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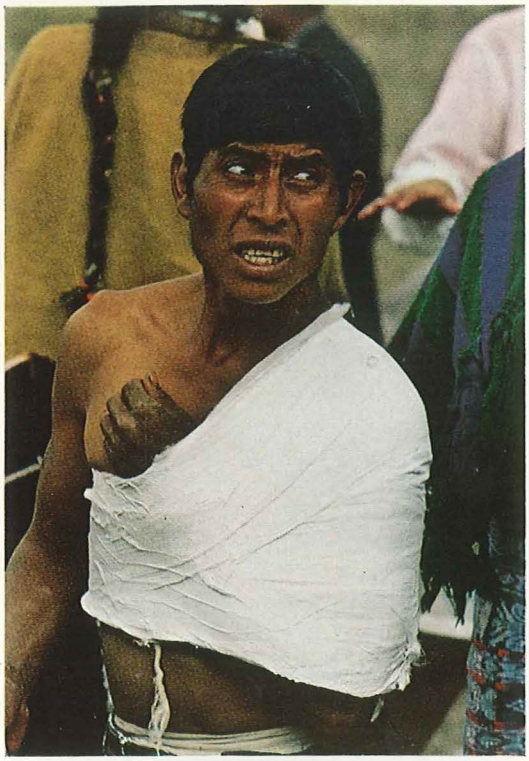
ROBERT W. MADDEN (BELOW) AND W. E. GARRETT



Grief and shock mark the face of a highland farmer (**above**). Survivors pick through the rubble that was El Progreso (**right**).

Earthquake in Guatemala

Half a minute seemed an eternity last February as the earth shook, triggering one of the worst disasters ever to hit the Western Hemisphere.

By BART McDOWELL

Photographs by W. E. GARRETT and ROBERT W. MADDEN

ALL NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF

ALL THE WARNINGS about Guatemala had been deadly. But the wise men differed in details.

Some highland elders, for example, still believed in an old Maya legend: The world was a cube of earth supported at its corners on the shoulders of four gods, the Vashakmen. Whenever a growing population increased the worldly weight, the Vashakmen would grow tired and shift their burden, ridding the world of people.

In a Maya scripture, the *Popul Vuh,* a villainous deity called Cabracán warned: "I am he who moves the earth [and] will demolish all the world."

Just as gloomy were modern seismologists; their geological maps of Guatemala show a multitude of stripes—prophetic black fault lines running east and west. To these scientists the world is not a god-borne cube but a sphere of hot magma with a crust of floating slabs called tectonic plates. One, the Caribbean plate, forms the ocean floor of the West Indies. It touches and grates against the American plate along the middle of Guatemala (map, page 814).

And also, things had been too quiet. Late in 1975 Don Claudio Urrutia E., director of the Guatemala National Observatory, had complained to his associates about the infrequency of local tremors. "We averaged 500 a year in the 1950's, but since 1960 only about 250 to 300 tremors a year," he said. "Tension is building up."

Artist's Painting Foretells Quake

Perhaps there had been other portents and perceptions. In the Sombol Gallery in the capital, Guatemala City, Doña Ruth Bunge displayed an oil painted by a well-known primitive artist, an Indian named Rafael González G. (page 719). "He had always done realistic village scenes, but this time, strangely, he had pictured an earthquake," said Doña Ruth. "Houses knocked down, people dead and injured, others fleeing. González told me it was all imagination. The wife of the Belgian Ambassador, the Countess de la Barre d'Erquelinnes, saw the painting—and impulsively bought it. That was my last sale on February 3."

But because none of the wise men could

precisely measure the weariness of the gods, or the gnashing tensions of tectonic plates, no one predicted the greatest natural disaster ever recorded in Central America.

It struck at 3:02 a.m. on February 4, when the earth began to rupture some 17 miles south of Lake Izabal: the epicenter of an earthquake ninety times stronger than the one that leveled Managua, Nicaragua, in 1972. Along the valley of the River Motagua, a fault—more than 40 million years old, 150 miles long, and three miles deep—ripped Guatemala in two. Recording 7.5 on the Richter scale, the 30-second shock was felt from Mexico to Costa Rica; the major shock area covered 3,530 square miles. During the next few weeks some 23,000 people were counted dead, perhaps 77,000 others injured, and more than a million homeless.

On the Caribbean shore at Puerto Barrios, a shudder severed the pier; two night watchmen guarding the seaside warehouse were killed, the only fatalities there.

At the ancient Maya site of Tikal one sleepy tourist thought his roommate was stomping around. "I didn't know it was an earthquake until I heard the monkeys and parrots in the jungle. They raised a terrible racket."

On the south side of Lake Atitlán, some people slept peacefully through the night. And on a farm south of Guatemala City, one planter woke up to the sound of his swimming pool "splashing all by itself."

Visible Rift Cleaves the Nation

But between Atitlán and the Caribbean, Guatemala had been grievously wounded. This strike-slip fault, as geologists call it, cut fast and almost clean, east to west, a visible rift, the north side jolting crazily westward. The lightning bolt of a scar cut across railroad tracks, highways, and walls, leaving human construction askew by a measurable five feet.

No one measured that night.

