



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 485

4 April 1975

VIETNAM ORPHANS - FURTHER REPLIES FROM PREMIERS (2)

The New South Wales Premier, Mr Lewis, sent the following reply:

"My Government will accept children irrespective of their current state of health or whether they can be adopted immediately. As indicated over the last few days this government will accept responsibility for two thousand children and will give consideration should the need arise to receive more than this number. Children will receive medical and if necessary hospital accommodation and be accommodated when they arrive."

The Tasmanian Premier, Mr Neilson sent the following message:

"I refer to your message this morning in connection with the adoption of Vietnamese children. I note that the Vietnamese government is prepared to facilitate arrangements for the exit of orphan children. With regard to the lack of documentation I am prepared to accept this, but it will mean that some of the children will have to remain as child migrants until adoption is possible. The medical problem I accept in the emergency that this will be true and on humanitarian grounds am prepared to agree with the proposal that Tasmania should undertake to receive the children and, if not acceptable for adoption guarantee their accommodation and care. Numbers of people already approved and on the State's waiting list to adopt children have now indicated willingness to accept Vietnamese children and the number currently is 30 with more expected. My State authority, the Department of Social Welfare, will continue to keep day to day contact with the Australian Department of Labor and Immigration and will at the appropriate time supply information about procedures for reception, placement and ongoing care for the children. Tasmania is prepared to do more than its share and will cooperate in every way with the Australian Government."

CANBERRA, A.C.T.