

**The original documents are located in Box 3, folder “The War Cradle” - Draft, Undated” of the Shirley Peck Barnes Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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The generous couples who became new parents are to be admired and emulated. There is much to consider in raising a child in today's society. Having one's own child is merely complying with nature. Taking some one else's child has to be a "walk with God."

*Approved* The ~~seer~~ sign-in sheets containing the hundreds of Continental volunteer's signatures ~~are preserved~~ *have been* in an honored place, next to a bible. It was my intent to include ~~them all~~ *the rest* at the end of this book, but in the interest of those who expressed the desire to keep ~~it~~ a private matter, I honored their wishes. I think ~~it was always the intent of the agency involved to formally thank all those that made a contribution to Operation Babylift, but I do not think the opportunity availed itself.~~ I would like to think this book is a tribute to each and every one of ~~you.~~ *who participated page 2* *small in* *O.B.*

*No,* Many of the individuals interviewed for this book told me their stories, then requested anonymity. It is as if they have imposed some kind of a silence about "Operation Babylift" upon themselves. How I wished they allowed me to reveal their name ~~for~~ *for* in the historical record.

Most of the Vietnam Veterans mentioned in the chapters are making it somehow. I have seen their eyes get misty when they talk about the war. It is apparent that they cherish the camaraderie they experienced in that far away place. Some never found it again, not even in marriage.

~~If you have the feeling that you haven't done anything worthwhile lately, think again!~~

Women generally prefer not to draw attention to their age. But, <sup>at</sup> the <sup>TOL40</sup> Doolittle Raider's Reunion at the Air Force Academy, I sat next to a Coors Vice-president who recognized a discrepancy and who was curious about my involvement with a group of young World War II buffs. Categorically, I had to admit that I was the senior member of the ALH (in years, that is), then proceeded to relate how I reluctantly got involved by filling in at one of the parades. Further, I confided that my first event left me overwhelmed with emotion; the result of countless salutes and blown kisses from the sidewalk, presumably from veterans who related to a Red Cross girl somewhere, sometime, some place far away.

By doing what we do, Living History, it is almost impossible to escape the emotion, nor is there a measurement of the impact we have on others by resurfacing dormant memories.

To appreciate the feelings of nostalgia we evoke, you would have had to have been in the ballroom the night of the Raider's reunion. Robin and Robert Clybourne drifted on to an empty dancefloor as the academy band, dressed in khaki-clad uniforms, dominated the room with Glenn Miller's <sup>musical</sup> ~~theme~~ <sup>several</sup> ~~song~~. Robin appeared in a grey striped forties suit, embellished with a large brim hat, reminiscent of something Katharine Hepburn would have worn. Robert, <sup>in his</sup> could have been a Raider of long ago, ~~in his Air Corps Officers uniform~~. <sup>They</sup> ~~had the attention of everyone in the room~~, it was as if no one wanted to break the magic. For the many onlookers who lived the war years, it was another time, another place; ~~they were teary-eyed with memories of themselves.~~

*Any Air Corps attire,*

*all eyes were on them, many with tears,*

liberals, who had long been vocal in the antiwar movement, were also unenthusiastic about the Vietnamese refugees. Senator George McGovern declared: " I think the Vietnamese are better off in Vietnam, including the orphans." He was joined by countless other individuals and agencies who regarded the airlift the same way.\*

*Newsweek - 5/12/75*  
*Following the war's end*

*A man in*

For the next couple of years after the end of the war, lawsuits against FCVN, FFAC, and other adoption agencies who functioned in Vietnam, hit the courts. Civil liberties groups demanded the return of these children to their natural parents, even though they had previously signed documents relinquishing them. Some of the children who were awarded back to their natural parents neither recognized, or wanted to return to them. They were taken from judges chambers screaming for their American mothers. Hearts were broken on both sides of the courtrooms, until the matter settled to dust with the passing of time; the children grew in age and the issue resolved itself.

None of the adoption agencies involved in the lawsuits were ever compensated by either the natural parents, or the civil liberties groups, for their role in the rescue, care or the expenses of the child. Litigation was also costly.

FFAC disbanded shortly after Operation Babylift ended. FCVN, as a redesignated agency, continues to this day as a Denver adoption service, re-locating unwanted, abandoned children from the corners of the world.



Continental went on to become one of the more success-oriented facilities in the area. An innovative program was developed that produced phenomenal results in returning psychiatric/geriatric clients back to the community despite unsurmountable odds. Research teams were impressed to the point they declared the program important enough to be documented. Then, the report was filed in the bottom drawer of a state agency. It is not uncommon for the bureaucracy to criticize something as being too far ahead of the times, since it finds change difficult, if not impossible, within itself, <sup>and</sup> therefore, as an agency unable to adapt and grasp new ideas. ~~and unable to grasp new ideas~~

*even when the outcome points is unarguable*

Several of the other agencies that functioned in Vietnam have also continued to place foreign children for adoption as well as to provide support for Vietnamese refugees. There is a need to document and analyze the relationship between those agencies and the government and to explore what worked and what didn't work in Vietnam. An attempt to research the millions of papers on file that exist in Washington will be an ambitious effort within itself.

