

Pistol-Packing Millionaire

Airlift's Daly Ignores Rules to Help Vietnamese

By James Kloss
Chicago Daily News

Someone is going to think of making a movie about Edward J. Daly, probably with John Wayne or George C. Scott playing the pistol-packing, two-fisted president of World Airways.

Daly's daring, on-the-scene direction of rescue missions in South Vietnam this week would seem to require a Wayne, with his mashismodrenched, man-of-action Hollywood image.

But there may be more subtle facets to this unusual multimillionaire, a tough son of a Chicago fireman with a heart and checkbook of gold when it comes to helping kids in need.

Although one of the richest men in America, the relatively unknown airline executive made a rare but spectacular splash into the news by personally engineering the first airlift of 57 South Vietnamese orphans to the United States.

Daly, a bull of a man, also made an indelible impression on those who saw film of his effort to airlift refugees out of DaNang before that city fell to Communist forces.

Daly, 53, who was a semi-pro boxer at one time, and his crew members tried to beat back South Vietnamese soldiers who stormed past refugees in an attempt to get on the escape plane.

With a grenade-damaged wing, and soldiers hanging from the aircraft, the plane managed to take off. It was the last plane out of DaNang.

It also was an unauthorized flight. Daly is not one to let official niceties stop him, according to friends, associates and others who have followed his career.

He's that kind of a man, a very determined person," said Charles O. Finley, owner of the Oakland A's, and a friend of Daly, whose home and corporate headquarters are in the Oakland area.

Daly decided several weeks ago to leave his luxurious home in California and fly to Vietnam despite, or perhaps because of the deteriorating military situation.

His company, World Airways, had been flying cargo and personnel for the military since the beginning of American involvement in Vietnam.

Why did Daly, a man reputedly worth \$500 mil-

lions, fly to a volatile Vietnamese situation?

"In the past he's gone over there because I think he just got a charge out of it. But this time he was emotionally overwrought about the children there," said a friend in California.

At home, Daly treats 5,000 underprivileged kids to the



EDWARD J. DALY
... 'very determined'

circus every year. With each ticket comes \$2 for pocket money.

Daly has supported an asthma research hospital in Colorado, where children come from all over the nation for treatment.

When Daly was 15, his father, a retired fireman, died, leaving him to help support his mother, two sisters and two brothers.

He qualified to study chemical engineering at the University of Chicago, and started a trucking firm to help with the finances. After college, Daly joined the Ar-

my Air Corps and went to the Pacific Theater in World War II. During his hitch he learned about military air cargo operations.

After working his way up to a vice president's post with a freight forwarding company in Chicago, Daly, then 27, put together some partners and \$50,000 and bought World Airways. The two-year-old company was \$250,000 in debt, and had two old, leased airplanes and 32 employees.

Today the firm is one of the larger "supplemental" airlines, with more than 17 jet aircraft, including jumbo jets and 1,404 employees. It reported revenues of \$112.2 million last year, mostly from charter passenger service, although World Airways is still the second largest military airlift command contractor.

Their California home of Daly and his wife, Jane, has a swimming pool, a gymnasium, tennis courts and a butler. They have a married daughter.

Daly owns a chalet on Lake Tahoe and an opulent floating home on a barge on the Thames outside London.

He is outgoing and gregarious, "a good party guy who will gather up a plane-load of friends and fly off to Europe for a weekend," one friend said.

4-5-75
W. Post