

For Childless Couple, Three Instant Sons

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DENVER, April 4—Larry and Linda Moritz got the son they long wanted. Dave and Bobbie Johnson became instant parents of three boys after six years of childless marriage. Tony and Denise Ingram found a new playmate for their two previously adopted Vietnamese girls.

In a touching, quietly joyous scene, the three American couples were finally united here today with the Vietnamese orphans they had been awaiting for weeks.

More than 100 persons—parents, friends, relatives, volunteer case workers and translators—showed up at 1 A.M. in the otherwise deserted Denver Airport to meet 17 orphans, part of the group flown to the United States from besieged Saigon.

Twelve of the children, many of them carrying balloons, toy telephones and stuffed animals, were met by local families who put them up temporarily before sending them along to their new parents elsewhere.

But for Tom Moritz, 4 years old, Camille Ingrams, and for three young brothers, Jeremy, Peter and Matthew Johnson, the 10,000-mile journey ended when their new parents embraced them as they stepped off the commercial Western Airlines flight from San Francisco.

Greeting by Children

The moment was particularly moving because of the backgrounds of the three adoptive families and because Denver is the home of Friends of Children of Vietnam, the organization largely responsible for bringing these orphans to this country.

Dozens of toddlers brought by their parents played with the new arrivals on the airport floor and gave them presents. Two previously adopted Vietnamese boys, identically dressed in mini-football jerseys, plunked themselves down in the group.

Linda Moritz of Loveland, Colo. fought back tears as



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Linda Moritz embracing the Vietnamese boy she and her husband are calling Tom. He was one of 17 children who arrived in Denver yesterday and are being adopted.

she stroked the hair of the wide-eyed, silent Vietnamese boy she and her husband have named Tom.

"I was afraid I wouldn't recognize him because all we had seen were pictures with his head shaved," she said. "But isn't he beautiful? Oh, sweetheart," she crooned, "Mama loves you. Mama won't hurt you."

The Moritzes' two daughters, aged 4 and 7 reached

up to clutch the boy's hand and to offer him a brown and white teddy bear. A young Air Force veteran whispered in Vietnamese, "You're safe, don't cry."

Tom immediately buried his head in his new mother's shoulder and wept.

"Here," Mrs. Moritz said, handing the boy gently to her husband, who manages a service station in Fort Collins, "Here's your son."

Like Mr. and Mrs. Moritz, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson of Berthoud, Colo., had arranged their adoption after finding it impossible to adopt an American child also like the Moritzes they became excited about the prospect of adopting a Vietnamese child when they visited some of the families in the Loveland-Berthoud area who over the years have taken in 11 of the homeless young war victims.

But for the Johnsons the arrival of the three Vietnamese brothers, aged 5, 6 and 7, whom they have adopted, meant the start of a "total change in life-style," as Mrs. Johnson put it. The Johnsons have been unable to have their own natural children.

Sign Language at Start

"We've gone through a lot of soul-searching," Mrs. Johnson, a teacher, explained. "But we're probably better mentally prepared than most parents who go through a nine-month pregnancy. It's going to take a lot of patience and a lot of love. We're going to use a lot of sign language. And we've learned a few words of Vietnamese—like the word for potty."

Mr. and Mrs. Ingram made the four-hour drive from their home in Casper, Wyo., just in time to meet Camille, a part-black orphan who will be the third Vietnamese girl in their family. They also have two young sons of their own.

The Ingrams know better than most what problems they'll encounter with their new daughter. It took five weeks before their first adopted Vietnamese would let her new father touch her. Their second cried "for two weeks solid at night," Mr. Ingram said. "But now they fit right in."

Mr. Ingram, the superintendent of a trailer home company, added that he had been concerned when his wife first "hit me with the idea" of a racially mixed child. "But it makes no difference," he said, hugging Camille. "What you're doing is saving a life."

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