



Children in orphanage in Nha Trang.

## MILPHAP-19 Newsletter 2007



# MILPHAP-19 Bringing Life-Saving Medical Innovation to Vietnam



Dr. Gerald Zelikovsky (front row center with mustache) and members of MILPHAP-19, Buon Ma Thuot, 1969-70.

**M**ILPHAP-19 has continued to increase its presence in different remote areas of Vietnam and with your help this will continue to grow. To date, MILPHAP-19 has established programs in the following cities: Vinh Long, Ghia Nhia, Nha Trang, Buon Ma Thuot, Qui Nhon, Kom Tum and Lao Cai. MILPHAP-19 is considering establishing similar programs in remote areas of Laos and Cambodia.

I thank you for your support and hope that it will continue in the future.  
Tax-deductible contributions can be made to:

**MILPHAP-19**  
c/o Gerald Zelikovsky, M.D.  
5 East 84<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10028

**I**n 1969 and 1970 I served in the United States Army in Vietnam as General Surgeon in a province hospital in the Central Highlands, which was mainly an aborigine community. During the war, almost all

the Vietnamese physicians were in the Vietnamese Army, resulting in a lack of medical care for the civilian population. There were 54 different ethnic minorities (aborigine groups) scattered throughout the Central Highlands of Vietnam.



Dr. Zelikovsky with Aborigine in Buon Ma Thuot District.

In 1999 I returned to Vietnam to visit the communities that I had served during the war. I discovered at that time that the medical facilities were in worse conditions than they had been during the war and that the Vietnamese physicians lacked experience, medical equipment and supplies. I consulted with the Medical Directors of the Province Hospital

and found that they were very receptive to receiving help, as far as medical technology and education. I met with the medical directors of 2 province hospitals in Buon Ma Thuot and Nha Trang and proposed setting up an organization to aid these areas as far as medical education, equipment, books, computers and onsite instruction of surgical techniques. I also visited orphanages and remote



MILPHAP has established surgical training programs in the cities indicated in red.



*Kitchen of orphanage. Food Budget for orphanage is \$6/month for each child.*



*Orphanage in Buon Ma Thuot.*



*Dr. Zelikovsky observing Dr. Tan perform a prostatectomy in Buon Ma Thuot.*

villages in these provinces and proposed a process to help them as far as education and delivery of medical services.

**T**he name of the medical unit I served in Vietnam was called the “Military Provincial Hospital Advisory Program Team 19,” hence the name of my foundation of MILPHAP-19.

**S**ince that time I’ve returned to Vietnam once or twice a year to provide medical equipment where it was needed and instruction on how to use this equipment.

**I** have since been joined in this endeavor by surgical colleagues of mine in the areas of general surgery, thoracic surgery, gastroenterology,

vascular surgery and other urologists like myself.

**E**ndoscopic surgery of the prostate was virtually unavailable throughout Vietnam except for hospitals in Saigon and Hanoi. MILPHAP has since furnished endoscopic urological equipment for the surgery of enlarged prostates and bladder tumors to the province hospitals in Buon Ma Thuot, Nha Trang, Kon Tum, Qui Nhon, Vinh Long and Lao Cai. The first endoscopic prostatectomy ever done in these provinces was performed with the equipment that MILPHAP donated and was performed by me instructing the local Vietnamese urologists. I am proud to say that over 1,000 operations on prostates and bladder tumors are done a year throughout Vietnam with



*Dr. Zelikovsky performing prostatic surgery in Lao Cai.*



*Dr. Zelikovsky performing the first endoscopic prostatectomy ever done in Kon Tum.*



Newborn orphan in Nha Trang.

Thousands of patients have been treated with the benefit of the surgical equipment and training that we have provided to remote hospitals in Vietnam and I feel privileged to have been part of this. None of this would have been possible without the help of my friends in the medical community and without your help.



