

## Ready for New Homes

By Kevin Leary

Eating, sleeping or gazing wide-eyed at their new surroundings, about 50 Vietnamese orphans waited at the Presidio Army base here yesterday for the final leg of their dramatic journey to new lives in America.

The children — aged 8 months to 8 years — all have adoptive parents throughout the country who have been anxiously waiting for the tiny refugees for months.

Officials of Friends of the Children of Vietnam, the Denver-based humanitarian organization that arranged the adoptions, said the chil-

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dren would all be on their way to their new homes by today.

Meanwhile, the children stayed in the makeshift nursery at the Presidio, a rapidly converted gymnasium-like reserve training building.

A dozen babies slept on mattresses laid out on the floor as women volunteers and nurses fussed about with the other babies or older children who sat quietly munching on orange slices,

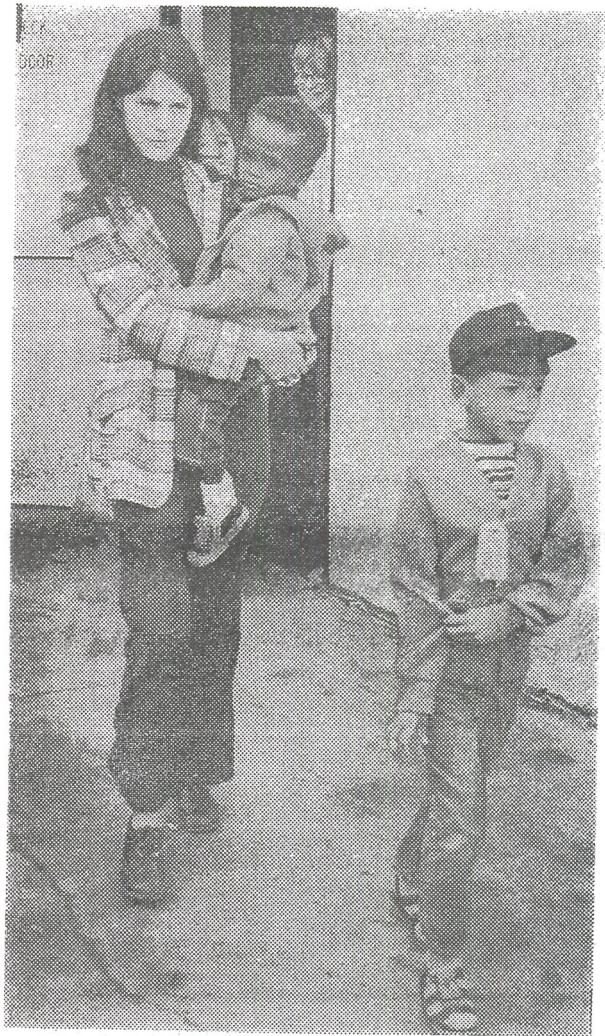
bananas, cereal and sweet rolls.

A few bolder children buzzed around the large room on tricycles, hauled pull toys and played catch with a basketball.

A shy, 8-year-old boy in a Snoopy tee-shirt told a reporter, through an interpreter, that he left four brothers behind him in Vietnam, that he did not know his new parents and that he wasn't able to sleep all night.

"But," said David, who has no last name, "It's good to live. America is a good place."

Then the reporters were hustled away by one of the many officials who walked around the large building trying to shield the children from the culture shock of a score of newsmen.



Two children left the Presidio yesterday with an escort to fly to their new families

Many of the children, perhaps most, were racially-mixed—obviously the children of American servicemen. Without exception they were beautiful.

Two of the orphans were hospitalized with minor ailments, and two others were taken to Letterman Army Hospital for examination, but on the whole they were very healthy kids.

Dr. Walter Miller, a pediatrician from the University of California Medical Center and a volunteer medic at the "nursery," said he was "impressed with how well nourished they are."

"Of course they're tired, they've just had a 48-hour trip from Vietnam," the doctor said. "But we haven't found anyone seriously ill."





