

# U.S. Begins Mine Cleanup

## Washington

United States Navy ships and helicopters arrived off Haiphong harbor yesterday to begin clearing thousands of underwater mines from North Vietnamese waters.

Pentagon officials said actual clearing operations probably will get underway Monday.

The helicopter carrier New Orleans, flagship of the

Navy's mine countermeasures Task Force 78, and two amphibious transport docks, the Ogden and DuBuque, dropped anchor outside the channel entrance. They joined several smaller support ships and minesweepers that had been in the area for the past few weeks clearing an anchorage 35 miles southeast to prepare for the operation.

Operation Endsweep, Pentagon code name for the mine-clearing project, involves 20 to 25 ships, about 60 specially equipped helicopters and 5000 men.

Navy sources said it would take more than two months to remove, destroy or deactivate all underwater explosives from the

North Vietnam's seven major ports, harbor approaches and inland waterways

*Associated Press*