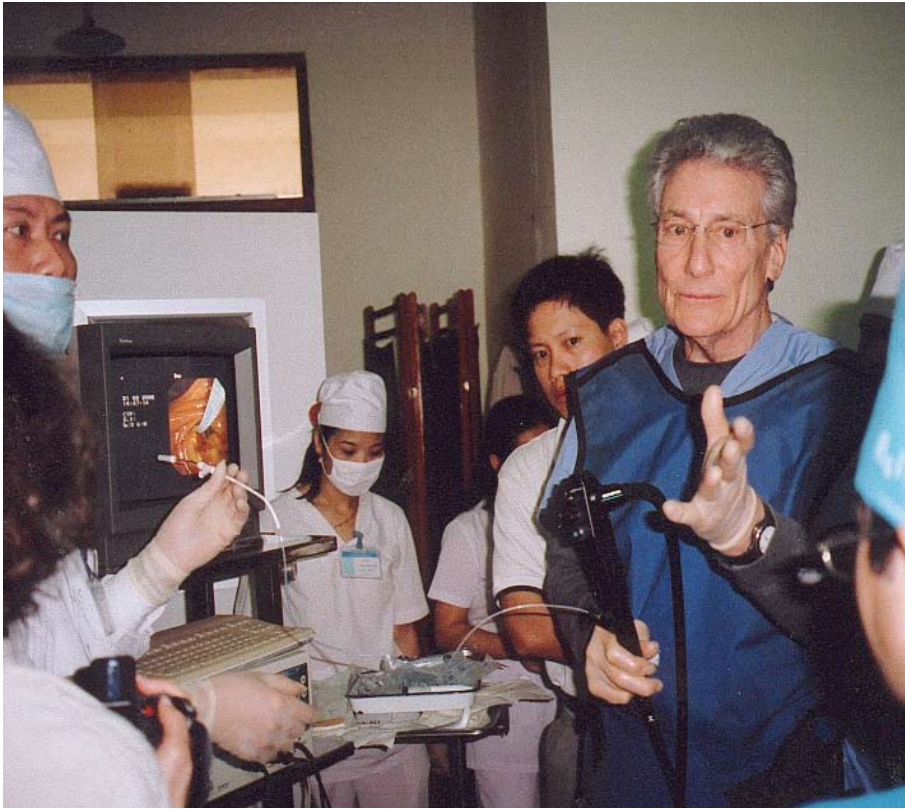
*A 6-week-old child with a benign tumor of the neck.*



*3 months later, after a successful surgery in Ho Chi Min City paid for by MILPHAP-19.*



*Same child at 2-years-old.*



*Dr. Jerome Siegel instructing Vietnamese gastroenterologists in Lao Cai.*

Vietnam in the province hospital in Nha Trang.

**I**t came to my attention that in the central portion of Vietnam there are no pediatric surgeons. All pediatric surgeries are done either in Saigon or Hanoi. Most of the population of these areas are very poor with no ability to travel to these areas or to obtain surgical treatment. This was made obvious to me by a newborn child with a benign tumor of the neck. I arranged for the child to go to Saigon where she was treated and where she has developed normally.

I will be setting a fund whereby children with serious surgical anomalies can be referred to hospitals in Saigon or Hanoi and the cost of the treatment and travel will be paid for by MILPHAP.

**T**he program that I started so innocently in 1999 has grown and blossomed beyond my wildest dreams. It has become obvious that there was a need for medical equipment and instruction that has been lacking in remote areas in Vietnam. We are presently studying the need to provide these services in rural hospitals in Laos and Cambodia.



*Dr. Karen McGinnis performing removal of right lung of patient with cancer, being assisted by the Director of Surgery of Nha Trang.*

our donated equipment.

**T**he first endoscopic removal of stones from the bile ducts of the gall bladder was performed by Dr. Jerome Siegel in Vinh Long, Nha Trang and Lao Cai. Dr. Karen McGinnis, an eminent thoracic surgeon, performed the first open-lung biopsy and resection of a cancerous tumor of the lung in Nha Trang in 2001. Dr. Ronald Chamberlain, the Chief of General Surgery at St. Barnabas Hospital, performed complicated abdominal bypass surgery in Vinh Long, Nha Trang, and Qui Nhon. He also performed the first intestinal stapling procedures done in the central portion of



*Dr. Ronald Chamberlain performing removal of rectal cancer in Nha Trang.*