Continental Care Center, the building that made a home for 600 orphans in Denver, opened in June 1975 as scheduled, despite last minute efforts by health officials to padlock it for "contamination." The accusation disintegrated when results of multi-culture tests proved negative. It was an indication of things to come, when the stigma of "Operation Babylift" emerged time and time again during surveys and administrative conflicts.

Continental went on to become one of the more innovative success-oriented facilities in the area. It produced phenomenal results in returning clients back to the community despite unsurmountable odds. New roles in healthcare were introduced that attracted the attention of research teams, who declared the program important enough to be documented. Then, the report was filed in the bottom drawer of a state agency. It is not uncommon to be criticized for being "ahead of the times." The bureaucracy finds change hard, if not impossible, within itself and conversely is usually "too far behind the times."

"Taking on city hall" remains to be one of those "inequities"

*The reaction from Peter was also mixed and ranged from "oh yes, to yikes."*

*created least favorable*

*and many other programs we developed that*

*Innovative Program*

*In the beginning to comply as far as*

*Smile*

*to grasp new ideas*

*Ray Morris - Blank - City Park - Denver*

of a free society. It just isn't done singlehandedly. ....  
 unless you are a John Wayne...or an Ed Daly.

During the years following <sup>operation</sup> Babylift, many of the orphans  
 and their new parents visited the center. Perhaps it was an  
 attempt to retrace the past, since Continental represents the  
 first memory of America for many of them. It is in all of us...  
 to go back and look for the remains of what is gone. It's a  
 warm place.....that "going home" again.

Each spring, along about April, one of the physicians who  
<sup>duty</sup> was involved in <sup>at Continental</sup> "Babylift" <sup>and family</sup> would appear unannounced. Engulfed  
 in private thoughts, he would saunter the halls of the second  
 floor and then leave just as inconspicuously. Doctors have  
 emotions too.

Somebody scratched my name in the sidewalk. I am pleased  
 it is still there.

The building has since changed names and ownership several  
 times. Efforts to get a commemorative plaque on its cornerstone  
 have not been successful. I don't understand the indifference.  
 Humanity was served twice here in the same century. The site  
 possesses great Denver history.

Discouraged with the system, <sup>the pitiful</sup> and the haggling with 45,000  
 regulations, I left Continental in November 1977. I should  
 have taken a much-needed vacation instead.

From time to time the lives of the orphans and refugees  
 continued to draw interest. Many have achieved outstanding  
 recognition and have mastered complicated subjects. Several  
 have graduated from military academies with ~~honors~~. A national



spelling bee champion was a refugee who, until a few years ago, could speak no English. Tim Buchanan, the first adoptee who arrived in Denver in 1968, graduated from high school and went on with his life as an "average American boy."

There were some who were not as lucky. Many never adapted to their new environment and continued to be psychologically unretrievable victims of war <sup>to this day</sup> ~~and remain~~ <sup>permanent</sup> as clients in the social service system. Some committed suicide.

Even though many Amerasian children were brought to America under <sup>Operation</sup> Babylift, many more remained in the country of their birth, destined to live out their lives in poverty.

Occasionally the ~~Amerasian~~ issue would resurface in the media to tug at the hearts of Americans who left children there. In a land that considers racial purity imperative, the mixed blood children would be treated with discrimination and destined for a lifetime of half-wondering <sup>why +</sup> who they are, ~~and why they are~~ <sup>here</sup> here. They are the innocent victims of the whole tragedy of Vietnam. There is no foreseeable change in their future.

Congress eventually passed legislation allowing Amerasian children to enter the United States under the sponsorship of their natural fathers. Too few benefitted from the law and their reunions were both awkward and heartbreaking. Hurried or inept explanations were made to American families who were not aware of their existence.



*Those unclaimed children*

The Amerasian children not reclaimed must spend a lifetime wondering who their fathers were. They have only to look into a reflection to be reminded of the drama they are living.

Most Vietnamese refugees made the transition into American life and heads no longer turn with curiosity. We are, after all, the melting pot of the world; they are just one of the crowd. Yet, one can't help but <sup>deliberate</sup> ponder if they <sup>might</sup> must feel a sense of loss or displacement in a country so geographically different than the one of their <sup>origin</sup> destiny. There is a longing for <sup>roots</sup> home in all of us.

