

Humanitarian, Say Some;

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By SHAWN G. KENNEDY

As the children arrived by the planeload from South Vietnam to face new homes, new families and, in many cases, new names in the United States, interviews in the metropolitan area indicated that opinion on the airlift was as divided among the public as it was among the experts.

To some the airlift was a generous humanitarian effort; to others it was political propaganda; and still others wondered why some American children go uncared for while the switchboards of the adoption agencies have been jammed with requests for the Vietnamese foundlings.

"Saving the kids is the main thing," said David Rosenberg, a Manhattan lawyer, as he strode through Rockefeller Center while on his lunch hour. "But I'm not sure that the people who are adopting these kids realize what they are in for.

"Adoption is not easy under any circumstances, and these children are going to need a lot of time and attention. I think we owe them something."

Mr. Rosenberg was not the only one who felt that the United States had a continued responsibility to the people of South Vietnam and that the airlift of the children was part of that

responsibility.

In Bloomfield, Conn., Patricia Quinn, who has three children and is active in Catholic Charities, said of the adoption program:

"We haven't been able to lend any other suitable support to the Vietnamese, and we are filling the needs of America, where we don't have adoptable children."*

Mrs. Quinn said she thought that American couples have trouble adopting because most of them want very young children and the liberalization of abortion laws has made the adoption of foreign children more common.

In Hartford, Edwina L. Clohosey, the telephone receptionist at the Connecticut Senate, also cited the tight adoption situation as a good reason for the airlift.

Part of Responsibility

"I love children and I think it's wonderful that people want to give these children a home," she added. "After all the killing I don't see why they shouldn't."

Even people who opposed the war in Vietnam and are still wary of any United States intervention said they approved of the babylift.

"I opposed the war, but I think the airlift is a good thing," said Sylvester Cole, a student from the Bronx. "If we sent money it would be wasted and would probably go to

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* SEE WYPOST 9 APR 75
RON SHAFER

Easing Guilt, Say Others

other things—not the children."

"I think as much as I oppose the war in Vietnam, we should set aside our views and concentrate on the humanity of it all," said Joel M. Ellis, Fort Lee, N. J., resident said. "We should try to get together with organizations or individuals to do what we can."

But everyone did not agree that the children should be shuttled to the United States for new homes.

Joe Biscardi, a Manhattan carpenter, said he felt that the children were being used as political propaganda.

'With Their Own People'

"Look at these headlines," Mr. Biscardi said, as slapped the back of his hand against a newspaper. "You don't see any headlines shouting about the mass starvation in this country or the children here who need homes. Why doesn't someone airlift children from Appalachia or Bedford-Stuyvesant to clean, middle-class homes? Those children belong in their own country with their own people and culture."

Tina Jackson, who lives in a comfortable section of Hartsdale, also expressed contempt for the lack of interest in and compassion for American children in the same position.

"I was wondering why this compassion for children so far away

while there are those who need a little bit of love and attention right here at home," she said. "Biafra was a problem last year but I never heard anyone expressing concern about the starving kids they saw there.

John Stiner of New Haven, who works as a research analyst for the Connecticut Elections Commission, expressed doubt about the motives of the people promoting the adoptions.

"This must indicate a lot of guilt in our society," he said. "It is a repercussion of our involvement there over a decade."

Even some of those who said they supported the airlift and were happy to see the children in new homes expressed concern for their future in this country.

Phyllis Cohen of Hicksville, L. I., who has two children age 15 and 13, said:

"I think it's a two-fold problem. The first has been solved by bringing the children here. I'm glad to see the children here.

"The other half of the problem, of course, is what will happen when the children grow up," she continued. "If their foster parents remain part of the organization that sponsored bringing them here then there won't be a complete elimination of their own culture and they won't be alienated from the society in which they are forced to live."