

# ***FLIGHT***

MAGAZINE FEBRUARY  
1971 60¢



**Special Report**

**BROTHERHOOD SPREADS ON WINGS OF HOPE**

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# **FLIGHT** MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY, 1971  
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## **EDITORIALS**

### **Wings Of Hope —A Challenge To U.S. Aviation**

**T**HIS edition of FLIGHT Magazine is concerned largely with the subject of humanitarian uses of airplanes throughout remote areas of the world, with emphasis on those being operated under the auspices of an interfaith, tax-exempt, completely aviation oriented, U. S. based charity known as Wings of Hope, Inc.

FLIGHT Magazine's first involvement with the basic concept of desperately needed air transport support of medical missions abroad was in 1964, when we joined a campaign to provide an all-metal lightplane to a small band of Irish medical missionaries based in an inaccessible area of the Turkana desert in Kenya, East Africa. The campaign was a success. World-famous long-distance pilot Max Conrad personally delivered a Cessna Skywagon to this remote and totally isolated hospital in 1965 for the flying missionaries' use.

The Skywagon actually saved the medical mission from annihilation. Floods following years of drought had cut off all access to civilization. Human misery was relieved. Lives were saved.

Out of this rewarding experience came the foundation of Wings of Hope, Inc., which now provides aircraft, radio communications, qualified personnel and logistical support to peoples in remote areas of the world similarly isolated as the little hospital in the African desert.

Thanks to occasional publicity in medical, charitable, aero and religious publications and by "jungle telegraph," word has spread globally that there's a group of Americans based in St. Louis with the singular mission of relieving human misery through the use of modern airplanes, radio communications and trained personnel.

Hence the ever-growing number of requests from the four corners of the earth which, if

even partially satisfied, requires the immediate expansion of the Wings of Hope organization. March 1 marks the date for launching the first broad solicitation for funds and equipment, with the confident hope that this charity can remain largely an arm of the U. S. aviation community with international backing to come later on.

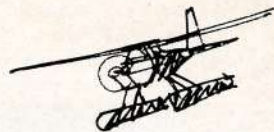
The U. S. aviation trade press with the help of two aviation-oriented advertising agencies already have donated time and space to Wings of Hope's messages of appeal. Several manufacturers have provided both funds and valuable services during the "guinea pig" years of finding the proper methods of operation. Pharmaceutical firms have been generous with drugs and medicine. The Wings of Hope executive staff and board of directors work without pay, without expense accounts. As a result there is a sound, realistic base for the immediate expansion of the organization's humanitarian efforts.

This edition describes in detail exactly what Wings of Hope does, how it operates and how, through professional and technical knowledge gained from long and hard experience, it has been able to put more than 95% of all income into actual operations, an accomplishment practically unheard of in the field of organized charity.

We recommend direct participation in this truly great human assistance program, the first major non-sectarian aviation-oriented charity ever established. Gifts, bequests, legacies, devises or transfers of property to Wings of Hope are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes. The executive office is located at 2319 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, 63139.

*The time for you to get on board is now.*

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# BROTHERHOOD SPREADS ON WINGS OF HOPE

**By GEORGE E. HADDAWAY**

**W**OULD you believe a Skywagon operating in East African deserts can compress a year's grueling land travel into two or three weeks of flying time?

Or that deep in the Amazon jungle of South America a Cessna 206 on floats can carry a native just bitten by a deadly bushmaster snake to a well-staffed hospital in less than an hour while the same trip by boat would take more than two days?

Or that an American-made light twin taking off in the mountain vastness of New Guinea at a 10,000-foot elevation can fly a woman dying in childbirth to a seashore village hospital in 20 minutes and save her life because the only other method of transport would be by mule or Land Rover bouncing over 18 hours on mountain trails?

Flying accomplishments such as these are easily understood by airmen but what grabs even the most seasoned of aviation folk is the tremendous number of these documented human dramas being enacted daily all over the world by flying missionaries in modern general aviation airplanes, most of which are made in America.

The three cases listed above are from the records of Wings of Hope, Inc., St. Louis-based, aviation-oriented



provide desperately-needed medical help and food from the jungles of Southeast Asia and the Amazon to the deserts of Africa, as seen in these Wings of Hope photos.



