

WEATHER

FORECAST
Southeastern North Carolina - Partly cloudy and little change in temperature Monday.

THE SUNDAY STAR-NEWS

THE PORT CITY OF PROGRESS AND PLEASURE

Served By Leased Wires of the UNITED PRESS and the ASSOCIATED PRESS With Complete Coverage of State and National News

VOL. 18.—NO. 50.

WILMINGTON, N. C., SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1946.

SECTION-A

LEWIS ENDS WALKOUT ON U.S. TERMS; 122 DIE IN ATLANTA HOTEL DISASTER

Wilmingtonian, Winecoff Builder Cites Fire Underwriters' Report

Inferno Hits As 280 Seek Escape Path

Many Horribly Burned Or Injured As They Leap From High Windows

CAUSE SOUGHT

All Hotel Employees Being Questioned As Investigation Begins

BY BURNS EENNETT (United Press Staff Correspondent)

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 7.—A mass of flames shot through the 15-story Winecoff hotel today in an inferno which killed 122 persons, and tonight an exhaustive investigation was begun to learn the cause of the holocaust, worst hotel fire in the nation's history.

In three hours of flaming hell, while the fire raged unchecked, the hotel's 280 guests tried to escape. A few succeeded, some of them with tales of their experiences. But most of the men, women and children who jammed the 194 rooms for the week end were either killed or injured.

Many of the injured were horribly burned or had multiple fractures caused by leaping from windows. As flames shot skyward through the brick structure, guests awoke in a smoky fog. From windows and window ledges, aroused from their slumber and crazed by terror, they called for help, pleading to be rescued. But many of them fell or leaped to death, their night clothing trailing ribbons of flame.

While the dead were still being counted, all employees of the hotel were called for exhaustive questioning by the fire officials seeking to determine the cause.

City Fire Marshall Harry Phillips (Continued on Page Five; Col. 4)

Okinawa Employees Sought By Union

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—Okinawa, site of the last major battle of World War II, is being unionized.

The National Federation of Federal employees, an independent union, reported today that a charter has been granted for a local on Okinawa to include civilian employees of the Army engineers.

New Hearing Approved On Sale Of Lake Forest

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—David L. Krooth, acting National Housing administrator, decided today to recommend a new hearing before disposing of the masonry units in the Lake Forest housing project in Wilmington, N. C.

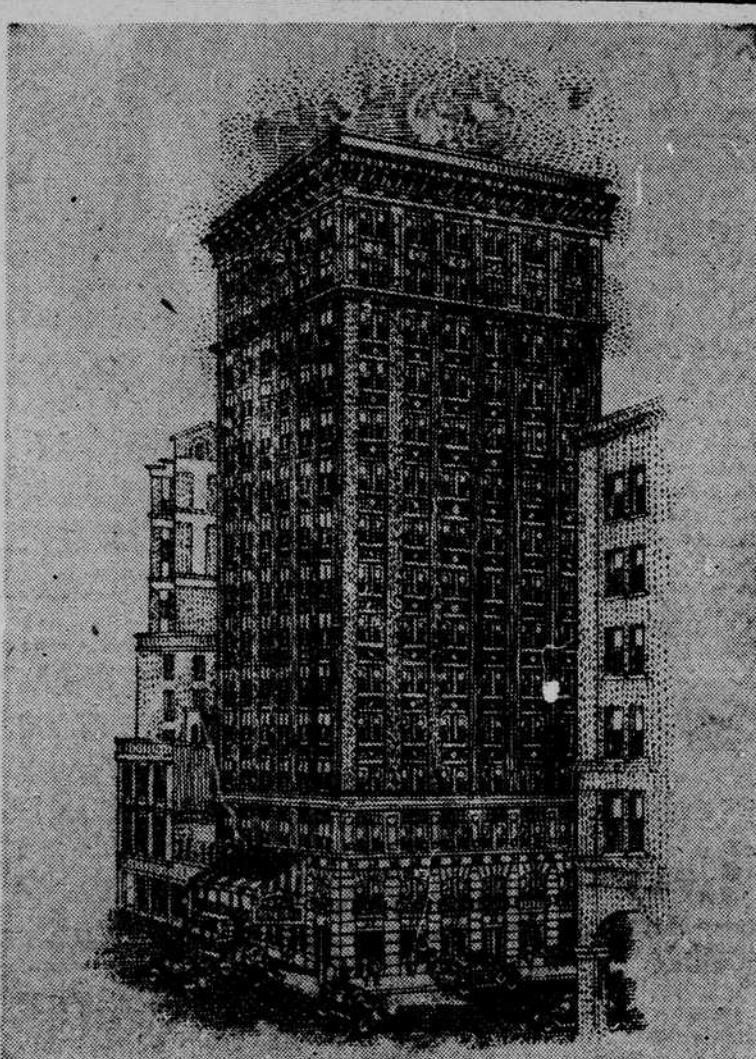
He held a reporter after talking with representatives of the Lake Forest Tenants' association he would make that recommendation to the successor to Wilson Wyatt, who resigned as Housing administrator this week.

