

Wilmington and vicinity: Partly cloudy and cooler today and tonight; Friday fair and rather cool.

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ASSOCIATED PRESS
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UNITED PRESS
With Complete Coverage of
State and National News

1200 BELIEVED DEAD IN BLAST

Jewish Underground Threaten Hangings

JEW, ARABS MAP PARLEY STRATEGY

Major Clashes Between Leaders Expected At Assembly Meet

LAKE SUCCESS, N. Y., April 16. (AP) — A major clash at the forthcoming special Palestine session of the United Nations assembly appeared to be shaping up tonight as Jewish and Arab leaders mapped their strategy amid increasing world tension over the Holy Land problem.

Jewish agency officials were busy in New York on two controversial proposals for submission to Secretary-General Trygve Lie, while leaders of the Arab states drafted their plans in Damascus for the April 23 session at Flushing.

A spokesman for the Jewish agency, official voice of Palestine, said the assembly would be asked formally to provide for Jewish representation in the discussions and for immediate opening of Palestine to Jewish immigration. An Arab spokesman said these proposals would meet strong opposition.

Write Acheson
The American Jewish conference, which claims to represent 62 national Jewish organizations, said it had sent a letter to Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson demanding that the U. S. delegate take the position that the Jewish agency be represented on the proposed commission of inquiry, if Britain and the Arab states were represented.

Le told a news conference that the assembly itself must decide on the scope of its discussions, but said he hoped the delegates would avoid formal ceremonies and general debate in the interest of speed and efficiency. For this reason, he said, no plans had been made to invite President Truman or other officials to address the opening meeting.

GEN. CHANG CHUN NEW JAP PREMIER

Friend Of Chiang Kai-Shek Named To Succeed T. V. Soong, Resigned

NANKING, April 16. (AP) — Gen. Chang Chun, who served on two committees seeking to end China's civil war and who advocates building up this republic by peaceful industrialization, today became its premier.

He succeeds T. V. Soong, who had taken a strong anti-Communist stand and who resigned March 1 under mounting criticism that his policies contributed to China's economic crisis early this year.

Chang, governor of Szechwan province and a friend of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek since they were classmates at the Japanese Military Academy, presumably had been groomed for the premiership. He was reported in line for the post as much as 14 months ago when some factions declared Soong was partially responsible for blocking effectiveness of the government-Communist truce.

Chang was a member of Gen. George Marshall's committee of three that just had brought about a truce agreement. He was named also to a committee to effect a government army reorganization under the truce terms. The pact was quickly violated, however, and subsequent violations prevented its ever becoming effective.

The Weather

FORECAST:
North Carolina: Partly cloudy and cooler; Thursday, cooler Thursday night with scattered frost interior; Friday fair and rather cool.
South Carolina: Partly cloudy and cooler; Thursday, cooler Thursday night with scattered frost interior North portion; Friday, fair and mild.
(From U. S. Weather Bureau)
Metropolitan data for the 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m. yesterday:
1:30 a. m. 59; 7:30 a. m. 64; 1:30 p. m. 70; 7:30 p. m. 67; Maximum 71; Minimum 57; Mean 64; Normal 62.
PRECIPITATION:
1:30 a. m. .04; 7:30 a. m. .07; 1:30 p. m. .08; 7:30 p. m. .07.
Total for 24 hours ending 7:30 p. m. .36 inches.
Total since the first of the month .32 inches.
TIDES FOR TODAY
(From the Tide Tables published by U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey).
High
Wilmington 6:49 a. m.; 1:37 p. m.
Masonboro 7:16 a. m.; 2:04 p. m.
Low
Wilmington 11:03 a. m.; 6:59 p. m.
Masonboro 11:24 a. m.; 7:16 p. m.
Sunrise 5:38; Sunset 3:16; Moonrise 4:00; Moonset 3:16.
River stage at Fayetteville, N. C. at 8 a. m. Wednesday 27.4 feet.
More Weather On Page Two

British Alert Over 100,000 Troops, Put Cerfew On Holy Land

JERUSALEM, Palestine, April 16. (AP) — The outlawed Jewish Irgun Zvai Leumi tonight was reported to be boasting that it would hang 40 British officers in "revenge" for the execution early today of Dov Gruner and three other Irgunists.