**Flying missionaries have been busy for years throughout the world. Wings of Hope, Inc., plans to provide both funds and technical assistance to all such operations, especially where medical efforts are paramount**



*Lifeline of jungle missionary support services*

charity. Completely non-denominational, this tax-exempt, interfaith group is especially unique because more than 95 per cent of all donated funds have gone entirely to supplying airplanes and the support services that go with them. The organization offers its services to any legitimate missionary enterprise regardless of affiliation. For example in one case a Wings of Hope airplane sponsored by a Canadian religious group has been assisting the Wycliffe Associates (including Jungle Aviation and Radio Service), the Seventh Day Adventists and Roman Catholic medical missions all on the same route circuit. The youngest Wings of Hope pilot is a Mennonite.

No one can hire or charter Wings of Hope aircraft. Every service is completely gratis. While some flying doctor services, notably in Australia,

are supported by government funds, no government involvement is sought by Wings of Hope.

During the past seven years of operating aircraft over all sorts of terrain and under every possible type of climatic conditions, the organization has experienced about every conceivable flight, mechanical and communications problem found anywhere. And the key to success has been the ability to work out the solutions and apply them to operations world-wide.

Putting the right people, technically trained, into the right airplane for the job at hand isn't as easy as it sounds. Missionary flying has no room for improperly trained, undisciplined or starry-eyed do-gooders regardless of their deep religious or humanitarian dedication. With the wide range of American utility aircraft to pick from,

it's not too difficult to find the right airplane for any specific mission under any and all operating difficulties. It's not as easy however, to find the special kind of manpower required for the missionary field. One Wings of Hope pilot not only does all routine maintenance on the aircraft and engine but also has become adept at pulling teeth because painful, rotten teeth are a major plague and agony to the natives in the area he serves.

#### **First Appeal for Funds**

As word has spread around the world, more and more requests for aircraft and trained personnel pour into Wings of Hope headquarters. Because of this upsurge of requests, many of which are in most critical situations, Wings of Hope is making its first massive appeal for funds and equipment as described in contributed advertisements now being run in the American aviation trade press. Donated funds that accrue this year will be allocated to new operations in other remote areas as well as to beef up current operations.

While requests for assistance will always outnumber the organization's ability to provide aircraft and logistical support, the move from highly limited and more personal solicitation of funds to a broad national campaign in the U. S. and Canada more comparable to other major charitable groups means that the neediest cases now ready for action can be taken care of, perhaps this year.

#### **Requests for Assistance**

A typical example of requests for assistance is one from Nigeria just now emerging from one of the most cat-

*Wings of Hope officers, directors and advisory board members in photo below include (clockwise) Harold Wood, Parks Air College; John Smith, Keokuk, Iowa; E. A. DaRosa, Southern Illinois University; Edward Schertz, SIU; John C. Mosby, St. Louis; W. D. Edwards, St. Louis, executive director and secretary; Bruce Salsman, Nashville; Joseph G. Fabick, St. Louis, president; George E. Haddaway, Dallas, chairman; Paul J. Rodgers, St. Louis, vice president.*





single sideband radio (left). Food for starving African children is rushed by lightplane (right with tribesmen).

astrophic civil wars in history. The appeal comes to Wings of Hope from Rev. Fintan Kilbride, who spent thirteen years as a missionary in Biafra and built the first mission hospital in the Port Harcourt Province. This hospital serves the medical needs of over 100,000 in a very remote jungle area.

In the same Niger River delta an additional 500,000 people go without hospital or medical facility of any sort in an area roughly 5,000 square miles. The only means of communication is the slow-moving native canoe and dug-out. Even with an out-board motor it takes four days of tedious travel from the town of Brass (pop. 30,000) to the nearest hospital at Port Harcourt.

The flying environment in this malaria-infested jungle area is approximately the same as experienced by the Wings of Hope operations in the Amazon River basin and will require the same kind of float-equipped aircraft as employed in South America. A minimum immediate cash requirement for the Niger River basin is \$100,000. This expenditure includes establishment of a jungle radio network which is an essential part of missionary services.

