

TORNADOES

The death toll in that series of Midwestern tornadoes--now past two hundred and thirty--and still climbing. With new victims found hour by hour--as rescue workers comb through the trail of rubble left by the twisters.

Indiana the hardest hit--with more than a hundred and twenty dead--more than a thousand injured. At least sixty-five dead in Ohio--and some thirty more in Michigan. Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa also hard hit--by the nation's worst tornado disaster in thirty-three years. The third-worst--in the nation's entire history.

The tragedy touched off by dry, polar air sweeping down from the North--to collide with hot, humid air from the Gulf of Mexico. Result--a "line squall" moving cross-country at about fifty miles an hour--spawning clusters of tornadoes along the way.

The zig-zag pattern starting in Iowa--not far from Des Moines. Weaving across the dairy belt of Wisconsin--

then south toward Chicago. In Indiana--the path of destruction sweeping north from Indianapolis to the Michigan border--in a two-pronged pattern. One crashing through lower Michigan--the other sweeping North into Ohio--and then eastward along the shores of Lake Erie.

WEATHER

And the weather was on another rampage tonight -- in the lowlands of Minnesota. More than twelve-thousand persons already driven from their homes -- with the Red Cross prepared to evacuate another eight thousand -- before the spring thaw runs its course.

The Minnesota River -- flooding thousands of acres. With the swirling waters of the Mississippi -- pouring into St. Paul today -- a full five days ahead of the expected crest. At least six dead -- so far.

VIET NAM

U.S. Marines in Viet Nam today received a shipment of the heaviest artillery -- yet to be seen in that battle zone; including a platoon of eight-inch howitzers -- with nuclear capability. The Marines getting no nuclear war heads as yet -- but a Marine spokesman indicating that they could be shipped in quickly -- if necessary. In that meantime, the Marines to rely on conventional shells -- if needed -- to meet an expected major thrust by the Communist Viet Cong.

One footnote to this story. The howitzers are virtually the same -- as those delivered to the Nationalist Chinese at Quemoy in Nineteen Fifty-Eight; used in that attempt to head off the massive Red Chinese artillery attack on that island. Which they did.

SIGNALS

Soviet astronomers suggested today that unique radio signals -- received regularly from outer space for the past year -- indicate that "we are not alone in the universe." The mysterious signals -- noted before by astronomers in Great Britain -- as well as Russia.

However, the official Soviet news agency Tass now ~~reporting~~ ~~asserting~~ that the signals seem to have been created -- "not by nature, but by reasonable beings." This deduction based on evidence that the signals are repeated regularly -- once every one hundred days.

SUB SOVIETS FOLLOW SIGNALS

That Tass announcement ^{was} a highlight of Russia's fourth annual "Cosmonautics Day"--on the fourth anniversary of Russia's first manned space flight.

Other space developments of the day including-- a speech by the President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, in which he said it is now "beyond doubt"-- that man can work in space--and eventually travel to the moon and beyond.

Also, the birth of another Soviet "space baby"-- a son born to Cosmonaut Valery Bykovsky and his wife-- Valentine. This the third child born so far to Russian cosmonauts and cosmonettes--and all reported doing-- just fine.

BERLIN

Communist border guards today opened the Berlin wall -- to visitors from the West -- and thousands of Berliners streamed across the border for Easter visits with relatives in East Germany. This the first time since the wall went up -- that the Communists have permitted a cross-over during the Easter Holidays. An estimated eight hundred thousand Germans expected to pass through the barriers -- before the end of the holiday ~~Easter~~ season a week from Sunday.

The Easter bonus accompanied, however, ^{by} ~~with~~ a Communist threat. The official East German newspaper -- warning that future Easter visits will be imperiled -- if there are any more meetings of the West German Parliament in West Berlin. You no doubt recall -- it was just such a meeting that touched off last week's -- "little blockade" of Berlin. Incidentally, travel to West Berlin -- back to normal today -- running free and easy.

JERUSALEM FOLLOW BERLIN

Meanwhile, the divided city of Jerusalem -- in the Holy Land -- crowded today with tens of thousands of pilgrims -- from throughout the world.

By a rare coincidence -- the Jewish Passover and the Moslem Feast of El Adhw -- both falling within the Christian Holy Week. Indeed, Good Friday -- one of the holiest of Christian Days -- will be celebrated this year on the same day as the Jewish Passover. That observance marking the exodus of the Israelites -- from Egypt.

BANK

Bank officials in Montreal -- tonight attempting to determine the amount of loss -- in one of the biggest safe jobs in Canadian history. A band of safe-crackers drilling their way into a vault of the Royal Bank -- and there rifling hundreds of safety deposit boxes. The loot said to total -- at least "several hundred thousand dollars." With one report that the total loss -- may reached as much as a million dollars.

BASEBALL FOLLOW PRESIDENTS

Another President still much in the news -- Lyndon Baines Johnson. Who today fired a couple of high, hard ones at the District of Columbia Stadium -- to officially launch the Nineteen Sixty-Five baseball season. The big right-hander perpetuating a Presidential custom -- begun in Nineteen Ten.

2 But if the President proved himself a strong-armed pitcher -- he was still a losing rooter. The Boston Red Sox ~~cracking~~ blasting five home runs -- to down the home town Senators -- seven-to-two.

PAKISTAN FOLLOW ~~THE~~ PRESIDENTS

Speaking of baseball, here's a dispatch from the city of Lahore -- in Pakistan. President Mohammed Ayub Khan of Pakistan -- returning home from a trip to Red China and the Soviet Union. Met at the Lahore airport by a cheering mob -- and later consenting to an airport press conference.

There Ayub Khan summing up his thoughts in a single sentence -- as follows: "Having concluded visits to two of our great neighbors -- China and Russia" -- said he -- "I am looking forward to visiting the United States -- with which we also have close and friendly ties."

Now, ~~But~~₁ you might ask -- what does all that have ~~and~~ to do with baseball? Not much really. Except that in baseball parlance -- wouldn't you call that -- touching all ~~the~~ bases?

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FURS

In Boston today -- a band of robbers held up a fur company -- almost within sight of a passing policeman -- and got away with it. The bandits invading the Huerth and Herth Company -- tying up the owner and three employees -- then stripping the firm of some sixty thousand dollars' worth of furs.

The policeman might have been able to help -- except that he was too busy to notice anything wrong. Too busy doing what? Why, putting a ticket on an illegally parked car. Whose car? That's right -- the bandit's car.