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**Europe Wonders if Evacuation
Is Best for Vietnamese Children**

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LONDON, April 6—Europeans are reacting to the tragedy in Vietnam with horror and sympathy but are divided on the humanitarian value of flying children out of the country.

With scenes of refugees dominating television screens and the war once again front-page news all over Europe, several governments have announced programs to send medicine and food. But there is a general reluctance by governments to sponsor airlifts of children, as backed by the United States.

In announcing its relief program, for example, the British Government emphasized its belief that it would be better for the children to remain in Vietnam than moved to some alien environment. Judith Hart, minister for overseas development, said "one has to consider what is best for the children."

"In Southeast Asia, there is an extended family system," she said, "If such a child could go back to a village to be looked after by members of its family, that is obviously best for it."

Although a privately financed effort to bring more than 100 Vietnamese children here is under way, experts in London and elsewhere in Europe have been warning about the dangers of impulsive sympathy. The Rev. Gordon Barritt of the National Children's Home, Britain's largest adoption agency, said "there is a terrible danger of panic."

"Bringing the children away from Vietnam at such speed is risky," he added. "In simply sending planes and picking them up you may be separating families needlessly. You may take the wrong children."

Despite the doubts expressed, the plight of the children and the refugees has touched many in Europe deeply. Several said they could no longer watch the agonies portrayed on the television screens.

Officials Saying Little

In broader terms, the governments of Europe have taken a calm view of the military collapse of South Vietnam. While editorials argue about the credibility of the United States in the years ahead, officials are saying very little except that they are not worried about American commitments to Europe.

A French Government spokesman, for example, said the collapse was certainly not the end of the world or of America's position in the world.

Willy Brandt, West Germany's former Chancellor, returned from a trip to the United States and said that the American commitment to the North Atlantic alliance was "unshaken" but that the possible isolationist reaction in the United States should not be underestimated.

Helmut Schmidt, Mr. Brandt's successor as Chancellor, said last week that people criticized Washington when its forces were in Indochina. Now, he said, people were beginning to criticize the United States because it has withdrawn militarily from Southeast Asia.

"In both cases, I am extremely reserved with criticism of the United States," he added.

The press in Europe has been raising questions about America's role in the world and about whether Washington would become more inward-looking and lose interest in Europe and the Middle East. The Economist, the weekly magazine in London, ran a cover story this week entitled "The Fading of America," and Corriere della Sera of Milan, Italy's biggest newspaper, headlined its comment: "After Kissinger, Isolationism."

'Burned American Fingers'

"The majority of Americans now seem to be in a mood to ask what they stand to gain by helping to defend any particular country, and then to set that gain against the cost of providing the help," said the Economist. "The pulling back of burned American fingers is not something that affects only Southeast Asia."

Meanwhile, the left and right in Europe are drawing lessons, with the left applauding the setbacks for the Saigon Government, and the right stressing the rush of the refugees from Communism. Some of those on the right, moreover, are agonizing over what they regard as the failure of world governments to denounce the North Vietnamese.

"Naturally, there is general concern at the appalling scale of human suffering involved," wrote Peregrine Worsthorpe, a right-wing columnist in The Sunday Telegraph today. "But what is surprising, and worrying, is the lack of any accompanying sense of indignation or moral outrage aimed at those who are causing it; the power-hungry rulers of North Vietnam, ruthlessly bent on conquest and domination over the whole of Indochina."