#### **Twin Needed for Safety**

Late last year Wings of Hope delivered an airplane to Father Ivo Ruiter, who learned to fly in 1950 and has been flying in New Guinea for thirteen years, logging more than 9,000 hours over some of the world's most hazardous terrain. His area of service contains some 250,000 New Guineans many of them still living in a stone age culture.

Due to the mountainous terrain with peaks rising above 14,000 feet, Ruiter desperately needs a light twin and his plight is high on the Wings of Hope list because of his broad experience in actual flight operations over some of the roughest terrain imaginable. Additionally, Ruiter is able to carry his operations costs through support of his own religious groups with no burden to Wings of Hope.

According to Wings of Hope President Joe Fabick, St. Louis businessman, pilot and plane owner, the ideal situation for the organization in future years would be to serve as a provider of aircraft and related equipment to self-sufficient sponsoring organizations, to enlist and train personnel, to serve as a logistical supply source, or purchasing agent, and as a clearing house for all missionary aircraft operations throughout the world.

#### **Training for Bush Pilots, Mechanics**

An important step in this direction has already been made. One of the finest schools of aviation technology is at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois. Heading up the aviation technology department is E. A. (Tony) DaRosa, who serves as technical advisor to Wings of Hope. Plans are being worked out for bush pilot training and new maintenance and repair systems primarily designed for bush operations. DaRosa is steeped in knowledge of jungle flying, having been training missionaries to fly and providing technical assistance and supply services for New Guinea operations for more than 20 years.

The missionary aviation training program is unique in that the student

receives a comprehensive one and one-half to two years of flight instruction as well as training in practical mechanics. The graduate also receives the FAA license as a commercial pilot as well as the airframe and powerplant mechanic license.

This in-depth training has aided the flying missionary to make better judgment in respect to the airworthiness of his aircraft, to establish protective and corrective measures against adverse climatic environments, to insure structural integrity when operating from inadequate fields, and to perform repair and maintenance on the aircraft.

In some locations a fair amount of such maintenance is being performed by the natives under the supervision of the flying missionaries. This arrangement appears to give the natives a feeling of participation and usefulness as well as provide some relief for the missionaries for other tasks. The heart and soul of any bush flying operation is in developing the technical expertise that guarantees safe and effective utilization of the aircraft. Missionary flying history is splashed with tragedy and failure in those cases where this fact of life was not admitted and followed.

#### **U. S. Dominates Mercy Flying**

Why has the United States accounted for the bulk of humanitarian use of aircraft operations throughout the World?

Aside from being the wealthiest nation on Earth, it's obvious, especially during this century, that it also is the most generous and far in the vanguard of relief efforts and money whenever disaster strikes.



*Sister Michael Therese, the flying nun of the Turkana desert in Africa, and some of her friends. The desert hospital there, run by the Medical Missionaries of Mary out of Ireland, received its first airplane in 1965 — a Cessna Skywagon which replaced a Piper Super Cub given by Jerry Fay and Everett Donovan, two airline pilots residing in the state of Washington.*



*With another Wings of Hope airplane for New Guinea are pictured (left to right) Joe Fabick, president; John M. LaBerge and Noel Girard of Wings of Hope of Canada; William D. Edwards, executive director; and (kneeling) Robert Chatley, director of development, and E. A. (Tony) DaRosa, technical advisor.*



Just as significant is the fact that the American free enterprise system has led the world in the number and variety of civil aircraft. Our aircraft, engines and avionics have become the standard of the aviation world. In recent years more than 25 per cent of U. S. and Canadian civil aircraft production has been for export. We would hazard the guess that some ninety per cent of all aircraft going into non-aviation-manufacturing countries are out of American factories.

It is also widely recognized that American missionary flight operations have had tremendous influence on the ready acceptance of American equipment abroad. These unsung heroes of the "war for peace" unintentionally and perhaps unknowingly have helped to tie U. S. aircraft and equipment to the developing countries, making it difficult if not impossible for products from other nations to penetrate the market place. This is especially true as far as U. S. aircraft engines, accessories and avionics are concerned in those cases where non-U. S. airframes are involved.

