



# The Pittsburgh Press

WEATHER—Windy with rain and thunderstorms. Cloudy and colder tonight and Thursday.

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## FINAL

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# BLAST AND FIRE KILL HUNDREDS IN TEXAS

## British Hang 4 In Palestine; Reprisals Due

### Underground Boasts It Will Kill 10 for 1

JERUSALEM, April 16 (UP)—The British Army hanged Dov Gruner and three other Jewish undergrounders in ancient Acre Prison today. At once word spread that the Irgun Zvai Leumi was boasting that for every Jew executed 10 Britons would be killed.

Palestinians took it as a foregone conclusion that the underground would strike back in reprisal for the hanging of the convicted terrorists. The whole country braced for the anticipated shock.

### Precautions Ordered

The Palestine government ordered all British civilians to stay indoors as a precaution. Three autos were reported stolen in Tel Aviv, frequently a sign of impending underground action. The question in every mind was where and when—whether the underground would go into action.

The Exchange Telegraph reported from Jerusalem that a clandestine Irgun radio broadcast a threat that 10 British officers would be hanged in the streets of Jewish Palestine for every one of our martyrs murdered by the British today.

Police arrested three underground leaders near Hebron today who were believed to be preparing an attack on a British army patrol. Police described the arrests as "very important."

### Jews Attend Burial

Hanged with Gruner in the grim stone Crusaders' castle, 25 miles north of Haifa, were Dov Rosenberg, 21, Eliezer Kahana, 19, and Mordechai Abshai, 20. All three were arrested Dec. 29 while trying to crash a road block and were sentenced to die for carrying firearms. Reliable sources reported that Gruner was executed at 2 a. m. and died singing the Jewish national anthem Hatikva. The same sources said the other three were hanged at intervals of one hour.

Gruner and two of the three were buried at 2 p. m. on Mount Canaan. The entire Jewish population of Safad, about 2000, attended.

Strong army forces blocked all roads at Northern Palestine leading to Acre. The hangings were secret without advance public warning.

A curfew was imposed on the Jewish quarters of Palestine almost simultaneously with the execution.

### Picards Appear

Two hours after the curfew began picards appeared in the streets reading, "Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, burning for burning."

Hundreds of soldiers and police tore down the signs.

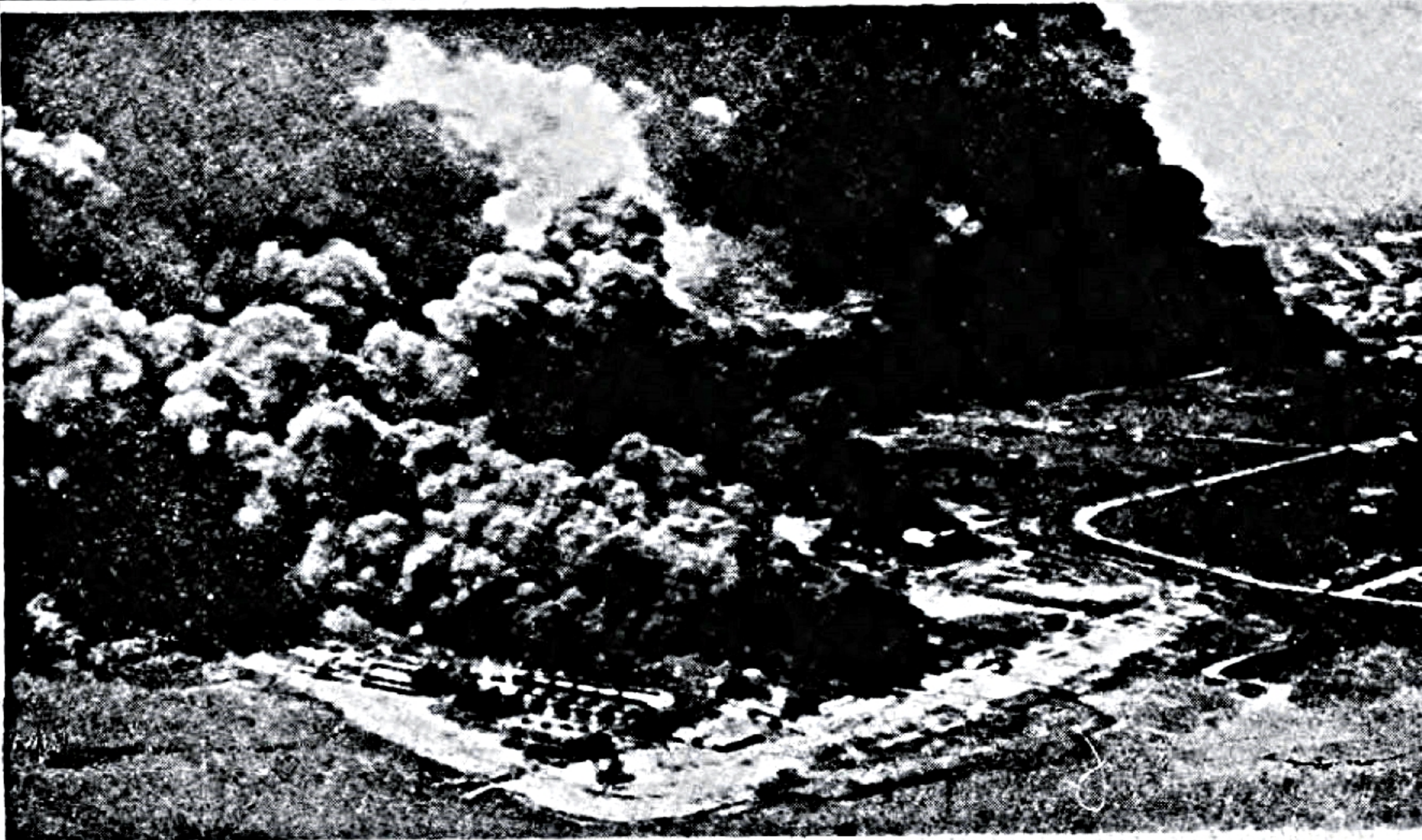
Sir Alan Cunningham, the high commissioner, called a meeting of his advisory council.

