

# EXPLOSION DEATHS MAY HIT 350

## Herald and News

PRICE 5 CENTS KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON, TUESDAY, JULY 18, 1944 Number 10213

**Weather News**  
 July 18, 1944  
 Max. (July 17) 94 Min. 65  
 Precipitation last 24 hours .00  
 Stream year to date 9.89  
 Normal 12.04 Last year 17.76  
 Forecast: Fair.

### Two Munitions Ships Blow Up In Dual Blasts

PORT CHICAGO, Calif., July 18 (AP)—As many as 350 men may have died in the thundering explosion of two ammunition ships at a navy munitions dock here.

That estimate today of last night's tragedy was based on the navy's official statement that at least 200 to 250 navy men were missing and presumed lost, and on a combined civilian crew list of about 130 men for the two ships.

The vessels, shattered into bits by the dual explosions, were identified by the navy as the S. S. Quinault Victory of the United States Lines, a Victory ship, and the S. E. A. Bryan, operated by the Oliver J. Olson Lines.

Almost every house in the little town of Port Chicago—a village of 1500—was wrecked. The blast was felt 50 miles away.

Loss of the ships, the munitions and property damage will run into many millions of dollars.

The Bryan was literally shredded by a mighty explosion at 10:19 p. m. Only seconds later the larger Victory ship blew up and the earth quaked to the thunder in the heavens.

One man, a mile away, said he saw a "mile-high skyrocket" of red and white flame leap into the clouds.

Two small coast guard boats were sunk by the explosions. Wreckage swept over Suisun bay, which branches east from San Francisco bay.

Shortly after dawn today, the navy permitted newspapermen to enter the naval station, where the work of bringing out the bodies had begun, but they were not allowed to enter the dock area.

**Boats Sunk**  
 A navy spokesman admitted they feared many of the victims, literally disintegrated by force of the terrific blast, would never be found.

"You wouldn't want to go down there anyway—or write about what you see down there" of the 250 navy men who were on the loading docks when the ships blew up, the spokesman said.

**Ships Shredded**  
 The two big cargo ships were shredded into jagged bits of steel by the explosion. A huge chunk from the hull of one was hurled a half mile to the center of the adjoining town of Port Chicago, where it half-embedded itself in a street.

On the steps of the Contra Costa county and community hospitals in Martinez, trails of blood were mute evidence of the procession of pain that had entered the institution. Ice trucks from nearby Pittsburgh were commandeered to help remove the wounded to hospitals.

Previously a navy commander had estimated the dead at 850. Sheriff J. R. Thornton figured the toll at 300 dead and the injured at 1000.

**Personnel Injured**  
 An accurate count could not be made until after a daylight search of the devastated area. The dead and injured were chiefly naval personnel attached to the Port Chicago depot, some (Continued on Page Two)

## Yank Troops Capture St. Lo

### BRITISH MAKE OFFENSIVE ON ROAD TO PARIS

By FRANK JENKINS  
 ST. LO falls to our Americans. Its German garrison counter-attacked hard last night, driving the doughboys back. It was only a delaying operation to give the German withdrawal. When Bradley's men went in this morning, the bulk of the Germans had left.

DO NOT fall into the delusion that because St. Lo is taken the war is won. St. Lo is just another place to FIGHT (and kill) GERMANS.

In his campaign before Richmond, Grant's losses were staggering. But Lee's losses were relatively MOBE staggered. When Lee had lost more men than he could afford, Appomattox came.

That's the way this war will end.

ST. LO was first fortified by Charlemagne, some 1100 years ago. Largely because it is a good place to fight, it has been fought over off and on ever since.

At Tours, some 150 miles southeast of St. Lo, Charlemagne's grandfather, Charles Martel, stopped for good and all the Moslems, who were advancing northward from Spain into western Europe.

War is old stuff in this part of Europe where our men are fighting. It has been going on practically ever since there were men to fight.

BRIEF note: The good weather reported yesterday continues today. Our planes are busy. Among other places, they smashed a rocket bomb experimental factory away up in the Baltic.

THE Russians are nearing the Bug river. It will be interesting to see what happens when they get there. The Bug is the line the Germans in Poland are supposed to have been falling back to.

FROM AP Correspondent Gilmore in Moscow comes this possibly significant dispatch: "There is every reason to believe in Moscow today that the Red army is READY to hurl the greatest offensive in Russian history over the German line in Italy. They are throwing the whole front (from Romania to Finland) into violent activity."

