

L.T. SUNOCO AND P.& G. THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 1947.

GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:

About the Texas City disaster, all fires are reported out, or under control tonight. Nevertheless, the police, fearing more explosions, have started evacuating all persons, including fire fighters, from the still burning waterfront area.

Flames from burning oil tanks are licking toward two huge onion-shaped containers holding either highly explosive propane or butane, -- now Deputy Mayor announced that the danger was over. But minutes after that, another oil tank exploded.

This afternoon three other explosions occurred. Another freighter going up-- carrying ammonium nitrate. And fragments of white hot steel rained down on the already demolished town.

Now comes a threat of still another explosion; and another exodus is on. In one cafe in the downtown area, diners, cooks, and waitresses fled into the street, leaving half-cooked and half-eaten dinners behind.

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NEW LEAD EXPLOSIONS - 2

In still another cafe, reporters huddled under tables with an open telephone beside them, hoping they'd not have to flash the news of another explosion.

DISASTER FOLLOW EXPLOSION-NEWSREEL

As though they hadn't had enough to bear, three more explosions crashed over the heads of the stricken people of Texas City. Another freighter, carrying ammonium nitrate, blew up. <sup>with</sup> Fragments of white hot steel were raining down ~~all over the place.~~ The few people who were abroad, ~~ran to cover.~~ <sup>with</sup> Firemen ~~were~~ fighting no fewer than six <sup>great fires,</sup> ~~separate and distinct conflagrations.~~

President Truman <sup>today</sup> placed the <sup>full</sup> resources of Uncle Sam at the disposal of the devastated area. Among those taking part in the samaritan work today is ~~none other than~~ General ~~Jonathan M.~~ Wainwright, hero of Bataan. After all he went through on Corregidor <sup>and Bataan,</sup> and during his years of imprisonment in Japanese camps, ~~Wainwright~~ Wainwright declared that he had never in all his experience seen a greater tragedy than <sup>at</sup> ~~that of~~ Texas City. ~~With the consent of the Commander in Chief,~~ he offered the services and resources of the Fourth Army, which he now commands.

DISASTER FOLLOW EXPLOSION-NEWSREEL - 2

Engineers were recalling today that twenty-six years ago an explosion of ammonium nitrate destroyed an entire German town; ~~That one killed nearly~~ fifteen hundred people.

~~Tonight the worst is over in the Texas City~~  
~~Galveston area. The flames that raged along the~~  
~~waterfront are less towering, and it now becomes slowly~~  
~~possibly to count the dead.~~ <sup>IP</sup> The latest estimates ~~are~~  
between six-hundred and six-hundred-and-fifty ~~deceased~~.  
Four hundred ~~are~~ definitely known to have perished.  
It has been impossible to get at any accurate figures  
because ~~nobody could go near~~ <sup>of the difficulty of going into</sup> the blazing ruins. Not  
until this afternoon, were rescue workers able to  
search the premises of the great Monsanto Chemical plant,  
<sup>which</sup> today ~~it~~ is ~~just~~ one huge ruined shell. There was  
reason to fear a terrific additional death toll there,  
since eight hundred persons were at work yesterday

DISASTER FOLLOW EXPLOSION-NEWSREEL - 3

morning when the French freighter Grand Camp blew up.

However, the Red Cross figures <sup>seem to be</sup> ~~are~~ definite - a total death roll of six-hundred-and fifty. More than three thousand ~~are~~ injured.

~~The~~ Survivors in ~~Texas City~~ are walking around, with the ~~rest~~ <sup>men</sup> of persons utterly crushed, numb from the shock and tragedy. Nobody smiles today, in Texas City.