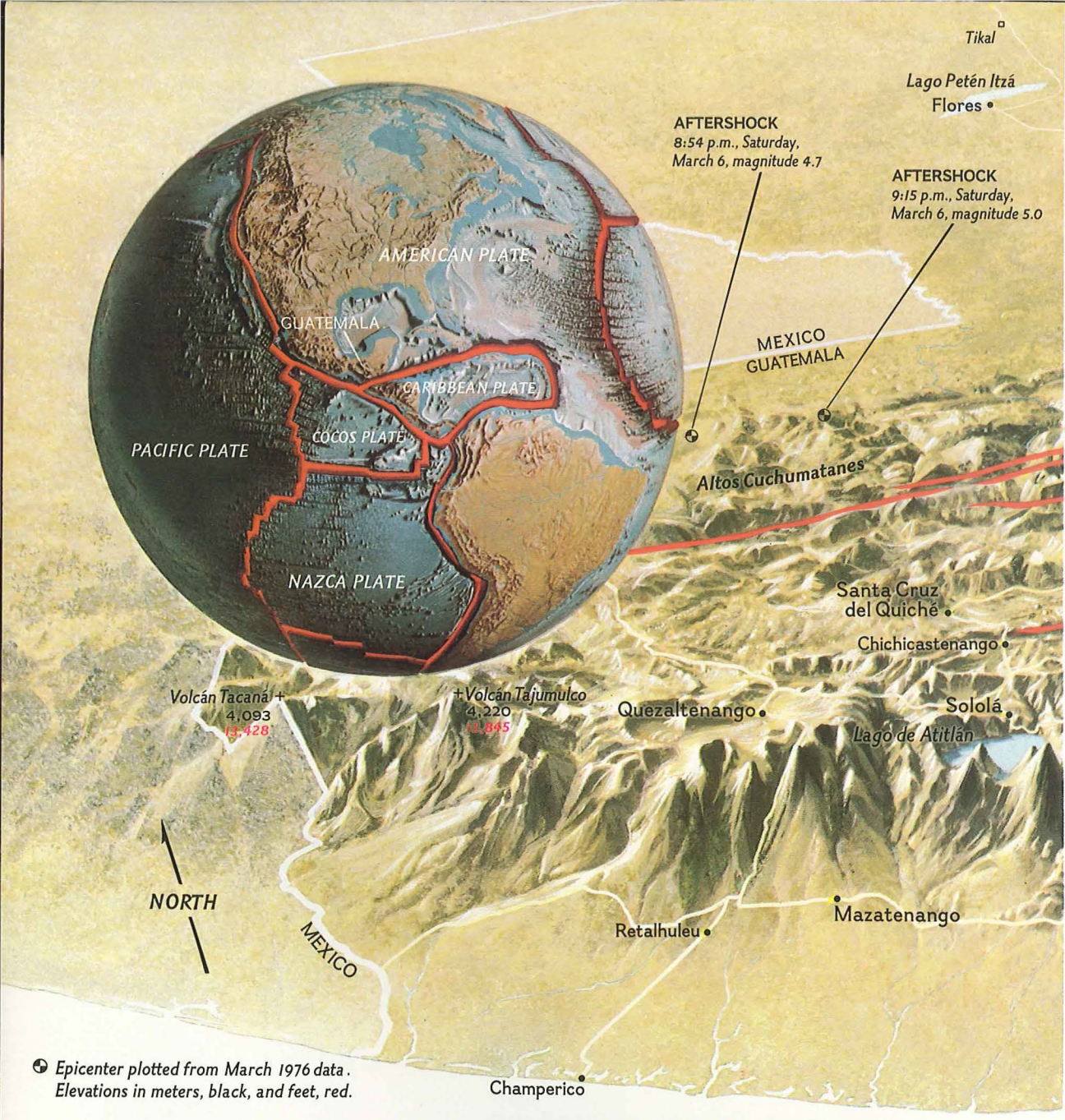
In San Pedro Sacatepéquez, an Indian entrepreneur named Cleto Monroy felt the earth's convulsion and, in the dark, seized two of his children. Somehow he got them out the door before the adobe walls collapsed. "I thought it was only my own house that had fallen," *(Continued on page 818)*

ROBERT W. MADDEN (FACING PAGE) AND W. E. GARRETT

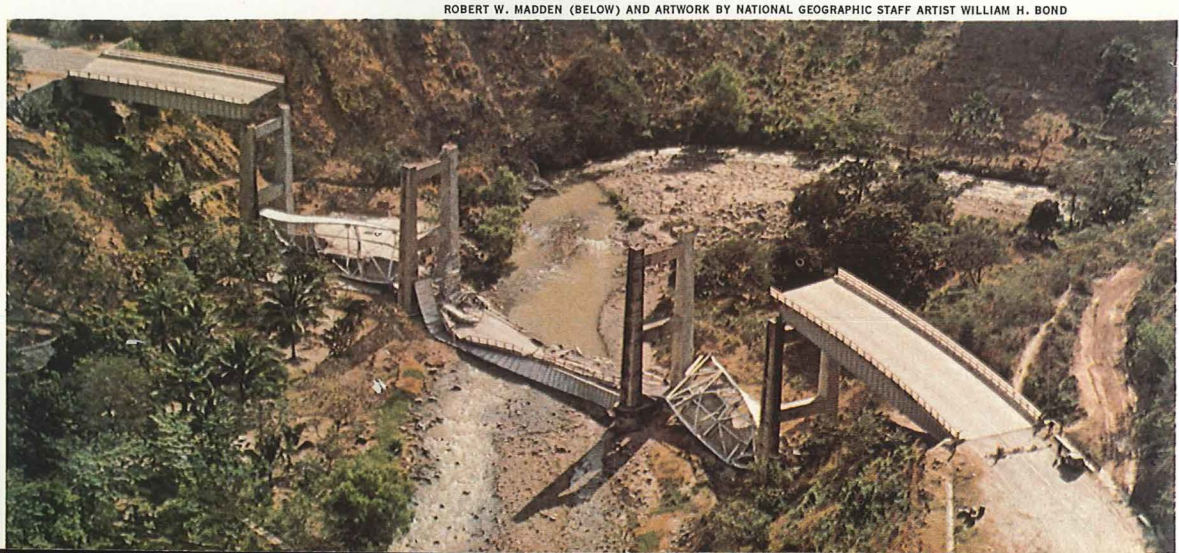
Their lives uprooted, survivors bundle against the chill night on a Guatemala City street (**left**); a candlelight prayer comforts two children (**right**). Of the thousands who took refuge outdoors, many were homeless, others afraid to return to weakened houses.