While Gruner's lawyer was trying to appeal to the Privy Council in London, the Irgun announced that his execution would be the signal for a "blood bath." Tonight, the Irgun's hidden radio was said to be announcing that the measure would be 10 British officers for every Jew executed.

Almost nobody in Palestine doubted that the Irgun would try to retaliate. The government, expecting imminent violence, ordered all British civilians to stay at home. High Commissioner Sir Alan Cunningham put British forces in the Holy Land on temporary "active service," meaning that they will be tried by military courts, rather than civil courts, for civil offenses.

Strict Curfew
Most of Jewish Palestine was under strict curfew. Rehbovitz and Rishonle Zion, two big Jewish townships that escaped the curfew order, imposed a curfew upon themselves and ran up the blue and white colors at half staff, the first indication that Gruner and his fellow Irgunists were being made Zionist martyrs.

A shot felled a boy who strolled down a Jerusalem street this afternoon in violation of the curfew. Three automobiles were stolen in the all-Jewish city of Tel Aviv, crimes which frequently precede underground attacks. Citrus house, British military headquarters in Tel Aviv, was left with only a skeleton staff. It has been the target of numerous underground attacks in the past.

Palestinians accepted it as a foregone conclusion that the Irgun would strike. The only question in their minds was when and where. Gruner was a 33-year-old veteran of the British army who had been convicted of attacking a police station. He maintained that he had only happened to be near the station when the attack was made.

Other Guns, Whips
The three other Irgunists — Dov Rosenbaum, 21, Eliezer Kashani, 19, and Mordechai Alosli, 20 — were caught with guns and whips. They told police they were looking for a British major to flog.

Shortly after midnight, a curfew was imposed, 100,000 British soldiers alerted and the four men were hanged in Crusaders castle, 25 miles north of Haifa. The district commissioner watched the hangings; not even the superintendent of the prison was notified until they were over.

Gruner was reported to have gone to the gallows at 2 a. m., singing "Hatikva," the Jewish national anthem. The other three were said to have been hanged at 60-minute intervals.

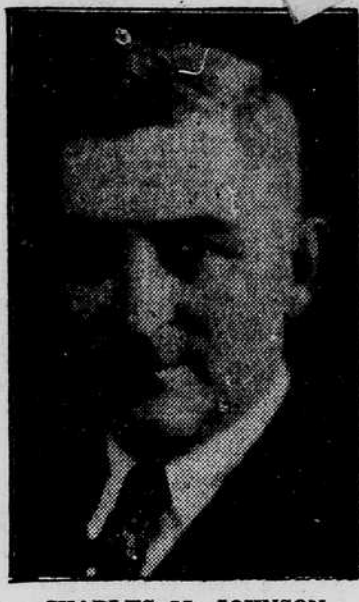
CLEARING SKIES END FLOOD WORRY

Cape Fear, Neuse Rivers Not Expected To Overflow Banks

RALEIGH, April 16. (AP) — Clearing skies and a forecast of fair weather put a damper on the threat of rising rivers today, but not until the Cape Fear had risen within seven feet of flood stage at Fayetteville.

The U. S. Weather bureau here said persistent heavy rains during the past few days had caused the Cape Fear to rise to 28 feet at Fayetteville, at which point it crested this afternoon. Flood stage at Fayetteville is 35 feet. At Elizabethtown, a crest of about 23 feet is expected around noon tomorrow. The river had risen to 19 feet there today.

