

Sendoff



UPI Telephoto

The Nixons waved good-by to each other

Pat Nixon Flies Aid to Peru

A.P. & U.P.

El Toro Marine Air Station

Pat Nixon, given a personal sendoff by the President, flew to Peru yesterday with two plane-loads of supplies for earthquake victims there.

"I think it's a very fine symbolic gesture—the fact that while our government has provided aid, our people in a voluntary capacity also wanted to participate," President Nixon said as he and his wife inspected the boxes loaded with blankets, clothing, tents, cots, medical kits and

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camp-style cookstoves.

Mrs. Nixon, flying aboard Air Force One, which had old laundry detergent boxes jammed with relief supplies stacked in the VIP compartment where presidential guests normally ride, left El Toro at 7:39 a.m., and two minutes later a C-135 cargo jet also loaded with supplies took off.

MESSAGE

"The cargo on these two planes is only a small portion of the enormous amount of help, and they are a message of sympathy, affection and respect from the people of America to the people of Peru," the President told newsmen after kissing his wife good-by.

"It is better that she is going than if I were to go," Mr. Nixon said.

Mrs. Nixon and a party of reporters, cameramen, staff members and secret service agents arrived at Jorge Chavez International Airport after a 4180 miles, eight hour flight.

While en route southward aboard the Air Force One, Mrs. Nixon disclosed that she will go directly into the Andes mountains areas hardest hit by the quake, bypassing the Chimbote coastal area she had first been scheduled to visit.

The journey into the mountains, to be made soon after a memorial mass for the earthquake dead, is expected to involve plane and possibly helicopter travel into the Celajon Valley cities of Huaras, Anta and Hungay.

In the first hours of the flight to Lima, Mrs. Nixon endorsed checks for last-minute contributions to the relief funds, bringing the total collection to around \$30,000.

"We've got a lot of dough from our friends," she told reporters aboard the plane, adding that the contributions included one from her husband. The sum was not disclosed.

Mrs. Nixon said the biggest single check, for \$10,000, was from W. Clement Stone, Chicago insurance executive, longtime Nixon friend and Republican party supporter. It came special delivery just before she left.

Discussing how her trip came about, Mrs. Nixon told her reaction to the disaster: "I'll always feel deeply about these things. Because that's the type citizen I am.

"I told my husband how proud I am of the American people. They raised \$2.5 million and they really showed compassion and affection for the Peruvian people."

IDEA

After she had expressed her concern for the thousands of stricken Peruvians, the President said he thought "it was a great idea" for her to make the journey, Mrs. Nixon said.

"I think you should go," he told her.

Asked if she was nervous about her first foreign trip on her own, Mrs. Nixon said, "I travel so much I'm at home in any part of the world. It's always a pleasure and never a problem."

Some people have said she was shy, Mrs. Nixon noted. But she commented: "I am anything but that. I make friends instantly, and have a warm personality."

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S.F. Cheon