To date, a multitude of subjects regarding Vietnam still appear in the papers, though they are now on a lesser page. Agent orange surfaces, the never-ending quest for the MIA's and the occasional family reunion is seen in a tearful picture. It's all there to remind us there was a war.

~~As recently there are some~~  
 You occasionally read of veterans returning . Most recently, in a humanitarian effort to curtail further tragedy, some veterans returned to clear a mine field they had placed years earlier. There is some healing.

Lockheed Aircraft Corporation was sued for their part in the C5A Galaxy crash, in which 172 orphans and escorts perished. The settlements dipped into millions and took eleven years to clear the courts.

Eighteen years after the end of the war, Vietnam is not much better off. A third of the children in Ho Chi Minh City can't afford to go to school. City resources are being severely strained by an alarming population explosion of 70,000 more mouths to feed each year. The villages and hamlets are not much better.

Poverty, polio, tuberculosis and a multitude of disease continue to ~~run rampant in~~ <sup>ravage</sup> Vietnam. The Communists do not seem to have the great plan for a better country. The presence of Americans and even the cruel war may have been the best of times after all.

As for the real heroes in the saga of "Operation Babylift," those tens of thousands of volunteers, whether in Denver, San Francisco, Boston or hometown USA, all is quiet.

The deed lives on.

Those in the field, in Vietnam, who gathered up the human discards and transported them to America, began what was necessary. But it was not all that was required, there was indeed much, much more. Individuals around the world gave their time, their money and of themselves. Then, quietly and without fanfare, they returned to the lives they enjoyed before the moment in history.

The generous couples who became new parents are ~~heroes too.~~ <sup>to be admired & emulated</sup>

There is much to consider in raising a child in today's society.

Having one's own child is ~~considered a walk~~ <sup>mostly complex</sup> with nature. Taking some one else's child has to be a "walk with God."

*John* Sign-in sheets, containing the names of hundreds of <sup>Contented</sup> ~~volunteers~~ <sup>next to a bible</sup> has been preserved in a very honored place. Many of the individuals interviewed for this book told me their stories, then requested anonymity. How I wished they allowed me to <sup>reveal</sup> place their name in the historical record. Most of the Vietnam Veterans mentioned in the chapters are making it somehow. *I've seen* Their eyes get misty when they talk about the war. <sup>It's incredibly</sup> ~~It is obvious~~ <sup>apparent</sup> that they cherish the camaraderie they experienced in that far away place. Some never found it again, not even in marriage. <sup>Many</sup> ~~Some of the~~ civilian volunteers <sup>never returned to a</sup> ~~never found~~ their lives <sup>normal</sup> again either. *normalcy in their lives*

*It is as if they have forgotten even kind of a picture about people upon themselves*

5 Cherrie Clark went to India to open "The Mission of Hope," and dedicated herself to sheltering unwanted children of that country.

2 Ross Meador's search for the meaning of it all took on a new challenge as he graduated from law school in Berkley and is currently with an international law firm in Korea.

4 Dr. Ted Gleichman, plagued with health problems, continued his medical practice until 1988, when he passed away. His last wishes reflected his concern for humanity; he donated his body to a medical school.

1 Ed Daly of World Airways also departed after a lingering illness. His pilots Healy and Keating remained with the airline industry in California and affirm, "It's too bad you never met him....he was one of a kind!"





Nor did Daly's generosity to aid the orphans cease after Babylift. He frequently provided airline passes to other orphans and families in transit.

Mike LeClaire, the marine who found a <sup>different window to</sup> ~~new awareness in~~ human suffering in Vietnam, is with a Denver television network.

Doctors Ted Ning and Richard Flanagan are in private practice in the <sup>Denver</sup> ~~Mile High City~~ and ~~have stayed close to their~~ <sup>operations</sup> ~~memories of Babylift,~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~and continue their involvement in easing~~ the suffering of the less fortunate.

Esther Hahn and Minnie Smith are both "retired," if <sup>you can believe</sup> there is such a term for those dedicated to giving to others.

As for myself, I continued as a healthcare administrator for several more years, at <sup>a large</sup> ~~another~~ facility, and found <sup>nothing changed.</sup> ~~it just~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~as frustrating to implement change in a system severely lacking~~ in creativity and progress. <sup>and those all guided heartless.</sup> Every good fighter knows when to lay down his gloves.

I looked for another challenge and found it after meeting Dr. Clifford Bennett and his <sup>brave</sup> ~~courageous~~ wife, Pauline. <sup>They</sup> convinced me that "Operation Babylift" needed to be told and that <sup>page</sup> ~~rather than a lot of logistics,~~ <sup>at personal stay</sup> ~~the human side would be~~ a greater contribution. <sup>than Page of Logistics.</sup> I have taken a shot at a beginning. Rosemary Taylor, Ross Meador, Father Oliver and those who served in the field have their own stories, but the pain may run deep. I don't know if they can ever share those sorrows with anyone but God.