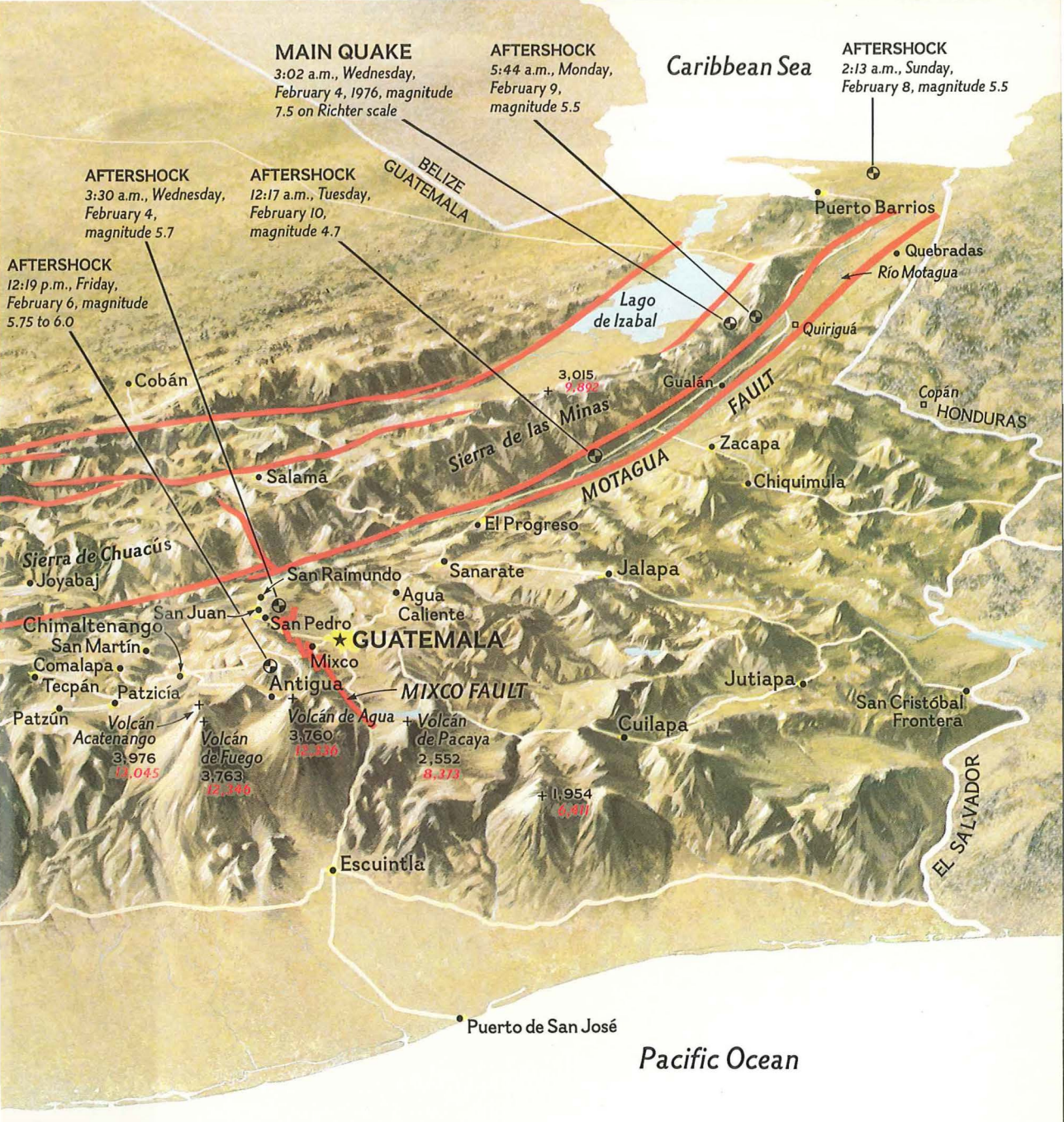
The February 4 quake jolted Guatemalans from their beds at 3:02 a.m. Thousands died inside collapsing houses. A second major shock occurred two days later.

The estimated toll: 23,000 persons dead; 77,000 injured; more than a million homeless—one of every five in the Central American republic.



ROBERT W. MADDEN (BELOW) AND ARTWORK BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC STAFF ARTIST WILLIAM H. BOND





Fractured land: From its epicenter near Gualán, February's earthquake tore apart the Motagua Fault (**above**), battering Guatemala's populous central highlands. The country straddles the restless boundary between the American and Caribbean plates —part of earth's grinding crust (**globe, left**). A five-foot lurch of the northern plate unleashed the recent damage. A serious economic jolt came with the collapse of the Agua Caliente bridge (**left**) on the supply route to the Atlantic.

Landslides shaved away whole mountain faces, leaving white scars in their wake and stirring thick clouds of dust in a valley near Chimaltenango (**following pages**). Throughout this hard-hit region, slides buried roads and cut off mountain villages to every conveyance except helicopters. Nationwide, more than 300 villages suffered extensive damage. As the government urged sounder home construction, survivors scoured the rubble for old adobe bricks in the rush to rebuild before the rainy season in May. ROBERT W. MADDEN

(Continued from page 813) he said later. "When I turned on the lights of my car, I saw that the whole of San Pedro had fallen."

At the capital city's 17th-century church of Cerrito del Carmen, Father Constantino Gastino heard "a sound like an explosion—perhaps an entrance of thieves." Another man compared the sound to that of a train. Photographer Diego Molina found the quake "more like a storm at sea—or hooking a shark."

In the western part of the capital, off Avenida Elena, a bakery fell and smashed adjoining houses, killing seven people. Luís Arturo Rodas Ortiz awoke for only an instant to the noise of crashing furniture and human screams; then the collapsing roof caught him and he was unconscious again.

