



Welcome Exiles, But Not All Exiles

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PRESIDENT FORD loves exiles — but not all exiles.

He will not hear a word against those who are coming here from South Vietnam. Some of the 130,000 are not really fit company for a respectable, conservative, Midwestern square — prostitutes, thieves, profiteers.

But he's holding high the lamp beside the "Golden Shore" for every last one of them.

Yet American exiles, those who fled to Canada and elsewhere, cannot be evacuated home. The war, which the President says is "over," is not over for them.

The President's voice grew deep and strong when he spoke of his compassion for those who fled Vietnam "to escape the possibility of death in their country under the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong."

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BUT HE HAD nothing to offer Americans who did the same thing years ago — some because of conscientious objection to the war, and some out of a simple desire not to die for General Thieu, or before him, Marshal Ky.

Some of the Vietnamese, particularly the upper class, were equally unwilling to shoulder arms for the leaders we dredged

up to give them the benefits of Western democracy. But their draft-evaders are welcome, our own are not.

The President, at his news conference, gave a copy-book demonstration of moral leadership. It could be argued that if he used that same moral power and suasion to win the country over to the side of our own exiles, he could do as much for them.

But that would be dangerous. That would take valor. For the right wing of his party is snarling and smoldering over America's first defeat.

Ronald Reagan, whose footsteps are ever near, would pounce on him. George Wallace would denounce him.

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THE RETURN of the natives would raise questions the President does not want to face. They would bring back with them the forbidden and haunting thought that the war, which the President is still defending, was a mistake.

They cannot come home. They cannot even come back to visit their families. We will admit South Vietnamese criminals, but Americans who dared to defy their government are ineligible.

The statue of Liberty, it seems, is an Oriental.