

Earthquake ravages Northern California

From AP and CNS Wires

SAN FRANCISCO — Federal relief workers in Northern California were surprised by the low number of victims seeking aid early this week, as the San Francisco area began recovering from the Oct. 17 earthquake that devastated areas surrounding the epicenter in Santa Cruz.

The quake registered 6.9 on the Richter scale and caused 62 confirmed deaths and more than 3,000 injuries in the San Francisco Bay area. Total property damage was estimated at some \$7 billion.

Early estimates put the death toll from the collapse of Interstate 880 alone at 253, but by Oct. 20 officials were saying the number would be smaller because there were fewer cars under the collapsed freeway than first thought.

One man was pulled alive from his smashed car under the Nimitz Highway debris Oct. 21, attracting the awe of people throughout the country.

Volunteer lines were long and stacks of information huge, but the victims were few Sunday at a disaster center the Federal Emergency Management Agency estab-

lished in San Francisco. And the visits did not change the lives of those who did show up.

Volunteers helped people fill out applications for low-interest loans, individual and family grants, temporary housing, counseling, tax information, legal service referrals, Social Security, veteran's benefits or hiring a contractor.

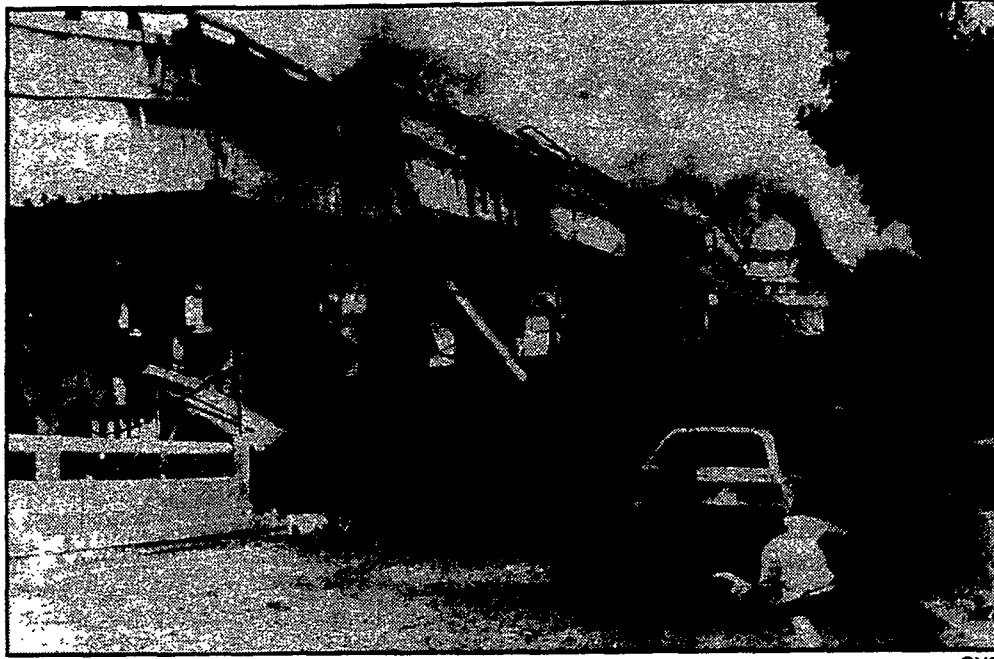
Barbara Nash and Jody Rosendin, both Red Cross volunteers, were concerned about the low turnout.

"It's been a lot slower than we thought," Nash said. "Most of the people want money right now and we can't give them money." But doctors, psychologists and counselors were available, she said.

"I just heard about some aid. I have nothing but these clothes," said Neil Hancock, who lived in one of the Marina district apartment houses leveled by an earthquake-triggered fire.

"The apartment building was totally demolished. It burned down. It's not even a pile of rubble. It's a hole," said Hancock, a title insurance writer.

He's been sleeping and eating at a Red



CNS
Medics help a person injured in the collapse of an Oakland, Calif., freeway following the earthquake that hit the San Francisco area during rush hour Oct. 17. More than 4,100 people are believed to have been injured in the quake, with 62 confirmed dead.

Cross shelter, although he moved in with a co-worker Sunday. He's spent his days distributing supplies for the Red Cross. "Just seeing everybody else being so confused and upset, it's contagious and scary," he said.

The owner of a four-unit Marina apart-

ment building spent several hours at a bank Saturday proving who he was, without identification papers, so he could access the modest balance in his savings account.

"I've walked 100 miles in the last couple of days. I see no faces I recognize. Getting word about my neighbors has been almost impossible. It's nuts," he said. "It's like nobody ever lived there. I feel like I'm in Cincinnati."

Church officials in California, meanwhile, announced that a seminary workman had been killed in the collapse of a tower at the St. Joseph College Seminary in Los Altos.

Curtis Currin, 24, of Half Moon Bay, Calif., was trapped when most of the tower of the seminary collapsed. He died later in the El Camino Hospital. Early indications showed that the seminary, owned by the Diocese of San Jose, may be irreparable.

Church officials also listed a cathedral and at least one Catholic church among property lost to the disaster. The California dioceses of Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose and Monterey — which encompass the areas hardest hit by the earthquake — experienced severe damage.

More damage to property could result from a number of aftershocks expected in the weeks ahead. Landslides from heavy rains Oct. 23 further complicated recovery efforts.

St. Patrick's Church in Watsonville, which is in the Monterey diocese, also appeared likely to be razed.

The Archdiocese of San Francisco estimated damages to church and school structures would exceed \$1 million.

Bishop John S. Cummins of Oakland said Oct. 19 that his earthquake-damaged cathedral may have to be replaced, but whatever the decision it "will impact the diocese severely."

"We may lose it entirely," he said.

Damage to the Cathedral of St. Francis de Sales forced its closing, Father William V. Macchi, diocesan vicar general, told CNS Oct. 19.

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