Credit also must go to the flying missionaries and our various medical corps operating throughout the world for contributing substantially to the American image abroad. It is best summed up in a statement made by a missionary pilot flying in the early days of the East African operation after he had rushed an old Turkana desert chief's baby to a hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. The baby's life was saved by emergency surgery.

Said the pilot: "Out here on the desert you don't have to do any propagandizing about the United States. You just do your job of looking after these poor folks when the emergencies arise. They know where the assistance is coming from. And that's why a lot of communist infiltrators who poured into newly independent, emerging countries in the 1960's found such barren ground for their insidious propaganda against the free world. They came, they lost, they left."

In these days of world turmoil with its background noise of hatred preached against us by our enemies, a breath of fresh, clean air comes drifting through the gloom, straight out of the wilderness where mercy instead of bombs drops from the sky, where life will be a lot better for the least of God's chilluns because a great nation and industry created and perfected the flying machine also for peaceful and humanitarian uses. Wings of Hope is the embodiment of that mercy and helps measurably to point up not only the present accomplishments but also a glowing part of the future destiny of our general aviation fraternity.

**People in aviation  
and their businesses  
support Wings of Hope**



*Joe Fabick, Wings of Hope president, is at right in photo showing William D. Edwards, executive director, and Max Conrad (at controls) with first aircraft delivered to Africa.*

## How Wings of Hope Is Financed

**R**ELIGIOUS groups, individuals, corporations and foundations have supplied the life blood of Wings of Hope since its inception.

As a purely aviation-oriented charity a large measure of our support has come from people with a stake in aviation either as pilots, plane owners or aviation businessmen.

When "tight money" hit about mid-1970, Wings of Hope directors decided to seek gifts of aviation equipment in lieu of cash. The aviation trade press generously carried our appeals by donating complimentary advertising space with the ad copy worked up gratis by the Gardner agency of St. Louis and the Gordon, Kietzman, Dennis agency of Oklahoma City.

In the event we can use the donated equipment in our missionary support operations — engines, airframes, avionics or instruments and accessories—we fix it up and ship it out. If we can't adapt it to our own uses, we overhaul or repair it and sell it or trade it for something we can use.

In recent years memorial funds have been a source of support. Usually these funds are established by friends or relatives of deceased brethren who have aided our cause. Two such memorials are for the late Dwight P. Joyce, Cleveland, Ohio business executive and pilot, the first president of the National Pilots Association, and Joseph T. Geuting of Washington, D. C., a founder of the medical assistance ship "Hope" and long time supporter of Wings of Hope. Joe will be remembered as the dedicated executive director of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, formerly Utility Airplane Council of the Aerospace Industries Association.

Corporations making contributions to Wings of Hope, Inc. can deduct up to 5% of taxable income. They may carry over for 5 years contributions in excess of the 5% limit.

A contribution may be made in the form of property as well as money. The amount deductible before the 1969 Tax Reform Act was the fair market value of the property at the time of contribution. Now the value must be reduced by the amount which would be ordinary income or short-term gain if the property had been sold for fair market value. Thus, the deduction for a gift of appreciated inventory will be limited to basis.

If the sale would have resulted in long-term gain, the value must be reduced by 62½% of such gain. Thus, the corporation may deduct basis plus 37½% of the appreciation.

If Wings of Hope, Inc. is able to actually put contributed property to use in its own charitable endeavor, the above values do not have to be reduced as stated above; and the contributing corporation may deduct the full fair market value subject to the 5% of taxable income limitation.

Individuals contributing to Wings of Hope, Inc. can deduct up to 50% of their "contribution base." The "contribution base" is adjusted gross income computed without regard to any net operating loss carry back to the taxable year. So, for most cases we may say the contribution is limited to 50% of adjusted gross income.

A contribution may be made in the form of property as well as money. The amount deductible before the 1969 Tax Reform Act was the fair market value of the property at the time of contribution. Now the value must be reduced by the amount which

would be ordinary income or short-term gain if the property had been sold for fair market value. Thus, the deduction for a gift of appreciated inventory will be limited to basis.

If the sale would have resulted in long-term gain, the individual must limit his deduction to 30% of contribution base instead of 50%.

