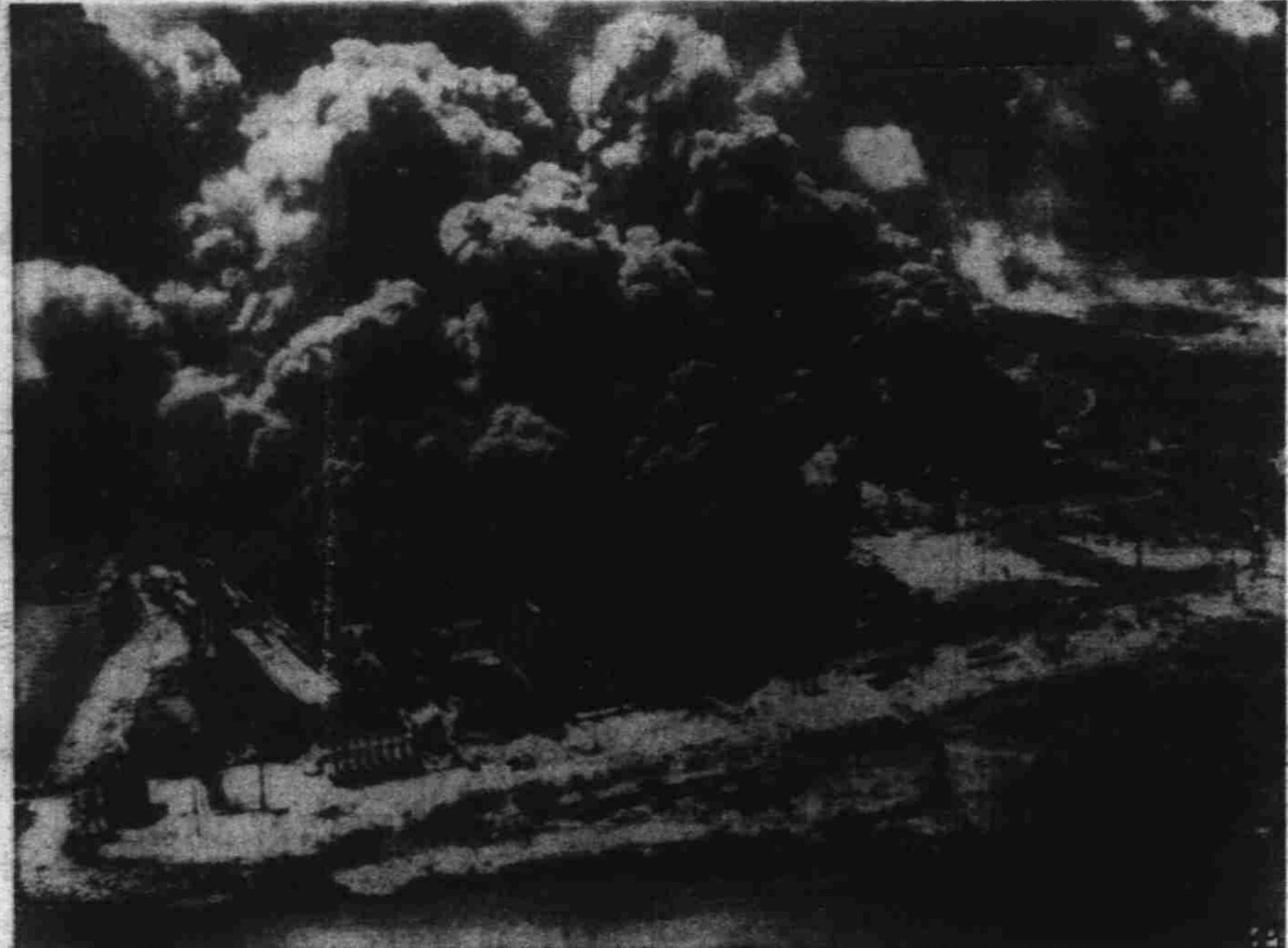


Deaths Climb by Hundreds as Gulf Port's Waterfront Explodes, Burns NEW BLASTS ROCK TEXAS CITY

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TEXAS CITY, Tex., April 16—An aerial view shows the smoke plume rising from the waterfront area of this city of 15,000 population after an exploding ship carrying a cargo of nitrate set off a series of explosions which devastated the entire area early today. The plant in left center foreground is the Monsanto Chemical company which suffered heaviest damage. (AP Wirephoto to The Statesman.)

Labor Bill Vote Due In House

WASHINGTON, April 16—(AP)—The house today beat back three attempts to change major provisions of its general labor bill restricting strikes and union activities.