Representatives of the association urged Krooth to stay the decision made by Wyatt about a week ago to give priority to a veterans' cooperative for purchase of the housing units.

In protesting the ruling, which gave veterans preference over non-veterans, the group headed by Brooks A. Broome declared that occupants of the unit should have first preference. They said they believed non-resident veterans will buy the housing for speculative purposes.

Wyatt, shortly before he resigned, sent a memorandum to Federal Public Housing Commissioner Dillon Meyer stating NHA policy is to give preference for purchase only to veterans with families needing

Where 122 Perished



Before dawn yesterday flames kindled the heart of the famed Winecoff hotel in the center of the Peachtree section of Atlanta, and early today the charred remains of 122 victims had been removed. According to superstition, most hotels have no 13th floor; neither does the Winecoff. The 12th floor may be seen beneath the top two floors, which are the 14th and 15th floors. This was the nation's worst hotel disaster. The above drawing was made available to the Star-News by James McKay, 402 South Third street.

Stark Tragedy Marks Atlanta Hotel Blaze

By WILLIAM TUCKER United Press Staff Correspondent

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 7.—On the 11th floor, a woman knelt in a bathroom gathering her three children into her sheltering arms. The fire crystallized them that way, like a piece of blackened statuary.

That was only the starkest of a hundred tragedies I saw on a horrifying ascent from the bottom to the top of the black, smoking tower of the Winecoff hotel.

Each room, each corridor, each flight of stairs had its own tragedy. And on each flight I passed a grim brigade of firemen and Red Cross workers bringing down "another dead weight." That was the "Day of Infamy" Goes Unobserved

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—The Fifth anniversary of the sneak attack by the Japanese on the fleet at Pearl Harbor, passed today without official notice in the national capital. This has generally been the rule since the late President Roosevelt described December 7, 1941, as a "day of infamy."

BEVIN ARRIVES WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—Ernest Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, arrived in Washington tonight for a brief visit which will include a meeting tomorrow morning with President Truman.

USES SAYS:

GIVE VETS JOBS FOR CHRISTMAS

Desperately seeking jobs for 928 ex-servicemen in the Wilmington area, the North Carolina Employment service in this city has come up with a slogan aimed directly at employers in this area — "Give A Veteran a Job for Christmas."

Harold M. Hinkle, NCES manager, points out that under the new program the employers would benefit as much as the veterans.

"Certainly the veteran is the most desirable person to employ," he reminds local industrial officials. "We know Uncle Sam took the cream of the crop, and we know that during his wartime service the veteran learned to report on time; he learned neatness; he was trained in some of the most expensive and specialized courses ever undertaken; and

collectively the men who fought the war performed the greatest job ever done in history." Hinkle revealed the returned veteran as bewildered by the "economical turn of events in the land he came home to. He said employers were obligated to make a comprehensive inventory of their needs, and attempt to find a spot within their organizations where the employment of a veteran would

Construction Thought Safe By Local Man

Frank Harrell, First Lessee Of Winecoff, Cites Fire Reports

NO 13TH FLOOR

Says Underwriters In Atlanta Deemed Escapes Unnecessary

B JACK COWIE Star-News Staff Writer

An interview with Frank Harrell, part-owner of the H. and W. Cafeteria last night revealed that fire underwriters could have been responsible for the large loss of life in the fire which swept the 15-story building today.

He had lived there in retirement with his wife ever since relinquishing control of the hotel. There have been no reports on Mrs. Winecoff. The couple maintained a room on the 10th floor.

ATLANTA, Dec. 7.—(AP)—W. F. Winecoff, 70, who built the Winecoff hotel for Frank Harrell, of Wilmington, was killed in the fire which swept the 15-story building today.

Harrell first lessee of the hotel, and the man responsible for the hostelry's construction, said last night "it is unbelievable that such a catastrophe could have befallen the hotel."

He added that fire underwriters (Continued on Page Five; Col. 3)

WINECOFF FIRE NATION'S WORST

By United Press The Winecoff hotel fire at Atlanta, Ga., today, which took lives, was the worst hotel disaster in the nation's history and the fourth hotel fire this year.

Lasalle hotel, Chicago, June 5, 61 dead. Canfield hotel, Dubuque, Iowa, June 9, 10 dead. Baker hotel, Dallas, Tex., June 21, 8 dead.

EARLIER HOTEL FIRES Gulf hotel, Houston, Tex., Sept. 7, 1933, 54 dead. Kerns hotel, Lansing, Mich., Dec. 11, 1934, 32 dead. Victoria Mansion, Lakewood, N. J., Feb. 12, 1935, 16 dead.

Terminal hotel, Atlanta, Ga., May 16, 1938, 35 dead. Amsterdam hotel, San Francisco, March 27, 1944, 22 dead. General Clark hotel, Chicago, Jan. 16, 1945, 14 dead.

Plan Plant Here



J. G. Thornton, president of the Wilmington Savings and Trust company, drives home his point at a meeting yesterday of the Wilmington Port commission and business and industrial officials. Others in the Port Commission office, left to right, are: Fred Willetts, commission member; C. D. Hogue, chairman; J. T. Hiers, executive secretary; R. B. Page, chairman of the State Ports authority; and B. H. Thomason, Fayetteville veneer plant owner.

