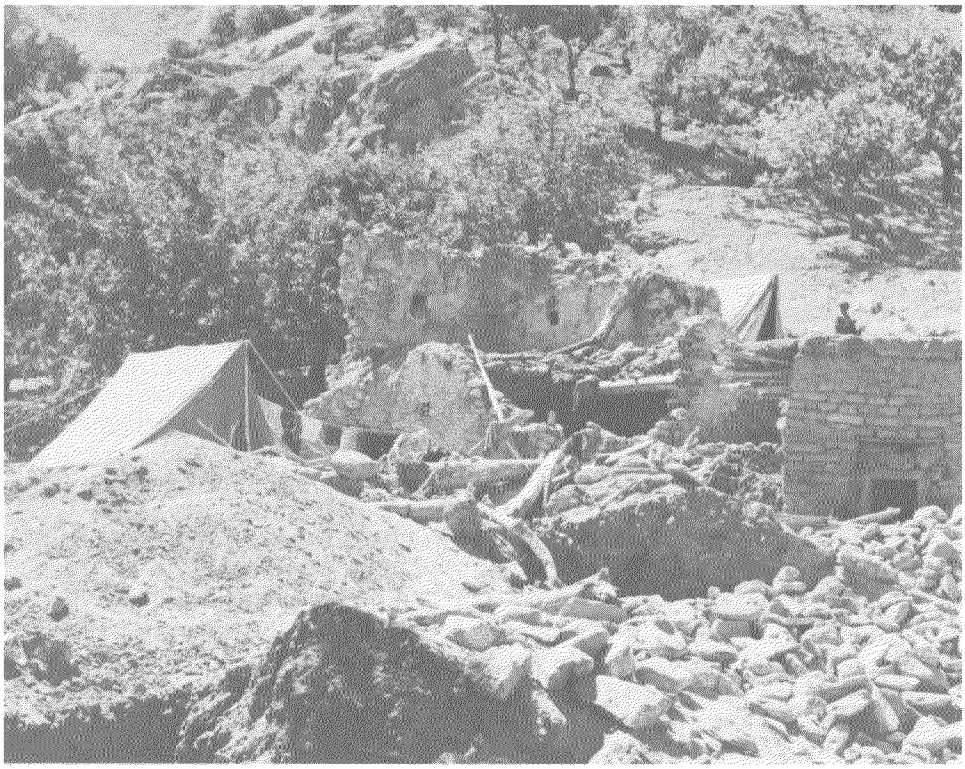
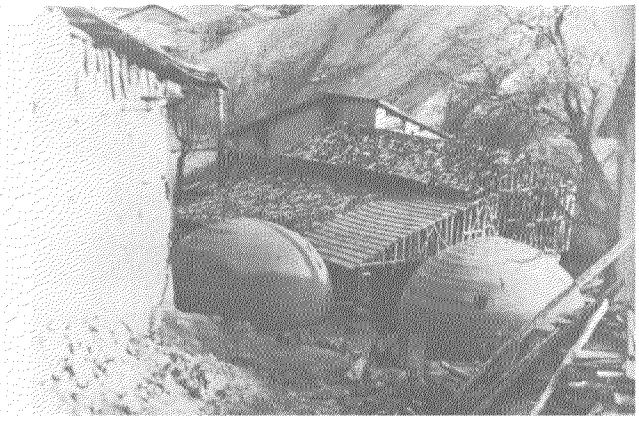


A 1976 flood in the Pansear Valley of Afghanistan washed most of this home away. Relief tents were placed within the building ruins, possibly to protect belongings (including animals) and preserve the ownership of the home.

Managua earthquake, Nicaragua, 1972—Coyotepe Camp, Masaya. The tents came from the emergency stockpile of the US Government's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). Three hundred and sixty tents were provided. Occupancy, at its peak, reached 60 per cent.



(Credit: Michael Menzies)

Following the 1970 Gediz earthquake in Turkey, the West German Red Cross in collaboration with the Bayer Chemical Company used their polyurethane disaster shelter igloos for the first time. (They were used on two other occasions, Chimbote, Peru 1970, and Nicaragua 1972.) This photograph shows how one family has taken their igloos from the site and has carried them to a farm, probably for use as stables, or animal houses.

The record of the performance of imported emergency shelters and the role they play during the emergency period suggest the following conclusions:

(*a*) Emergency shelters made of local materials are both helpful and necessary in refugee camps resulting from war and civil strife, but their effectiveness after a natural disaster appears to be limited.

(*b*) The majority of foreign assisting groups have concentrated on designing emergency shelter units which can be quickly flown in and erected in large volume. The problem, however, lies less in initial transportation, or in speed of erection, but in the distribution of the units within the disaster-affected area.

(*c*) In practice, few donor-designed emergency shelters serve the purpose for which they were intended, i.e. life support or protection from the elements. The uses to which the survivors have put the units have normally been of a secondary type, i.e. storage, with the families themselves living in adjacent, improvised shelters, built at a fraction of the cost of the donor shelter.