Driving on schedule toward passage of the bill, perhaps late tomorrow, the membership defeated:

1. A proposal to knock out the bill's ban on industrywide bargaining. The vote was 161 to 71 on a standing count. The bill permits companywide bargaining.

2. An amendment to outlaw the union shop, on a voice vote. The measure already contains a ban on closed shops under which only union members can be hired. A union shop permits a non-union man to be hired but he must join the union later.

3. An amendment to ease the bill's prohibition against employer contributions to health and welfare funds which a union controls. This was done 136 to 177 on a teller vote by which members march down the center aisle to be counted.

GOP chieftains expected passage of the bill late tomorrow, designed to restrict certain strikes and union practices and give individual workers a "bill of rights." They said an informal poll showed more than a two-thirds majority—the votes needed to offset a presidential veto.

Area Evacuated as More Bursts Loom

Senate to Vote On Greek-Turk Loan Tuesday

WASHINGTON, April 16—(AP)—The senate agreed to night to vote at 4 p. m. (EST) next Tuesday on legislation to extend \$400,000,000 worth of military and economic assistance to Greece and Turkey.

The decision was reached after the senate had been held into the night to speed action on the proposal.

Earlier in the day the house foreign affairs approved the program 12 to 0.

Acting Majority Floor Leader Wherry of Nebraska first proposed that the senate vote late Monday on the measure but when Senator Taylor (D-Idaho) objected he modified the request.

Poison Gas Menace To Rescuers; Worst Disaster in Decade

TEXAS CITY, Tex., (Thursday) April 17—(AP)—Two new explosions rocked this stricken city at 1 a. m., today, injuring many persons who survived yesterday's disastrous blasts. There were no immediate reports of additional deaths.

John Coldron, reporter for the Beaumont Enterprise, said another ship had blown up in the Texas City harbor. Earlier, the nitrate-loaded freighter, the High Flyer, was reported burning.

At nearby Lamarque, the state highway patrol said that one of the explosions was that of an oil tank on the Republic Oil company's tank farm. They did not account for the second.

The patrolmen also reported that the freighter, the High Flyer, which was expected momentarily to explode, was still burning.

TEXAS CITY, Tex., April 16—(AP)—Giant explosions smashed the waterfront of this industrial gulf port today, killing hundreds, injuring thousands, and survivors fled the danger area tonight under threats of fresh disaster.

Fires, which spread to the docks and industrial area after the French freighter Grandcamp blew up at its berth, grew close to an ammunition dump, a poison gas plant and a ship holding nitroglycerin.

Estimates of the dead ranged from 1200 down to 450. General Jonathan M. Wainwright, hero of Bataan, visited the scene and said:

"I have never seen a greater tragedy in all my experiences. I have come here to offer this stricken community every facility that the army can place at its disposal."

Many of the fatalities occurred on the waterfront after the nitrate-loaded Grandcamp, an American-built Liberty ship, exploded, killing all of its crew of about 40 men. Sightseers flocked to the docks to be caught by following blasts which demolished the \$19,000,000 war-built plant of the Monsanto Chemical Company.

Top Toll Estimate 1,200

Mayor J. C. Trahan said he knew of 300 dead. G. B. Finley, state highway commission official, said at Austin that officials at the scene had indicated the toll would reach 1200. Houston Police Sergeant Wiley Whately, at the disaster scene, estimated that the death total would be between 450 and 500.

The Houston Post's report from State Editor Elbert Turner said that residents were racing in all directions to get out of town ahead of the expected new blasts. Turner also said that chlorine gas had saturated the dock area and was feared to be moving toward the city's residential and business sections.

Much of the boom industrial city was destroyed or damaged by blast or fire. Property damage will run into millions of dollars. The first blast rocked the surrounding region for 150 miles, inflicting heavy damage in Galveston.

A reporter flying over the scene likened it to bomb destruction of European cities in the recent war. The mushrooming cloud of smoke that arose was described as resembling the aftermath of the atom bombing of Hiroshima.

First eye-witnesses to move into the area after the explosion saw workers stream from buildings with blood gushing from noses and ears, the result of concussion.

"Bodies were tossed about like playing cards," said a reporter for the Houston Chronicle.

There were some 3,500 persons in the dock area at the time of the major blast.

Midwestern headquarters of the Red Cross at St. Louis reported that 500 bodies had been brought out of the explosion area late today and that more bodies were being found constantly.

Earlier, E. A. Boehler, a Houston city policeman, had reported: "Bodies can be picked up by the dozens in the first area, but you cannot get in to them."

Relief and rescue workers swarmed into the area from all directions. National Red Cross headquarters in Washington set aside \$225,000 for relief work and sent 30 disaster experts to the scene.