Mayor Lifts Embargo, Recalls Proclamation

The news that John L. Lewis had called off the nationwide coal strike last night caused the lifting of Mayor W. Ronald Lane's proclamation asking for Wilmingtonians to conserve the fast-dwindling stock-pile of the fuel in the community.

ONR CRAFT DUE IN CITY TODAY

USS PC 776 Is Expected To Dock At Customhouse At 4 o'Clock

The USS PC 776 which has been turned over to the local U. S. Navy Organized Reserved unit will arrive off the bar at Southport about 2 o'clock this afternoon and is expected to be docked at the customs house wharf about 4 o'clock, according to information received by Lt. B. S. Solomon, executive officer of the local ONR.

In short but impressive ceremonies on Thursday, December 5th Captain Richardson of the Commandant's staff of the Sixth Naval district turned the craft over to Lt. Comdr. John H. Wilson, commanding officer of the local ONR.

It is reported that the shake down cruise and sea trials which (Continued on Page Five; Col. 6)

Southern Governors Elect Gregg Cherry

MIAMI BEACH, Fla., Dec. 7.—(AP)—Gov. R. Gregg Cherry, of North Carolina, today was elected chairman of the Southern Governors' conference as the group ended a three-day session here.

Cherry will serve for one year, succeeding Governor Robert Kerr of Oklahoma. Governor Meadows of West Virginia was named vice chairman.

Wooten Is Elected Carolina Aero Head

RALEIGH, Dec. 7.—(AP)—A. L. Wooten, of Wilmington, today was elected president of the Carolina Aero club at a state-wide meeting here. Also elected was Mrs. J. C. Pennington, of Wilmington, as secretary-treasurer.

Others named were Clay Swain, Salisbury, first vice president; Bob Ridenhour, second vice president. Twelve members of the Aero club at Wilmington were present.

Miners Are Ordered Back To Coal Pits

UMW Due To Return Monday Until March 31 On Government Terms

HONOR CONTRACT

President Cancels Talk; Negotiations Are Expected To Begin

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—John L. Lewis surrendered dramatically today in his coal strike fight with the government. He called off the crippling 17-day walkout and sent his United Mine workers back to the pits until March 31 on the Government's terms.

Lewis announced at a suddenly-summoned news conference that the 400,000 soft coal miners will return to work on Monday under terms of the Krug-Lewis agreement negotiated last May—the contract he terminated last November 21.

It has been the Government's position throughout the strike that there could be no dealing with Lewis until the miners honored that contract.

Lewis' surrender came while the Supreme court deliberated a Government request for swift and final decision on the conviction of Lewis and the UMW for contempt of court in failing to prevent the strike. The district court here fined Lewis \$10,000 and the union \$3,500,000.

The UMW chief said he was calling off the strike to enable the Supreme court to consider the contempt case "free from public pressure superinduced by the hysteria and frenzy of an economic crisis" because "public necessity requires" that coal be produced while the final outcome is awaited.

Coal operators estimated they (Continued on Page Five; Col. 1)

Wainwright Cautions Of 'New Pearl Harbor'

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7.—(AP)—Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright said tonight on the fifth anniversary of Pearl Harbor that because of inadequate defense preparations "Pearl Harbor and Bataan were a needless waste."

In a warning against disarmament "through false economy" he told the local bar association "that in the event of another war, New York, Detroit, Chicago and Washington—all together—may be our new Pearl Harbor."

Living Christmas Tree To Be Lighted Tonight

Wilmington's living community Christmas tree, largest in the world, will this year divide its inspiration for the holiday season with all the nation.

Tonight the living symbol of Christmas will be lighted at 7 o'clock bringing to an end a blackout which has darkened the tree since 1941.

Movies which will be taken of the secular and religious programs will be used as the Fox Movietone Christmas greeting throughout the nation.

M. D. Cooke, Fox Movietone cameraman, who yesterday filmed the Kiwanis club safety program, will take pictures of the ceremonies surrounding the turning on of the lights.

Earlier in the day he will film "The School for Santa Claus" program is scheduled to get underway at 2:30 o'clock with some 2,000 school children assisting in the event.

The afternoon program will be highlighted by the school which will be conducted by Papa Santa for 30 assistants. A course on tree decorating, using the large tree as an example, will spotlight the school. A rehearsal at 5:30 o'clock has

Essay Contest Planned On Social Conditions

An essay contest on the subject "Survey of Social and Living Conditions of Wilmington" is being sponsored by the Star-News and the Young Men's Christian Association.

Contestants will be members of the Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y groups under the supervision of R. H. Caudill, Boys Work secretary of the YMCA.

Living Christmas Tree To Be Lighted Tonight

Wilmington's living community Christmas tree, largest in the world, will this year divide its inspiration for the holiday season with all the nation.

Tonight the living symbol of Christmas will be lighted at 7 o'clock bringing to an end a blackout which has darkened the tree since 1941.