

BARSKY CLINIC HELPS VIETNAMESE CHILDREN

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 3, 1974

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to my colleagues' attention an article on the Center for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in Saigon that appeared in the June 30, 1974, New York Times. This clinic, founded several years ago by Dr. Arthur Barsky, specializes in the treatment of burns and is the most complete facility of its kind in all of South Vietnam. Operated with financial assistance from the U.S. Agency for International Development and the South Vietnamese Ministry of Health, as well as from private contributors, it is, as the article points out, "one of the few positive legacies of the war." It meets a medical need that cannot be fulfilled elsewhere in that country, and is an excellent example of the type of humanitarian service that the United States is well-advised to associate itself with.

The article follows:

[From the New York Times, June 30, 1974]
SAIGON'S PLASTIC SURGERY CLINIC IS A BUSY HAVEN FOR THE INJURED VIETNAMESE

(By David K. Shipler)

SAIGON, SOUTH VIETNAM, June 29—The 10-year-old boy with the melancholy eyes is Phan Thanh Anh. He was swinging a knife through long green elephant grass, clearing some new land for farming, when something exploded and blew all the fingers off his left hand.

Doan Van Hung, 12, fell asleep as he was studying by the light of a kerosene lamp, knocking the lamp over and setting himself on fire. Inadequate medical care and terrible scars have left his elbow stiff and his neck partly immobilized.

On Muoi is now 31. As a child, she was attacked by a potent and common gangrene called noma, which in the course of a few weeks ate away whole sections of her face, destroying her upper lip and nose, twisting her features into monstrous shapes.

RECONSTRUCTION OF PEOPLE

These three are victims not only of war but of poverty, and of accident, chance or carelessness. They are all patients in a Vietnamese and American-funded medical center for plastic surgery, one of the few places in South Vietnam where reconstruction is actually going on. This is the reconstruction of bodies.

Formally, the clinic is called the Center for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, but everyone knows it as the Barsky unit, after its founder, Dr. Arthur J. Barsky, an American plastic surgeon who is now professor emeritus at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

During the height of the war in the nineteen-sixties, Dr. Barsky and a lawyer, Thomas R. Miller, were so moved by reports of war injuries to Vietnamese children that they established an organization called Children's Medical Relief International, which created the Barsky unit with the help of Federal grants.

The clinic is one of the few positive legacies of the war. Only about 20 per cent of its patients now are military-injury cases; the rest are victims of diseases that began throughout most of Asia long before the war—and will probably continue long after—and accidents.

There are many badly burned children, but hardly any were burned by napalm; people hit by napalm rarely live to be treated, doctors say.

Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hoa is a survivor of a napalm attack, but the napalm never struck her directly; it was dropped on her village after Vietcong troops came into the area, she recalled, and it set fire to her thatched house. "My whole family was in the bunker," she said. "Suddenly the house was on fire. Three of the five in my family died; my father and I ran away, but the fire caught us."

She is now getting skin grafts on her hands, feet and face.

BURNS TRACED TO HOMES

Joyce M. Horn, a nurse and the administrator of the Barsky unit, calculates that most of the burns are from domestic accidents—kerosene lamps and stoves, charcoal fires, boiling water—all made more common by the crowding of children into tiny rooms, the lack of electricity, the practice of cooking in areas where children play.

Furthermore, Miss Horn observes, the Barsky unit expends a good deal of effort undoing damage that could have been avoided in the first place with proper medical treatment—particularly, separating badly burned limbs and fingers that have been allowed to grow together or attach themselves to other parts of the body as they have healed.

The unit trains Vietnamese personnel, and it has provided residency for young doctors. Four have graduated so far as full-fledged plastic surgeons; two others were called into the army before they could finish their courses.

The Barsky unit's patients are not cheerless. In the wards, there are easy smiles and bursts of laughter. They are more comfortable here, Miss Horn says, than outside, where they are often stared at and ridiculed. "They come to the Barsky unit, where all of a sudden they're normal, and they don't want to go home," she says.

