

No Vietnamese Need Apply
Joe Biden's politically motivated hypocrisy on immigration.
Joseph Hippolito

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"And Biden was one of the few, the very few, the distant few, who wanted to leave them in the water with the pirates."

Và Biden là một trong số ít, rất ít, tách xa, là người đã muốn bỏ mặc, để cho những thuyền nhân khốn khổ trên biển, (phải rơi vào tay bọn hải tặc Thái Lan khát máu...)

Joseph Hippolito

Nearly half a century before igniting the current border crisis, Joe Biden tried to keep another group of immigrants out of the United States.

As Delaware's junior Senator in 1975, the future virtual president opposed allocating federal money to help refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia establish new lives after their homelands fell to Communist insurgents.

Biden was not alone. Other Democrats opposed such mass resettlement. Among them was California Gov. Jerry Brown, who even tried to [forbid](#) aircraft filled with refugees from landing at Travis Air Force Base near San Francisco.

Also among those Democrats was South Dakota Sen. George McGovern, who insisted that American troops leave South Vietnam. As his party's Presidential nominee in 1972, McGovern lost to incumbent President Richard Nixon in one of the biggest landslides in national history.

In 1975, McGovern [said](#) during a lecture: "Ninety per cent of the refugees would be better off going back to their own land ... The Communist government has already given orders that the people are not to be molested ... Our program should include the highest priority steps to facilitate their early return to Vietnam."

But Biden's opposition became conspicuous by its unwavering tenacity.

That tenacity began days before the Communists conquered both South Vietnam and Cambodia. On April 14, Biden joined his fellow members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a [meeting](#) with President Gerald Ford, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Defense Secretary James Schlesinger at the White House. Though Ford had asked for \$722 million in military aid to South Vietnam, discussion quickly shifted to evacuating both Americans and South Vietnamese. Kissinger promptly outlined the logistical complexity.

"The total list of the people endangered in Vietnam is over a million," he said. "The irreducible list is 174,000. This doesn't mean we could get them out; it would be just those in overwhelming jeopardy."

As discussion continued, Biden concentrated on evacuating Americans. "We should focus on getting them out," Biden said. "Getting the Vietnamese out and military aid for the GVN (South Vietnamese government) are totally different." Kissinger replied that plans to evacuate Americans were "in pretty good shape" but added that the United States has "an obligation" to help the Vietnamese. "This is infinitely more complicated and large-scale," Kissinger said.

"I will vote for any amount for getting the Americans out," Biden responded. "I don't want it mixed with getting the Vietnamese out."

When Pennsylvania Sen. Hugh Scott, the chamber's minority leader, suggested discussing specific amounts, Biden replied, "I don't want to commit myself to any precise number. How much money depends on how many we try to get out."

Unlike his fellow Senators, most of whom wanted to end American military involvement, Biden offered no concrete suggestions or hypothetical scenarios. He merely reiterated his opposition to funding the evacuation of Vietnamese.

Three days after the meeting, the Khmer Rouge conquered Cambodia. Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge's leader, immediately implemented the genocidal policies that killed between one million and three million of his countrymen. Meanwhile, the North Vietnamese were rapidly descending on Saigon, South Vietnam's capital.

Yet the exponentially deteriorating situation failed to sway Biden. When Kissinger appeared as a witness during committee hearings on Ford's proposal, Biden told him the White House "had not informed Congress adequately about the number of refugees to be brought here." the New York Times [reported](#). Publicly, Biden [insisted](#) that the United States has "no obligation, moral or otherwise, to evacuate foreign nationals," and that "the United States has no obligation to evacuate one -- or 100,001 -- South Vietnamese," he said.

Nevertheless, 14 of the committee's 17 members recommended that the Senate support the appropriation for humanitarian aid. Biden was one of the three [opposing](#) it. On April 25, Biden became one of 18 Senators to [oppose](#) the bill, which passed, 55-18. Five days later, the Vietnam War ended when the Communists captured Saigon. Biden's ensuing political behavior could only be described as surreal.

On May 8, Biden joined 91 other Senators [supporting](#) a resolution welcoming South Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees to the United States. Eight days later, however, Biden [abstained](#) on three [different](#) votes concerning financial support for those refugees -- including the actual [bill](#) for \$405 million to be delivered by June 30, the end of the fiscal year.

Why did Biden oppose immigration from South Vietnam and Cambodia nearly 50 years ago? Perhaps he, like other Democrats, feared the creation of a pro-Republican voting base; Cuban refugees who escaped Fidel Castro built just that in Florida. Why does Biden support unlimited immigration from Latin America now? Perhaps he, like other Democrats, hope to expand the party's own voting base.

Despite Congressional appropriations, however, thousands of Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians had to cross the Pacific Ocean on unsafe, even rickety, boats. They faced starvation, dehydration, illness and piracy. They would be nicknamed, "the boat people."

Nearly half a century after Biden's anti-immigrant activism, Vietnamese still remember.

"My Mom and my Dad were refugees from the war," [wrote](#) someone called Second Gen.

"They had worked closely supporting the cause against Communism. It is horrible what they had to go through. They will never forget that Biden did not want the Vietnamese to come to America. He wanted to close out Camp Pendleton and offer zero support to Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese people who lived through this remember this time clearly and the impact his decisions made. It's too bad that the media is trying to spin the truth."

"My wife and then 2 years old daughter were among the first Vietnamese who fled Saigon," [wrote](#) Phung Ngo.

"We arrived at Guam on 4/24/1975 and CONUS (the continental United States) on May 1st, 1975 as evacuees instead of refugees because, now I learn, Joe Biden refused to accept us. Many members of our greater family including my father and brother were 're-educated' because they were not lucky to escape as we. Many others were executed or died in the last few battles. All to get away from the Communists, Socialists or Marxists, whatever you call them."

Those commentators responded to an [article](#) from the left-wing blog Daily Kos that criticized Biden's stance at the time. The author, Stephen Fox, volunteered to help refugees living temporarily at Camp Pendleton, a Marine base north of San Diego.

"Egregious memories of then-Senator Joe Biden's staunch opposition to desegregation and busing still disturb me, but worse was his hostility towards helping Vietnamese war refugees after that war," Fox wrote.

"I spent a lot of time just after the fall of Saigon as a volunteer helping Vietnamese refugees living in a tent city at Camp Pendleton Marine Base, to determine where in the United States they could move to.

"The State Department, Red Cross, and airlines were all there to help; I helped because I was asked to do so by an eminent Vietnamese Buddhist in L.A. (Los Angeles), Dr. Thich Thien-An, and because I spoke French via a French-Vietnamese translator, in order to help those bewildered people. Why? Because no one else would.

"President Gerald Ford evacuated thousands of families who had worked with U.S. troops during that infernal war, but the arch Senate spokesman, the leading voice in the Senate opposing this rescue effort. was Joe Biden. (bold in original)"

Monica Showalter, [writing](#) in American Thinker, described living with these refugees in suburban San Diego before paying Biden the ultimate insult.

"They were wonderful people, the world's most desirable immigrants, people who shared our values, showed us what industry was, and delighted us with their everyday ao dais (long gowns) and Vietnamese groceries and restaurants," she wrote.

"These Southeast Asian refugees impressed us in school, coming in with no language skills and assimilating quickly anyway. In short, they were real refugees who had sided with us and proved their loyalty by paying a price. As Americans here, we cared about them."

"And Biden was one of the few, the very few, the distant few, who wanted to leave them in the water with the pirates."