

TRAGEDY

Thurs, May 16 - '68,

At the top of the news tonight -- tragedy around the world. Including tornadoes in the U.S. midsection -- earthquake off Northern Japan -- and a building collapse in London.

Here at home -- the tornado toll now set at more than seventy. With Jonesboro, Arkansas, and nearby Oil Trough, Arkansas -- bearing more than half the burden. Charles City, Iowa -- another disaster area. As scores of twisters -- hopped, skipped and jumped over at least ten ~~states.~~ ^{states.}

Across the Pacific -- in Japan -- the earthquake toll now set at about fifty. Most of them -- residents of Honshu and Hokkaido Islands. Victims of tidal waves -- that followed the offshore quake, which registered, incidentally -- eight-point-two-five on the Richter scale.

In London -- a thunderous explosion on the top floor of a new twenty-two story building. Ripping open a corner of the structure -- from top to bottom. Opening it up

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"like a giant zipper" -- ~~in the words of one witness.~~

Latest reports indicating ^e~~perhaps~~ as many as six dead --
another twelve injured.

PARIS

Pending Saturday's next session -- peace talks in Paris -- an apparent study in futility today. With a U.S. press spokesman -- calling for an end to the East-West propaganda duel. Asserting: "We would be very happy to get away from public statements -- and get down to private negotiations." Followed by North Vietnam's press chief -- who vowed "no compromise." Adding that Hanoi will refuse even to discuss peace -- unless and until the United States stops all bombing and "other acts of war" against North Vietnam.

Be that as it may -- U.S. Ambassador Averell Harriman refusing to yield to pessimism. "There is all this propaganda that has to be got out of the way -- which we had expected" -- said he. Adding that now -- "we will just have to see what comes out ~~of~~^{of} it."

ADD PARIS

CBS News

In later remarks for ~~U.S. television~~ -- Harriman
again urging restoration of a truly demilitarized zone --
between North and South Vietnam. This perhaps the
"breaking point" in the Paris impasse -- said he. Suggesting
that President Johnson might offer in return -- a total
U.S. bombing halt of the Communist North.

SAIGON FOLLOW PARIS

Meanwhile, the cost of continued delay -- all too apparent today in Saigon. U.S. casualty figures for ^{the} past week -- showing a record loss of five hundred and sixty-two men. The Viet Cong's latest offensive -- also claiming six hundred and seventy-five South Vietnamese. As compared with enemy losses -- totaling five thousand, five ~~hxx~~^h hundred and fifty-two men.

Most of the American casualties -- in and around Saigon -- also along that so-called demilitarized zone. With Hanoi obviously trying to strengthen its position -- at the Paris bargaining table.