However, if he elects to reduce the amount of appreciation by one half he may still give and deduct up to 50%.

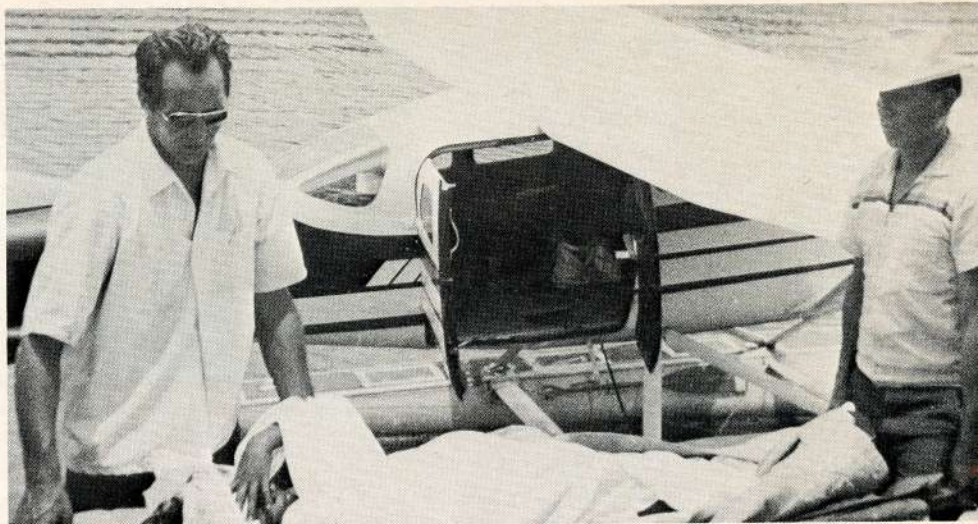
If Wings of Hope, Inc. is able to actually put contributed property to use in its own charitable endeavor, the full fair market value of the contributed property up to 50% of contribution base, may be deducted.

In the case of an individual contributing an aircraft to Wings of Hope, Inc. that he has used only for personal use, his undepreciated cost would be his base. This base would exceed the fair market value of the gift and there would be no appreciation. The full amount of the fair market value would be deductible up to 50% of income.

Regarding bargain sales, it is now generally no longer possible to avoid gain by selling appreciated property to a charity at cost. Formerly, the profit, if any, was measured by the amount received less the entire cost of the property. Now only a portion of the cost is taken into consideration.

Again in the case of an individual having an undepreciated aircraft, if he sells part of the aircraft and contributes part, the contributed part would be fully deductible; and the part sold would not be taxable because it would not exceed his undepreciated tax base. Unused contributions in excess of 50% of contribution base, may be carried forward for 5 years.

Padre Guy Gervais is a French Canadian Priest who devoted years of training for the role of flying missionary. He is now Wings of Hope field director in South America.



Padre Guy Gervais (left) with patient in the jungle. His aircraft is a Cessna 206 float-plane supplied and supported by fellow French Canadians through Wings of Hope.

By **ROBERT S. CHATLEY**  
Development Director, Wings of Hope, Inc.

## Our Man In

**H**E speaks in broken English but his French and Spanish are perfect. He does well, too, with native dialects. But his principal communication is with deeds, not words, and the airplane is his medium.

Padre Gervais took over the Amazon operation in 1968. His exploits over the "green hell" of the jungle where all surface travel is by boat or dug-out canoe reads like a Hollywood movie script. Wings of Hope in that part of the world is the Spanish equivalent, *Alas de Esperanza*. For thousands of miles up and down the tributaries and mainstream of the Amazon below Iquitos, Peru, the sound of any airplane engine represents American friendship to the natives because the Wings of Hope record of lives saved by emergency evacuation of sick and injured to hospitals and misery relieved by delivery of hard-to-get medicines and drugs has spread throughout the area.

### **Tooth-Pulling Flying Padre**

Guy Gervais is a man of many parts — seasoned jungle pilot and mechanic who spent six years in Papua-New Guinea before taking on the Wings of Hope assignment in the Amazon. While learning to fly he served in a hospital in Washington, D. C., where he had practical, rudimentary instruction in medicine and a lot of sociology. He even worked under the direction of an oral surgeon and became adept at pulling teeth — an art that comes in mighty handy as he makes his flying visits into the little Amazon villages where they've never

seen a doctor or a dentist. If you were to build a set of specifications around the ideal missionary bush pilot, Padre Guy of Montreal, Canada would fill every requirement, including complete and undistilled dedication.