The weather bureau said there was little danger of other rivers in the state overflowing at present. (Continued On Page Two; Col. 1)



JOHNSON ENTERS GOVERNOR'S RACE

State Treasurer Formally Announces Candidacy; Native Of Pender

State Treasurer Charles M. Johnson today became the first formally announced candidate for governor of North Carolina in 1948 with the release of a statement in which he briefly outlined his service in the state government and gave a hint as to his platform in the next gubernatorial race.

Although it has been predicted and rumored for several months that he would toss his hat into the ring, Johnson's statement officially placed him on record as a candidate for the first time.

A native of Pender county, Johnson first gained prominence while deputy county clerk in Burgaw when his method of keeping the county's records became well-known in the state for orderliness and thoroughness.

He was made a district supervisor for the state tax commission and for a while had charge of property revaluation in nine counties. He held the positions of traveling auditor for the state, chief deputy state auditor, executive secretary of the county government.

BERNARD BARUCH CALLS FOR UNITY

Advisor To Presidents Urges 44-Hour Week With No Strikes

COLUMBIA, S. C., April 16. (AP) — Bernard M. Baruch said here today that the world "can get going only if men work," adding that "if we accept the challenge to preserve civilization, it means greater effort than that expended during the war."

"We cannot achieve our purpose," he asserted, "with the present, hazy and limitations on work." He urged a 5 1/2 day 44-hour week, "with no strikes or lay-off, to Jan. 1, 1949" in order to increase production.

"The result would be electrifying," he said. Baruch spoke at the unveiling of his portrait in the Hall of the State House of representatives. The native South Carolinian said that if his suggestion were adopted "production would flow smoothly; a sense of security would return to worker and employer; and the reaction upon the economy of the world would be deep and lasting."

Unity Necessary
"Until we have unity; until we straighten out and solve our own problems of production, and have internal stability, there is no basis on which the world can review itself physically or spiritually."

Baruch declared that "there is no place left to which to turn for regeneration except to America. We must answer that call or we shall fail civilization in its most tragic moment, and thus fail ourselves."

The portrait, painted in 1928 by Oswald Birley, an English artist, was unveiled by Baruch's daughter, Belle. It was a gift from Baruch, made after \$4,000 was authorized to be spent for a new painting.

Survivors Flee Stricken City

Police Issue Order To Evacuate City; Chemical And Oil Fires Blaze Furiously; Casualty Lists Impossible

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEXAS CITY, Tex., April 16. (AP) — A chain of blasts set off by the explosion of a nitrate-laden ship smote this Gulf port today, killing an estimated 1,200 persons and injuring perhaps 3,500. It was the worst American disaster in the past 10 years.

Much of the boom industrial city of 15,000 population was destroyed or damaged. Property loss will run into millions of dollars.

Fires followed the blasts. Poisonous gas from exploding chemicals was reported to be filtering through the area.

The first blast rocked the surrounding region for 150 miles, inflicting heavy damage in Galveston. All aboard the ship, the French freighter Grandcamp were killed.

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

The estimate of dead was reported by G. B. Finley, State Highway Commission maintenance engineer, on information from the disaster area.

"Rescue parties bringing out casualties from the blast area estimated that about one out of every three persons had been killed," Finley said, "which indicate around 1,200 dead."

He referred to the dock area, where principal damage occurred and where there were some 3,500 persons at the time of the major blast.

Like Bomb Blasts

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

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

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

Earlier, E. A. Boehler, a Houston city policeman had reported:

"Bodies can be picked up by the dozens in the first area, but you cannot get in to them."

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

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

Second Disaster

It was Texas' second major disaster within a week. A tornado swept the Panhandle and Northwestern Oklahoma last Wednesday, killing 132 persons in the two states. Relief workers still stationed in the storm area rushed to the scene of the new calamity, hundreds of miles to the south.

The \$11,000,000 plant of the Monsanto Chemical company, built in wartime to make styrene, an ingredient of synthetic rubber, was reported completely destroyed.

