



GUATEMALAN INDIANS PRAY AS AFTERSHOCKS ROCK THEIR COUNTRY
 . . . survivors of earthquake gather in devastated villages

AP Photo

Mass Starvation, Illness Feared As Aftershocks Shake Guatemala

GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala (AP) — Foreign disaster experts expressed fears Saturday that mass starvation and serious epidemics will envelop Guatemala in the aftermath of earthquakes that by official estimate have killed at least 7,375 people.

Ruined roads, broken bridges, landslides and fuel shortages blocked delivery of food into devastated areas outside Guatemala City and hundreds of aftershocks still rolled through the Central American country of 6 million persons.

Messengers rode mules and bicycles into the capital with tales of whole communities leveled by the shaking earth, adding to the ever-mounting death toll.

The emergency relief committee said at least 7,375 persons had died since the first earthquake before dawn Wednesday. Unofficial estimates from foreign rescue workers put the toll as high as 14,000.

From 5 a.m. Friday until 5 a.m. Saturday the national observatory recorded 133 new tremors, which kept the devastated country in turmoil.

Health experts expressed fear that

epidemics could cause more deaths because many dead were being buried in shallow graves, people were drinking untreated water and no sanitary facilities exist for thousands living in makeshift shelters in city streets.

More than 400 people, these experts said, were buried in a common grave less than four feet deep near Chimalteango. A radio station said survivors north of Guatemala City were begging for guns in order to shoot dogs digging up shallow graves.

Fearing widespread epidemics, President Kjell Eugenio Laugerud on Friday night ordered mass vaccinations and the immediate burial of the dead in common graves.

Relief aid continued to pour into Guatemala City, but blocked transportation routes kept it from being distributed to provincial areas with the greatest need.

A U.S. Army field hospital arrived in the capital Thursday, but it took almost 24 hours to move the hospital 38 miles to its destination at Chimalteango.

Disaster teams from the United States, Mexico and Venezuela were

trying to get food and medical facilities into the ravaged areas.

The road to Progreso, less than 50 miles from the capital, was cut in more than 100 places by landslides. As soon as a slide is cleared, new tremors bring down tons of rock and dirt from the mountainsides in other places.

The national railway system is paralyzed and predictions are that it will be weeks before it can operate again.

United States aid has poured into Guatemala City, according to embassy sources. The 100-bed field hospital includes 9 doctors, 24 nurses and 196 aides preparing food. The Guatemalan army set up a 200-bed field hospital in the capital, and Nicaragua has a smaller hospital in another badly hit area. Experts said more hospitals are needed.

Sixteen American airplanes and 18 helicopters flew in. Eight more helicopters, with 15,000-pound capacities, were due today and Monday.

Caritas, the Roman Catholic relief organization, delivered a million pounds of food, most of which was being distributed in the interior of the country.

Boise Missionary Reported Safe

Mormon Church officials in Guatemala City have notified the parents of a Boise missionary that their son is safe.

Mary Richman, 5111 Mountain View, whose son Larry, 19, has been a missionary in Guatemala for more than a year, said Saturday the Guatemala City Mission notified her that all 200 Mormon missionaries are accounted for. One American Mormon missionary was reported injured but was not identified.

The mission spokesman said the only

missionary injured was a Maryland man who was flown out by plane Friday, Richman said. The other missionaries are distributing food and cleaning up the earthquake-torn area, she said.

Other Boise parents, Mr. and Mrs. Archie Stephenson, 3020 Wingate Lane, said Saturday they have not heard whether their son Lane, 19, is safe. Stephenson said he believes his son is alright or he would have heard otherwise.

The Stephensons have attempted to reach their son through a ham radio operator in Boise without success. Friends in Orem, Utah, have contacted the mission home in Guatemala which assured them Lane is safe, Stephenson said.

Another Boise missionary, Virgil Johnson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Don Johnson, is working in Guatemala. The Johnsons could not be reached Saturday as to whether their son is safe.