

### WITNESSES AWED BY PYROTECHNICS

#### Some Narrow Escapes, Too, Are Related by Persons Near the Explosion

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES

PORT CHICAGO, Calif., July 18 —A description of the Port Chicago explosion was given by K. E. Knapp of Hayward, a railroad worker who was atop a box car a mile away when the ammunition was detonated.

"I saw what looked like a mile-high skyrocket, red and white," he said. "Then came a terrific blast and it seemed like star shells were filling the air. Small pieces of metal from the exploded ship began falling all around."

Nils Anderson of San Francisco, an engine room officer on a freighter in the Bay off Port Chicago, said he was standing on deck "thinking of nothing in particular" when "the ship at the pier went up" and he found himself sitting down feeling of his throbbing head. Then he fainted, but not before noticing that "the air seemed full of flying shells."

Floyd L. Scott, a naval painter, said he did not remember hearing a sound "because it was so loud, I guess," but suddenly the force of the explosion shook the building in which he was working "like a terrier shakes a rat."

"I managed to get to my feet and started out the door when there was a second explosion and I saw barracks go down and the sound of men screaming."

"Then the ammunition started going off. I guess it was about the biggest barrage of the war. High explosives, fragmentation shells and everything else was exploding."

Don Partin, gunner's mate third class of Klamath Falls, Ore., decided he was lucky to be alive. He had liberty yesterday, he related, to put his wife on a bus for home.

"When I left her," he said, "I told her I would return right to my ship. I reported to San Pablo Point, and was told it had been moved to Port Chicago. I was on a bus for Port Chicago when we heard the explosion."

Partin was saddened by the knowledge that his close friend, C. R. Holansworth, seaman, first class, was standing watch for him.

#### Reporter Was Impressed

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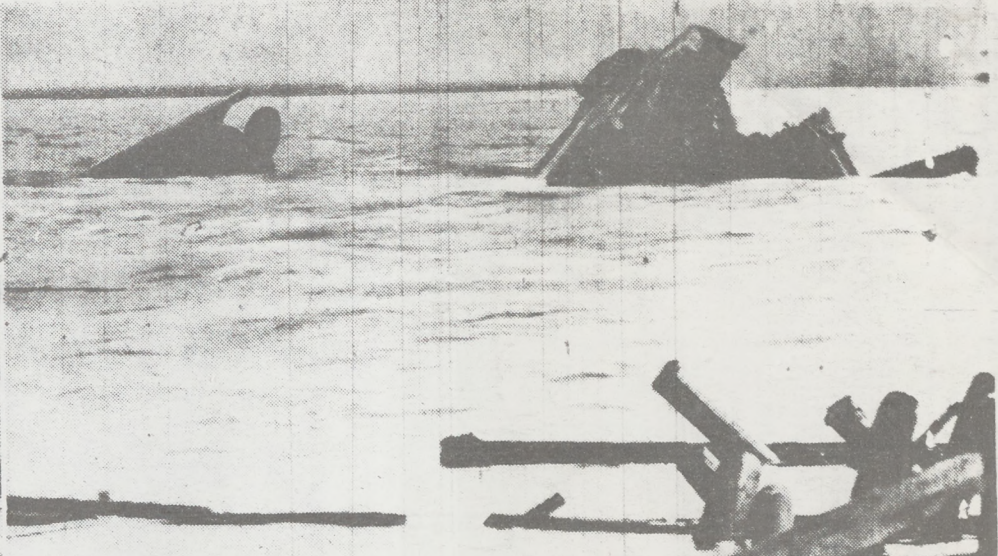
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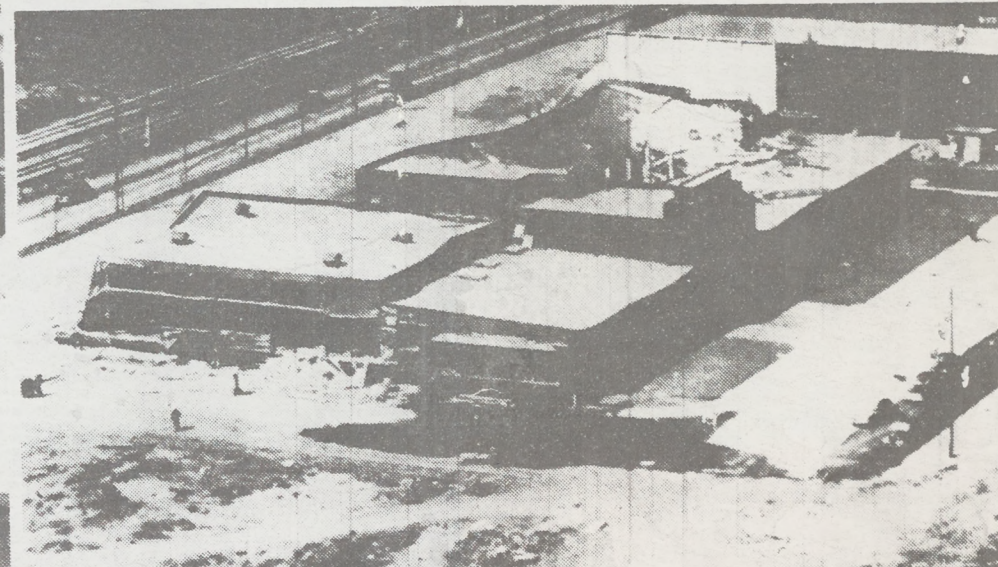
## A Catastrophe on the Home Front: Havoc Caused by Munitions Ships' Blast on Pacific Coast



Automobiles parked near the dock area of Port Chicago, Calif., were blown apart. In the background are the ruins of one of the docks



Two bits of wreckage sticking out of Suisun Bay were all that remained of the vessels



Sailors' barracks were shattered and windows broken throughout a wide area of the section

### RED CROSS RUSHES AID TO BLAST AREA

#### Staffs Reach Scene Swiftly, Care for Civilian Injured and Help Homeless

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Officials and volunteers of the chapters at Martinez, Vallejo and Oakland, on the east and north sides of San Francisco Bay, felt the shock, rushed for telephones and then hurried here. Within half an hour the first Red Cross aides were at work among the wounded.