Window Ledge Is a Lonely Spot

Student Estuardo Nanne climbed out his bedroom window and held fast to the sill as the wall of his neighbor's house crashed down. "At such a moment," he said, "you feel . . . *lonely.*"

To combat the risk of fire, electric power in the capital city is automatically disconnected during severe quakes. But darkness proved no handicap for a seller of lottery tickets, Edgar René Quiñones, and his wife: Both are blind. "We had been taught how to take care of ourselves," said Señor Quiñones. "My wife and I leave our clothes close by in a chair, and we had taught our children the same. Darkness was no obstacle."

Don Claudio Urrutia of the Guatemala National Observatory had a scientist's instant list of priorities. He was awakened by his wife. "She is my first seismograph. We had just felt P, but not yet S [for primary and secondary shock waves]. I bent over to get my shoes—and toppled onto the floor with the shock of S. Everything was dark and moving, so I felt the wall to reach the door. There I found that my wife had also fallen, so I picked her up, got her out, and said, 'Don't move.' I went back inside to get a flashlight. And then my pistol. And then my wallet, for if your house falls, you need money. And after that I went to the observatory. You know, other people run outside when an earthquake starts; scientists run *inside.* To get their instruments working again."

Don Claudio's professional priorities were matched by those of Father Constantino Gastino: "I put on my pants and then asked God for His help." In such a spirit Guatemalans began life again. One Indian remarked, "You go to sleep and awake and the world has changed."

In El Progreso, 18-year-old Alfonso Amaya Montes had heard his sister call to him in the first moments of the quake, but now he lay buried alive beneath the rubble of tiles and adobe—all that was left of the family's house. "I could hear cries," he said. "I thought of my father and mother and wondered whether they would be saved. There was dust, dust. But I had just enough air to call. Within an hour a man with white hair managed to dig me out.

"My parents were dead. And the sister who had called me. I lost eleven relatives, and they were all buried without coffins, wrapped only in sheets. We could not have funerals. There were too many dead."

In El Progreso, survivors could not even summon help: All telephone lines were ruptured, and the highway had been blocked by a hundred landslides. At dawn a messenger set out on foot for Zacapa, 37 miles away.

In the capital doctors and nurses moved hospital patients outside onto sidewalks.

"I've never seen so many fractured spines and pelvises," a surgeon reported. "Everyone was in bed when the houses fell."

"I sutured 36 spleens in 24 hours," another surgeon observed.

"We had no beds for the children the first day," a nurse told me. "They had to lie in the street. I worked just on my knees. We had only one blanket apiece for them that first cold night. Some Indian children were brought in from the highlands. They spoke only Cakchiquel, so we couldn't find out their names or home villages."

Faithful Companion Guards His Master

My friend Diego Molina was working feverishly with his camera when he found a man's body in the street. "A dog was guarding the body," said Diego. "When men took the body away, the dog whimpered."

At first no one knew the extent of the national tragedy. Unbidden and spontaneously, members of the Guatemala Air Club and the civil air patrol converged on the airport with their private planes, volunteering to fly and land in spots where the larger Guatemala

Air Force rescue planes were unable to work.

"Our first problem was gasoline," said pilot René Morel. "The gas pumps worked electrically—and the power was still off. But we got three planes up to assess the damage. The first pilot came back, swearing, and said, 'All is finished.' The next man came back and said, 'He was wrong—it's even worse.' "

Obscuring observation were clouds of dust from fallen towns and from the chalky hills that had sloughed away. Tremors and aftershocks continued—1,000 to 1,500, many of them perceptible to the nervous survivors. But gradually pilots were able to piece together the pattern of desolation. There was San Martín Jilotepeque, famous for its brocaded blouses—blocked by landslides, not reachable by road, and almost leveled to the ground (pages 822-23). The people were "dead or bleeding, with only dirt to eat," as one Indian put it. San Martín was typical of other devastated villages in the fault zone: El Progreso, Tecpán, Joyabaj, Patzún, Patzicía.

John C. Bellamy flew the first mission into Patzicía two days after the quake. "I was worried about the people, and whether they might fight over food. Some of the people in the area speak no Spanish. But I landed on a stretch of highway, and the Indians calmly helped me unload the food and medicines. An old man seemed to be in charge, and he asked, 'Are you returning?' I told him yes. 'Then we'll wait to divide the food until you bring more,' he said. 'After two days without

LEE ROMERO, EL SOL DE MEXICO

Overcome with relief, a woman sobs after viewing quake victims in Guatemala City; her missing husband was not among them. Most deaths came as adobe buildings caved in, raining beams and debris on residents. To avert the spread of disease, people resorted to mass burials and cremations, sometimes of unidentified bodies.

food, another half day will not be so hard.'"

"The landings weren't easy," another pilot admitted. "I took out the backseats so the injured people could lie down. When the hospitals filled up, we set up our own ward at the airfield with 37 patients in our hangar."

"There was a lot of heroism," notes William Salas, of CARE. "But the real heroes were those volunteer pilots."

Salas' own CARE professionals must rank along with the pilots. They fed a quarter million people a day with food provided by the U. S. Government. CARE also gave shelter for the homeless and got damaged water systems working again. While aftershocks still rumbled, CARE began bringing in tools for clearing away the rubble.

The Guatemala City airport thundered with traffic as help arrived from abroad—especially from veterans of similar disasters in Central America. Dozens of nations and voluntary agencies sent help.

There was confusion, of course. In the interval just before my own arrival, a severe aftershock—nearly 6 on the Richter scale—had brought the evacuation of the airport building. I met customs, immigration, and health officials in tents on the edge of the runway. In the crowd of arriving passengers, one excited man was objecting to formalities. "Let me go through," he begged. "I must learn whether my children are alive!"

