

FRI. APRIL 11, 1969
(Fort Pierce, Fla.)

FLOODS

In the flood stricken upper Mid-West, more than four thousand are homeless tonight, while thousands more - continue to struggle against swollen rivers and wild streams, attempting to contain a Spring run-off - that now threatens an area from northern Iowa all the way to the Red River Valley.

Even at that - the worst may be yet to come. With full crests - in many cases - still days, maybe weeks, away. At St. Paul, for example, the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers - both expecting to hit their high a week hence . Together threatening to top the city's previous record twenty-six foot flood level - set only four years ago.

NATO

For President Nixon an eighty minute private meeting today - with NATO Foreign Ministers assembled in Washington. Chief topic for discussion, we are told - U.S. plans for arms control talks with the Russians; also, "strategic and political questions - of common concern to the Allies." Beyond that, from the White House no comment.

BOSPHOROUS STRAIT

A related item - from the Bosphorous by way of London.

British naval sources reporting today a number of Soviet warships and submarines - in transit from the Black Sea on into the Mediterranean. There expected to join a Russian fleet - already said to number more than forty-seven ships. This then the Kremlin's greatest show of strength in the Mediterranean - in many a year.

JERUSALEM FOLLOW BOSPHOROUS STRAIT

At the same time - another clash today across the nearby Suez Canal. Egyptian and Israeli troops trading tank and artillery fire - for the fourth time in as many days.

While at Jerusalem - Israeli officials were rejecting King Hussein's new six-point Mid-East plan. Calling it a "smokescreen - that does not represent a genuine wish for peace with Israel."

TAXES

The White House again - a hint today at possible tax reforms, soon. Including one specifically designed to plug the loopholes - by which certain high-income people manage to escape heavy taxes. This by limiting total exemptions - to fifty per cent of total income. That is - if Congress approves, of course.

Also, a "lucky hit" at Tay Ninh - about fifty miles northwest of Saigon, setting off a pair of U.S. ammunition dumps - again with disastrous results. The chain reaction that followed - killing nine, wounding more than ninety. With the area still reverberating to explosion after explosion - more than twelve hours after the original blast.

VINH LONG-TAY NINH

In Viet Nam - the war suddenly heats up again. With reports telling today of enemy rocket attacks - on forty-five towns and bases. This the heaviest barrage - in three weeks.

Principal target - apparently - the provincial capital of Vinh Long - about fifty miles southwest of Saigon; where a prolonged shelling killed some twenty; - wounding about a hundred more.

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SAIGON

Meanwhile in Saigon - South Vietnamese President Thieu turned down flat today - a Viet Cong offer calling for a coalition "peace cabinet". He called it "another example of Communist insolence and stubbornness."

NEW YORK

Former Mayor Robert Wagner of New York - back in the running for the "nation's second toughest job". Formally announcing his candidacy to be the Mayor again - a post he abandoned in Nineteen Sixty-Five after three terms in office.

At the same time - Wagner saying: "Twelve years is enough. Now at age fifty-eight - Bob Wagner is saying, in effect: "Let's begin again." This becoming - temporarily at least - number eleven in a parade of candidates for Mayor of New York this year.

PRAGUE

In the city of Prague, Czechoslovakia - East meets West; with a brief visit today - from fourteen U.S. Senators and Congressmen. An American good-will mission - invited over by the Czech Parliament. Senator Sparkman of Alabama - one of the first off the plane, telling the Czechs: "This is a country - whose friendship we prize and desire." Senator Thurmond of South Carolina - adding that the "people of American prize freedom". "And we hope" one day - said he - "to see the people of Czechoslovakia enjoy the same freedom as we do."

(Tay-na-ray)

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only oasis - in a Sahara desert area covering over covering

one thousand square miles.

TREE OF TENERE (TAY-NA-RAY)

Looking for something new in a way-out vacation. Then this next may be just the thing. It's a cross-country auto tour of the Sahara Desert - suggested today by the Republic of Niger, in cooperation with Algeria and Mauritania.

Fair warning though - the trip does have certain drawbacks; like daytime temperatures that sometimes hit a hundred and thirty - and down to sub-freezing at night. Also, an occasional big sand-storm - and they can be something; also once in a while, believe it or not, a flash flood - capable of washing away whole towns. Be that as it may - increasing numbers are giving it a try. Indeed, the Niger government reports traffic so heavy recently - a French driver somehow smashed crash-bang into the fabled tree of (Tay-na-ray) Tanere. Which happens-Warren - to be the only tree on the only oasis - in a Sahara Desert area covering over covering one thousand square miles.

CUMMINS PRISON FARM

The hero of this next piece - country and western singer Johnny Cash; whose recent recording of "Folsom Prison Blues" - has already sold over a million copies. Also, leading to a number of special occurrences -at prisons clear across the country.

Well, to make a long story short - the singer's latest stop - at Cummins Prison Farm, in his home state of Arkansas. Governor Winthrop Rockefeller - there granting him the supreme accolade. With the full approval of nine hundred inmates - awarding Johnny Cash, QUOTE "an honorary life sentence."