The other side ~~of the issue~~ <sup>story</sup> needs a voice also. How the Vietnamese people themselves viewed Operation Babylift and <sup>what</sup> their concerns <sup>were</sup> for the loss of thousands of children needs to be documented. <sup>revealed</sup>

<sup>get the Vietnamese part</sup> In an attempt to put the other side on record, <sup>in 1984</sup> I applied for <sup>entrance into Vietnam</sup> and received preliminary approval from Hanoi. <sup>at OISA</sup> Ross Meador, Stewart Jacoby, Mike LeClair and my son Rob were all prepared to accompany me back into the devastated country. <sup>What were all brought down to the US +</sup> Within the same time frame several major television networks submitted requests to film a documentary depicting "ten years after the war."

Competing with the <sup>big</sup> corporate structure was "no contest" and my <sup>humble</sup> request was placed on the bottom of the pile. It was dead in the water.

I did, however, get to meet Tran Trong Khanh, Press Secretary to the Permanent Mission of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the United Nations. It was a meeting filled with intrigue as well as an exchange of concerns.

A three hour chat, conducted beneath a dominating picture of Ho Chi Minh and the NVA flag, demonstrated another characteristic of a free society. It could only happen in America. Our <sup>discussion</sup> <sup>with Khanh</sup> <sup>revealed</sup> that the new government of Vietnam viewed "Operation Babylift" as a humanitarian gesture. Further consensus was, that without a doubt, it saved many lives.

*Made a copy of the transcript*

I came away from the meeting with the distinct impression that the the new Vietnamese Government was somewhat appreciative it happened, even though they did not have the veracity to publicly state as much. But for those who know the Vietnamese character or motive, they are very much a fiercely independent people, therefore, without comment.

I didn't know I could like a Communist since I had never met one before. But I liked Khanh.

At the conclusion of our meeting, we retraced my <sup>earlier</sup> clandestine entrance through locked peephole doors, clicking machines and elevators to different levels. It was pretty heady <sup>stuff</sup>.

Khanh carried my suitcase to the deserted street below and placed me safely into a cab. But not before kissing me on the cheek and thanking me for coming. <sup>I was impressed by his</sup>

We exchanged notes and <sup>perhaps in white</sup> calls and some of the <sup>conversations</sup> ~~were~~ <sup>included</sup> regarding ways to resolve the MIA issue. His country, too, had many unaccounted lost men. I relayed the substance of our discussion to the White House along with some <sup>man on the street</sup> constructive suggestions and received a stock file response. "It was being handled effectively." The MIA issue still remains unresolved.

The mixed reviews regarding the <sup>return to Vietnam</sup> documentaries was perceived as a disappointment by Khanh. I wished they had let me go instead. <sup>I think the ~~documentaries~~ coming together on the Chudam</sup> "Operation Babylift" would have been a better focus and may have <sup>promoted some healing</sup> provided a more productive tool for understanding.

Sometimes simple solutions, by ordinary people, accomplish more than all the strategy the big boys can conjure. <sup>as slight of</sup>

*hand, nothing up the sleeve.*

My "almost" getting into Vietnam (before the crowd) was written off as one of those things I missed in life. I have been known to have had a few along the way. *but I will go on record to say I was never without the desire to meet the challenges.*

*11 conclusion*

To date several thousand books have been written about the Vietnam War and there must be as many more on typewriters, somewhere. They are all needed to document this *part of* era in our history, for the story is not yet complete.

As for "Operation Babylift," ~~do not look for this book to be a balanced account of the history of the Vietnam War. For those who want a more scholarly piece, you must look elsewhere.~~ I have ~~only~~ attempted to open the door on a subject that to date has had minimal exposure...only a paragraph here, a sentence there in the history books. It is hardly enough to have the lasting impact it deserves. What happened to the children of Vietnam will be forgotten unless the injustice is reverberated. *and its lesson learned.* It may be too late already. *History usually repeats itself* What we are witnessing in the abandonment, destruction and starvation of children in many parts of the world today indicates that the job of rescuing the young is far from over. It may never be over. We must remain alert for the cries and wimpers.

At this very moment many international agencies are in *general* those war-ravaged countries trying to maintain *them* those precious lives within their own environment. *of you* Those children must be *treas* treasured, like a gem....protected for safe keeping....until the bigger kids have settled their squabbles and life becomes tolerable again.



*Time*  
The wealth of a country are its children. They are its  
very future, a new garden just sprouting. To stomp on the new  
growth, or send them away forever is within itself an act  
of destruction. We have been good at that for centuries, but *It must*  
*be realized that* the future we are destroying is our own.