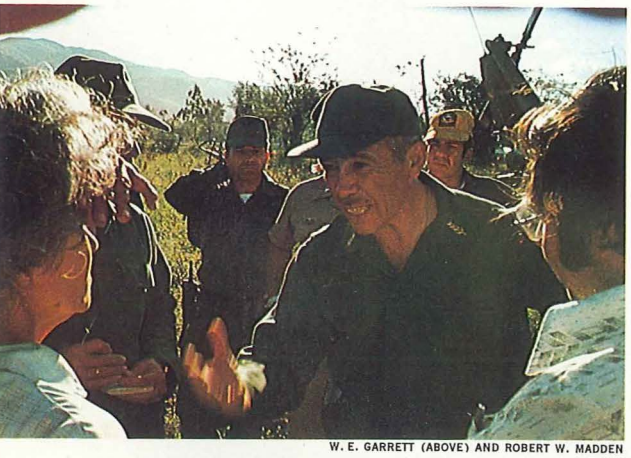
Hundreds were not. Cemeteries were as full as hospital beds. "Each day we find another 2,000 corpses," one official told me.

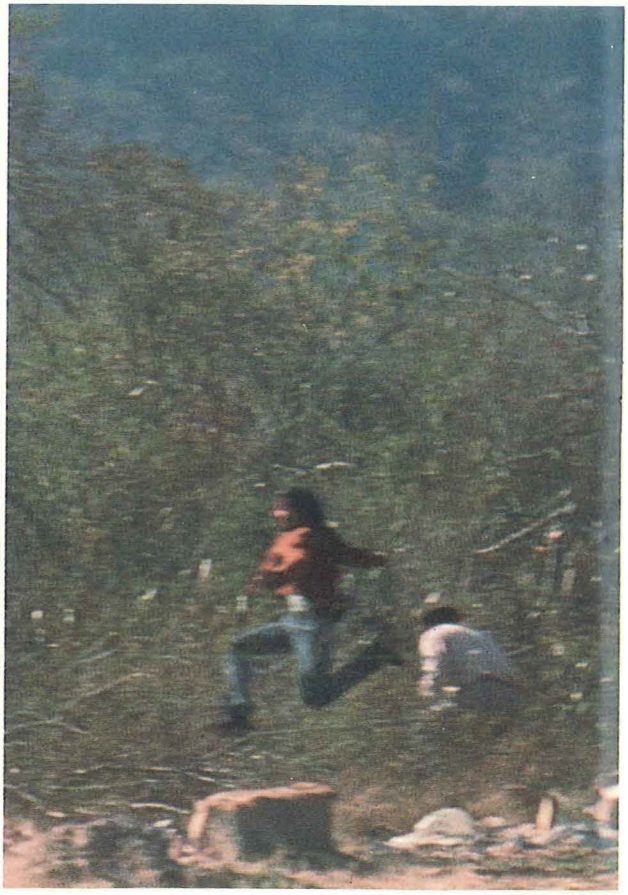
Driving through the severely damaged neighborhoods, I found sidewalks turned into tent towns; blankets and sheeting provided meager shelter. Women cooked over campfires, using splintered lumber from the rubble as their fuel.

Stricken Family Happy to Be Alive

On Avenida Elena I talked with homeless people like the José Antonio Salazar family—a young bookkeeper, his wife, and three boys, ages 10, 8, and 5. "We have the clothes we are wearing," said the young father, "and those things we dug from the wreckage." He pointed to a mattress and a few pans. "Yet we have our lives. My family is unhurt!"

But not the family of Señor Rodas. "I awoke in the hospital, where they had splinted my leg," Luís Rodas told me. "Broken in two places. They had to discharge me at once, though my chest is still painful. Too many injured." He lay beneath a quilt in a small tent sheltering seven families; his wife tended him.





W. E. GARRETT (ABOVE) AND ROBERT W. MADDEN

Buffeted by crosswinds, a rescue plane crashes into a truck (**right**), while trying to land on a mountain highway near Sanarate. Miraculously no one suffered serious injury. Guatemala's President Kjell Laugerud García (**above**) promises relief to distraught victims in El Progreso. Early government efforts focused on clearing roads and rescuing the injured. Some 135 privately owned aircraft helped move supplies.

"No, we have no medication," said Señora de Rodas. "Not even aspirin. Our neighbors share their food with us. And trucks bring us drinking water during the day. Our family?" Señora de Rodas, a handsome woman, faltered. Fine, dark eyes filled. "Our daughter, Rosa—a girl only 14—she was killed. Rosa was sleeping beside me in the room. Our only daughter." The mother wept, and the father turned toward her, wincing as he moved his painful bandaged chest. He managed to grasp her hand.

Rifle-bearing soldiers stood sentry duty among the ruins. "Neighborhoods have also organized committees for patrol," a Guatemalan Air Force officer told me. "The police and army are spread too thin. Last night where I live, two *maleantes* were shot. Gunfire kept me awake." Maleantes—crooks and outlaws—had begun to loot the rubble, as people seem to do in every catastrophe. I woke often to the sound of rifle fire and the stutter of automatic weapons. And as excavators recovered bodies, they reportedly found persons dead from gunfire.

The radio warned people to beware of false medical men. "They give injections of morphine," said the announcer, "and take your wallet when you sleep."

But for the few acts of malice, we found countless examples of neighborliness and generosity. With National Geographic colleagues Bill Garrett and Bob Madden, I hitchhiked on food trucks and on mercy planes, landing on blocked-off highways.

"Have you had lunch?" a woman asked us in the rubble of Sanarate. She escorted us past her fallen house to the communal campsite behind it; 40 people had found refuge there, along with chickens, dogs, and cats. "You like tortillas? Perhaps an avocado?" Three women were patting *masa,* ground corn, into flat tortillas—an affirmative sound like applause for life and food.