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

Fire fighters wore gas masks, fearing further explosions. Company officials said there were stocks of explosive chemicals in the buildings.

A reporter for the Houston Chronicle who flew over Texas City for an hour after the initial blast said there was a fire on the waterfront, another along the Santa Fe railroad and a third in a gasoline refinery area. He said there were no fires in the city's business or residential areas.

Eyewitness Account

The reporter gave this picture: "Fire trucks were racing up from the south, presumably Galveston."

"The ship which is said to have started the fire could not be seen through the smoke."

"Flying toward the blaze, the smoke could be seen from Ellington Field, approximately 30 miles away. It reached 4,000 feet."

"One oil tank, about a thousand feet away from the blaze, was crumpled like a piece of tinfoil."

"Buildings along the Santa Fe railroad tracks had had the ends blown out. The sides were intact. Pieces of metal could be seen from the air lying at the foot of the building."

"An industrial section close to the bay was afire with the biggest blaze. Smoke was pouring from tanks and buildings."

"A refinery west of the tracks also was burning. Several oil tanks were blazing brightly. A few tanks were crumpled by the force of the blast."

"A heavy cloud of smoke hung over the scene, shot with flashes of flame from the first that still raged along the waterfront."

Texas Blast Briefly Told

Highlights Of Worst Disaster In History Of Lone Star State

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A series of devastating explosions at Texas City, felt 160 miles away, was the worst explosion in Texas history, exceeding the 1937 New London school explosion.

The dead — 1,200 (estimated by Department of Public Safety).

The injured — more than 1,000 (same source).

Time — 9:12 A. M. (CST).

Damage — Unofficial estimate puts loss in millions. Grand Camp a complete loss. Monsanto in ruins, city hall leveled, etc.

Extent of blast — Felt 160 miles away in Palestine, Tex., also at Orange and Port Arthur, 100 miles distant; rocked Galveston and did much damage there, 11 miles across bay; felt at Pelly, where sound so sharp one man said it hurt his eardrums.

Relief — Quickly mobilized from Galveston, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, other cities, with Red Cross, Army, Navy, state and other agencies aiding. Relief mobilized so quickly that city clogged and state officials said no more needed at 2 P. M.

It was Texas' second major disaster in a week. Tornadoes wrecked the Panhandle area, killing 132 in Texas over 100 in Oklahoma last Wednesday night.

TRUMAN TO GREET BOMBSHELL OWNER

Millionaire Milton Reynolds, Crewmen Will Visit White House

NEW YORK, April 16. (AP) — Millionaire pennemaker Milton Reynolds and his two-man crew took off from La Guardia field in a drizzling rain today en route to Washington to receive the congratulations of President Truman for their record breaking globe-circling flight.

Capt. William Odom, who piloted the silver-hulled converted A-26 "Bombershell" on its 20,000-mile flight, was at the controls again today after a few hours sleep — his first since Saturday morning.

T. Carroll Sallee, flight engineer, postponed plans to marry his pretty fiancée, Patricia Houlihan, until after the Presidential visit. Reynolds and his crew had been scheduled to see Truman between 3:30 and 4 p. m. today but bad weather and trouble with the plane's hatch delayed the take-off until 4 p. m. They will see the President tomorrow.

The bombshell's flight clipped 12 hours and 19 minutes from the previous record set by Howard Hughes in 1938. The new unofficial record is 78 hours and 55 minutes.

HARTSELL ELECTED GRAND MASTER OF MASONIC ORDER

RALEIGH, April 16. (AP) — Luther T. Hartsell, Jr., of Concord tonight was elected as Grand Master of Masons in North Carolina, as the Grand Lodge of North Carolina ended its 160th annual communication here.

Others elected at the closing session of the two-day meeting were Dr. Maxwell E. Hoffman of Asheville, deputy grand master; Wilkins P. Horton of Pittsboro, senior grand warden; Dr. Wallace E. Caldwell of Chapel Hill, grand treasurer; and Wilbur L. McIver of Raleigh, grand secretary.