~~TP~~ Much of the disaster news comes ~~today~~ from Houston, ~~Texas~~, where refugees <sup>were</sup> ~~continued~~ pouring in all day. ~~And a~~ ~~score~~ of doctors and sixty-six nurses are taking care of some of the wounded in the huge Houston Auditorium. ~~one block square. The whole place has been turned into an emergency hospital. Relatives and friends are huddling in the dress circle and balcony, waiting for news. As soon as the rescue workers have brought in a fresh victim, they ask, "May we have the stretcher back soon." And that of itself tells a grim tale.~~

~~Some escapes ~~from death~~ sound almost miraculous.~~

~~A Texas City painter was forty feet in the air on top of a Monsanto building. Suddenly everything went black, and the next thing he knew he was lying on the ground,~~

~~*but still alive.*  
on his side. And, says he, ~~he~~ was he lucky!~~

~~A seven year old boy with a broken leg *says:*  
describes it in these words: "There was a big noise,  
then a lot of people were dead."~~

Texas City tonight presents a spectacle of utter desolation. Not ~~one~~ <sup>2</sup> single house ~~is entirely~~ undamaged. ~~Aside from obvious damages, The concussion from the explosion was so violent that it loosened all foundations, joists and timbers. The authorities spent many anxious hours this afternoon. The Deputy Mayor~~ early today exclaimed: "The Lord is on our side, but we're not out of the woods yet." What sharpened their fear was the wind. Fortunately, it blew from the north, blew the smoke and fumes out over Galveston Bay. If it had shifted, fresh devastation would have been inevitable.

EXPLOSION - NEWSREEL

~~Today~~ <sup>This</sup> has been one of the busiest of days in the newsreel studios. Going over all the incoming films of the Texas City explosion. Tens of thousands of feet of film.

Yesterday morning, at Movietone, my co-worker, Arthur De Titta, was at the News Desk -- when the press wire flashed the first news. He immediately grabbed a telephone and tried to get Galveston. In spite of strike conditions, emergency calls were being put through, and Arthur was able to reach the only newsreel contact that Movietone had down ex there, a free-lance cameraman; the manager of a Galveston radio station, who takes motion pictures as a hobby.

This man was right in the middle of broadcasting news of the disaster, but he took time out to say that his father already was in a plane, filming the catastrophe. His father, too, seems to be an amateur cameraman.

Shouted DeTitta:- "Rush the film!"

That was all. And at that moment the telephone

lines went out; the explosions continuing, the storm of fire spreading. Which left things in a doubtful state. Whereupon Arthur De Titta hastily dug up some old records with names of free-lance cameramen all over that section of the South. Many of them had not been heard of for years. But Arthur sent a wire to all that he could find, more than a dozen, giving them instructions to hurry to Galveston Bay and film everything they could of the explosions and fire. At the same time, he sent wires ordering regular newsreel cameramen to the scene.

That was all that could be done; then nothing to do but wait. So what happened? Well, the film began to come in, pour in, tens of thousands of feet. At Movietone we've been looking at it all day, cutting and editing -- and in a moment I'll be on my way to Movietone again, to work the rest of the night on the newsreel of this appalling drama of disaster.



## HELIGOLAND

Here's a story about some explosions -- all arranged on purpose.

Tomorrow the British Navy is going to touch one off that may even rival our Operation Crossroads at Bikine. What they propose to do is to blow an island off the map -- the famous island of Heligoland, blow it right into the North Sea: No longer to be there off the German coast, a menact to John Bull's shipping and Navy, and an impregnable fortress protecting Germany's northwest coast.

Heligoland is a rocky island, only mile long and a third of a mile wide, with some two-thousand-five hundred inhabitants -- or did have. Its name means Holy Land, because there used to be a temple to the Norse God of Justice there. Once it belonged to the Danes, but the British took it early in the Nineteenth Century, and held it until Eighteen Ninety. The Marquis of Salisbury, then Prime Minister, was loudly criticized because he traded it to the Germans for some other concessions.

Salisbury considered the place valueless because under British rule it was crumbling away, from erosion. But the Germans took it, built great seawalls, and made it impregnable, as strong a fortress as you'd find anywhere in the world. So that it prevented any British attack on the great seaports of Hamburg and Bremen, or the Kiel Canal.

During the first World War, Heligoland provided a perfect haven for German U-boats, and even larger vessels, that lay in wait there, for any British craft that hove within range.

