

DRUG DONATION ASSISTS LEPROSY COLONY

On Sunday, October 31st 1965, A US Army helicopter swooped low and then landed at the St. Joseph's Leprosarium at Ben San, Viet Nam, 7 miles northwest of Bien Hoa Air Base and deep in Viet Cong controlled D Zone. US Air Force Flight Surgeon, Captain Calvin C. Chapman, Commander of the USAF Hospital at the Air Base, stepped out and delivered to the staff and patients at the leprosarium \$1200.00 worth of pharmaceutical preparations donated by the Texas Pharmacal Company of San Antonio, Texas.

In June 1965, when Dr. Chapman first went to the leprosy colony, he noted that skin problems were common among the lepers. The disease often thickens the skin to a leathery consistency, and there is no sensation because the nerves have been destroyed. Frequently the skin cracks and infection enters leading to serious secondary problems. Skin in parts of the body unaffected by leprosy also suffers because many of these victims cannot care for their own personal hygiene needs. Dr. Chapman felt that the use of preparations to keep skin moist and soft would be helpful.

He wrote to his former Air Force medical associate, Colonel Harold A. Myers, who arranged for the Texas Pharmacal Company of San Antonio to donate large quantities of skin lotions and creams and anti-fungal preparations. The shipment was airlifted to Viet Nam by the Air Force, and a US Army helicopter piloted by Captain Anderson of the 501st Aviation Company at Bien Hoa airlifted Dr. Chapman and the precious cargo deep into D Zone to the leprosarium.

The Chief Nurse, Sister Marie Antoinette of the Sisters of Mercy, and the Priest, Father Victor Berset, were delighted by the humanitarian gesture. The products will be especially useful in the day to day care of many of the patients. The patients themselves enthusiastically assisted in the unloading of the helicopter and transporting the products to the most modest dispensary, where the official welcoming ceremony took place.

Father Berset expressed the thanks of patients and staff when he said: "The friendship demonstrated to the Vietnamese people by this thoughtful donation of much needed medicine to the most unfortunate group of all, the lepers, is an outstanding example of American concern for all people in Vietnam. The Texas Pharmacal Company has been very generous. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the company and to all the Americans whose efforts made this gift possible."

Calvin C. Chapman Capt USAF MC FS
Commander, USAF Hospital
6251 TAC FTR Wing, Bien Hoa Air Base, Viet Nam
APO San Francisco 96227