadrift on San Antonio Bay. "We have no thing against the Vietnamese peo-ple. There's just not enough re-sources. It's gonna come to the point where nobody's making a living."

The shooting death of Billy Joe Aplin by a Vietnamese man in Seadrift last year and other incidents were blamed on fishing-related tensions between Vietnamese refugees and native Texans who complain they are being crowded out.

J.C. Harlan, president of the Sea-food Producers Association of Rock-port, said his town, with the help of a Vietnamese fluent in English, had kept the peace by communicating and cooperating.

But he also said the Vietnamese fishermen active in the area had merely replaced Texans who left the business and had not added to the economic stress.

Chau said there are other areas of tension — the language barrier, re-fugee ignorance of local laws and cus-toms and Texan ignorance of Viet-namese culture. He called for ag-gressive action to solve these prob-lems.

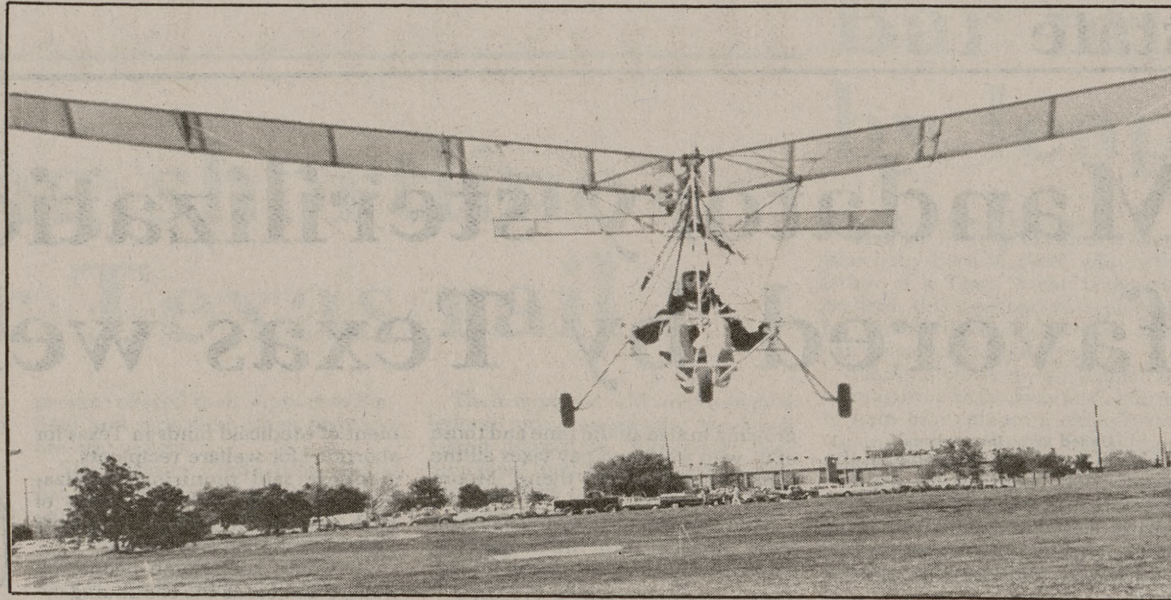
Chau praised the City of Port Arthur for creating seminars for re-fugees to educate them about their new surroundings.

The 60 persons attending the meeting — representing communi-ties all along the Texas Gulf Coast as well as state and federal agencies and social organizations — held work-shop sessions to try to agree on prob-lem and coordinated solutions.

Efrain Martinez of the sponsoring Justice Department Community Re-lations Service said the meeting was the latest CRS effort to solve prob-lem for the 25,000 Texas refugees but the first meeting to assemble all groups involved.

"We hope to accomplish an en-lightenment of all the parties as to the status of the Indochinese on the Gulf Coast and ways to help," Mar-tinez said.

Cunningham, a Seadrift city coun-cilman, said tensions in that tiny Gulf Coast community have subsided since the Aplin death.



Hang glider or airplane?

Flying through the air in his motorized hang glider, the status of which is questionable, is Paul Shaffer. The demonstration was sponsored by the Texas A&M Hand Gliding Club to advertise the meeting last night.

Staff photo by Steve Clark

# Alien schooling query in court

United Press International  
HOUSTON — A 9-year-old Mex-ican girl illegally in the United States Wednesday told a federal judge and a group of lawyers she did not un-derstand why she was not allowed to go to school like her brother.

Civil rights and Justice Depart-ment lawyers hoped the testimony in Spanish by Gabriela, whose last name was not given, and that which followed in English from a 7-year-old illegal alien girl enrolled in public school in Dallas would demonstrate the contrast in attitude and develop-ment of the youngsters.

The civil rights and federal attor-neys are presenting a challenge to the constitutionality of a Texas law forbidding financial support for ille-gal alien children. The lawyers claim the law requires the children to pay tuition, effectively excluding most from public schools.

Gabriela, of Houston, offered her testimony in the chambers of U.S. District Judge Woodrow Seals, who is hearing the case without a jury. The 7-year-old's testimony followed in open court. The younger girl was allowed to enroll in public school af-ter the lawsuit was filed.

The plaintiffs sought to show the girl kept out of school was shy and remote and the one in school was more outgoing.

Gabriela's younger brother is a U.S. citizen and she said she stays home while he goes to class. She said she reads books he brings her from his teacher and instructs herself.

Her mother said the family could not afford the tuition to send her to school.

# Abducted infant reunited with her mother in El Paso

United Press International  
EL PASO — A Mesquite woman whose daughter was abducted Monday was reunited with the 2-month-old infant Wednesday at the El Paso County Sheriff's Department.

Tessa Leann Thorn, who spent the night in a foster home, was returned to her mother, Cathy Greene, Wednesday afternoon, a Texas Department of Human Resources spokesman said.

"I just want her back in my arms," the mother said while awaiting her daughter's arrival. Tears welled in Greene's eyes minutes later as she cuddled her child and vowed never to allow anyone to babysit the infant again.

Police said Greene left the baby in a suspect's Mesquite motel room Monday night and went to a party. The suspect, Patricia Renae Stevens, allegedly fled in Green's car with the infant while the mother was away.

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