Forty minutes after the ammunition went off Don G. Cramer, director of disaster relief for the Pacific area, was on the scene. His home is at Antioch, ten miles or so from Port Chicago. He heard the blast, called headquarters at San Francisco, phoned quick orders to surrounding chapters and sped to the wrecked area.

Verne Simmons, Red Cross Pacific area manager, and Raymond Barrows, assistant manager, who lives at San Mateo, forty miles dis-



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commanded the detachment of troops.

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"This morning," he said, "we were pleased to learn that not one injured man could be found at Port Chicago."

He hailed "the grand cooperation of the Army."

He described last night's ship-loading operation as "merely a routine one, as we have loaded many, many ships at the port."

"As the work was being done by enlisted personnel, we had heavy supervision and as a result heavy officer loss," he declared. "We had very few seriously injured among the enlisted personnel and these are being taken care of at near-by military hospitals. Of the casualties the most serious are several leg fractures and serious

that a lighted match or cigarette might have caused the explosion.

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"It's high time we put a stop to this smoking on ships carrying explosives," Judge St. Sure declared from the bench. "It is difficult to impress upon you men that you are subjecting ships, crews, civilians and property to a grave danger. You might have caused hundreds of deaths and destroyed thousands of dollars worth of property."

Victor J. Samulis, 31, who received the sentence, had pleaded guilty, but said he had not been told of the smoking ban.

He was the twentieth person sentenced in the bay area for smoking on munitions ships since April 1, when the Coast Guard began a drive against the practice. Most sentences have been fines of \$25 to

### Nye Holds Lead of 956 Votes

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JULY



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McDowell said almost a half minute elapsed between the first flash and the sound of the first blast.

Then "a series of terrifically loud explosions was accompanied by a fast movement of wind and air," he reported.

Other explosion eyewitness reports were:

Chief Steward L. A. Fitzgerald of one of the two blasted ammunition ships escaped death because he was off duty—having a drink in a Port Chicago bar.

"The concussion broke the glass in my hand," he said. "I was blown across the room and thought the Japs were bombing us."

"There were eighty-six men aboard my ship. Only fifteen of us are alive."

George Wildes, Pittsburg police officer who saw the explosion from a farm five miles from Port Chicago said:

"It looked like a lot of fireworks—big sparklers going up and trickling down. A huge ball of fire in the middle kept going straight up. Then the explosion came; batted me around like I was a toy; pushed my car over on the wrong side of the highway; threw dirt in my face."

Seaman Morris E. Rich of Tuttle, Okla., said that all but eleven of his fellow crew members of one of the ammunition ships which blew up last night were missing.

"I was just returning to the ship from Martinez when I saw it explode," he said.

Pfc. John Kintz, a marine from Belle Vernon, near Pittsburgh, Pa., was knocked unconscious while taking a shower. He said the walls of the marine barracks crumpled under the impact and several men were injured but none was killed.

### PRESIDENT IS OPPOSED BY VANCE M'CORMICK

By The United Press.

HARRISBURG, Pa., July 19—Vance C. McCormick, newspaper publisher and former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, said today that his papers would not support President Roosevelt in the coming election.

In an editorial prepared for publication tomorrow, Mr. McCormick said his papers had foreseen that the New Deal "would not be content with twelve years in the White House" when they opposed Mr. Roosevelt's election to a third term.

"The Patriot and Evening News, which four years ago could not support President Roosevelt for a third term, clearly cannot sanction the greater violence to American tradition in a fourth term," Mr. McCormick declared.

Mr. McCormick, a member of President Wilson's "Little War Cabinet" and his economic adviser at the Versailles Peace Conference, said he would support Mr. Roosevelt if he thought the success of

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Verne Simmons, Red Cross Pacific area manager, and Raymond Barrows, assistant manager, who lives at San Mateo, forty miles distant, hurried to headquarters.

#### Temporary Hospitals Set Up

First Red Cross concern was for the civilian casualties, since the Navy had its relief organization at work. Cars of doctors and nurses had priority.

The Hotel Clyde at Port Chicago was ordered evacuated and some of the injured were taken there. A school house damaged by the explosion was also used as a temporary hospital. Other injured were taken to hospitals at Martinez and Concord.

A base was set up in the Veterans Memorial Building for the treatment of the less seriously injured, chiefly those cut by flying glass or bits of flying wood or plaster.

At first, with all electric lines down, the Red Cross workers toiled with flashlights. A carnival at a nearby town closed at once and rushed its mobile illuminating equipment to the blast scene. Emergency lighting equipment was also trucked from Red Cross warehouses in San Francisco.

The Red Cross estimated that 350 houses and thirty business structures were damaged. Wallboard and nails for repairs were rushed from San Francisco.

#### Data on Civilians Compiled

Disaster case workers compiled information on civilians of the area to be supplied to relatives and friends. A special staff at headquarters in San Francisco handled inquiries which ran into the hundreds.

Mobile kitchens went into the area. The Martinez chapter called in its canteen staff and by dawn had food units set up. Breakfast was prepared for 1,000 to 1,200 persons and relief feeding will go on for five days to a week because the gas was turned off promptly after the explosion as a safeguard against fire and will not be turned on again until every connection in every house is thoroughly tested.