The reason this dispatch may be significant is that it passed the Russian censorship.

IN Italy, our men are reported today to have forced a bridgehead over the Arno river (the next German line in Italy). We're nearly outflanked by the important Italian port of Livorno (maybe Leghorn on your map). Don't wholly ignore the Italian fighting. Italy is ANOTHER place to kill Germans.

WATCH Guam. It's the present Pacific hot spot. In addition to our bombers, our battleships, cruisers and destroyers move in today to bombard its defenses. (Our warships can move in so close because the Japs are short of air power.) This is the 13th straight day it has been pounded.

Guam is important because it is ANOTHER Jap strong point in the screen of islands defending the Philippines, the China coast and Japan itself.

THERE has been some kind of shake-up in the Jap army and navy. Saipan's loss was a hard jolt. Somebody has to be spanked. One guesses Tojo has arranged a public spanking.

That's probably all it amounts to.

TOJO says today (for home consumption): "Japan has come to face an UNPRECEDENTEDLY great crisis."

That is the TRUTH. But again don't jump to conclusions. Tojo tells the Japs they are hard up against it because he knows that will make them FIGHT HARDER.

THIS is rather good: "Tojo says he is 'moved by great trepidation by the thought that deep anxiety has been caused the Mikado."

He is moved to greater trepidation by the thought that HE, Tojo, might get caught in a night of the slowly tightening line.

THE home front war at Chicago is cut and dried as to the Presidency, but the boys are being a little freer to feel that they have a little freedom in the choice of a vice-president. FDR says in a letter today he'd like to have (Continued on Page Two)

### Six At a Clip



Capt. Fred J. Christensen Jr., above, of Watertown, Mass., set a record for fighter pilots recently when he downed six enemy planes on a single mission. The day's bag brings the 8th air force fighter's total to 22.

### ATTACKS ON GUAM HINT OF NEW OFFENSE

Intensive Shelling Is Given Pacific Island

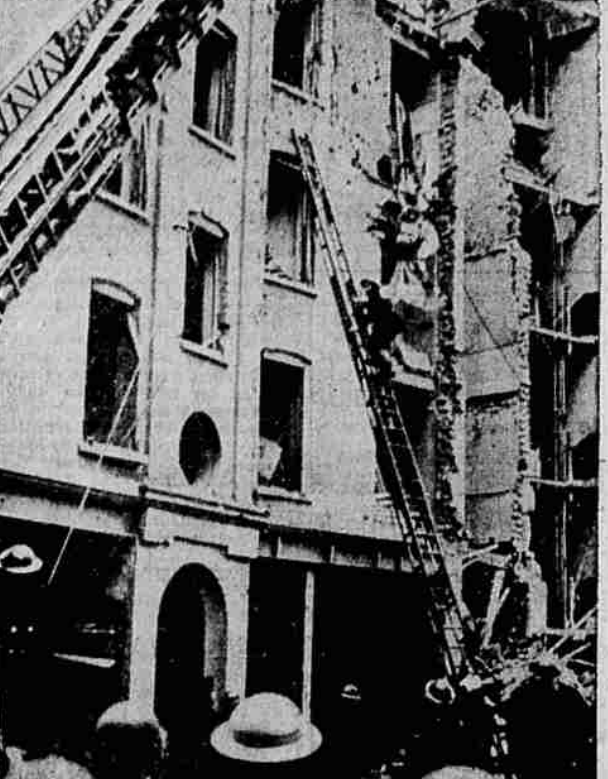
U. S. PACIFIC FLEET HEADQUARTERS, Pearl Harbor, July 18 (AP)—Bombarded by America's biggest battleships and ripped by the most intensive rocket attack ever loosed on a Pacific island, Japanese-held Guam appeared today to be at the threshold of significant developments.

Opposed only by ineffective shore batteries, the battle wagons trained their highly destructive guns, along with the guns of cruisers and destroyers, on Nipponese defenses Saturday. The next day, carrier planes went after anti-aircraft batteries and barracks with rockets and fire bombs.

Assault Opens July 4  
 These developments, reported last night by Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, carried the defense-leveling attacks on Guam through 13 uninterrupted days. The assault opened July 4, four days before Yank invasion forces completed the conquest of Saipan, 125 miles to the northeast in the same Marianas chain, an integral part of Nippon's inner defense ring.

