

**Senator Jesse Helms . . .****Appeals To President  
For Massive Evacuation  
Of S. Vietnamese***(Special to The Wanderer)*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In the face of a possible collapse of resistance of South Vietnamese forces against the current Communist onslaught, Sen. Jesse Helms (R., N.C.) has appealed to President Ford to utilize the U.S. Seventh Fleet to evacuate two million or more S. Vietnamese to safe haven. Sen. Helms sent the following telegram to the President on April 3rd:

Mr. President: The ongoing tragedy in Vietnam demands action without delay. I believe that you should immediately assign to the Commander of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, Vice-Admiral George Steel, the mission of utilizing the fleet for the purpose of evacuating every refugee who wants to leave Vietnam.

Our facilities at Con Son Island off the Vietnamese coast, on Okinawa, at Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay in the Philippines, and American bases in Guam, Taiwan, and Thailand should be used for emergency refugee processing centers. The United States should immediately dispatch emergency military medical teams from Hawaii.

The whole operation can be carried out by the U.S. Navy and CINCPAC. My personal inquiries ascertain without question that the Seventh Fleet can perform the task of total evacuation of 2,000,000 refugees or more within seven

days. I am informed that the availability of emergency refugee centers and military medical teams is beyond any doubt. Furthermore, the Vietnamese navy has 90 blue-water ships and 2,000 smaller craft which also can be used for this mission.

Today my office has received reports from Saigon by telephone. These reports may be summarized as follows: "There is total chaos in Saigon, panic that cannot be described, chaos that borders on anarchy. People are committing suicide. This morning, over the loudspeakers and megaphones, the people of Saigon were advised to get on any kind of boat or sampan and get out to the South China Sea, where they will be picked up by American ships. In the countryside, civilians by the thousands are being slaughtered by the Communists while attempting to flee. Other thousands are floating helplessly on small craft and logs off the coast of Vietnam."

Mr. President, these are not soldiers of war I am talking about. These refugees are war's tragic victims, helpless in the face of the onslaught before them. In the name of God and humanity, Mr. President, we must act now.

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The above telegram was hand-delivered at the White House on  
(Continued on Page 8)



# **Appeals To President For Massive Evacuation**

**(Continued from page 1)**

Thursday night, April 3rd, and cabled to Mr. Ford in California. As of this writing, however (April 10th), there has been no response from the Chief Executive.

The stark Helms telegram reinforced urgent appeals sent the previous day (April 2nd) by the U.S. Catholic Conference. In identical letters to President Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Bishop James S. Rausch, General Secretary of the Conference, pledged the readiness of the Catholic Church "to expand

existing programs or to establish new ones" to help the South Vietnamese refugees.

"We are deeply concerned over the humanitarian aspects of the deteriorating situation in Southeast Asia," Bishop Rausch said. "We are hopeful that our government will seriously consider the advisability of providing a future life in the United States or other countries for those whose lives may be in danger by a Communist takeover in South Vietnam." (See additional reports on the S. Vietnamese crisis elsewhere in this issue.)