In the middle of a Port Chicago street a Salvation Army canteen was posted, serving coffee, sandwiches, doughnuts, cigarettes and candy.

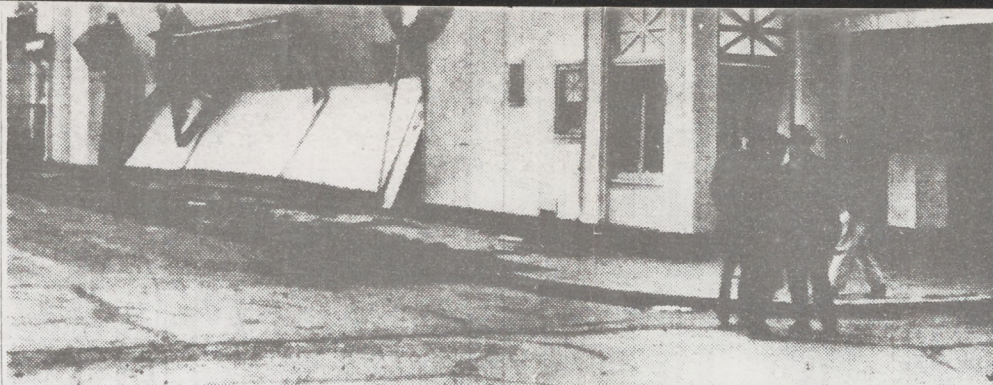
### WARNS LIQUOR INDUSTRY

Seagram's Head Urges Square Deal for Public in 'Holiday'

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

DULUTH, Minn., July 18—Liquor distillers were warned today by Frank R. Schwengel, president of Seagram & Sons, Inc., to transmit to the public and to the trade "quality production" benefits as the result of the order of the War Production Board permitting resumption of the distillation of potable spirits.

He spoke at the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators here.



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Associated Press Wirephoto

## AT LEAST 350 DEAD IN BLAST ON COAST

Continued From Page 1

the water. Twisted stacks of lumber and rubbish were everywhere. A railroad track running out to the wrecked pier was dipping almost into the bay. Barracks at the loading station were demolished and other structures, including a carpenter shop, had disintegrated.

Observers had to take the word of Navy spokesmen that two ships had been tied up at the pier when the blasts went off at about 10:20 P. M. (1:20 A. M., New York time). The twisted bow of one ship lay on its side, protruding twenty feet or so out of the bay. A hundred feet away a propeller shaft was visible. Debris littered the water, but the ships, except for these parts, had sunk or been scattered. One sailor reported that a piece of sternpost landed in his barracks room a half mile away.

Port Chicago, with a peacetime population of about 1,500, lies a few miles west of the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, where they empty into Suisun Bay, an arm of San Francisco Bay.

In the development of the war loading port the Navy built acres of two-story barracks for pier workers. The barracks are a half-mile out of town. The population of the barracks, all of which were damaged, with many left uninhabitable, was put at around 1,400.

It was reported unofficially that most of the sailors working the loading shift at the time of the explosion were Negroes.

#### Tribute by Admiral Wright

Rear Admiral C. H. Wright, commandant of the Twelfth Naval District, declared that all of those killed gave their lives "in the service of their country."

"Their sacrifice could not have been greater," he said, "had it occurred on a battleship or a beach head on the war fronts. Their conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States naval service."

The destroyed vessels were the 10,000-ton Quinault Victory, a Victory ship delivered a week ago by the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation at Portland, Ore., and the 7,500-ton E. A. Bryan, a Liberty ship delivered by Richmond Yard No. 2 March 8. Both yards are in the Henry J. Kaiser organization. The Quinault Victory was operated by the United States Steamship Lines and the Bryan by the Olive-humj Olson Company. The damaged tanker was a Red Line ship.

One of the ships, according to Captain Goss, was loaded with "several thousand tons of explosives" and the other was "only slightly loaded" when the blasts occurred.

Capt. John Hendrickson and seven members of his crew of for-

## Concussion Coincides With Movie Bomb Scene

By The Associated Press.

PORT CHICAGO, Calif., July 18—As a result of the ammunition ship explosion, a mile and a half away, 195 movie theatre patrons in this town had a miraculous story to tell today.

They were watching a war film filled with bombing scenes last night. Then the wall blew in.

Joe Meyer, owner-manager of the theatre, said that he was operating the projector when the explosion occurred, just as a bombing scene with all its noise came on the screen.

He did not hear the ship blowing up, but one wall of the theatre caved in. Members of the audience, he said, got out safely with only minor scratches.

damage had not been even greater. A munition train standing hardly more than a city block from the water's edge was undamaged. Other freight cars dotted the reservation, but most of them were unscathed.

In the main barracks area, every window was blown out. Some of the war-built structures collapsed. The sides of others were blown out.

In Port Chicago the wall of a theatre was crushed, but with injury to only a few in the audience. At the Santa Fe depot broken glass strewed the floor. Store windows were smashed. A main street grocer, Pop Graham, found that 1,500 glasses of jellies and preserves had been broken.

The town was left without gas, electricity or running water. But late tonight the water supply was "reasonably well restored," relief workers announced, and progress was being made toward re-establishing electric and telephone service.

A man who was passed through the lines by State highway police and military sentries at about 5 A. M., said that he had waited for hours on the outskirts afraid to go to his home.

"I work in the steel mill over in Pittsburg," he said. "I have a wife and five kids. I was afraid to come home. I was afraid they all were dead. My house is gone. But the family's safe."

The clock in the Port Chicago Hotel stopped at 10:19. This was the time the blast shook the bay area so hard that its force was registered on the seismograph of the University of California at Berkeley.