The Jap airforce on Guam apparently has been wiped out and the almost inconsequential losses for the Americans seem to indicate ground defenses are (Continued on Page Two)

### Rescue of Buzzbomb Casualty



A casualty is lowered from a bombed building, damaged by German flying robot bomb, somewhere in southern England. There is no pretense that menace has been solved, daily allied pounding of launching sites and strengthened fighter patrols are having good effect.

### TOJO RELIEVED AS ARMY STAFF CHIEF

By The Associated Press  
 NEW YORK, July 18 (AP)—General Hideki Tojo, top Japanese war leader, has been relieved of at least one of his posts, that of chief of the army general staff, in the second drastic change in the Japanese high command in two days.

Without giving any indication of a change in Tojo's status as premier and war minister, the Japanese radio told its listeners—already shocked by the loss of Saipan island and by a navy shake-up announced yesterday—that Gen. Yoshijiro Umezu, former commander-in-chief of Japan's Kwangtung army and ambassador to Manchuria, had been named chief of the army staff.

Domei, Japanese agency, announcing the shift, linked the appointment with that of the (Continued on Page Two)

### Girl Drowns After Saving Older Brother

EUGENE, Ore., July 18 (AP)—Within a few minutes after she pulled her brother, Stephen, a year her senior, from the waters of Lost Creek, little Eleanor Louise Parker, 7, of Dexter, was drowned in practically the same spot Monday evening.

While her playmates were excitedly gathered around young Stephen after his rescue from the water, Eleanor apparently stepped into the same spot, and had disappeared from sight when they turned around to thank her. The girl's father was summoned from his farm home just across the road, and he retrieved her body from the water. A doctor was called, but all attempts to revive her failed.

The girl's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Parker have bought their Dexter farm just recently, having moved here last week from Santa Ana, California.

### Berlin Predicts Trip for FDR

By The Associated Press  
 The Berlin radio, which frequently broadcasts reports in attempts to glean information, said today that President Roosevelt soon would visit Rome and that arrangements already had been made for his trip by his Vatican representative, Myron C. Taylor.

There was nothing from any other source to indicate that the German report had any basis of truth.

### Wallace Campaign Slowed by FDR's Mild Approval; Opposition Strong

By JACK BELL  
 CHICAGO, July 18 (AP)—Pennsylvania 72-vote delegation, which had been claimed for Vice President Henry Wallace, split today as Wallace responded to a hurry-up call to take over his campaign for renomination.

Wallace telegraphed he would arrive at the democratic convention tomorrow morning from Washington. His campaign, which slowed perceptibly after President Roosevelt's mild words of personal approval, faces its biggest opposition from War Mobilizer James F. Byrnes and Senator Alben Barkley of Kentucky, 41 For, 21 Against.

How Pennsylvania's delegation divided, in an advisory poll which is not binding, went undisclosed in detail. It was announced that 41 voted for Wallace, 21 against him or not voting and the rest were absent.

Senator Joseph Guffey, a steady Wallace backer, called the result satisfactory. He predicted that 50 or 60 of the Pennsylvanians would vote for Wallace when the vice presidential balloting comes in the convention.

More May Enter  
 While the general disposition among delegates is to regard the vice presidential race largely as a three-man contest between Wallace, Byrnes and Barkley, some new arrivals such as Senator Francis Maloney of Connecticut thought upwards of 15 names would be presented on the first ballot.

Senator Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma said his state's delegation likely would present the name of Gov. Robert S. Kerr, the convention keynoter, and Indians planned to offer Paul V. McNutt, who lost out in the same race in 1940, as a candidate.

First Support Predicted  
 The Pennsylvania break-way from Wallace seemed likely to be matched in Montana. Senator James E. Murray told a reporter he thought that while Wallace would get first ballot support, he had no doubt that later the delegates would divide their allegiance.

There was evidence, also, of a split in the Alabama delegation. Wallace to Arrive  
 Wallace's impending arrival at the convention was announced in a telegram he sent Jake More, (Continued on Page Two)

### Dewey Charges Unfair Practice In Soldier Vote

ALBANY, N. Y., July 18 (AP) Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, republican presidential nominee, asserting that "a group with unlimited financial resources has been playing partisan politics with the right of New York state's fighting men to vote," said today "it is time that this campaign of deceit be labeled and exposed."