The case of the 33-year-old Gruner had created world interest because it came to symbolize the struggle between the British and the violent underground groups.

Gruner's war record as a British lance corporal in Libya, Italy and Northern Europe added significance to his fate.

Legal efforts to save him were carried in vain all the way to the judicial committee of the Privy Council in London, highest judicial authority in the British Empire. He was condemned to death by a British military court for participation in the Acre massacre.

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Aerial view of Texas City, Tex., after a ship explosion set off a chemical plant blast, set fire to two refineries and killed hundreds.

## Ship, Chemical Plant Explode; Poison Gas Threatens Large Area

### BULLETINS

NEW YORK, April 16—The Coast Guard here today received reports from Coast Guard officials at Texas City, Tex., which estimated the dead at 200 to 1000, and injured at 2000 to 3500.

TEXAS CITY, Tex., April 16—Police ordered all disaster relief workers out of the explosion and fire wrecked waterfront area today as the threat of a TNT explosion developed. Firemen were trying to reach 48 women who were working in a wrecked building when the order to evacuate came. It was found the women already were dead.

NEW ORLEANS, April 16—A Coast Guard communications truck on the disaster scene at Texas City, Tex., notified headquarters here today that one refinery tank had exploded and that another, the largest owned by the Humble Oil Co., was expected to blow up.

The big Humble tank was in the path of the flames and doomed unless the fire could be checked.

TEXAS CITY, Tex., April 16 (UP)—A French Lines freighter blew up at a Texas City dock today, setting off a chemical plant explosion. The blasts rocked a 140-mile industrial area along the Gulf Coast.

Red Cross estimates were that from 200 to 700 persons lay dead.

A Galveston newsman reported from the scene 200 were dead. Bud Myers, Houston Press reporter, estimated that 300 to 500 were killed.

A Texas City police radio report said gas fumes, feared to be poisonous, were filtering over the area.

### Huge Fires Raging in Oil Tanks

The report said authorities were ordering the evacuation of an estimated 18,000 persons.

Huge fires, sending smoke spiraling into the air for miles, raged in oil storage areas along the busy waterfront. The 19 million dollar Monsanto Chemical Co. plant, ripped by blasts which followed the ship explosion, was afire.

At least two oil refineries and some 50 gigantic oil tanks were in flames.

Fire equipment from the entire Gulf Coast area was on the scene. Telephone lines were down and the power was clipped off.

In Dallas, Magnolia Oil Co. officials quoted direct telephone reports from the Pan-American refinery in Texas City as saying that the city morgue held the bodies of 75 victims of the explosion "and more bodies are being brought in."