Records of the Metropolitan Life Insurance company in Washington showed that the disaster was the worst in lives lost in the last ten years. The next worst, the Atlantic coast hurricane of September, 1938, took 682 lives.

The huge plant of the Monsanto Chemical company, built in wartime to make styrene, an ingredient of synthetic rubber, was reported completely destroyed.

Fires still were raging in the Monsanto plant late today and fire fighters could hear the screams of some workers trapped inside. One Monsanto worker estimated that 35 employees were imprisoned. Rescue was impossible because of the heat and flames.

Eyewitness Tells Chaos
By William C. Barnard
TEXAS CITY, April 16—(AP)—This tonight is a city of flames, torn steel, and smoking rubble, a city where the dead are uncounted and the living are too dazed and weary to cry.

IT SEEMS TO ME

By Chester A. Stroup

In the making of deals from the trading of horses to sale of land or purchase of flour there must be what is called a "meeting of minds" before a deal is consummated or a contract concluded. Likewise in negotiating treaties between or among nations, there must be a meeting of minds.

At Moscow there has been no meeting of minds on any major issue. The powers have been unable to agree on amount or character of reparations to be collected by Russia from Germany; on Germany's eastern boundary; on disposition of the Ruhr or the Saar; on a form of government for the new Germany. Finally, in an effort to compose fears of new German aggression, Secretary Marshall proposed a 40-year four-power treaty to guarantee Germany's military impotence; but Molotov insisted on so many amendments that the plan was killed. Only on the minor points of handling of displaced persons and treatment of German assets in Austria was an understanding reached.

Secretary Marshall has gone to Premier Stalin, apparently in an attempt to break the deadlock. No official statement has been made but the indication is that the direct negotiation with the chief of the USSR was fruitless. It is now expected that the conference will break up with the foreign delegations heading for home.

This impasse seems almost fatal to any early settlement of Europe's problems. The minds do not meet, they do not even approach.
(Continued on editorial page)

Reynolds to Receive Presidential Plaudits

NEW YORK, April 16—(AP)—Millon Reynolds, Chicago manufacturer, and his two globe-girdling companions left today in their record-setting "Bombshell" plane for Washington to receive the personal congratulations of President Truman.

Animal Crackers

By WARREN GODDRICH



"Yeah... you and who else?"

Salem Councilmen Plan Merger Talks

By Ed Lewis, Staff Writer, The Statesman

First move was taken by the Salem city council Wednesday night to inform West Salem citizens of possibilities for their future if the Polk county community should merge with Salem.

Appointed by Mayor R. L. Elfstrom to a committee for consultation with West Salem Mayor Walt Musgrave and city council were Alderman David O'Hara, City Manager J. L. Franzen and City Attorney Chris J. Kowitz.

Questions which Mayor Elfstrom said had been raised in his conferences with West Salem officials involved the separate franchises granted to bus and taxi companies and to utilities.

Reports by City Manager Franzen included a statement that proposed additional stop-go traffic signals on Capitol street would cost \$10,000 and that this expenditure would be shared equally by the city and state.

Studies by Franzen and state highway department officials revealed the need of lights at Capitol street's intersections with Fairgrounds road, Market and Center streets. Franzen stated that the Center street light would be synchronized to operate with the other two lights.

Money for the project is not yet available but Franzen assured the council that it could be obtained. He also broached the idea of budget planning.

Initial efforts to streamline the 1947-48 budget committee from 13 to 5 citizen members, to conform with the recent state legislature's specifications, were begun by the council, which decided to submit candidates for the citizen members at the next council meeting. Alderman James Nicholson and Mayor Elfstrom, both former citizen members of the budget committee, will now be members by virtue of their offices.
(Additional details on page 2.)

Snell Signs Barracks Bill

Gov. Earl Snell signed into law Wednesday the house bill which appropriates \$620,000 for operation of the Klamath Falls marine barracks as a state vocational school for the biennium.

Funeral Friday For Dr. Kerr

PORTLAND, Ore., April 16—(AP)—Funeral services will be held Friday here and at Corvallis for Dr. William J. Kerr, chancellor emeritus of the state system of higher education, who died Tuesday night.

Kremlin Talk Fails to Solve Big 4 Dispute

MOSCOW, April 16—(AP)—The Kremlin conference of U. S. Secretary of State Marshall and Prime Minister Stalin was understood today to have solved no deadlocks and the foreign ministers council stated a double meeting on Austria tomorrow in an apparent drive to end the conference.

Although Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov told the council today that the Russians desired to complete and sign the Austrian treaty at this Moscow meeting, the four ministers tangled sharply and inconclusively when he demanded reparations from German soil.