As pieced together by the authorities, the basic story is about as follows:

Gangs of Navy enlisted men, working as stevedores, were well along in the loading of the Quinault Victory with a cargo of high explosives of all types for use in the Allied offensive in the Pacific. The Bryan was tied up near by and

and debris. A motorist described the rising mass of fiery debris as "a flaming doughnut."

As the force of the explosion was dissipated, air rushed in to fill the atmospheric vacuum. Its force was estimated at 150 miles an hour.

One 200-pound ship fragment sailed more than two miles.

Debris was hurled out into the bay for hundreds of yards. A warning was sent out for small craft to proceed through the adjacent waters with care.

Disaster relief units, military and civilian, formed early in the war to act in case of a Japanese attack, swung swiftly into motion. Doctors, nurses and hospital facilities throughout the bay area were "alerted." Ambulances were sent from points as far distant as Sacramento, sixty miles away. The number of civilian casualties was large, but few of the injuries were expected to be fatal.

For the first few hours relief workers labored in darkness or with flashlights. Before dawn brilliant floodlights illuminated the scene, but the full scope of the disaster was not revealed until daylight.

#### Communications Hampered

Long after the explosion was felt in San Francisco and more distant places the exact location was a mystery. Communications were down and the Navy got piecemeal information by short-wave radio. Cars with no official business were shunted off the roads to wait until the doctors, nurses and ambulances had got through.

Rear Admiral Henry F. Bruns, in charge of docks and construction, visited the disaster scene. As Navy investigators went over the ground, agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation announced that they were not participating in the inquiry.

The relief work on the naval reservation was supervised by Capt. Merrill Kinne, its commanding officer, who kept on the job in spite of slight injuries. A Navy spokesman said that many of the men in the barracks were asleep and that the casualties in the residential area of the reservation were confined to injuries.

First calls for fire equipment, sent out at the time of the explosions, were soon canceled. The fire was confined to the pier area and was quickly under control.

Many in the area agreed on essentially the following: "We thought it was the Japs bombing us."

Many, especially persons living down the peninsula, south of San Francisco and as far as ninety miles from the explosion scene, felt a slight tremor and thought another earthquake had struck the bay area. Some near Port Chicago were thrown from their beds. Windows were broken in towns as far as twenty miles away.

All day long sightseers were kept out of the community. After Sheriff Long had called for help in policing the vicinity soldiers were sent in with an armored car mounting an anti-tank gun. They

troops.

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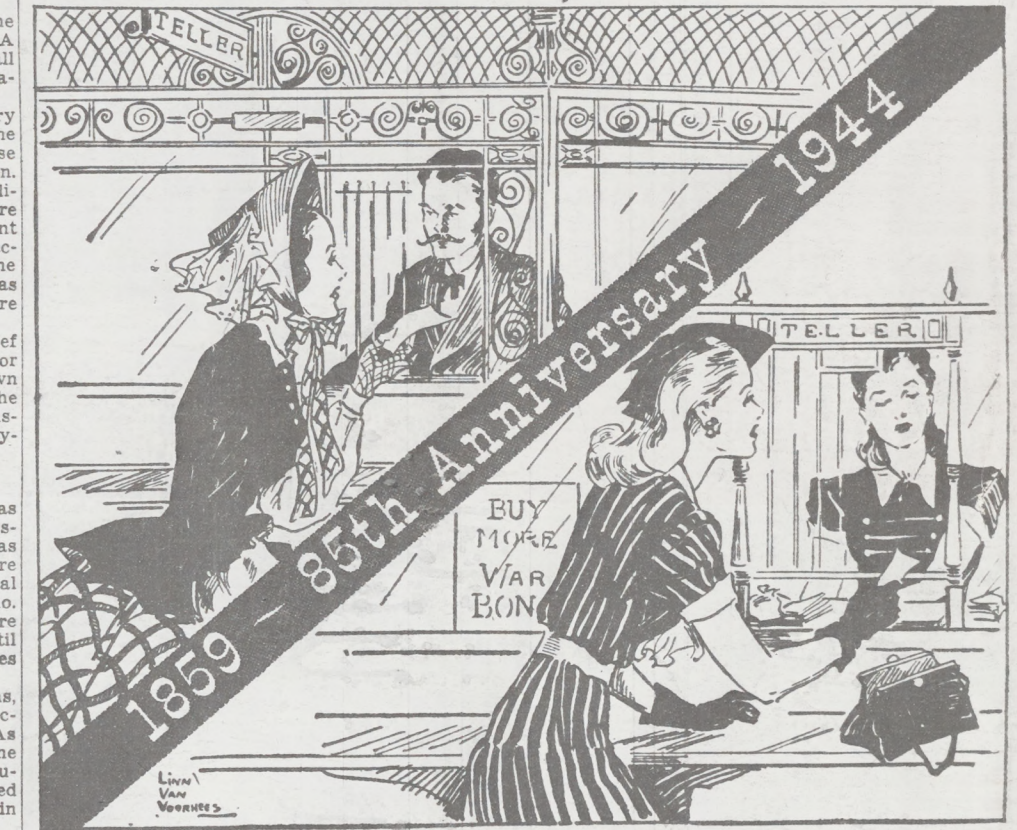
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## Fashions Change

## but Saving is always in Fashion!

War or peace—depression or prosperity—1859 or 1944—saving money is everlastingly "the thing." Since Central Savings Bank opened its doors just 85 years ago, our depositors have multiplied in number from 44 to over 189,000; deposits have risen from \$7,670 on the first day of July, 1859, to more than \$200,000,000

on our eighty-fifth anniversary. To those depositors who have helped us prosper through the years, we wish to offer our deep appreciation. And if you are one of those who have not yet opened your account at Central, we cordially invite you to step in and follow a very old and yet a very modern fashion.