Town Tilted by Earthquake's Force

To reach El Progreso, we hitched rides on four different trucks and bypassed the closed main highway by driving for hours through the shallow water of a riverbed. El Progreso had straddled the fault line. I could see only three buildings reasonably intact (page 811). The rest of the town lay in ruins or stood strangely: walls cracked and crazed, pillars tilting, roofs slumping in a posture of lunacy —a violation of all man's sense of balance.

As we entered the town, one man was screaming in the ruins. "He has just found the

bodies of both his parents," a volunteer explained. The man was still screaming when neighbors took him away.

We spent the night there in a Salvadoran Red Cross tent. Nearby the Panamanians had brought in a hospital. Like everyone in El Progreso, we had a troubled sleep: One aftershock that night registered 5.5 on the Richter scale; it uprooted our tent stakes and our Salvadoran hosts joked of being seasick. But next morning everyone seemed edgy.

We had shared a truck ride with Edgar Montes, coming from the capital to help his few surviving relatives. We ran into him again near the ruin of his family's house. "Do you want to come with me to the cemetery?" he asked. "I want to visit the grave of my parents." Edgar had lost 11 relatives here.

In the Aftermath, More Horror

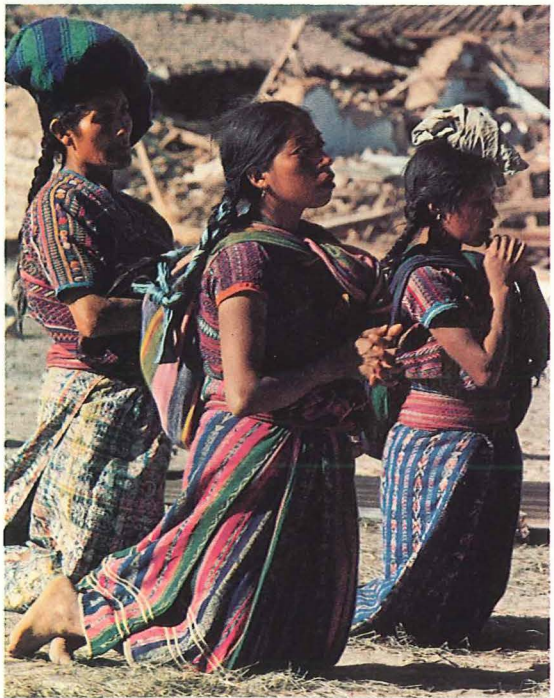
In the cemetery a few headstones had been toppled, but damage was slight. Not like the one in Joyabaj, where coffins had been shaken from their graves. There, a government engineer found the body of his own father who had died three years before. "I have had to bury him twice," he said.

Edgar found the Montes family plot; quiet tears coursed down his face. "I have lived away from El Progreso for 15 years," he said, "but I have come back home every week." As though a son's tears needed explanation.

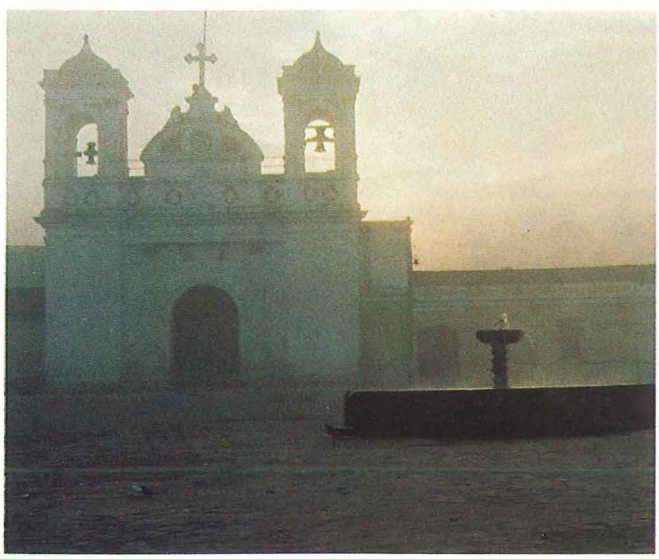
On our way out of the cemetery, a pall of smoke blew across the road—dense, black smoke, the sort that rises from tallow candles in a church. "They are burning the bodies found last night," Edgar told us. And in a common pit, drenched with alcohol, 15 corpses flamed. I thought of the man the day before, screaming in the ruins. His parents would be here. But not that blackened form on top; the skull was a child's.

Seeking clean air and distance, we climbed a small hill behind the town. Here the desolation of El Progreso was hidden by trees—palms, mangoes, glossy citrus foliage with ripening oranges. In ruined patios and parks scarlet poinsettias and bougainvillea bloomed with manic brilliance.

Near us on the hill were two small children with a thin, very old woman. Her gray hair and clothes were disheveled, and she sat on the earth, clinging fiercely to a bramblebush. The children *(Continued on page 826)*

