

NICARAGUA

Volcano Eruption

February 3, 1971

... of Cerro Negro, for the second time in two years, destroys 100 houses and deposits ash over a 3,400 square mile area. 600 people were left homeless, 1,000 were evacuated and 3,000 were directly affected. Considerable crop damage occurred. Estimated dollar damage—\$2 million.

Value of U.S. Assistance	\$29,630
Value of Assistance by Other Nations	18,140
	<hr/> \$47,770

DETAILS:

The Cerro Negro Volcano, which has a long history of volcanic eruption, erupted once again at 09:30 hours on February 3, 1971, and continued for ten days, causing great damage to the surrounding area. The last previous eruption was on December 10, 1968. The 1971 eruption was the more serious of the two.

Cerro Negro is located in a chain of a group of five volcanoes on latitude 12°31' North and longitude 86°44' West. It is 33 miles northeast from the city of Leon and 35 miles northwest from Managua.

According to a Government of Nicaragua report, the fallout covered an area of more than 3,400 square miles with ash. The report divided the area into four zones. Zone 1, the most affected area, (approximately 35 square miles) was covered with 4 to 16 inches of ash. Zone 2, with a cover of from 1 to 4 inches, extended approximately 55 square miles. The other two zones were less affected. The city of Leon, with a population

of 60,000, was covered with over 1 inch of ash. The report stated that land in Zone 1 was unsuitable for further cultivation and recommended that families living in this area be re-settled. The other three zones remained suitable for cultivation.

The livelihood of approximately 3,000 people was affected by the ash fallout. Of these 3,000, approximately 1,000 had to be evacuated to emergency camps.

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The Red Cross and the Leon Emergency Relief Committee, with assistance from the "Civil Action" of the National Guard, the Public Works Department, the Nicaraguan Institute of Development, the Leon Fire Department and many other government and private agencies, were quick to evacuate disaster victims and to establish emergency camps.

The Red Cross and the Leon Emergency Committee mounted a local press, radio and T.V. appeal, to obtain funds and supplies for the victims. These local donations amounted to approximately \$42,000 in local currency and \$14,000 in goods.

President Somoza declared the eruption a National Emergency on February 10 and established a Commission headed by the Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Economy to coordinate international assistance.

The U.S. Mission reported that while there were some problems in coordinating relief operations and some duplication of effort, the actions taken were responsive to the needs of the people and effective.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

The American Ambassador did not exercise his authority to use A.I.D. contingency funds for disaster

assistance, but the U.S. Mission donated \$5,000 from USAID Special Development Fund to the Nicaraguan Red Cross

\$5,000

In addition, USAID Food for Peace Officer authorized the immediate transfer of 8,251 pounds of P.L. 480 Food for Peace nonfat dry milk, flour, corn and oil from CRS in-country stocks to the Leon Emergency Committee. Estimated value

\$ 710

\$5,710

After an appeal to the Ambassador by the Minister of Agriculture, in his capacity as Emergency Coordinator, to airlift the homeless to new agricultural lands, the U.S. Military Mission sent two C-123 airplanes on March 19 from the U.S. Southern Command in Panama. Costs were not reported and A.I.D. was not requested to reimburse the Military from contingency funds. The two airplanes flew 109 sorties, in a 9-day airlift, that carried 885 people and 206,872 pounds of cargo, including various small animals, from Leon to the new agricultural colony of Neuva Guinea. A 5-man U.S. Army Community Development Team (chief of party, doctor, veterinarian, sanitary engineer, medical specialist) also from the U.S. Southern Command, spent five days in assisting the new colony.

The U.S. Mission kept very close contact with the disaster relief operation, and Mission personnel made many trips to the disaster area and to the emergency camps, including a visit by the Ambassador.

During the emergency period, the American Embassy indicated there would be no need to send tents from the A.I.D. Disaster Reserve in Panama. The Nicaragua National Guard had approximately 150 tents that had been supplied by AID/DRC for the January 1968 earthquake.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY U.S. VOLUNTARY AGENCIES:

American National Red Cross

ANRC made a cash donation of \$5,000 and paid expenses of a League of Red Cross Societies Delegate in the amount of \$400. The ANRC also provided friendship boxes valued at \$4,000, for a total of ..