The war in Vietnam, the war we couldn't win has become  
the war we can't forget. The scars of the people of this nation  
are not yet healed from this era in our history. Witness to  
this is the outpouring of grief at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial  
in Washington, D.C. The names inscribed on the wall represent  
the lost ~~#~~ tomorrows that will never come. The Veteran's  
have their place to mourn. I wish there could be a memorial for  
the children too.

There is a greater lesson we can learn here...

"With the birth of each child comes the message that God  
has not yet tired of man...." Rabindranath Tagore.

Herein lies a new hope. Our own.

#####

In memory of the lost children of Vientam, please make a small  
contribution to an international children's fund. *to save the*  
*children of today.*

-The author



(A)  
 on a national level

Not all Americans were receptive or enthused with the influx of Vietnamese to the United States. Groups of residents in communities around the country gathered to complain about the refugees. A Gallup pole revealed that an astonishing 54% of Americans thought that the <sup>dispossessed</sup> ~~dispossessed~~ should be resettled--- somewhere else. There was a predominant fear that the new arrivals would quickly join the welfare rolls and compete with out-of-work Americans for scarce jobs. Congressional liberals, who had long <sup>been</sup> vocal in the antiwar movement, were unenthusiastic about the Vietnamese refugees.\* Sen. George McGovern declared: "I think the Vietnamese are better off in Vietnam, including the orphans." *He was joined by countless other individuals & agencies who regarded the airlift the same way -*

The American soldiers called it everything from Dodge City to Dogpatch. It became a garrison town, overflowing with refugees, whores, pimps, blackmarketeers and armed soldiers. Military Police patrolling the city were charged with keeping the Americans out of serious trouble. The center of the Buddhist uprising occurred at both Danang and Hue with more plot, revolts, riots and demonstrations than any other city in Vietnam.

*After the museum left in 1973, the South Vietnam Army occupied the area.*

All this had changed now and it was being abandoned to the Viet Cong. There was an incredible turn of events ~~and Danang~~ and the populace was fleeing the city. There was no effort <sup>to make a stand</sup> for its defense.

The few <sup>men</sup> volunteer and government agencies that were still in Danang made immediate plans for evacuation. CARE had an emergency program to feed the refugees with 30,000 bags of rice in a warehouse. But chaos overtook the city so quickly that the relief workers couldn't get their program started and had to abandon it. Albert Francis, the U.S. Consul General sent out his 80 man staff on a special flight along with other Americans and Europeans.

Before it appeared that Danang itself was threatened the U.S. embassy had planned an airlift of refugees <sup>to 40,000 + depends on</sup> that ~~called~~ for about a quarter of a million people using jumbo jets. It didn't happen.

World Airways came onto the scene on ~~Thursday~~ to evacuate Vietnamese employees and other U.S. agencies who were to have priority on the flights but most were blocked by military police at the air base gates. Instead, crudely forged copies of the priority passes were being black marketed at high prices on the streets.

*The situation was worsening. A day before the World Airways flights began - Albert Francis the Consul General proposed to Col James McCurdy, the Air Attache, that U.S. Military Helicopters be assigned to the evacuation of his people, the report to 7<sup>th</sup> A.F. Hu in Hue was turned down.*

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*Shutty*  
~~Days~~ before it appeared that Danang itself was threatened, the U.S. embassy had planned an airlift of refugees, beginning with 40,000 on chartered flights and expanding to a quarter of a million people using jumbo jets. It didn't happen.

(A)  
#

To understand what kind of man Daly was and grasp why he was using his personal wealth to fly orphans from war-ravaged South Vietnam ~~to give them a new lease on life in the United States,~~ you would have to examine his role as a humanitarian. It was the one that deeply penetrated his soul.

*In example,* Daly sent 5,000 disadvantaged children to the circus each year and threw in \$2 pocket money for each child for popcorn and goodies. He also was the guy who gathered up 1,000 children each christmas and sent them to the Oakland Sympany to hear the Nutcracker Suite. And when he heard that a home for young county wards did not have swimming facilities, he built them a swimming pool. *It wasn't publicized what he does.* Descended from Irish ancestry and a veteran of World War II, Daly was a feisty ex-boxer who was traditionally angered into action by the presence of oppression, starvation and human suffering. His eyes were on the "sparrows" of Vietnam on this dark April night. He was determined to help the cast-off children of the war ravaged nation.

