



MALACANANG
MANILA

(28 May 1955)

M E S S A G E

While we look up to the local U. S. Air Force as a vigilant co-guardian of our own modest Air Force over Philippine skies, we have perhaps heard little of the U. S. 31st Air Rescue Squadron.

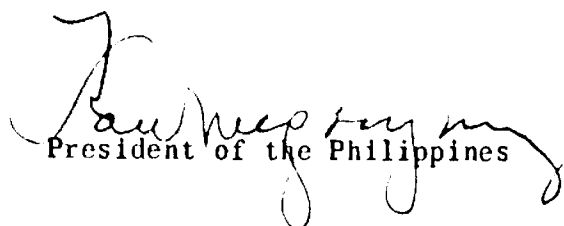
But then, as in every war, there are heroes unsung and unnoticed. This fact of course does not in any way make them less great or less appreciated. And so is this true of this U. S. Air Rescue Squadron which operates without fanfare behind the huge picture that is the U.S. air complement in the Philippines today. For while it has operated in comparative obscurity, it has however rendered heroic services in quite a number of local calamities of no little magnitude and gone out of its way on many occasions to perform urgent mercy missions here and there.

Foremost among its latest activities was the invaluable assistance it gave on the occasion of the recent devastating series of earthquakes in Lanao and its environs. As one man the squadron's crew airlifted much-needed medical supplies and medical officers to the stricken populace and thereby saved as many lives as possible.

Of the mercy missions it had undertaken, mention should be made of the evacuation of a critically wounded policeman from Palanan, Isabela to Clark Air Force Base Hospital for an emergency operation; the evacuation of a small Filipino girl stricken with polio from Puerto Princesa to Manila; the evacuation of seriously wounded Mayor Felicisimo Aguila of Misamis Oriental to a hospital in Manila; the delivery of an urgently needed respirator to a Baguio hospital in a last-hour attempt to save the life of the late Captain Claro Recto, Jr., Philippine Air Force.

This Air Rescue Squadron is undoubtedly a humanitarian arm of the local U. S. aerial armada. But perhaps we might look at it in another light and concede that it is a factor in its own right which cannot but further enhance existing Philippine-American relations.

I am certain I am not alone in expressing the highest appreciation of the worthy deeds of this efficient and active air Squadron. That a factual record of its exploits has been made, is rightfully due its officers and crew who are all doing a splendid job.


President of the Philippines