Urging families of service men to write them, "telling them the truth about their right to vote in the state," Dewey said New York's soldier vote law was "a model of simplicity drawn to fit precisely title 2 of the federal law."

### Five Nurses Receive Medals

AT AN ALEUTIAN BASE, July 18 (AP)—Five United States army flight nurses who for more than a year have flown in fair and foul weather to evacuate the sick and wounded from the Aleutian area were rewarded with Air Medals today.

The awards were made by Maj. Gen. Davenport Johnson, commander of the 11th air force. The citation praised the nurses—all second lieutenants of the army nurse corps—"for meritorious achievement in aerial flights during the period from April 13, 1943, to June 20, 1944."

### Swede Sets New Record for Mile

STOCKHOLM, July 18 (AP)—Arne Andersson of Sweden set a new world record for the mile tonight, running it over the Malmoe track in 4:01.6, or three full seconds under the recognized mark of 4:04.6 set in 1942 by his countryman, Gunder Haegg.

### John Turner Killed During French Invasion

The list of casualties from the invasion theater grew today with news of another Klamath Falls boy killed in action on June 6 during the invasion of France. He is John Turner, son of Mrs. Jack Hales of 1026 Homedale road.

A telegram from the war department was received by Mrs. Hales Monday afternoon.

Turner was serving in the tank division of the army. He followed the attack on Pearl Harbor and had recently been stationed in England prior to the invasion. Before enlisting he operated a news agency at Milwaukie, Ore.

### Brazilians Join Allied Armies

WASHINGTON, July 18 (AP)—Secretary of State Hull indicated today that the forthcoming talks on world peace organization here next month would be held at the expert level rather than by the foreign ministers of Russia, the United States, Britain and China.

Hull said that the conference will not necessarily be on a top level, and that means, he added, that the foreign ministers may not attend.

### Germans Shoot Allied Pilots

LONDON, July 18 (AP)—German captors have shot 33 more allied fliers, Sir James Grigg, war secretary, told commons today.

Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden announced on June 23 that 50 captured fliers had been shot by the nazis.

Sir James said that in 27 of the new cases, the men were alleged to have been shot while attempting to escape. The circumstances of the other six killings were not immediately disclosed.

### One Killed in Accident On Marine Barracks Road

Joe Elvich Bowman, 18, a seaman attached to one of the squadrons at the Klamath naval air station, was fatally injured early today when the car he was driving failed to make a turn on the Old Port road one mile below the Marine Barracks.

Another seaman, Ernesto Gonzales, 19, was injured. Not seriously hurt were two other occupants of the car, Leona Lee Morgan, 31, 725 Owens street, and Margaret L. Ramsey, 18, 2081 Wantland.

Four in Coupe  
 State police said the four persons were in the driver's seat of the coupe and were driving in the direction of town when the car failed to negotiate a lazy S turn and careened down a steep 7-foot embankment. The machine apparently overturned, throwing Bowman clear.

Help was given by the members of a party in a taxicab bound for the Marine Barracks, which came by a few minutes after the accident. The cab driver saw a girl on the highway signaling for assistance, and stopped.

A considerable search in the dark was necessary to find Bowman, who had been thrown some distance. The four occupants of the coupe were then loaded into the cab and driven to the Klamath Valley hospital, where Bowman (Continued on Page Five)

### Japs Say Peace Talk Unfounded

By The Associated Press  
 The Tokyo radio described today as "absolutely groundless" reports from Rome that Ken Harada, Japanese minister to the Vatican, had informed Pope Pius XII that Japan was ready to talk peace under certain conditions.

The broadcast, recorded by the Associated Press, quoted Japanese foreign office spokesmen as saying the Rome report was "so absurd it is not worth the trouble to deny."

The advices from Rome yesterday quoted usually well-informed persons with close Vatican contacts as saying Harada had presented Japan's views on peace at an audience with the Pope last Saturday.

### Don Partin Takes Wife to Bus, Misses Explosion

PORT CHICAGO, Calif., July 18 (AP)—One of the happiest survivors of the Port Chicago explosion was Don Partin, gunner's mate 3/c of Klamath Falls, Ore.

While newspapermen were interviewing persons receiving first aid treatment at the Port Chicago Memorial hall, Partin walked up and said:

"Gee, am I lucky, but will you do something for me?"

"You see, I had liberty today to put my wife on a bus for Klamath Falls. My pal, C. R. Holandsworth, seaman first class, offered to stow my watch.