Star Strip April 5, 1975



A

Saigon's mood during the last weeks of the war did not compel unity. Each Vietnamese seemed to be concerned only with his own personal fate, for at no time was there a sense of rallying around the government, to make a stand against the dreaded Communist take over. Nor was there any surge of support from volunteers or agencies to prepare for the sick and wounded, to collect medical supplies, blood, water, food or train people to man aid stations that were also absent. There were no swarms of civilian volunteers to build barricades, anti tank ditches, or fill sandbags. <sup>NOTABLY,</sup> There was no leadership to make demands for these necessities, to appeal for a common effort for survival. The exodus of officials was like an avalanche.

The few <sup>volunteer +</sup> <sup>government</sup> agencies that were still in Norway made immediate plans for evacuation also. CARE had an emergency program to feed the refugees with 30,000 bags of rice in a warehouse. But chaos broke the city so quickly that ~~Demer Brown~~ the relief workers couldn't get their program started & had to abandon it. <sup>all but from</sup> The U.S. command general sent out three 50-man teams on a special flight along with Demer Brown of CARE along with other American & European.

Report appears that Norway day was Thursday, the U.S. Embassy had planes on alert to refugees that could for ~~that 40,000~~ up about a quarter of a million using jumbo jets.

Would Army come into the scene on Thursday - ~~and~~ to evacuate American employees & other U.S. people who were to leave promptly on the flight, but most were blocked by military police at the air base gate.

Early in March of 1975 the North Vietnamese units launched strong probes into the north. Quang Tri quickly fell to the Communists and Hue, the historical and cultural heart of the country, the seat of the Vietnamese emperors, also was overtaken by the NVA.

Thieu vacillated back and forth about what areas in the highlands must be defended, then ambiguity persisted and it was too late. He ordered the Airborne Division back to Saigon. The Marines too were ordered back and given permission to evacuate their families. Without the Marines the provinces could not be defended; the civilians left with them and moved toward Danang.

Danang was choked with refugees fleeing the northern cities. Thousands swarmed the streets for refuge, among them were thousands of soldiers, lost from the from their units, frightened and disoriented.

During the sixties

Danang figured prominently in Vietnam over the years. The northern city ~~had once been~~ was a major logistic base for the U.S. buildup and home of two <sup>U.S.</sup> Marine battalions. Its big airbase and port housed more American soldiers than any other Vietnamese city.

Before the war it possessed some exotic charm with the French influence, which was still in evidence in the French colonial buildings and

She need to say  
Thank you  
— from The  
Children



*From the Desk of*

Elaine Kostikos

**Founders**

---

(double space )

~~Danang had figured prominently in Vietnam over the years. The northern city had once been dominated by the American troops, but with the withdrawal of these forces, the Vietnamese Army was unable to fend off the Communist thrust to take over the area. Thousands of civilians and Vietnamese troops were evacuating Danang and Daly managed to get the last refugee plane in and out of the city before it was abandoned to the Viet Cong. Because of the opposition of Saigon officials to his actions, he was more sure than ever that the Danang episode had something to do with their attitude now in the face of the babylift emergency.~~

To put it simply, USAID and the U.S. Embassy thought Daly was "getting too big for his britches."

Instead of lauding him for his performance and his compassion, they considered him an embarrassment. ~~It~~ <sup>his actions</sup> countermanded their policy of "doing nothing." ~~With the war winding down and the fall of Vietnam inevitable, perhaps there was some justification for their attitude.~~

But every war has its shakers and movers. Ed Daly was one of them. As the <sup>old adage goes</sup> saying goes, "it isn't over until it's over!" Daly had to do something!

you are building a case for their attitude being the result of their embarrassment. Now you leave the door open to justification.

A.

Outraged USAID officials <sup>merit</sup> considered the Danang escapade an "outrageously irresponsible and harebrained act of bravado," <sup>but</sup> Daly and his crew defended their actions as a "humanitarian <sup>system</sup> act." Which ever it was, it almost cost them their lives <sup>and instead of lauding Daly for his</sup>

performance, they considered him an embarrassment.

His actions countermanded their policy of  
namy mity.

But emy va —

A

Just a few days earlier, against U. S. Government approval, Daly ordered a Boeing 727 into the northern outpost to collect hundreds of refugees who were attempting to flee the besieged city. There appeared to be little interest on the part of the American or the South Vietnamese officials to initiate a mass evacuation effort from Danang, and for all practical purposes <sup>each individual</sup> an escape route <sup>to find an escape route</sup> was left <sup>arose</sup> for each individual to determine for himself. Conjecture <sup>arose</sup> points toward the inevitable fall of Vietnam and as to whether the officials deemed it a futile attempt. Saigon would be lost in a matter of days or a month, and they may have surmised that more refugees in the southern city would only add to the chaos already mounting. Daly was apparently concerned with lives, not military strategy or the effect of more refugees in the city.