\$ 9,400

Catholic Relief Services

The CRS Director in Nicaragua visited the disaster area with the USAID Food for Peace Officer. In addition to making available USG P.L. 480 food commodities, CRS provided 520 pounds of clothing, value

\$ 520

Sister City Program

The Hialeah-Managua Sister City Program contributed 7 tons of medicines, food supplies and clothing. No value was reported and in absence of this, AID/DRC estimated it at \$1 per pound for a total value of

\$14,000

Total Assistance U.S. Voluntary Agencies

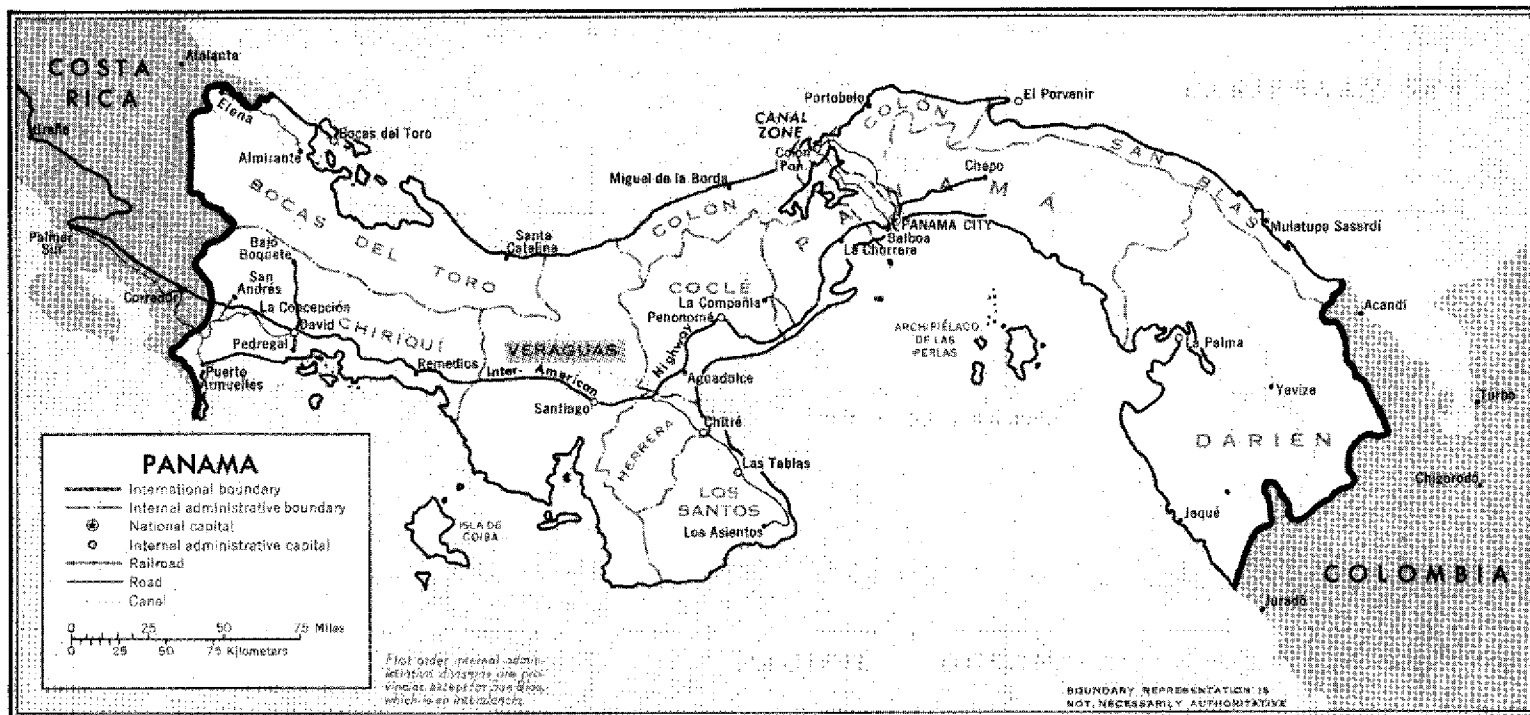
\$23,920

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY OTHER NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

United Nations—agricultural tools costing \$15,000
Canada—disaster supplies 2,740
Honduras—cash 400
also medical team

\$18,140

It was reported that Panama and Brazil also provided small amounts of medicine, clothing, food and some cash but quantities and value were not given. The Swiss Red Cross and El Salvador also offered assistance.



PANAMA Crop Failures 1970

...resulting from unusually heavy winter rains affect 40,345 people in Veraguas Province.

CARE and Catholic Relief Services deployed 485,950 pounds of USG Food for Peace wheat, vegetable oil, cornmeal, rolled oats, bulgur wheat and CSM to feed 7,443 families for a period of one month, at the request of the Government of Panama Community Development Agency and with the approval of the U.S. AID Mission in Panama.

Value of USG Food Assistance\$32,268