After taking the first floatplane into the Amazon in 1968, Gervais' major task was to erect a single sideband radio network that not only penetrates every section of his jungle area but also permits weekly conversations either direct or by "patch" with Wings of Hope headquarters in St. Louis.

Father Guy's first written report, dated 8 June 1968, was mailed out of Iquitos, Peru and covered his first week of operations. He flew a precious cargo from Iquitos to Estrecho on the Putumayo. A mission there had run out of flour and yeast for bread making, were dangerously low on critically-needed medicines and other items. The short hop in the 206 on floats replaced a long overdue three-week voyage by boat!

### **Emergencies in the Jungle**

That first week he flew three emergencies. A two-hundred-mile run for a youngster who caught fire after splashing gasoline all over himself, a woman who had "danced the twist on a Saturday night" and threatened miscarriage and a third person from deep in the jungle suffering from tetanus — all three saved by the air ambulance.

Other typical cases included a woman who fell from a tree while gathering nuts, breaking her back, a young girl of sixteen who had gone into convulsions with tetanus and a

young man who had been bitten by a poisonous snake. In another week he carried a government man from the ministry of education into eight villages where the schools had never had an official visit nor enough books to go around. The Wings of Hope airplane hauled in the books and the schools are open on a full time basis.

In a letter of thanks to Dr. John C. Versnel, a founder of Wings of Hope who had generously donated dental equipment to the Peruvian operation, Padre Guy wrote as follows:

"I have good news for you in terms of medicine. Since my arrival I had my first oral surgeries yesterday. Fourteen patients and three hours of work in Estrecho. I used the anesthetic you gave me and the three-point forceps. They are wonderful for the molars. I put in successful practice your advice: rolling in the socket. Many of these patients had not slept for weeks and yesterday we helped the sufferings. The grown people sat on a straight chair and the kids on the table."

### **All in a Day's Flying**

The Padre's reports are classics of colorful description. Here's one covering a flight from Sargente Tehande, a village of 150 people on the Colombian border, where a typhoid fever victim had to be flown to the Iquitos hospital, a distance of 350 miles — four days by boat, 2 hours 45 minutes by Wings of Hope:

"The first doctor of Iquitos, Col. Joseph Cesar del Aquila, took off with me on the mission. We landed and the sick man had his family there at the



Map shows area covered by Cessna 206, pictured at right. Dug-out canoe is only surface transport in most villages along the Amazon and its tributaries.

# The Amazon

dock. I want to explain to you the loading in the aircraft. On the bank of the Putumayo was the Colonel doctor with 6 bananas on each shoulder, cap on his head and quite energetic for his 64 years because he was really giving orders, the same way my grandfather did when I was seven years old. Then the sick man, Lopez, shaking with fever. He had lost 18 pounds in a week. His wife Norma, age 27, was holding a 2-months old baby and three other kids beside her, plus boxes and bags. I must not forget the four hens. So I made the organization to put my 8 passengers, baggage and hens.

## How It Works

"I suggested first that the airplane should be loaded with human beings and that these people could buy hens in Iquitos. The Colonel replied to me that these red hens were a gift from the villagers and he could not leave them behind and talking that way he grabbed two hens on each hand still holding his Colonel's stick and walked onto the pontoons and like a young man he tried to climb into the airplane, he made the first step but fell on the front seat, still holding those famous hens. As I am still strong I gave him a powerful push and there the Colonel sat in the plane, the hens waving the wings and spreading clouds of feathers.

"'Good trip with your flying gift, Colonel,' I said. Then Lopez, his wife and the four kids took places in the back and gave salutations to the villagers who wished us a *felix viage*.

We had brought hope to them and after take-off I smiled to Lopez. His face and eyes filled with fever, he says to me, 'Thousand of thanks, Padre, to come and fetch me, you save my life.' This morning I checked at the hospital and he is recovering."

