

but, in the makeshift "orphanages" which one often finds attached to the refugee shelters, these basic necessities are frequently absent, and the tiny beings more nearly resemble animals than humans.

There are bound to be long range effects upon a future adult population resulting from this de-familization, and de-personalization of the lives of their children. Immediately, one is quite conscious of the increasing problem of juvenile delinquency which is plaguing Minister Lieng to no end. It persists and grows in every city and provincial town.

The increasing suicide rate (not political suicide) in South Viet-Nam is also quite alarming—this is a fairly recent phenomenon which was raised by Mr. Baesjou—the UNESCO Representative, and also by Lawson Mooney the Director of Catholic Relief Services. While no accurate statistics are available, as yet, the incidence of self-destruction is growing, and of particular note and horror is the fact that mass or group suicides are becoming more common and that the participants are frequently teenagers.

With the destruction of the family, family life, veneration for age and physical removal from the ancestral burial place, the majority of Vietnamese indulge in confucianistic ancestral worship and do not attend any formal temple or church—a void is apparently created and a social reaction sets in.

These, then, are the more subtle effects of the physical conflict. The hundreds of children whom I met in various parts of the country, in some briefly, some for periods of extended conversation and acquaintanceship, could best be described as solemn. How often, Lawson Mooney and I both commented on the fact that the majority of them did not know how to participate in any form of group play. Fun, was clearly not a part of their usual day; listlessness, definitely was. I taught English three evenings a week, for awhile to an interested group at Sancta Maria, and then, again, more briefly in Binh Dinh to some injured "V.C." children and found all of them to be quite responsive, after an initial period of timidity.

Mr. Chairman, the committee should briefly be aware of the very special problems facing the Eurasian children of South Viet-Nam. Simply put, they are by and large rejected by the society at this time, and frequently abandoned. This is a particularly relevant concern for the Sub-committee due to the increasing number of "Amerasian" or half American babies presently being produced in that country. If no plan of evacuation and foster or adoptive placement, in this country or elsewhere, is devised for these who are cast aside, then, they surely will have a difficult future road to tread.

CONCLUSIONS

The effects of the conflict, Mr. Chairman, have greatly set back the capacity of the existing government to provide essential services such as education and health care, so that even at present the needs of the population are not nearly being met. In addition, the great numbers of children live daily in a situation where they could be physically brutalized at any instant. Perhaps, even more ominous is the breakdown of the family and what this portends for the future, as well as what it means right now.

By way of conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit some proposals for the consideration of the subcommittee.

First—that a program of mass evacuation of children from South Viet-Nam be established. That it operate on the basis of established priority conditions for evacuation (i.e. the wounded, and injured; the abandoned, etc.) That it be implemented by the American Voluntary Agencies and groups such as Terre Des Hommes, in a coordinated fashion through its Council, (ACVA) with the financial support and general assistance of the U.S. Government and the cooperation of the Government of Viet-Nam.

Second—That, as a part of the first suggestion, and a natural follow up, thereto, a foster home and adoptive placement program be undertaken by some Voluntary Agencies who are specialists in this field, in the United States and elsewhere. In the meantime, available hospital and institutional places should be secured, also in the United States and elsewhere, for the children.

Third—That planning and construction of needed medical treatment facilities in Viet-Nam be greatly accelerated, and the number of medical personnel in service in that country be tremendously increased.

Fourth—That every effort made to remove, immediately, the children from the areas of intense fighting—particularly in the Central Highlands, and the Northern five Provinces—and wherever possible, to resettle them in family units in more secure areas.