



Dr. Leonidas Berry organizing the Flying Black Medics Program to Cairo, Illinois in 1970.

Leonidas H. Berry, 1965; and Jasper F. Williams Sr., 1975.

Two of the most notable of those programs involved Dr. Leonidas Berry, who served as president of the CCPA in 1950. The first, called the Berry Plan by the media, occurred during Berry's tenure. It was the first major attempt in Chicago to control narcotic addiction through outpatient treatment. The prevailing theory until that time had been that such addiction could only be treated if people were confined either to hospitals or jails. Unfortunately, narcotics addiction then was looked upon more as a crime that required incarceration and punishment than as an illness that could be treated more

humanely and render more positive results in restoring its victims as productive members of society.

"In 1950, there was quite a hullabaloo about narcotic addiction among teenagers and school children," explains Dr. Berry, reflecting upon a condition still prevalent today, 34 years later; only today, the variety of drugs available for usage and subsequent dependence has increased.

"There weren't amphetamines and hallucinogens readily available back then," Berry says. "People basically started with reefer, got hooked and graduated to stronger drugs, which mostly consisted only of mainlining heroin and taking some cocaine. Drug

usage has never really disappeared from society, so you can't say there has really been such a strong recurrence today; it's just that more drugs have been added."

Being president of the organization at the time, Berry wanted to get the CCPA involved in the problem, therefore, he researched various methods used around the country and, indeed, the world, to combat narcotic addiction. He studied the first recorded incidences of narcotics usage in America, "which was among Chinese opium smokers who were building the railroads to the West," according to Dr. Berry, "and on through the days when cocaine was the great drug for sniffing in the latter part