## Thanks To St. Joseph

Apparently St. Joseph, the patron Saint of families, is also the Padre's patron saint. Many of his reports contain references such as:

"The interfaith aspect of Wings of Hope is always tormenting my mind for I wonder if I really do enough to promote it. Now time has come. Mr. Charles Hoynes, an evangelist who has his head well screwed on his shoulders, real good common sense, knows our program for over a year now and for May 25 his top managers from USA are coming. So I will be flying them into the jungle. He told me that his two superiors can throw some money in any project that makes sense. Let us hope in St. Joseph and that this will start flying more for the protestant missionaries here."

When news came from New Guinea that a pilot-mechanic Benedictine brother was interested in joining up with Wings of Hope, Padre Guy, who had flown with the man out of Wewak from 1961 to 1965, wrote, "It looks as if St. Joseph is taking good care of us in the right time."

All the aircraft in the world would be useless in missionary work without radio communication. The Amazon jungle system is excellent. They have nine installations at missions and one

on a boat that plies the rivers full time with a missionary on board. On one occasion Padre Guy talked to the boat missionary over a 1,200-mile distance from Iquitos, Peru to the confluence of the Putumayo with the Amazon in Brazil. "I think," writes Gervais, "that the RF communication people will be happy to hear that their radios are powerful enough to transmit such distances loud and clear with no interference whatsoever."

## Army Friends Help

He has made friends with Peruvian officials throughout the country, notably in the larger headquarters town of Iquitos. The army-managed airport permits him to maintain a lean-to hangar for servicing. Recently, army officials have donated aviation gasoline to the cause. One mission held a bingo and raised \$100 for the operation and gifts sometimes are made by grateful recipients of the service since actual payment is not permitted.

Once a year the Padre returns to his home station at Montreal, Canada and visits with the French-Canadian Wings of Hope group sponsoring one of the airplanes in the jungle. He often takes time off from his "vacation" to make a few talks and TV appearances in the States, and with his dedication and picturesque speech, is one of Wings of Hope's most productive ambassadors.

Wouldn't you agree that Padre Guy is quite a guy? Apparently St. Joseph thinks so, as do the thousands of Amazon jungle dwellers who depend on Wings of Hope.

**This article on Medico is as current today as it was in April, 1958, when it appeared in the New York Times magazine section. It is reprinted in part with permission of the New York Times**

# Foreign, But Human, Aid

BY THOMAS A. DOOLEY

**T**HERE is a general belief that foreign aid is the job of the Government alone. But in actual fact, no Government can ever replace the individual, his self-reliance, his initiative, his sense of self-responsibility. No dollars-to-person program can ever replace a person-to-person program. No dollars-to-person program can ever inject the warmth, compassion, and spontaneity that characterize the American way of life. Besides, America is based upon the concept that ordinary men can accomplish extraordinary things.

For several years I have run a small village hospital on stilts. Our hospital is on the China border in the northernmost village of the Kingdom of Laos. The men who work with me are superb men. Three of them were former Navy corpsmen who worked with me in Vietnam during the anguish of the refugee evacuation of 1954 and 1955. Two other men were students at the University of Notre Dame. These men know how to deal with the primitive people of our village, not as they *ought* to be, but as they are.

From the experience my men and I had as a result of our Navy duty in Indochina in 1954-55, we learned the importance of each man doing what he can. We learned that it was our individual responsibility to aid those in the world who "ain't got it so good." We formed a medical mission to accomplish what we could. Perhaps it was paltry in terms of dollars. But we believe that it is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness.

In 1956, at the invitation of the Royal Kingdom of Laos, we went to the northernmost tip of that nation, an area where white men had rarely been seen. We built a hut of a hospital. We had no electricity, no running water, no electronic physiotherapy paraphernalia. But we did have the most important qualification for a

hospital — compassion.

In that simple experience, plus our experience in Vietnam, we have seen the value of medicine, and the power of kindness. And we have seen the awesome need! Our experience has proved to us that a heart-to-heart, person-to-person program, however simple, can be extremely powerful, efficacious and appreciated.