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"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

LATE CITY EDITION

Partly cloudy with moderate winds today.  
Temperature Yesterday—Max., 81; Min., 67  
Sunrise, 5:40 A. M.; Sunset, 8:23 P. M.

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THREE CENTS IN NEW YORK CITY

## DEMOCRATS FACE MANY-SIDED BATTLE ON VICE PRESIDENCY

Opponents of Wallace Fail to Agree on Single Man to Bear Brunt of the Contest

## TRUMAN DRAWS SUPPORT

Senator Is Unwilling to Make Race—CIO Leaders Oppose the Boom for Byrnes

By TURNER CATLEDGE

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

CHICAGO, July 18—With Vice President Wallace rushing here from Washington to fight personally for his renomination and his opponents trying desperately but thus far unsuccessfully to center on a champion, the Democratic National Convention, scheduled to open at the Chicago Stadium at 11:30 A. M. tomorrow, appeared tonight to face the real possibility of an old-time Democratic battle royal over the selection of a running mate for President Roosevelt. Seeking to forestall this possibility, an increasing number of anti-Wallace leaders were making a supreme effort to line their forces behind Senator Harry S. Truman of Missouri.

This was taking place at the end of a day which buzzed with rumors and counter-rumors concerning the opposition to James F. Byrnes by the Congress of Industrial Organizations and other groups, and additional reports that the President therefore would possibly ask his Director of War Mobilization not to permit his name to go before the convention.

Mr. Wallace's opponents considered themselves free to proceed following Mr. Roosevelt's mild endorsement of his 1940 running mate in a letter which reached the convention city last night and the added remark therein that the choice was up to the convention.

Byrnes "Stock" Seems to Slip  
Mr. Byrnes was regarded until this morning as the focal point of forces intent on preventing the renomination of Mr. Wallace. His stock appeared to slip markedly, however, after word was put about that Philip Murray, president of the CIO, and Sidney Hillman,

## Convention Today

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

CHICAGO, July 18—The program of the Democratic National Convention for its first day is as follows:

Wednesday, July 19  
FIRST SESSION  
11:30 A. M., C. W. T.

Convention called to order by Robert E. Hannegan, national chairman.

Invocation—The Right Rev. John Zelezinski, Chicago.

National Anthem—Nona Vann, Chicago Civic Opera Company.

Call for convention, read by Mrs. Dorothy Vredenburg of Alabama, secretary, Democratic National Committee.

Welcoming Speeches—Mayor Edward J. Kelly of Chicago and Senator Lucas of Illinois.

Presentation of distinguished visitors.

Remarks by Edwin W. Pauley, director of the convention.

Appointment of committees on credentials, permanent organization, rules and order of business, on resolutions and platform.

SECOND SESSION  
8:15 P. M., C. W. T.

Called to order by Chairman Hannegan.

Invocation—The Rev. Harrison R. Anderson, Chicago.

Patriotic Song—Phil Regan.

Address—Mr. Hannegan, chairman of national committee.

Address—Mrs. Charles W. Tillett of North Carolina, assistant chairman, national committee.

Keynote address—Gov. Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma.

## DEWEY CHARGES WAR BALLOT PLOT

He Says 'Financial' Group Is 'Playing Politics' With Soldier Vote Rights

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

ALBANY, July 18—Governor Dewey declared today that a group with "unlimited financial resources" was "playing politics with the right of New York State's fighting men to vote."

He said that those advocating the use of the supplementary Federal ballot in New York ignored the fact that such ballots could not be counted under the State Constitution.

The Republican nominee did not identify the group he charged with a "campaign of deceit," in a prepared statement, but some ele-

## AT LEAST 350 DEAD AS MUNITIONS SHIPS BLOW UP ON COAST

Two Vessels Being Loaded at Port Chicago Explode, Killing Virtually All at Spot

NAVY TOLL IS 200 TO 250

Enlisted Men Were Working as Stevedores—70 in Crews Die—Wide Land Damage

By LAWRENCE E. DAVIES

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PORT CHICAGO, Calif., July 18—Three hundred and fifty or more persons were killed in the double explosion which shattered two munitions ships late last night, wrecked a Navy loading pier and left a "scorched earth" scene in this war boom town, forty miles northeast of San Francisco.

Material damage caused by the blast, one of the most disastrous in the country's history, was put at more than \$5,000,000, excluding the value of the thousands of tons of munitions blown up. The munitions ships, both almost new, were valued at about \$4,300,000. A Coast Guard crash boat and a fire barge also were destroyed and a tanker was damaged.

Hundreds of persons, possibly as many as a thousand, were injured. Every building in a radius of two or three miles was razed or damaged. Many stood at crazy angles, useless or with walls caved in.

Summary Toll

The death toll of Navy personnel, exclusive of members of the armed guard aboard the ships, was listed as "between 200 and 250," with some officials "guessing." Nine Navy officers supervising the loading of the ships by sailors lost their lives, as did fifteen Coast Guardsmen. Seventy Maritime Commission seamen were killed. Three civilian railroad workers riding on a locomotive and two cars near the explosion scene were never seen again and the pieces of the train were scattered over a wide area.