After the First World War, the British for some unfathomable reason, allowed the Germans to keep the place. So, in ~~the~~ World War Two there they were again, in command of a large portion of the North Sea.

Now, apparently, they've decided two lessons are enough. So, they've planted six thousand, seven hundred tons of high explosives, in strategic positions, around that famous island. These charges are connected with a cable ship which

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will lie nine miles off. At a signal from the B.B.C. in England -- which will make it a Radio show - a British naval officer will press a button on the cable ship, and then will follow the explosion, or rather a series of explosions -- and up will go Heligoland. The first will be just a small explosion to scare off the island bird life. The rest will blow all the mighty fortifications to Kingdom Come and leave Heligoland just a harmless sand dune where a fishing fleet can take refuge in case of a bad storm -- or maybe there won't even be a dune left.

## RUSSIA

We've heard a lot about shortages in Soviet Russia, but in one industry they're having a spectacular boom. Aviation, ~~no less~~ principally military aviation. Bill Courtney, European correspondent for Colliers, reports that the Soviet war lords are putting everything they have into air preparations. The principal reason for that celebrated iron curtain <sup>being</sup> to prevent Uncle Sam's fliers from seeing the prodigious progress of the Soviets in the air. <sup>He says they</sup> ~~they~~ aim to produce one hundred thousand planes this year, military and civilian; and <sup>that</sup> they are fast catching up with Uncle Sam.

Two years ago, the Reds had sixteen-thousand, four-hundred-and-twenty planes; and that included four thousand, two-hundred bombers and seven-thousand fighters. That, says Bill Courtney ~~of~~ Colliers, represents <sup>the</sup> total strength of Uncle Sam's Army Air Force today, though many of our planes are held in

reserce and others are, as they say, "pickled." I saw endless rows of them out West on my recent trip. So, Uncle Sam's air strength today is down to what Russia's was two years ago. But, Russia today has double its military aviation, as represented by the Nineteen Forty-Five figures. The Red putting out three-hundred-and sixty transport planes a month, whereas we made only four hundred-and-sixty-seven in all Nineteen Forty-Six. And transports that fly civilians one day can fly troops the next.

## WALLACE

Whatever his own countrymen think of Henry Wallace, the Left Wingers in Britain are loud in their praise of him. The ~~XXXXXX~~ Daily Herald, organ of the British Labor Party, announced<sup>S</sup> that Henry had<sup>1</sup> made a sound case for himself. Wallace<sup>TR</sup> <sup>now</sup> is on his way to Scandinavia, to tell the Swedes and Norwegians what he thinks about President Truman's foreign policy, and to ask them to be kind to the Russians. Before Henry left, a hundred Left Wing members of Parliament signed a testimonial letter, giving him a glowing send-off.

The English Labor editor thought that the denunciations of Henry over here were hysterical, and completely unreasonable. <sup>All of which</sup> ~~this~~ aroused Senator Alben Barkley, minority leader in the Senate, who is over in Paris. Barkley said he wondered what the British would think of an Englishman, a former Cabinet Minister, who went to America to denounce his own government; and that without any backing from the people.

ADD WALLACE

But late reports inform us that Henry is at it again. Wallace has just landed in Stockholm, Sweden, and in his first words to reporters voiced this complaint: "A considerable number of American ~~workers~~ just don't want to have any understand with Russia."

Wallace added: "Ninety-nine percent of the British people strongly favor an understanding with the Soviets." Presumably, Wallace gleaned ~~that~~ information from his one week's stay in Britain.

~~Only~~ <sup>only</sup> Henry Wallace could assay the feeling of ninety-nine percent of a country in so short a time.

## RAILROAD

The nation's oldest labor dispute has been settled, the eighteen-month old railroad strike against the Toledo, Peoria, and Western Railroad. A simultaneous announcement from union and management in Peoria tonight.