It was <sup>similar</sup> likened to a fatal accident, you still attempt to stop the bleeding and do what you can, knowing the patient is going to die. Like everyone, Daly was just as surprised that Vietnam fell so quickly during the last months. It was beyond belief that Vietnam could fall with so much American aid and support. <sup>There was no real support.</sup>

not a real good analogy

NOT really -

→ The evacuation flights from Danang had begun unsuspectingly, as routine flights. Refugees were flown to either Saigon or to Nha Trang, South Vietnam's <sup>is this true - I think DANANG is 2nd largest</sup> second largest city on the coast just north of Can Ranh Bay. A total of ten trips were made between March 24, 25th and 26th. But, on the 27th an abrupt change took place when passengers, after an orderly boarding,

Nha

largest



"OPERATION BABYLIFT"/BARNES

216.

*Forgive fate?*

*Madame Pigeon*

Vietnam. Before the war it may have possessed some exotic charm with the French influence, which was still in evidence in the French colonial buildings and wrought iron balconies. The whitewashed stucco houses were covered with bougainvillaea and they clustered in quiet settings of narrow streets, shaded by palm and tamarind trees. ~~It was a portrait of serenity~~

*with* ~~with picturesque mountains to the west~~ One could easily doubt that there was a war going on in another sector of the city. *country*

*soldiers*


The American G.I.'s called it everything from Dodge City to Dogpatch. It became a garrison town overflowing with refugees, whores, pimps, blackmarketeers and armed soldiers.

*Military Police*

MP's patrolling the city were charged with the task of keeping the *Americans* G.I.'s out of serious trouble. It was the center of the Buddhist uprising which occurred at both Danang and Hue and ~~had~~ *with* more plot, revolts, riots and demonstrations than any other city in Vietnam.

All this had changed now and it was being abandoned to the Viet Cong.

~~the flight over" is a motivation, when it was apparent that Daly was compelled~~  
to do "something."

The evacuation flights from Danang had begun unsuspectingly, as routine flights. Refugees were flown to either Saigon or Nha Trang, a large city on the coast just north of Can Ranh Bay. A total of ten trips were made between March 24th and 26th. But, on the 27th an abrupt change took place when passengers, after an orderly boarding (continued next page) 

Days before the complete collapse of public order in Danang, World Airways was chartered to make 20 flights to evacuate U.S. agency personnel and Vietnamese employees. But when the first flight appeared, ~~most were~~ *the passengers were* blocked by military police at the air base gates. Instead, crudely forged copies of the priority passes were being black marketed at high prices on the streets.

Al Francis, the consul-general proposed to Col. Gavin McCurty, the air attache, that U.S. military helicopters stationed in Thailand be assigned to the evacuation of his people. The request to 7th Air Force Headquarters was turned down, thus leaving the only air exit to the World Airways chartered flights.

In spite of efforts made by Francis to get Vietnamese officials to get control of the air base, the second flight was mobbed, leaving Francis and World Airway vice president Charles Patterson wrestling refugees to close the plane's doors. Francis again appealed to the 7th Air Force in Thailand for the helicopter evacuation or for a couple of C-130 transports. That request too was denied. The reason given was that using American military forces in Vietnam was a matter of extreme sensitivity and would skirt both U.S. law and the Paris agreement.

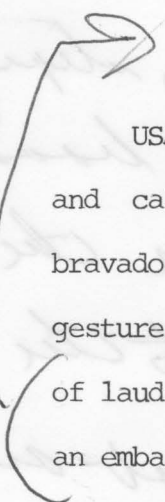
Several more <sup>attempts</sup> were made, <sup>in vain</sup> all precarious as the previous ones. *by word only!*  
~~when~~ <sup>THEN</sup> Francis called a halt to Daly's flights.

But Daly had other ideas.

*On Saturday March 29<sup>th</sup> Daly asked for Boeing 727 back to base. He wanted clearance for the Annam Embassy. He wanted the plane to prominently display the American flag! Major Annam officials called it a bit of a haul but he would*



Insert  
A



USAID and Embassy officials were outraged over the Danang escapade and called it an "outrageously irresponsible and harebrained act of bravado." Daly and his crew firmly defended their actions as a "humanitarian gesture." Which ever the case, it almost cost them their lives. (Instead of lauding Daly for his performance and his compassion, they considered him an embarrassment; his actions countermanded their policy of "doing nothing.")

But every war has its movers and shakers. Ed Daly was one of them.

As the old adage goes, "it isn't over until it's over."

Daly had to do something, and he did.

When Daly and his station manager  
Joe H. Reynolds stepped off the landing strip  
the two men couldn't get back on board  
before Healy pulled away from the  
mob, so they went back to the  
control tower. Meanwhile the mob was  
which pulled & pushed about after the  
zigzagging plane, shooting at the plane  
as well as at each other.