No civilian residents of the blast area are known to have been killed. Six of the injured were at work in the Benicia Arsenal seven miles across the bay from Port Chicago. Col. Paul G. Rutten, commanding

# BRITISH RIP LINES EAST OF CAEN; AMERICANS WIN ST. LO JUNCTION; RUSSIANS NEAR LWOW IN NEW PUSH

AS 57,000 NAZI PRISONERS WERE PARADED IN MOSCOW



Some of Hitler's soldiers, captured on the White Russian front, being marched through the streets of the Soviet capital  
The New York Times (Sovfoto Radiophoto)

## JAPAN DROPS TOJO AS CHIEF OF STAFF

Umezu Heads Army in Shuffle Laid to Saipan as Premier Discloses National Crisis

After a five-month term as active head of the Japanese Army in the concurrent position of Chief of Staff, Premier General Hideki Tojo was "relieved" of that job yesterday in a drastic new High Command shake-up that was accompanied by the first Japanese acknowledgment of the loss of Saipan and a statement by Premier

## Soviet Troops Gain 31 Miles Through a 124-Mile Breach

By W. H. LAWRENCE

By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MOSCOW, Wednesday, July 19—A great new offensive aimed at the very heart of Germany was announced late last night by Marshal Joseph Stalin, who said that forces of the First Ukrainian Front in three days had driven thirty-one miles through a 124-mile-wide breach in the German lines, captured 600 inhabited points and crossed the Bug River almost at the 1941 Soviet-Polish frontier.

[The 1939 Polish partition line was reached at Skomorokhi, the Russian midnight communiqué said.]  
The new drive, led by Marshal

## 7,000 TONS OF BOMBS PACE BRITISH DRIVE

American, British and Dominion Planes in Thousands Blast Germans for 4 Hours

By JAMES MacDONALD

By Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

IN THE CAEN SECTOR, July 18—One of the mightiest air forces that ever took to the air—thousands of American, British and Dominion bombers and fighters—bombed—struck awesome blows early today at every enemy target northeast, east and southeast of

## MAJOR ASSAULT

British Armor Streamlined Into Open Country Engage Germans

PACED BY RECORD BOMBING

Americans Cut Road to Le Mans and Periers, Report Abandoned by Foes

By DREW MIDDLETON

By Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS Allied Expeditionary Force Wednesday, July 19—The British Second Army has cracked the man defensive position at Caen in the successful opening a major offensive.

British armored formations mobile troops streamed on flat open country east of the River and southeast of Caen night to clash with elite German armored divisions in a crucial battle. The break-through, the significant action on the Normandy front since the fall of Cherbourg was preceded and supported by the heaviest air assault ever launched against an army in the field.

Lancasters and Halifaxes Royal Air Force's Bomber Command, Liberators of the States Eighth Air Force and raiders and Havocs of the Air Force blasted enemy positions, field batteries, troop concentrations and fuel, ammunition and food dumps with more than 7,000 tons of bombs between 10 A. M. yesterday.

As the British army pushed through the breaches in the man lines on the eastern sector the 100-mile front, the hard-fighting men of the American Army fought their way into St. Lo, the hinge of the German positions on the western sector captured the German str

## AMERICAN TROOPS REACH ARNO RIVER

Drive Between Florence and



Seeking to forestall this possibility, an increasing number of anti-Wallace leaders were making a supreme effort to line their forces behind Senator Harry S. Truman of Missouri.

This was taking place at the end of a day which buzzed with rumors and counter-rumors concerning the opposition to James F. Byrnes by the Congress of Industrial Organizations and other groups, and additional reports that the President therefore would possibly ask his Director of War Mobilization not to permit his name to go before the convention.

Mr. Wallace's opponents considered themselves free to proceed following Mr. Roosevelt's mild endorsement of his 1940 running mate in a letter which reached the convention city last night and the added remark therein that the choice was up to the convention.

Byrnes "Stock" Seems to Slip  
Mr. Byrnes was regarded until this morning as the focal point of forces intent on preventing the renomination of Mr. Wallace. His stock appeared to slip markedly, however, after word was put about that Philip Murray, president of the CIO, and Sidney Hillman, chairman of the CIO Political Action Committee, opposed him.

Mr. Murray and Mr. Hillman denied at an afternoon press conference that they were "against" Mr. Byrnes or anyone else. They said that they were simply "for" Mr. Wallace, for whom they have long been fighting, and would stand with him to the end.

Mr. Wallace's friends, meanwhile, experienced a considerable lift in spirits, following a few hours of virtual despair after the disclosure of the President's letter. One of the possibilities was that Mr. Roosevelt would be asked in the final stages to designate his choice, and that he would again demand Mr. Wallace, as he did in 1940, or turn to Associate Justice William O. Douglas.

Favorite Sons in Background  
Senator Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky and at least a dozen other "hopefuls" stayed in the background as the Vice-Presidential contest was intensified. None of them seemed to be picking up strength, so far as word-of-mouth conversation around the Chicago hotels would indicate. Mr. Barkley was endorsed by the Kentucky delegation in a caucus; Gov. J. Melville Broughton of North Carolina was put forward by the delegation and several other delegations endorsed favorite sons.

Mr. Byrnes was not to be considered entirely out of the picture, although it was generally understood that he would not go to the post without the President's consent.

Reports that Senator Truman was to be the choice of the anti-Wallace forces were heard in the New York State delegation at a dinner and cocktail party. Earlier in the day, it was stated, Edward J. Flynn, New York national committeeman, in a conference with leaders, informed them that the decision of the Wallace opponents was to back Senator Truman, and that the New York delegation might be voting for him, at least after the first ballot. The group agreed to accede to this de-

Keynote address—Gov. Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma.

## DEWEY CHARGES WAR BALLOT PLOT

### He Says 'Financial' Group Is 'Playing Politics' With Soldier Vote Rights

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.  
ALBANY, July 18—Governor Dewey declared today that a group with "unlimited financial resources" was "playing politics with the right of New York State's fighting men to vote."

