

Interview with Le Huu Khoan

"We had to swim from Long Xuyen to avoid detection. When we got onto the ship; actually it was a small boat about 10 meters long crammed with 50 people, I called out for Le and Lim my two sons. They yelled back "Father I'm here", once I heard that I was at ease. On the passage, it was wrought with pain and sadness. We were there for 10 days and were robbed five times. Thai fishermen who turned into pirates robbed us; they would block our boats and proceed to rob us and damage our engine in the process."

Interview with Alex Pham

"We were lucky we didn't get capsized. Because the boat could hold maybe up to 20 people and there was a hundred on it. The boat was going really slow cause it was so heavy. And of course the engine died because it was over working. So we were just floating out there for a week or two. And we were lucky to be picked up by a bigger boat. And they gave us organs. And we were so happy. They picked us up and took us to the Philippines. And they dumped us there to get processed. The US were agreed, because the US came to the ally country, like the French and Australia, that's why you have a lot of Vietnamese there. Each country agreed to take in some. The US agreed to take in 7 thousand. We were the first wave so we were easily processed and brought over. Later on it was harder because the US stopped accepting so much people."

-Vietnamese American Oral History Project, "Interview with Le Huu Khoan. Interviewed by Michelle Le Pham. September 15, 2012. Garden Grove, California. The Grove Senior Apartments. Vietnamese American Oral History Project, University of California, Irvine Libraries, Special Collections and Archives. Interview with Alex Pham. Interviewed by Emily Stavros. February 15, 2012. Westminster, California. Vietnamese American Oral History Project, University of California, Irvine Libraries, Special Collections and Archives." (2012) excerpt.