

## 'Immense Tragedy'

# Ford's View of Fall of Da Nang

### Palm Springs

President Ford considers the fall of Da Nang, South Vietnam's second largest city, to be "an immense human tragedy," his press secretary said yesterday.

But White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen said: "It is the President's desire that this evacuation go forward."

Mr. Ford ordered Saturday that U.S. naval transports and contract vessels assist in evacuation of refugees from Da Nang and other coastal sea ports. But the city was overrun by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops early yesterday.

Nessen, saying he was reflecting the President's views, said the fall of Da Nang "has cruelly trapped many hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese refugees who tried until the last moment to escape the North Vietnamese army."

"It should be deeply disturbing to all civilized mankind," Nessen said.

Nessen answered newsmen's questions in this desert resort where Mr. Ford is vacationing.

He said Mr. Ford had been in touch with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger by phone yesterday morning and that he was in contact with other members of the National Security Council.

Nessen said that Kissinger is due in Palm Springs Thursday night or Friday to discuss events in Southeast Asia with the President.

Army Chief of Staff Frederick Weyand, who is conducting a factfinding mission in Indochina for the President, is also to arrive here on Friday or Saturday.

The President and Mrs. Ford flew here Saturday night after the President signed the \$24.8 billion tax cut bill in a nationally-broadcast address.

They plan to spend nine days in this sun-drenched resort in Southern California's Mojave Desert on a combination holiday and working vacation. Mr. Ford hopes to play golf several days and Mrs. Ford told newsmen Saturday night she hopes to do a lot of swimming while here.

The Fords are staying at the fashionable home of insurance executive Fred Wilson. They are paying \$100 a day rent to the Wilsons, who are old friends. The home has three swimming pools.

*Associated Press*