**David is 8 and left 4 brothers behind**

"Our national organization has authorized us to provide nursing care, food, diapers, baby bottles and other supplies until the orphans are placed in their new homes," said Bob Howard, the local spokesman for the Red Cross.

Army spokesmen said they planned to retain the child care center at the Presidio, where they have a capacity to care for more than 800 children.

Dr. Miller said he and four other volunteer doctors on duty yesterday were "just sitting around waiting for anything that might come up."

One of the major things that might come up is that 2000 additional Vietnamese orphans may be brought to the United States during the next couple of days.

Many of the orphans are already adopted by American families and are waiting in Saigon for transportation to their new homes.

A group of 17 orphans arrived in Los Angeles last

night, most of them destined for Atlanta and homes in the south, and another group of 30 is due to arrive in San Francisco today.

Dr. Miller said "we are ready: for many more orphans, to arrive, if they do.

"Every hospital in town has mobilized its pediatrics

staff in case of such an influx," said the bearded, young physician.

And the Golden Gate Chapter of the American Red Cross was meeting yesterday to establish contingency plans.

As yesterday's early chaos at the army base slowed to a routine, U.S. immigration authorities processing the orphans discovered that at least six of those aboard the daring World Airways flight from Saigon were stowaways.

A top immigration official said the stowaways — two men, two women and two children — simply got aboard the plane "uninvited" during the last-minute confusion at the Saigon airport.

Later in the day, U.S. Senator Henry M. Jackson (Dem. Wash.), campaigning in San Francisco for the Democratic Presidential nomination, paid a 33-minute visit to the Presidio.





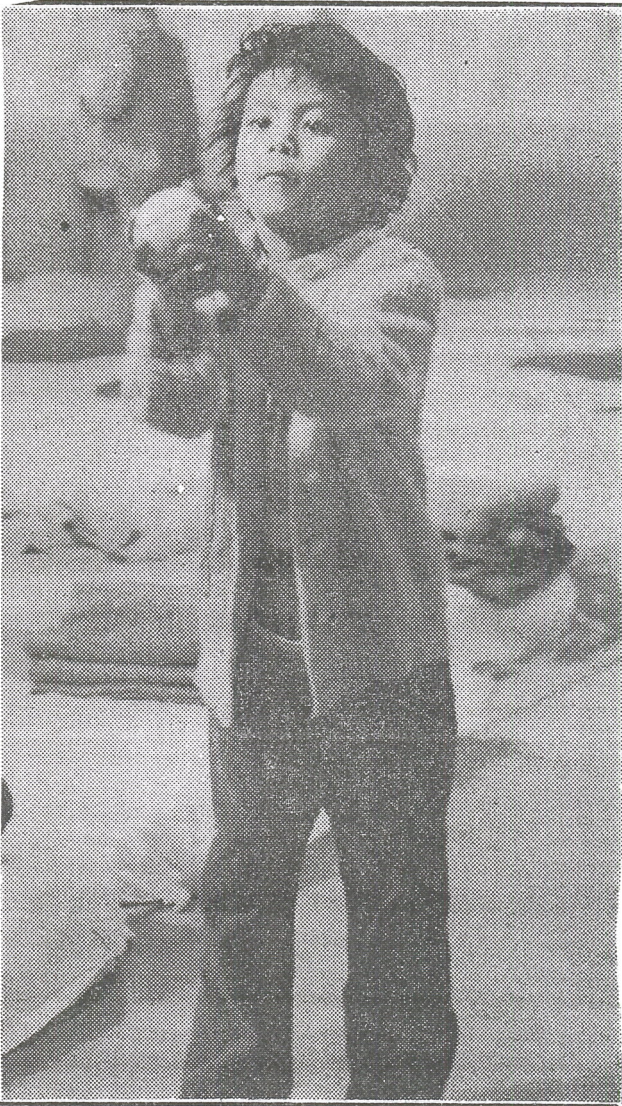
*By Peter Breinig*

While some children slept on pallets at the emergency Presidio care center, others snacked

**'But It's Good to Live . . . America Is a Good Place'**

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**A few of the  
children played ball**