

Seismic Wave Noted in Antarctic

'64 Alaskan Quake Moved Mountains

Associated Press

The Commerce Department said yesterday the 1964 Alaskan earthquake was so powerful that it moved mountains, temporarily raised the level of the Mississippi River and sent a seismic wave as far as the Antarctic.

The Department's Coast and Geodetic Survey, more than three years after the Good Friday disaster, is still gathering data on the effects of the strongest earthquake ever recorded on the North American continent.

Some of its findings are incorporated in a technical report issued by the Environmental Science Services Administration.

It said some Alaskan mountains subsided because of the quake, the sea floor in one area rose as much as 50 feet, and a seismic wave was recorded in the Antarctic 22½ hours after the quake. This giant wave, the report said,

had traveled 8445 miles at 430 miles an hour.

The earthquake caused 131 deaths and more than \$750 million in damage not only in Alaska but along the U.S. Pacific coast as well.

Here are some findings from the report:

Mountains on Kodiak Island and the Kenai Peninsula and the Chugach mountains near Prince William Sound subsided seven feet or more. Earlier surveys revealed that some Kenai Peninsula mountains shifted laterally about five feet.

The ocean floor rose in an area 480 miles by 127 miles with the highest upheaval 50 feet—the biggest ever recorded—between Kodiak and Montague Islands.

Shock waves oscillated the water as far away as Key West, Fla., 3968 miles distant. Surges of water began along

the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas between 30 and 40 minutes after the quake.

At New Orleans, a sudden rise of 1½ feet in the Mississippi River caused vessels to break from their moorings. Near Dunham Springs, La., the water receded five feet and at Houston, Tex., three 10,000-ton ships broke their moorings.

Of the 131 deaths, only nine occurred outside the areas hit by sea waves. Fifteen deaths were outside Alaska, including 11 in Crescent City, Calif., and four in Newport, Ore. At Crescent City, five died when they stopped for a beer during their flight and were trapped by a wave, the report said.

The highest point reached by the surging waves was 220 feet above sea level near Valdez, Alaska, where land about 4000 feet long and 600 feet wide fell into the sea.