

SEChronicle

# Viet Orphan Dies Here of Infection

APR 12 1975

A massive ear infection took the life of a two-month-old Vietnamese orphan girl at Mt. Zion Hospital here yesterday.

Doctors at the Presidio, where the medical screening of the children being flown from Saigon is based, said the child, whose only known name was Dorothea, had been taken to Mt. Zion shortly after her arrival here.

It was the first death reported among the more than 1000 orphans who have arrived in the Bay Area since the airlift began.

Dr. Alex Stalcup, one of the chief organizers of the volunteer medical effort, said the little girl was among those aboard the c-5 Galaxie that crashed after takeoff from Tan Son Nhut airport in Vietnam April 4.

The infection, however, had already started before then, he said.

"The delay prevented much needed medical treatment," he said. The infection had spread into bone tissue, and emergency surgery at Mt. Zion was too late.

Stalcup said infection is one of the most dangerous enemies of the orphan airlift. In particular, he said, it is "a miracle" more children have not been lost due to the huge numbers of children aboard some of the aircraft and the danger of cross-infection.

More than 150 children have been hospitalized at Bay Area facilities during the airlift, "which is just about capacity," Stalcup said.

Stalcup and other doctors at the Presidio have asked that no more flights be brought to the Bay Area for several days "while we let our volunteers and the hospitals rest a bit."

The most critically needed change, he added, "is too have fewer kids on these planes. It is unmanageable to have a couple hundred sick kids all arrive at the same time. It is not healthy on the plane, and it strains our resources here."