The surprise settlement came only thirty-eight days after the brutal and unsolved murder of George McNear, President of the road, who was killed near his home in Peoria last month by an unknown assailant. McNear's death was not the only violence in the long and bloody dispute. Two union pickets were killed in February, Nineteen Forty-Six, and on numerous other occasions shotgun blasts and threats of dynamite punctuated the strike.

Tonight, the long strike is ended, the union coming to terms with McNear's successors, but McNear is dead; his murderer still not apprehended.



## HOLLYWOOD

If a Supreme Court Justice is interested in picking up a little extra change, he should take himself to Hollywood. We found out today that some movie bit players get more per day for portraying Supreme Court Justices than the august minds of the bench get for pondering their weighty decisions.

The story came out of a suit being tried in a Superior Court and a witness testified that bit players who acted the part of the high court judges -in the movie WILSON made Three-Hundred-to-Four-Hundred Dollars a day. They'd much rather be bit players than Supreme Court Justices.

So our tip to Supreme Court Justices is, "go west to Hollywood where the work is easy and the pay is high." Except for one thing. A casting director might say, "How can I help it if you are a Supreme Court Justice if you don't look like a Supreme Court Justice?" That would sound just like Hollywood.

And hear something that sounds like Nelson Case.

PRESS

The greatest menace to freedom of the press and freedom of speech in the U.S.A. is a certain group of Labor leaders. So says Wilbur Forrest, President of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He made the statement today at a meeting of the Society, in Washington.

Some Labor bosses, he went on, now have more power than they ever dreamed of. They have become petty dictators, defying the Government, and indifferent to public opinion. He says that Labor Union chiefs can control the production of newspapers -- in fact can shut down one or all of the newspapers in any given community, do it overnight.

Then he went on to warn the country's editors that a campaign is now brewing to smear the press -- this inspired by Communists who have wormed their way into Unions.

Whereupon everything Wilbur Forrest said was pretty much confirmed by Thurman Arnold, former <sup>(Assistant</sup> ~~former~~

Attorney General, under Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Testifying before a sub-committee of Senators, he told them about the unfair methods of the Typographical Union, a union that he said is proceeding so ruthlessly that it is crushing many small independent newspapers to whom free speech means so much.

Thurman Arnold pointed out that instead of trying to help a small newspaper cope with its natural ~~xxx~~ disadvantages, the Typographical Union is ruthlessly aggravating the small paper's burden, in many cases even making it impossible for the small newspaper to exist.

And, President Roosevelt's Attorney General went on to say that Union leaders are implacable about featherbedding customs that compel publishers to hire more printers than they need. That union chiefs have refused to bargain with publishers, and that union locals have no independence, must take their orders from headquarters. Newspaper publishers, said Thurman Arnold, are caught in the grip of absentee control over their

own composing rooms; and are quite helpless against  
the force of the Union.

## LABOR

The fight about the new Act of Congress to control Union labor is about to begin in earnest. The Representatives today finished their work on it, and sent up to the Senate the strictest bill in the history of the country. One that would do away with closed shop contracts and forbid industry-wide bargaining.

A Congressman who visited the White House today came out with the news that President Truman will most certainly veto it. However, he added that Mr. Truman had not authorized him to say this.

The Senate will pass a less drastic bill; but, rumor is, the President will even veto that.

One important feature of the House bill is that it would forbid the National Labor Relations Board to recognize Unions whose officers are now or ever were, members of the Communist Party.

## TELEPHONE

A gleam of hope shone regarding the telephone strike today. Henry Mayer, counsel for the National Federation of Telephone Workers, announced that the girls and boys can go back to work if the Bell Companies will give them an immediate raise of six dollars. And that's a compromise the original demand of twelve dollars. Mayer explained the they would consider the six dollars a token increase, a token of the Company's willingness to arbitrate.

Then followed the statement of Joseph ~~Beirne~~ Bierne, President of the Union, who said the strikers would have to have what he called "a down payment" before he would be willing for them to arbitrate. Beirne announced that the union leaders hoped to have a settlement before the week is out.

Well - that sounds better. And how about a good word from you, Hugh.