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Central File

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

pool

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 2, 1975

RC7

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: THE STAFF SECRETARY

FROM: ROLAND L. ELLIOTT *RE*

SUBJECT: Incoming Presidential Mail for
Week of April 28-May 2, 1975

Incoming Presidential mail this week totaled about 36,000 pieces. The major subject of concern was South Vietnam and related issues.

4,500 pieces of mail directly commented on aid to South Vietnam. 324 supported U.S. military assistance, 982 opposed it, and 951 expressed support for humanitarian aid only.

Since the fall of South Vietnam, you have received 136 telegrams and mailgrams. Virtually all were strongly critical of U.S. "failure" to give full backing to an ally. The first message in the Mail Sample contains an especially compelling telegram from a career soldier who spent 6-1/2 years in Vietnam, over five of them as a POW.

The matter of evacuation and resettlement of South Vietnamese refugees in the U.S. continued to draw heavy attention. Over the past several weeks there has been a marked shift from virtually unanimous support for the babylift to increasing opposition to resettlement of adult South Vietnamese.

Cumulatively, refugee mail was divided:

PRO:	5,581
CON:	2,689
COMMENT:	181

This week alone, however, it divided:

PRO:	498
CON:	1,437
COMMENT:	75

This shift in attitude reflects some fear that the slumping U.S. economy cannot absorb new, and mostly unskilled, workers, nor can local citizens afford to pay these jobless refugees welfare benefits. Mail is heaviest, for example, from California, where citizens anticipate most of the refugees would be settled.

In the Pro: Refugees section of the sample there is a thoughtful, touching letter of thanks to you and appreciation to the Guam air base personnel from a Vietnamese father who writes on behalf of his own family and all the refugees on Guam.

Your various trips and speeches across the country these past two weeks have also drawn considerable comment (434 pieces). A common thread running through all of this mail, and much of the Vietnam mail, is a deep concern for the future direction of America. Writers urge that full attention be given to domestic issues, with special emphasis on reforming government and redressing middle class inequities.

Specifically, your Bicentennial trip to New England drew praise (65 pieces) and apologies for the "few" who caused disruptions. Your CBS interview drew mixed reaction (Pro: 130; Con: 64; Comment: 27), with criticism directed principally to your remarks about Israel and about the CIA. The Tulane speech drew limited comment (91 pieces), mostly favorable (62 pieces), with over 50% of this mail urging a full amnesty program as a proper end to the Vietnam period for America. The Yale speech also drew limited but favorable response (35 pieces).

Economic mail continued to pick up this week (909 pieces), with special concern expressed over too heavy taxation and excessive Federal spending.

Other domestic issues of concern were:

- (1) Transfer of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Game and Wildlife Ranges to BLM:

CON: 1,646;

- (2) Farm Bill:

PRO: 856; CON: 59;

- (3) Strip-Mining Bill:

PRO: 14; CON: 369;

(4) Federal gun and ammunition controls:

PRO: 47; CON: 393;

(5) Possible reduction in Social Security benefits:

CON: 387;

(6) Nomination of Stanley Hathaway to Cabinet:

PRO: 27; CON: 300.

cc: Paul Theis