



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No.496
15 April 1975

SECOND ORPHAN FLIGHT

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, said a chartered Qantas 707 would leave tomorrow morning to bring back to Australia a group of Vietnamese children whose departure from the Republic of Vietnam for adoption in Australia had been approved by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and for whom a sufficient number of approved adoptive parents were waiting in Australia.

Arrangements would be similar to those made for the first flight. RAAF C-130 (Hercules) aircraft would fly the children from Saigon to Bangkok where they would board the charter flight.

Dr W.A. Langsford Acting Deputy Director General of the Department of Health will be in charge of the party which will include Dr J. Forbes, Head of the Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital in Melbourne (where the children will be taken on arrival) and a group of about 25 medical and nursing personnel.

The medical personnel will fly on to Saigon on RAAF aircraft and escort the children throughout their flight back to Australia.

The Prime Minister said that this would be a smaller uplift than it had been possible to arrange for the first charter flight. It was expected that there would be about 77 children brought to Australia. This reflected, and emphasised, the fact that there were few children in Saigon waiting for adoption at this stage who fulfilled the requirements of the Saigon Government and the Australian State Governments.

The Qantas charter aircraft will carry about 12 tonnes of relief supplies for Vietnam.

The aircraft is expected to return to Melbourne at approximately 0630 on Friday 18 April.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.