

Bennington Heads South; Helicopters Come Ashore

Twenty-two flying Marines came ashore today and the Navy's U.S.S. Bennington, her mission of mercy completed, sailed from Humboldt shores at 10 a.m.

The Bennington's departure today officially launched the Redwood Empire into the clean-up stage of the flood disaster. All other operations will be conducted by land-based choppers.

Humboldt County Supervisor William Landis pointed out yesterday that there may still be many stranded flood victims in remote parts of the county in need of emergency aid.

"They could be anywhere," Landis said, such as in the vicinity of Bald Mountain, Orick or Orleans.

But the remaining flood victims will be aided by land-based choppers. The Bennington's mission is completed, Landis said a few good days of flying weather and the whole area will be covered.

Admiral Robert Macpherson today came ashore to pay his final respects and listed the Bennington's time of departure

as 10 o'clock. The U.S. Army is now in command.

Meanwhile, the Office of Civil Defense reported that road passes are required for motorists who wish to travel to Alton, Ferndale, Loleta Bottoms, the south of Table Bluff, points north of Orick and areas beyond Kneeland.

The Office said passes may be obtained from the Arcata Police Department, the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office, and at Civil Defense Headquarters.

State Marshall Warns Against Burning Briquets

The State Fire Marshall warned through Civil Defense radio here today against the use of charcoal briquets for cooking or heating inside houses or in any other closed area.

The burning briquets give off quantities of carbon monoxide gas and displace oxygen, the Marshall's report said. Several cases of monoxide poisoning already have been reported, but there has been no report of fatalities.

Civil Defense has announced that there are adequate supplies of LP gas fuels if those using them will conserve carefully. There was also a warning against tampering with any LP gas tank or valve due to the highly volatile nature of the contents.

Civil Defense Director Norman P. Robertson stated today that there are adequate supplies of food now on hand for all needs in the county.

Continue Copter Rescues

Orderly air evacuation of still-stranded persons from isolated areas via helicopter is continuing today and supplies and medicines are being brought in, but there was no official tally as to how many persons have been brought out or remain to be evacuated.

"We're not bothering with statistics — we're just going in and getting them and bringing them out," Major Paul Best, helicopter coordinating officer for Civil Defense, said today.

The U. S. Marine Corps 'copters now in use here are the same type as those used in Vietnam.

"We have it down to a pretty good routine — the control is the same as that used in military action," Best stated.

Major David Bell, Army operations control officer, said there are still some evacuees at places which cannot be reached at present because of the weather.

A radio report to the helicopter control center here said that it is snowing heavily in the higher area, with 19-inches reported at Ruth Lake and still falling. 'Copter operation there was reported unfeasible.

Weather in the southern Garberville sector is reported as "blue skies, visibility unlimited," but with low overcast north of Hedway. The bright southern weather presumably means that the 'copters were able to reach two Greyhound bus-loads of passengers stranded at Terrace Gardens south of that point.

Major Best said that original estimates were that 1,000 persons would have to be evacuated, but that some have refused to come out.

"We are not getting some where we expected to, and we are getting some where we did not expect to," he stated.