"My ship was due to sail and I was to board it at San Pablo point. When I left my wife I told her I would return at once to my ship."

The gunner said he went to San Pablo point but not seeing his vessel reported to the shore patrol. They checked and told him his ship was at Port Chicago. He immediately took a bus for that point and was between Oakland and the ammunition magazine when the explosion occurred.

"Now if you can only write my story," Partin said, "my wife, who will read of the explosion, will know that I am safe."

### LWOW DEFENSES IN POLAND PIERCED

LONDON, July 18 (AP)—The fortifications guarding Lwow in old Poland have been pierced, Premier-Marshall Stalin announced tonight.

The drive opened a new offensive in southern Poland, spreading the fighting along a 550-mile front. Lwow is an important rail junction town.

Break Defenses  
 Stalin's order of the day addressed to Marshal Ivan Konev said "troops of the first Ukrainian front going over to the offensive with support of massed blows by artillery and aircraft broke through strong and deeply-echeloned German defenses in the Lwow direction, and in three days of offensive fighting advanced to a depth of 50 kilometers (31 miles) widening their break-through up to 200 kilometers (125 miles) along the front."

German broadcasts first had announced the new Russian blows, reporting violent fighting 37 miles east of Lwow. Lwow was the third city of pre-war Poland, and is one of Europe's great rail centers.

600 Towns Taken  
 More than 600 towns and localities were swept up in the advance, Stalin said.

Krasne, rail junction 28 miles east of Lwow, was captured, the broadcast order recorded by the soviet monitor said.

Other towns taken included Zloczow, 37 miles east of Lwow, Radziechow, 42 northeast, Gorod (Continued on Page Two)

### Stallkeeper Fatally Beaten

PORTLAND, Ore., July 18 (AP) Ira Edward Briggs, 57, was fatally beaten today in his small vegetable market in suburban Portland—apparently by a bandit who entered the stall in the early hours of the morning.

Passerby discovered the Portland man in a semi-conscious condition. He died a few hours later in a Vanport hospital.

Police said Briggs told them he did not see the person who struck him on the head after robbing him of \$40.

### Chinese Report Counterdrive

CHUNGKING, July 18 (AP)—Chinese press reports lacking official confirmation said today the Chinese had started a counter-drive along the Peiping-Hankow railway and at the same time were campaigning to sweep the Japanese back along the Canton-Hankow railway in Hunan province.

These advices said the Chinese had mounted an offensive against Japanese in Honan province, to the north of the present principal battleground of Hunan, and struck toward Kishan, 150 miles north of Hankow. It was in this area of southern Honan that the Chinese previously had stabbed against the Japanese positions along the rail line bisecting the province.

AD P1 24.—ONE s/P.....  
 Police said the death car was registered to C. W. Bowers, Tulare, Calif., but added they did not know whether the car actually is owned by Bowers.

### Dorris Students To Attend KUHS

Dorris high school students will definitely be on the roster of KUHS for at least one term and probably two, according to word received here Tuesday by Arnold Gralapp, superintendent of Klamath schools.

Gralapp was notified that the Siskiyou joint union high school district board had taken the action. The Siskiyou board asked that KUHS make possible enrollment of Dorris students for a full year with the understanding that if the Dorris school building is finished by mid-term they may withdraw.

The new arrangement was made as an aftermath of a fire which destroyed the Butte Valley high school at Dorris. Construction of another building there will be started soon. Meanwhile, Dorris students will ride to Klamath by bus.

### Fire Threatens Douglas Building

CHICAGO, July 18 (AP)—The administration building at the 33 million dollar Douglas aircraft plant in suburban Park Ridge was destroyed today in a spectacular fire which for a time threatened the huge factory which builds the giant C-54 cargo planes.

Through the combined efforts of hundreds of firemen from suburban departments and from Chicago, the fire was brought under control after more than two hours of fighting, and the big factory was only slightly damaged. Three Chicago firemen were reported slightly injured.

Damage was estimated by John C. Buckwalter, plant manager, at \$1,500,000.

### Railroad Worker Fatally Injured

SPOKANE, July 18 (AP)—Aron W. Anderson, 54, railroad switchman, was killed last night when brushed off an express car by a freight car parked on a siding in yards here. He was thrown under the wheels of the express car.

His brother, Joseph W. Anderson, was in the switch tower and witnessed the accident.