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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *df*

OPENING STATEMENT

We are seeing a great human tragedy as untold numbers of Vietnamese flee the North Vietnamese onslaught. The United States has been doing and will continue to do its utmost to assist these people.

I have directed all available naval ships to stand off Indochina to do whatever is necessary to assist. We have appealed to the United Nations to use its moral influence to permit these innocent people to leave, and we call on North Vietnam to permit the movement of refugees to areas of their choice.

While I have been in California I have been  
spending <sup>many hours</sup> ~~considerable time~~ on the <sup>refugees</sup> humanitarian problem, I  
have directed that <sup>money from a</sup> two million dollars <sup>be made available</sup> ~~be made available~~ from  
a special foreign aid children's fund to fly 2,000 South Vietnamese  
orphans to the United States as soon as possible.

I also have directed American officials in Saigon to  
act immediately to cut red tape and bureaucratic obstacles  
preventing these children from coming to the United States.

I have directed that ~~several~~ C-5A planes and other aircraft especially equipped to care for these orphans during the flight, be sent to Saigon. I expect the flights to begin within the next 36 to 48 hours. These orphans will be flown to Travis Air Force Base and other bases on the West Coast and cared for there.

These 2,000 Vietnamese orphans are all in the process of being adopted by American families.

This is the least we can do, and <sup>we will</sup> ~~I intend to~~ do much, much more.