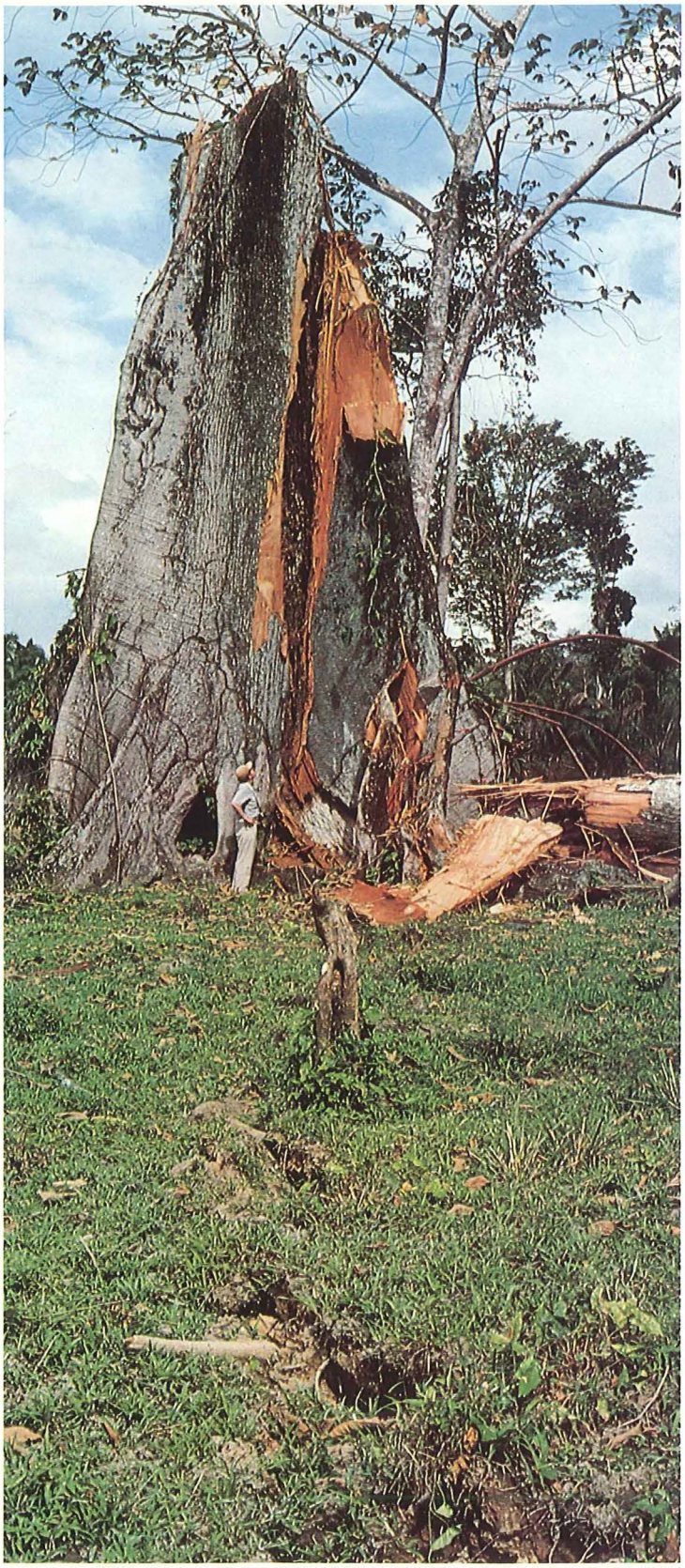


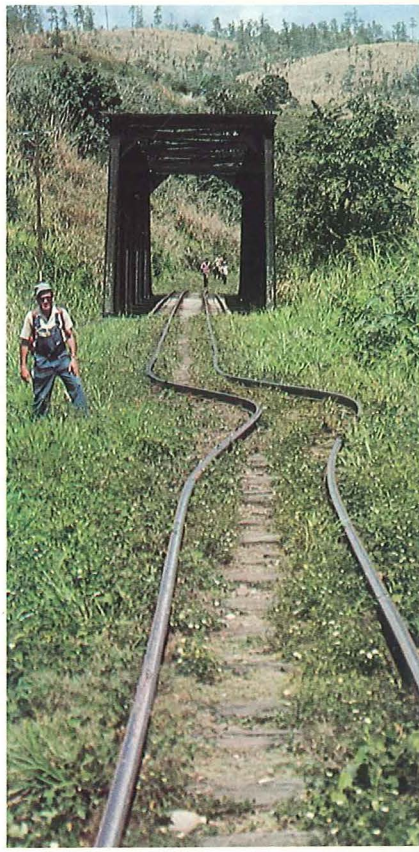
ROBERT W. MADDEN (LEFT AND ABOVE) AND MARTHA TRACY, M.D.



Litany of disaster unfolds in San Martín Jilotepeque (**above**), cut off for days by landslides that blocked roads. Survivors attend Mass before the ruins of their church. The shrine (**right**), once the glory of the spacious plaza, collapsed with all bells ringing, tolled by the quake itself.

Women pray for mercy (**left**); some Indians believed "God sent us this disaster in punishment for our sins." For the living, scars run deep. Thousands of children are orphaned. Many will always suffer dreams of the living nightmare.





Homes cascaded down a hill in Guatemala City (**facing page**), their foundations swept away by the violent shift of earth that destroyed 58,000 of the capital's houses. Geologists traced ground torn for some 150 miles, with single cracks as much as 33 feet long and 4 inches wide. Near Quebradas, the fault cleaved a large ceiba tree (**left**). On the rail line to Puerto Barrios, fault movement bent tracks more than three feet (**above**). This wrench indicated horizontal earth slippage, similar to the movement on California's San Andreas Fault system.

M. SGT. CARL D. MARTIN, U.S. ARMY (FACING PAGE) AND GEORGE PLAFKER, U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

were trying to pull her upright, urging her to return to town. She babbled incoherently.

"I knew her before the earthquake," Edgar said. "Her mind must have been injured." But to me she seemed more sensible than those of us who would return to the rubble.

"Do you want to stay in El Progreso?" I asked Edgar's nephew Alfonso. He shrugged.

"I am indifferent for the future."

But Edgar's sister cut in defensively: "No one wants to leave his town!"

Her loyalty was exceptional. The Montes' neighbor Lorenzo Chán would probably move his shop to another settlement. "I must follow my customers," said Don Lorenzo, hobbling on crutches. Three clerks were reclaiming goods from the adobe dust. But the most cogent commentary I heard on the fate of El Progreso came from Don Lorenzo's parrot. From his papaya-tree perch, the parrot trilled his *r*'s and screeched *"¡No lo creo! ¡No lo creo!*—I don't believe it! I don't believe it!"

El Progreso was by no means the worst-hit town. A band of settlements in the Department of Chimaltenango accounted for 13,500 of the nation's 23,000 dead. In San Martín, even the trees had fallen. This damaged area had been a travel-poster part of Guatemala,

W. E. GARRETT

Sky is the safest roof in Zacapa, where damage to the hospital forced its evacuation. Bed sheets shelter sleeping patients. Relief arrived swiftly from neighboring countries and the United States.

famous for its Indian customs, bright costumes, and artful handicrafts.