In a swiftly moving session today the ministers considered 15 of the Austrian treaty's 59 clauses, agreeing on a dozen of them and even settling some relatively minor disputes their deputies had been unable to patch up.

Usually responsible sources said no commitments of any kind were made last night, either by Marshall or Stalin, and no compromise suggestions were advanced.

BYRNES LAWYER AGAIN
WASHINGTON, April 16—(AP)—James F. Byrnes, former secretary of state and former associate justice of the supreme court, today became associated with the Washington law firm of Hogan and Hartson.

Occupational Tax Study Set By City Council

Mayor R. L. Elfstrom Wednesday night appointed the whole city council as a committee to study business and occupational taxes in Oregon cities, with an eye to requirements for increased city revenue in the 1947-48 budget.

Samples of similar taxes in 16 Oregon municipalities, compiled by the University of Oregon, were submitted to the council by City Manager J. L. Franzen.

Salem already collects annual fees from bill posters, auctioneers, apartment house owners, amusements and public utilities.

Virtually every business could be taxed on a fee basis under the system described in the University of Oregon survey.

Meter Devices to Aid Collectors

Rolling 'Vault', Separator to Serve in Salem

Two new pieces of equipment were received by city officials Tuesday to aid in handling the "take" from Salem's parking meters when they are put into operation. City Manager J. L. Franzen said Wednesday.

A two-wheeled dolly to be used by the coin collector on his rounds of the meters is made of aluminum steel, and has a strong lock to protect the money as it is deposited. The task of separating the nickels and pennies will be done by a machine constructed of the same material as the dolly.

The coins are placed into a perforated drum, the holes being large enough for pennies to pass through, but too small for nickels. As the drum is rotated by a handle the pennies fall into a receptacle in the bottom, leaving the nickels in the drum.

The average take of a parking meter varies from about \$5.60 per month in Oregon City to \$10 per month in Eugene and Portland, Franzen said. Assuming that Salem meters would average \$8 per month the total take of the 1,163 ordered meters would be \$9,304 every month. And that is a lot of nickels and pennies.

SHOWERS IN SALEM
Light showers early Thursday began to fulfill weather predictions by McNary field weather station, which forecasts continuation of the showers tonight.

3 Drown at Umatilla Fete

UMATILLA, April 16—(AP)—Three people—one of them a man trying to rescue his bride—drowned yesterday within sight of possible rescuers who took the frenzied warning of spectators for gay applause.

The victims were Mrs. Lynn Grogan and Mr. and Mrs. Max Elsey.

The strong Columbia river current overturned a motorboat belonging to Lynn Grogan during the McNary dam celebration, throwing its four occupants into the water.

Grogan said his boat motor stalled before the craft was upset by the current.

Lew Wallace to Start Camp White Initiative

PORTLAND, April 16—(AP)—A plan to circulate initiative petitions asking the state board of control to take over Camp White as a state institution was announced today by Sen. Lew Wallace.

The initiative would be voted upon in the May primary. A bill to utilize the camp as a state hospital was vetoed by Governor Snell.

Phone Operators In Disaster Area Resign from Union

OKLAHOMA CITY, April 16—(AP)—George Evans, Oklahoma strike director for the National Federation of Telephone Workers, said today his investigator ran into "unique hostility" in the tornado-stricken city of Woodward, Okla., where 30 telephone operators have resigned from their national union.

The operators' local in Woodward announced its entire membership was resigning from the union because the National Federation of Telephone Workers had refused to let them work during the last week's tornado emergency. A union investigator, sent to Woodward, said some men there warned him to get out of town immediately.

FOOD PRICES DECLINE
NEW YORK, April 16—(AP)—Dun & Bradstreet reported today wholesale food prices generally declined for the sixth consecutive week during the seven days ended April 15 after hitting a record high in early March.

Weather
Salem Max. 81 Min. 46 Precip. 0.00
Portland 81 46 0.00
San Francisco 65 32 11.00
Chicago 44 32 11.00
New York 51 48 0.02
Willamette river 43 feet.

FORECAST (from U.S. weather bureau, McNary field, Salem): Cloudy today and tonight with a few light showers. Highest temperature today 65. Lowest tonight 35.

Turn the handle and the sheekles separate. Lorraine Overgard, clerk in Salem city recorder's office, is shown above puzzling over the inner workings of the coin separating machine that arrived Tuesday along with the coin collection dolly shown in the inset. Coins collected from parking meters are transported in the dolly and then put in perforated hopper of separator to divide nickels from pennies. (Photo by Don Dill, Statesman staff photographer.)