The plane was halted three times  
and finally Healy managed to make  
the plane back to the control tower; he  
was not gay to leave untraced Healy  
& Reynolds

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Before the war it possessed some exotic charm with the French influence, which was still in evidence in the French colonial buildings and wrought iron balconies. The whitewashed stucco houses were covered with bougainvillaea and they clustered in quiet settings of narrow streets, shaded by palm and tamarind trees. (Built on a peninsula with picturesque mountains to the west, it was a portrait of serenity.) <sup>Deny the sight.</sup> One could easily doubt there was a war going on in another sector of the country.

This had all changed now it Danang was being abandoned to the Viet Cong. There was an incredible turn of events <sup>with</sup> and the populace ~~was~~ fleeing the ~~city~~; <sup>and</sup> no effort ~~was being~~ made to make a stand for its defense.

Before it appeared that Danang itself was threatened, the U.S. embassy had planned to airlift refugees flowing into the city from Hue, beginning with 40,000 on chartered flights and expanding to a quarter of a million people using jumbo jets. It didn't happen.

A few days before the complete collapse of public order in Danang, World Airways<sup>®</sup> was chartered to make 20 flights to evacuate U.S. agency personnel and Vietnamese employees. But when the flights <sup>begin</sup> appeared, the passengers were blocked by military police at the air base gates. Instead, crudely forged copies of the priority passes were being black marketed at high prices on the streets.

five northern provinces. <sup>By now the 2nd of March</sup> The city was swollen by a million refugees, tripling its normal population in a matter of days. The final chapter of the government's rout from the north <sup>was being played out in the</sup> complete collapse of public order. The real source of trouble was not the civilians, but a 100,000 marauding ARVN soldiers who were both armed and drunk. They roamed the streets robbing and killing people relentlessly, looting homes and shooting wildly and littering the streets with burning vehicles. There appeared to be little interest on the part of the American or the South Vietnamese officials to intervene or to initiate a mass evacuation effort of the refugees from Danang, and for all practical purposes each individual was left to find an escape route.

Viet Cong troops in civilian clothes moved into the city on loudspeaker trucks attempting to restore order, but in the three days between the beginning of the disorders and the fall of the city, tens of thousands of panicky refugees swarmed aboard any evacuation armada they could reach.

Page - 23.

(A) Just a few days earlier, against U.S. Government approval, Daly ordered a Boeing 727 into Danang, the country's second largest city and headquarters for the

In spite of efforts made by Francis to get Vietnamese officials to take control of the air base, the following flights by World Airways ~~was~~ <sup>will</sup> also mobbed, <sup>on one instance</sup> leaving Francis and World Airways vice president Charles Patterson wrestling refugees from the <sup>plane's</sup> stairway so that they could close the door. Francis again appealed to the 7th Air Force in Thailand for the helicopter evacuation or for a couple of C-130 transports. That request too was denied. The reason given was that using American military forces in Vietnam was a matter of extreme sensitivity and would skirt both U.S. law and the Paris agreement.

Several more evacuation attempts were made by World Airways, each <sup>in</sup> resulting/the same loss of mob control.

123

disembarked when they learned that <sup>Nha</sup> ~~Nah~~ Trang, not Saigon, was the destination. Since ~~Nah~~ <sup>immediately threatened</sup> Trang was not overtaken by the communists, there was nothing to account for this action. The refugees may have sensed the fall of all of Vietnam was inevitable and opted for the most southerly destination. The plane remained on the runway all that day without passengers, since no one wanted to board. By early evening, the crowd build-up reached enormous proportions and gunfiring throngs, held back by the heavy chain-linked fence, were fighting to board World's 727, regardless of the destination, just that it was away from Danang.

123

Through the 28th of March the crowd control around the Danang airport deteriorated progressively as rioting erupted among the refugees, themselves and people were injured and trampled to death. Fearing the security problem would endanger the plane and <sup>further</sup> evacuation efforts, Daly met throughout the night with every U.S. and South Vietnamese official he could reach, <sup>whoever</sup> and who he thought might assist with the crisis. They wouldn't, or couldn't, help. <sup>They either would not or could not help.</sup>

Angry and tired, Daly's decision had taken <sup>the</sup> a course to a definite point.

"To hell with those people (the authorities). They may not care about these refugees, but I do! And we're going to move them just as damn long as we can!"

Danang had once been the <sup>largest communist</sup> northernmost U.S. Airbase in

Not True.



Francis called a halt to World Airways flights.

But Daly had other ideas.

On Saturday, March 29th Daly ordered his Boeing 727 back to Danang without clearance from the U.S. embassy.

Daly was concerned with lives, not military strategy or the effect of more refugees swarming to the southerly most cities. *(If the old adage of "it isn't over till it's over" is true, then it was apparent*