

G. V. Sonny Montgomery Weekly Radio Show

Date: March 25, 1993

Audio begins at 00:01

Interviewer: This is Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington. The Pentagon gave final approval to the lease of two Army helicopters to be used as air ambulances in Central Mississippi. What's the story on this?

Montgomery: Governor Fordice came to me about a year ago and said why don't you try to get some Army surplus helicopters to be used as air evacuation vehicles in Central Mississippi. The Governor said we have no helicopters, no air evac vehicles available from Vicksburg, Jackson, Forrest, on over to Meridian over to the Alabama line. Well we do have the air evac in North Mississippi and South Mississippi. So, we went to work, and we had a lot of stumbling blocks but thanks to the help of the Acting Secretary of the Army John Shannon, we got the helicopters. They'll be leased to the state of Mississippi, to the Public Savings Commission for at least 3 years and we can always extend the lease no cost to the state to have to configure it a little better. But they're good helicopters, they're coming from the Army, they'll go to the Public Safety Commission and now we hope that we can get the cooperation from the hospitals that we can save some lives. And if we would have had these helicopters during the the tornado that hit through Rankin county there, we probably would have a chance to to have helped some people and gotten them to these centrally located hospitals. So, reck on the highway if you save two or three lives a year with these hospitals its certainly worth it.

Interviewer: What are the possibilities of basing one of the helicopters in the East Mississippi area around Meridian?

Montgomery: Well I hope we we can do this certainly one should be in the in the Jackson-Vicksburg area and move the other one up from Forest on over to Meridian and base it in Meridian. We we have the space now; we can put a helicopter and one of our Air Guard hangers over there and let the Public Safety Commission furnish the pilots and the crews to to do this. But the helicopter would be would be protected and it just makes sense to put one over around the Jackson area and one in Meridian and I hope we will be able to do that now we've got to get the crews, we've got to work out with the hospitals, that they will accept these patients and I think we can.

Interviewer: Some members of Congress are now cautioning about going ahead with big cuts to the military in light of the uncertain situation in Russia. What about the situation there?

Montgomery: I just attended a hearing this morning with Secretary of State Warren Christopher was talking about the situation in Russia. I little off the subject but I got the impression that there might be trying to work on some compromise between Yeltsin and his strong opponents. Also got the impression that I don't think the Parliament can can impeach him, maybe not have

enough enough votes to do that. So maybe they can work out something. But if they can and it becomes total chaos and the Russian generals move in and start taking over and doing things then what that means we're just gone have to do just the reverse we're doing now and start spending more money on the military, we'll have to alert our bombers. We'll just have to spend a lot of money because we just can't sit back with all these nuclear weapons that Russia's got, Ukraine has got and act like nothing's going to happen. I hope they can settle it, but I've always said we're cutting the military too much and and and too fast whether we even have a problem in Russia. But that is a dangerous situation over there where you're talking about impeaching the President of that country who's trying to set up a democracy and we just better go slow on on defense reductions in my opinion.

Interviewer: Thank you Congressman. This has been Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington presented as a public service by this station.

Audio ends at 04:33