

DATELINES OF THE WEEK

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STATIONS in the tornado-torn Southwest likely were the nation's hardest pressed to do their news jobs last week, as storms threatened the very roofs over their heads.

DALLAS—News Director Bob Tripp of WFAA-AM-TV Dallas saw a cloud funnel forming late Tuesday afternoon. At the WFAA radio studios in the penthouse of a downtown building, engineers carried equipment to the roof. There Mr. Tripp and staff broadcast a 40-minute account of the tornado's progress as it bore down, destroying homes and office buildings across one entire section of the city.

Two miles away, at the WFAA-TV studios, cameramen televised the twister from the studio roof, while film crews hurried out to where the storm hit. Newsmobiles relayed on-the-scene reports. Early spotting of the storm enabled them to get into disaster areas ahead of rescue crews. In these areas and at the studios, the entire staff was busy through the following day coordinating the job and relaying emergency information. ABC and NBC made extensive use of WFAA radio and television reports.

WASHINGTON—Miles away from the storm area, News Director Joe Phipps of WWDC Washington called KLIF Dallas last Tuesday afternoon to get a beeper report on the U. S. Senate elections. At that moment, the twister was hurtling down the streets of Dallas. And a KLIF mobile unit was in its path. The WWDC telephone line was patched in, and Washington listeners got the dramatic story first hand from a KLIF newsmen, complete with wind whistle, sirens and other bona-fide effects.

The tornado report, as timely as could be had in the East, lasted about two minutes—until the KLIF mobile unit, the twister on its tail, had to sign off and run.

WWDC did get its Texas election report later. But this time the station picked a calmer source. The election report came from Austin.

DES MOINES—KIOA Des Moines, Iowa, when the wind subsided, was operating momentarily with reduced power. Wind gusts toppled two 262-ft. towers Wednesday evening, it was reported by Bill Martin, executive vice president of the station. He estimated damages tentatively at upward of \$20,000.

Towers blown over were used for nighttime broadcasting, according to Mr. Martin, while four others southeast of Des Moines—used for day and night operation—withstood the winds. When the two towers collapsed, KIOA reduced power from its regular nighttime 5 kw to about 2 kw. Despite an earlier intermittent power drop, Mr. Martin said, the station remained on the air when the towers fell. Wind gusts were described as about 66 miles an hour.

ARDMORE—Tuesday's tornadoes missed Ardmore, Okla., but the 300-ft. tower of KVSOTV, located 13 miles north of the city, fell soon after the station had aired tornado alerts for residents. General Manager Albert Riesen of KVSOTV expected

last week to be back on the air today (Monday) or early this week.

SHANGHAI—Before storm news began to dominate the airwaves, KMTV (TV) Omaha got a personal version of a story that broke in Asia. When an Omaha Franciscan priest, Father Fulgence Gross, was released by the Chinese Communists a week and a half ago, after six year's imprisonment, KMTV (TV) telephoned him in Shanghai. After transcribing his interview with the priest, KMTV News Director Floyd Kalber arranged for cameramen to film Omaha relatives of the priest as they listened to the recording. KMTV used a split screen, to air its exclusive interview, showing on one hand a typed copy of Father Gross' words and on the other his family's filmed reactions.

BOSTON—In Boston last fortnight, WBZ-TV brought viewers a 15-minute telecast devoted to the Massachusetts Crime Commission Report on the day it was filed with Massachusetts Legislature. At 7:30 p.m. station host Arch Macdonald introduced a member of the commission, L. Sheldon Daly, and Thomas McArdle, commission counsel, to give a detailed report on the report. The special show was a project of the WBZ-TV public affairs department, produced by George Moynihan.

MEDFORD—On the other end of the continent, KMED Medford, Ore., aired a dramatic account of Ground Observer Corps work. When the corps decided to make an efficiency test to find out if aircraft could approach the continent from the west and evade detection, KMED's Sam Price was selected to go along on the flight. Mr. Price took his tape recorder into the nose of a B-29 bomber and recorded sounds of the trip, including fighter interception as the sneak bomber arrived at its target. The tape was broadcast by KMED and subsequently picked up by NBC's *Monitor* for use that weekend.

Ross Quits KNX-CPRN Post To Head Golden West Features

DON ROSS has resigned as general sales manager of KNX Los Angeles and the Columbia Pacific Regional Network, effective April 19 to become vice president and general manager of Golden West Features Inc., newly formed sports features subsidiary of Golden West Broadcasters Inc. (KMPC Los Angeles, KSFO San Francisco).

Gene Autry is board chairman and Robert Reynolds president of both of the latter organizations. In announcing the new company and Mr. Ross' affiliation with it, Mr. Reynolds said that its first feature will be the radio broadcasts of the Los Angeles Rams and San Francisco '49er football games this fall. KMPC and KSFO will be key stations, but plans call for a special network covering the 11 western states and Hawaii. Falstaff Brewing Co., through Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, New York, al-