"I worry about the future of the artisans," said Don Bertoldo Nathusius, a leading exporter of textiles and an art patron. "With their homes destroyed, will they ever be able to return to their own traditions?"

But in the ruined town of Chimaltenango we came across an Indian family that reassured me. In the rubble of their house, survivors had placed a table, and atop it, a full glass of water. "It's for our dead," they explained. "We could not help them in their last moments, but when their spirits return here, we can comfort them." Folklore, at least, survives.

Just outside the town, in a conifer grove beside a pond, I visited a completely staffed, 100-bed U. S. Army field hospital flown from Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and put into operation soon after the quake.

A helicopter arrived as I did, bringing an Indian woman just plucked from the rubble of her village and still in sharp pain. Stretcher bearers brought her to a tent whipped by the gritty wind of the rotors.

"The pain is here?" A Spanish-speaking U. S. physician examined her.

"We've stayed full," said Col. Thomas C. Birk. "More patients than beds, since some stay in incubators." He grinned, pulled back a tent flap, and showed me several newborn Guatemalans. "Not routine for battle conditions, but we came prepared."

Field Hospital Upholds MASH Tradition

"We're similar to the MASH hospital of movie and television fame," he admitted, "but MASH is no longer an official Army designation." Still, I found jaunty, irreverent, hand-lettered signs on the hospital tents: The examining area was "The Dust Bowl"; the oral surgeon's was "Chop Shop: Jaws Repaired While You Wait"; the X-ray tent said "Fox Studios"; plaster was applied to fractures at "Central Casting."

Throughout the highlands those first days, wild rumors rumbled like summer thunder: A new mountain was rising near Sanarate (it was not); the level of the ocean had dropped dramatically at Puerto Barrios (false); Guatemala's volcanoes were erupting (also false); and hungry villagers had mobbed helicopters for food ("No—the Indians were simply unfamiliar with helicopters and the danger of approaching too close," a local pilot told me. "We fired some shots in the air to make them move back to safety").

"And in Zacapa," a fellow truck rider told me, "a mute woman regained her speech."

Dubious, I checked with townfolk.

"Of course, you mean the widow Adriana de Reichstein," a physician in the Zacapa hospital said. "She lives behind the cinema. I once examined her—she was truly unable to speak for almost a year."

So I sought out Doña Adriana (facing page), a kind-faced woman with graying hair. "It was a true miracle," she told me in a strong if quavering voice. "I had even been unable to write during my infirmity. But my daughter and grandchildren were always patient with me. Then, after the noise of the earthquake—when I found that the family was unhurt—I regained my speech."

And what were her first words? "I shouted, 'Great power of God! My children!' "

Doña Adriana showed us her little house, cracked and tilting but still upright, then moved along the walk, greeting her neighbors. "How are you now?" asked one.

"Speaking!" she answered. Triumphantly.

Old Capital Relatively Unscathed

From Chimaltenango I drove toward the old capital, Antigua Guatemala, architectural jewel of the Spanish colonial period and a major tourist attraction.

"We have had perhaps sixty dead here," said young Héctor Gálvez, a student of accounting. "And your countrymen helped run a hospital in a tent borrowed from a circus. But the damage to old buildings? It seems bad only if you have known Antigua well."

Héctor was correct. The old market had fallen in—a loss in local color, but one without fatalities. And ruins of the church of La Recolección had collapsed.

But such is the splendor of Antigua that these losses seemed mere details. The old arch of Santa Catarina still spanned the street, though its clock was stopped at three. A portal was smashed at Santa Clara. The church of La Merced still stood, as did the museums and hotels I saw.

"A few weakened walls fell in the aftershock this morning," Héctor told me. "Nothing serious." To read a plaque on the wall of Our Lady of Carmen, I stood beyond her dangerous reach. Built in 1638, destroyed in 1717, reconstructed in 1728, felled again in 1773, now further damaged, she is a ruin of ruins. But no less evocative for fresh wounds.

The brown, brittle pages of local records give this eyewitness report to the King of Spain by city magistrates describing the tumult on the afternoon of July 29, 1773: "... at the first impact all the buildings ... fell to the ground. A ship in the middle of the ocean is not moved, not even in the harshest storm, as we saw our pitiful land tremble ... we rode on a sea of mountains and jungles, sinking in rubble and drowning in the foam of wood and rock. The earth was boiling under our feet as if tired of bearing us ... making bells ring, the towers, spires, temples, palaces, houses, and even the humblest huts fall; it would not forgive either one for being high or the other for being low."

That earthquake prompted the Spaniards to move the capital to a new location. Now Antigua had survived with fewer losses than its modern successor.

"We need to reassure the tourists," Guatemalan President Kjell Laugerud García had told me at the airport one day. I could now offer reassurance on one point: Guatemala's historic treasures had survived. But how safe would tourists be?

No Repetition of Quake—for Now

"No tourist lost his life in the disaster," an archeologist told me. "I was staying at the Pan American Hotel downtown in the capital. It's built like a safe. A mirror broke, but breakfast was still served at half past seven."

I also put the question of safety to the seismologists and geologists who were now swarming through the country.

"This Motagua Fault has moved many times in the past—and will in the future," said Dr. George Plafker, of the U. S. Geological Survey. "It moves half an inch or so each year. To produce this earthquake, the fault needed to accumulate elastic strain for at least sixty years. Nothing like it should recur on this fault line within our lifetime."

Perhaps the godly Vashakmen would hold their burden steady now. □

"It's the only little house I have." Tears overwhelm Adriana de Reichstein of Zacapa. For the widow the disaster was boon as well as loss. Mute for more than a year, she regained her speech the night of the quake. W. E. GARRETT