He said that those advocating the use of the supplementary Federal ballot in New York ignored the fact that such ballots could not be counted under the State Constitution.

The Republican nominee did not identify the group he charged with a "campaign of deceit," in a prepared statement, but some elements of the CIO have been conducting a campaign to bring about use of the Federal ballot by New York service men and women. A delegation of 800 persons came to Albany last week to urge the Governor to authorize use of the Federal ballot.

The Governor asserted that the State soldier vote was drawn to fit precisely Title 2 of the Federal law and that it was a "model of simplicity."

**TEXT OF STATEMENT**  
Following is the text of the formal statement:

"For some time now a group with unlimited financial resources has been playing partisan politics with the right of New York State's fighting men to vote. Instead of helping soldiers to vote, they have distributed millions of misleading circulars designed to confuse both the public mind and the mind of soldiers. It is time this campaign of deceit was labeled and exposed.

"Accordingly, I urge all families and friends of members of the armed services immediately to write to them, telling them the truth about their right to vote in the State of New York.

"The New York soldier vote law is a model of simplicity, drawn to fit precisely Title 2 of the Federal law. Every member of the armed forces all over the world will be

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## Race Issue Snarls the Platform; Southerners Halt Compromise

By CHARLES E. EGAN  
Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.  
CHICAGO, July 18—Sharp controversy over the racial issue stirred the Democratic resolutions committee today as it labored to complete an acceptable platform for presentation to the national convention on Thursday.

Insistence of leaders of the Congress of Industrial Organizations and Negro groups that a

statement by Mr. Murray that labor demanded a courageous stand on the racial issue, and a telegram sent by Edgar C. Brown, director of the National Negro Council to President Roosevelt, urging him to take definite action to pledge his party to approve Negro demands and implement them by legislation, provoked resentment on the part of the South-

erns ships, both almost new, were valued at about \$4,300,000. A Coast Guard crash boat and a fire barge also were destroyed and a tanker was damaged.

Hundreds of persons, possibly as many as a thousand, were injured. Every building in a radius of two or three miles was razed or damaged. Many stood at crazy angles, roofless or with walls caved in.

**Summary of Death Toll**

The death toll of Navy personnel, exclusive of members of the armed guard aboard the ships, was listed as "between 200 and 250," with some officials "guessing." Nine Navy officers supervising the loading of the ships by sailors lost their lives, as did fifteen Coast Guardsmen. Seventy Maritime Commission seamen were killed. Three civilian railroad workers riding on a locomotive and two cars near the explosion scene were never seen again and the pieces of the train were scattered over a wide area.

No civilian residents of the blast area are known to have been killed. Six of the injured were at work in the Benicia Arsenal seven miles across the bay from Port Chicago. Col. Paul G. Rutten, commanding officer of the arsenal, estimated damages to arsenal buildings at about \$150,000.

Capt. N. H. Goss, commanding officer of the naval ammunition depot at Mare Island, who has jurisdiction over the Port Chicago installation, voiced the belief that the cause of the explosion never would be known.

"We have no basis for giving any cause," he said, "as there are no close survivors to give evidence of what happened."

**Navy Inquiry Expected**

The Navy Department was expected to make a formal investigation.

The blast area, including Port Chicago and Martinez, was put under quasi-martial law as Sheriff James Long of Contra Costa County called for military aid in policing it.

Doubt was expressed that many of the bodies ever would be identified. It may be days, before the death roster is complete. A Navy spokesman said that no death list would be made public until the next of kin had been notified.

Newspaper men, admitted to the area ten hours after the explosion, saw why some residents thought at first that there had been an atomic bombing. Acres of pier had been blown away, the tops of piles sticking up.

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## JAPAN DROPS TOJO AS CHIEF OF STAFF

### Umezu Heads Army in Shuffle Laid to Saipan as Premier Discloses National Crisis

After a five-month term as active head of the Japanese Army in the concurrent position of Chief of Staff, Premier General Hideki Tojo was "relieved" of that job yesterday in a drastic new High Command shake-up that was accompanied by the first Japanese acknowledgment of the loss of Saipan and a statement by Premier Tojo himself in which he told his people that "imperial Japan has come to face an unprecedentedly great national crisis."

After declaring that "Saipan Island has finally fallen into the enemy's hands," Premier Tojo was quoted by the Tokyo radio as telling the Japanese people:

"Now the day for the decisive battle is approaching."

Gen. Yoshijiro Umezu, Com-

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## War News Summarized

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 1944

British and Canadian troops of the Second Army burst their bonds yesterday and shattered the German defenses about Caen. General Montgomery's finest divisions then started to roll across the plains east of the Orne and southeast of Caen, where a fierce battle of mobile forces raged all day.

The offensive was preceded by a gigantic aerial assault in which more than 2,000 Allied planes showered in excess of 7,000 tons of high-explosive and anti-personnel bombs on the Germans for four hours. Not a single enemy plane was to challenge the armada from four Allied air commands.

At the other end of the Normandy line the Americans drove the Germans out of St. Lo, made Pèriers virtually untenable and improved their positions at other points. [All the foregoing 1:8; map P. 2.]

The bombing barrage at Caen carried the "bomb-line" forward ahead of the advancing troops and raised such clouds of smoke and dust that daylight was blacked out. [1:7.]

Allied air might is so great that at the same time more than 1,200 additional planes blasted Pennemuende and Zimowitz on the Baltic coast, where the Nazis developed their flying bomb and



Some of Hitler's soldiers, captured on the White Russian front, being marched through the streets of the Soviet capital  
The New York Times (Sovfoto Radiophoto)

## Soviet Troops Gain 31 Miles Through a 124-Mile Breach

By W. H. LAWRENCE  
By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MOSCOW, Wednesday, July 19—A great new offensive aimed at the very heart of Germany was announced late last night by Marshal Joseph Stalin, who said that forces of the First Ukraine Front in three days had driven thirty-one miles through a 124-mile-wide breach in the German lines, captured 600 inhabited points and crossed the Bug River almost at the 1941 Soviet-Polish frontier.