The Barsky unit gets 21 per cent of its operating funds from the United States Agency for International Development and most of the remainder from the South Vietnamese Ministry of Health. But it needs more.

Dr. Barsky, who visited Saigon recently, remarked: "More thought seems to be given to destruction than to preservation—certainly more money is spent."

SECRET EYES-ONLY PLAN TO PUSH H.R. 12898 AND BURY H.R. 11500 IS COMPROMISED IN PARTS NOW REVEALED TO ALL

HON. CRAIG HOSMER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 3, 1974

Mr. HOSMER. Mr. Speaker, it seems no one can keep a secret any longer in Washington. Oh, the pity of it some are saying.

Even parts of my secret plan in connection with the surface coal mining regulation bills have been compromised.

Set forth below are the compromised portions so all will know, not just a few. None of the appendixes are compromised at this point, I think. So I am not revealing them at this time for the RECORD. If somebody steals any of them, and I find out about it, I will ask unanimous consent that they appear in subsequent issues of the RECORD, too:

REPRESENTATIVE CRAIG HOSMER'S SECRET CAMPAIGN PLAN TO FORWARD PASSAGE OF SURFACE COAL MINING LEGISLATION WHICH ENFORCES STRICT RECLAMATION OF MINED LAND TO ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME FACILITATING THE SURFACE MINING OF ENOUGH COAL TO SATISFY U.S. ENERGY REQUIREMENTS

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Enactment this year of legislation to assure that coal is surface mined pursuant to good conservation practices and thereafter the land is restored promptly to as good or better condition than before, while, at the same time, assuring that the nation's expanding needs for surfaced mined coal are fully met.

This objective is to be achieved by defeating the unbalanced and defective bill H.R. 11500 and substituting the bill H.R. 12898.

LEGISLATIVE SITUATION

(A) The writing of H.R. 11500 and its Senate companion S. 425 was dominated by legislators and staff whose primary concerns are environmental. As a consequence these bills are heavily overweighted with environmental concerns and drastically neglect the need for energy, and equal concern.

Note: The Interior Department and FEO estimate that H.R. 11500 would unnecessarily preclude production of up to almost two-thirds of all this country's surface mined coal—almost one-third of all its coal. The effect of this bill on the economy and upon employment nationwide would be disastrous.

(B) The substitute bill H.R. 12898 was drafted specifically to achieve the overall objectives specified above by giving measured and equal respect to both environmental and energy ethics. When full Interior Committee markup began a move to substitute it for H.R. 11500 as the markup vehicle lost by only one vote. (20 to 19).

OVERALL STRATEGY

(A) Rules Committee:

1. Get H.R. 11500 referred back to Interior and Insular Affairs Committee for reformation or substitution of H.R. 12898.

2. Failing the above, insist on rule making substitution of H.R. 12898 in order and up to 12 hours general debate upon this extremely controversial measure.

(B) House Floor:

1. Try to substitute H.R. 12898. If successful—

(a) Offer amendments as required to perfect it;

(b) Resist crippling amendments by H.R. 11500 adherents.

2. If H.R. 11500 remains the vehicle—

(a) Insist upon adequate discussion of ALL its defects, including wholesale loss of jobs, disruption of business, etc.;

(b) Seek to amend it in the 12 basic areas which are absolutely necessary to avoid crippling the nation's economy as a result of a drastic shortage of domestic mined coal, but making sure to preserve proper environmental safeguard;

(c) Move to recommit without instructions;

(d) Defeat the bill by vote of a majority which will fairly respect both environmental and energy ethics.

(C) Conference with Senate:

Doggedly insist upon a balanced bill or no bill. If that fails, rely sustaining of veto, which is certain to follow.

Appendices attached to this campaign plan

Appendix (A)—Surface Mining Bill Campaign Organization.

Appendix (B)—Surface Mining Bill Intelligence Plan.

Appendix (C)—Surface Mining Bill Communications Plan.