Hartsell will succeed William Bundy of Greenville.

FCA Moves To Avert Soft Coal Walkout

Collison Invites Lewis, Operators To Meeting On 'Bargaining'

WASHINGTON, April 16. (AP) — Capt. N. H. Collison, federal coal mines administrator, today invited soft coal operators associations and President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers to meet here on April 29 to discuss "a resumption of collective bargaining."

Collison sent a letter to the association and Lewis which read: "This is to invite you to a meeting to be held in Room 5160 in the Department of Interior building at 10:30 A. M. on April 29, 1947, between the representatives of the United Mine Workers of America and those of the Coal Operators association."

"The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the means by which a resumption of collective bargaining between the United Mine Workers, and the coal operators may most effectively and expeditiously be accomplished."

The government must return the mines to the private owners on June 30. Collison's invitation therefore was viewed as a direct bid to avert a strike at that time.

Lewis has threatened to call a walkout July 1 unless the operators accept and liberalize provisions of the government contract which created the miners' health and welfare fund.

The coal strike last spring — when the government seized the mines — resulted when the operators refused to grant this and other concessions. The Operators' negotiating committee later broke up and refused to bargain with Lewis on an industry-wide basis.

Lewis has signed a willingness to open contract talks any time but has warned in advance that his welfare fund demand must be met.

NLRB Request
Collison's move coincided with requests by the National Labor Relations board that the parties start work immediately on a contract to take effect when the government peace if they hold up the program too long or reject it.

Sen. Edwin C. Johnson, D., Colo., an opponent of the bill, highlighted tonight's session by warning the Senate that the proposed aid to Turkey would, if carried out, constitute an act of aggression.

"We'll have to admit this is a threat to Russia," he said.

Vandenberg earlier had broken into the hot debate to warn his colleagues that they will bear a heavy responsibility for world peace if they hold up the program too long or reject it.

REGISTER TAKES OATH OF OFFICE

Erroneous Report Of Resignation Circulated Since Monday

M. B. Register, chief deputy on the staff of the late Sheriff C. David Jones, was administered an oath of office as deputy sheriff yesterday afternoon.

The brief ceremony was held in the office of Clerk of Court A. L. Meyland in the county courthouse. An assistant, Lois Ward, administered the oath which made Register a member of Sheriff Porter Davis' staff.

Erroneous reports of Register's resignation have circulated since Monday when the board of county commissioners appointed Davis as successor to Sheriff Jones.

Technically all attaches of the office of the sheriff had no position from which to resign after acting sheriff Gordon Doran turned over the office to Davis.

The entire force serving under the late sheriff were administered new oaths of office when Coroner Doran served temporarily as sheriff. Their commissions expired when he relinquished the office to the newly appointed sheriff.

Sheriff Davis declined comment on the Register incident and said that he would not name a chief deputy for "some time."

Ophanages Get Children; Parents Are 'Homeless'

BUFFALO, N. Y., April 16. (AP) — Unable to find a home, Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. O'Connor placed their eight children in two orphanages today.

Tomorrow they will look for a furnished room.

The house the family had rented for the past five years was sold last May to a World War II veteran who, with his wife and 15-month-old son, has been living with parents.

The O'Connors were granted several extensions of an original eviction notice. The new owner, of his own accord, granted an-

And So To Bed

The other night, during a blinding rainstorm, a local resident of Riverside apartments, started on his way home from work.

When he arrived at the junction of South Front street and Southern Boulevard, it was discovered that the street had been blocked.

The man decided to take a short cut through the Moffitt Village road. He did not know the road and was not familiar with the approach from the south end of Adams street wandered in and out of four courts until he finally located the right one.

"I live in a different place when you come in from the south end," he muttered as he went up his steps.