Our experience has shown, too, that it is wrong to stand on a pedestal and attempt to reach down and mold the Asian to a mirror image of the American. We have seen that it is much better (though sometimes more messy) to get off that pedestal, stand knee-deep in the stench of some parts of Asia, and attempt to urge and lift the Asian up a bit — gently, slowly, steadily, but surely.

The pitfalls of foreign aid are many — in the hands of Government or in the hands of the individual. One of the most malicious dangers is the attitude, "Why help them? They don't want to progress, they are content the way they are. . . . Anyway, they can never handle the job without us." The effects of this haughty, supercilious attitude can be devastating. The recent history of colonialism has proved that.

Another attitude frequently adopted by those who aid foreign nations is that no other nation, no other culture, no other civilization than their own has anything to offer the world that is worth while. This "white-man-ism" is historically untrue.

In dealing with people less advanced than we, let us also remember that this is human intercourse. This is a human picture. We must remember that men and women are of flesh and hue, heart and soul, as well as simply people who need penicillin, electricity and plumbing. In each Asian there are strong undercurrents — "face," pride, ambition, the yearning for betterment. If the aider plunges into the stream oblivious of



*Prior to his untimely death, Dr. Tom Dooley and co-workers established a score of medical units in remote areas, manned by volunteers. Wings of Hope agrees with him that such efforts should be started by us and eventually turned over to the natives as we move on to other areas of desperate need.*

them, he may be swept away.

As even the poorest peasant has his pride, we established the rule that every peasant treated in our hospital had to pay for our services according to his means. We had a large basket just inside the clinic entrance. Every day it was covered with eggs, fruit, vegetables, scrawny chickens, and sometimes a couple of bottles of moonshine (which burned beautifully in our spirit lamps).

So it comes about that everything we cast upon the waters in Asia will return to us a thousandfold. If we cast nothing, we well may lose all.

The earth has shrunk too much to permit Americans to live in a mansion in the midst of world slums. Two-thirds of the human race, to whom adequate care is inaccessible, are sick and hungry. There are vast millions of souls who have never seen a doctor. There are people who are born, suffer, live, suffer and die without the simplest medicine. Many of these people are becoming convinced that their plight is not inevitable.

Here it becomes obvious that medicine has a most powerful effect on the recipient. And it is appallingly obvious that the United States is *not* utilizing therapeutic medicine as an instrument of our foreign policy. By failing to do this we are missing an important opportunity, with perhaps a dreadful consequence. The sick and hungry of the world can give impetus to the unrest that is often the prelude to revolution.

In the field of foreign aid, medicine has a unique role. It has a role in human destiny, far above the give and take of national rivalries. It rises above the fears of colonialism or of domination by selfish foreign interests. At the same time, medicine affords American doctors an opportunity for service to all mankind while serving their own nation.

Now the cynic says: "All right, it should be done. Along with Government dollars, libraries, guns and tanks, let's send individual doctors, nurses, aides and pills. But you'll never find enough of any of the four."

Another reaction always brought forth by the suggestion of a medical-aid program on a non-government, nonsectarian level is: "How much will that kind of program cost?" From personal experience, I have the statistics. With contributed medicines and cooperation from the host Government, we built, stocked, supplied and ran a hospital treating about 100 out-patients a day and hospitalizing thirty patients. Included was a teaching program and plenty of major surgery. The cost of this per month was less than that of a low-price 1958 automobile.

And to stagger the cynic, here are the statistics on the response from the "capitalistic companies" and the hearts of America. From five pharmaceutical houses alone we have been given enough of the basic pharmaceuticals to run six small hospitals in the field for two years. From one surgical supply house we have been given the basic instruments for six operating rooms. We also have six medical libraries, and tens of thousands of dollars' worth of other medicines and instruments from individual donors.

It has long been realized that foreign aid is essential to the life of other nations. And their life is essential to ours. Lately the unique role of therapeutic medicine, on a Government or private scale, has become more obvious. Simple, tender, loving care, even the crudest kind of medicine, inexpertly practiced by the most ordinary doctors, can change a people's fear and hatred into friendship and understanding. The majesty of medicine can reach into the hearts and souls of a nation. It can translate the brotherhood of man into a reality that plain people can understand.