[The 1939 Polish partition line was reached at Skomordki, the Russian midnight communiqué said.]

The new drive, led by Marshal Ivan S. Koneff, who had replaced Marshal Gregory Zhukoff, was linked with the campaign on the First White Russian Front, commanded by Marshal Konstantin K. Rokossovsky.

Last night's High Command communiqué announced the capture of a total of 1,040 inhabited points as the Red Army drove forward on sectors west and northwest of OPOCHKA, northwest and

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## AMERICAN TROOPS REACH ARNO RIVER

### Drive Between Florence and Pisa—Eighth Army Cracks Defenses of Ancona

By HERBERT L. MATTHEWS  
By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

ROME, July 18—American troops of the Fifth Army, after having fought their way through difficult mountain terrain, reached the Arno River between Pisa and Florence today at the town of Pontedera.

Polish troops of the British Eighth Army, with Italians on their left flank, achieved a complete break-through in the German positions southwest of Ancona and the largest Italian port on the Adriatic seemed about to fall soon. The same fate is gradually overtaking Leghorn, on the Tyrrhenian, with this advance to Pontedera and the general tightening of the stranglehold around the port.

The Eighth Army in the center is exploiting its surprise dash across the upper Arno and has taken Levane and Quarata. Thus three powerful thrusts, all initiated within the past four or five days, are driving the Germans back on what might be called the "Arno line," although it is really a series of natural positions that the enemy is expected to use to delay as long

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## German Staff Has Plans Now For Next War, Welles Warns

By JAMES B. RESTON  
Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, July 18—The German General Staff is aware of Germany's inevitable defeat and has already made "detailed plans for a later renewal of its attempt to dominate the world," Sumner Welles, former Under-Secretary of State, declares in a book to be published tomorrow.

Arguing for United States participation in an effective world peace organization and for the dis-

## 7,000 TONS OF BOMBS PACE BRITISH DRIVE

### American, British and Dominion Planes in Thousands Blast Germans for 4 Hours

By JAMES MacDONALD  
By Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

IN THE CAEN SECTOR, July 18—One of the mightiest air forces that ever took to the air—thousands of American, British and Dominion bombers and fighter-bombers—struck awesome blows early today at every enemy target northeast, east and southeast of Caen.

It was hell let loose. Seven thousand tons of bombs poured on the enemy in a few hours, and during that time the earth shook for miles around and the air throbbled with the roar of motors. Fires, explosions, the smell of cordite, occasional meteor-like streaks of flame as some of the Allies' planes hurtled to earth afire and the choking dust flung up by the bombs made the scene one that will not be forgotten by those who survived.

[Some 2,200 planes were employed and dropped 14,000 tons of bombs, The United Press reported.]

**Attack Begins at Dawn**

The curtain went up on this scene shortly before 5 A. M., just as day was breaking. From a vantage point of high ground well up in a forward area a group of war correspondents peered down on placid towns, villages and farmsteads. That placidity was a momentary thing in the stillness of early morning.

Suddenly through the stillness came the faint hum of airplane motors. The hum grew louder and louder and became an ear-splitting roar as a large formation of Royal Air Force heavy bombers circled

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Caen in the successful opening a major offensive.

British armored formations mobile troops streamed on flat open country east of the Orne River and southeast of Caen in night to clash with elite German armored divisions in a crucial battle. The break-through, the most significant action on the Normandy front since the fall of Cherbourg was preceded and supported by a heavy air assault ever launched against an army in the field.

Lancasters and Halifaxes of the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command, Liberators of the United States Eighth Air Force and Mustangs and Havocs of the Ninth Air Force blasted enemy strong points, field batteries, troop concentrations and fuel, ammunition and food dumps with more than 7,000 tons of bombs between 5 and 10 A. M. yesterday.

As the British army flooded through the breaches in the German lines on the eastern sector of the 100-mile front, the hard-hit infantrymen of the American First Army fought their way into LÖ, the hinge of the German positions on the western sector, captured the German strong after a siege that had lasted several days. This morning the Allies were rolling forward on both sectors after two brilliant initial successes.

**Great Tank Battle Believed**

Massed British tanks supported by other mobile forces smashed into strong German forces in flat country southeast of Caen where one of the greatest battles of the war is believed to be raging. According to a German correspondent at the enemy's headquarters, the British Fifty-first Infantry Division—the famous Flanders division that Gen. Sir Bernard L. Montgomery used in the main break-through—is in the thick of the fighting with "several British tank brigades. The Germans place the battlefield east of the Orne and about eight miles from the coast, or in the area Banneville-la-Campagne and Evrville.

"The advance has gone extremely well," a spokesman of the Second Army headquarters declared yesterday afternoon as British armor poured forward. According to reports from front, the drive began to Cuverville and Demouville, respectively four miles north and east of Caen, and toward the main Caen-Troarn road and line of villages from Touffreville-Sannerville. A considerable nu-

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## Nazi Sees Decision In Europe in 90 Days

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

LONDON, July 18—Nazi radio broadcasts acknowledged tonight that Gen. Sir Bernard L. Montgomery had carried his attack east of the Orne and one commentator said the war would be decided in less than three months.

"The war is now in its decisive phase," said commentator Paquis on the Nazi-controlled Paris radio. "In less than three months we shall know if the Allies have won or lost. On