### Half of Plant Reported Blown Up

The Magnolia officials said they had been informed over the direct line—apparently the only circuit operating into Texas City—that the explosion of the nitrate-laden former Liberty Ship had blown up about half of the Monsanto plant.

The vessel was loaded with ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer ingredient more explosive than TNT.

The French Lines freighter blew up at a dock where Police Chief W. F. Laddish of Texas City said "hundreds were working."

Chief Laddish said there was "no possible way to estimate how many are dead and dying." He said the toll would run into the hundreds and that force of the blast demolished the city hall a full mile from the scene.

Hospitals in Galveston were overflowing with dead and injured. Highways into Houston, 38 air miles away, were clogged with ambulances and hearses.

Gas fumes spreading over the area were believed to be from the burning chemical plant and from nitrogen stocks piled on the docks.

The Texas City Police Department said 300 small homes occupied by dock and refinery workers were near the ship which exploded and were hardest hit.

## Marshall's Talk With Stalin Fails

### Reds Must Prove They'll Keep Promises

By LUDWELL DENNY  
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

MOSCOW, April 16—Whatever happens as the result of the meeting between Secretary of State George C. Marshall and Premier Stalin at the Kremlin last night, it is not likely to wipe out the effects of the Big Four conference.

At best anything Russia might do at this late date could only save an injury to Soviet-American relations too deep to heal with words.

[An authoritative source told the United Press that Stalin and Mr. Marshall accomplished nothing in their face-to-face meeting. Exceptional secrecy surrounded their 90-minute talk. It was requested by Mr. Marshall formally through regular diplomatic channels the latter part of last week.]

If the Russians ever restore the foundations of good faith, worn away by almost two years of friction, it will be by long and faithful fulfillment of pledges now broken.

Three revelations of Russian policy have occurred at the conference here, with such clarity and repetition that Secretary Marshall (Continued On Page 6, Column 6)

## Both Sides Reject Phone Truce Plan

### Schwelienbach Tells Public to Speak Up

WASHINGTON, April 16 (UP)—Joseph A. Beirne, president of the striking National Federation of Telephone Workers, said today that only a specific wage offer can break the deadlock in negotiations to end the 10-day-old national telephone strike.

He made the statement after both the union and the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. rejected the arbitration formula proposed by the Government had hoped to end the strike at 3 p. m. tomorrow.

Secretary of Labor Lewis B. Schwellienbach promptly broadcast an appeal to the public to "demand" that the plan be accepted.

"The health and safety and the welfare of the people of the United States depend upon the constant maintenance of the telephone industry," Mr. Schwellienbach said.

"I am asking you who want telephone service and who pay the telephone bills to demand of each side that they accept the proposal," Mr. Beirne said he did not think the NFWA top policy committee would "seriously consider" any Government or company proposal that failed to include a specific offer (Continued On Page 6, Column 7)

## Smoke Control Blocked; Bill May Die in Committee

### Opposition Group to Hold Measure at Least Three Weeks; Adjournment Then Will Be Threat

Read an editorial, "Getting Kicked Around," on Page 12.

By L. R. LINDGREN, Pittsburgh Press Staff Writer

HARRISBURG, April 16—The Allegheny County smoke control bill, already maulled by the Legislature, is stalled for at least three weeks.

Buried in the unfriendly Mines and Mining Committee of the Senate the measure will gather dust there until the committee gets around to looking at it.

Chairman Montgomery F. Crowe, Stroudsburg Republican, said today that the measure amended to permit the County Commissioners to determine when, if ever, smoke control in Allegheny County is to be effective, was passed by the House Monday night, 183 to 15.

All members of the Allegheny County delegation—Democrats and Republicans alike—voted for it.

When it landed in the Senate a few minutes later, Lt. Gov. Daniel B. Strickler caused dismay to the bill's supporters by referring it to Senator Crowe's committee, which isop heavy with Senators from coal districts outside Allegheny County.

"Why did you send it to that committee?" Mr. Strickler was asked today.

"We put it there because that's where we want it," he declared. "That's where it belongs. It has to do with coal and smoke."

Then, as an afterthought, he said: "But so far as that goes, I don't think it makes any difference where it went."

He declined to amplify that remark.

Senator Crowe seemed completely "It went."

## Democrats Attack GOP Labor Bill

### McCormack Charges Leaders 'Confused'

### BULLETIN

WASHINGTON, April 16 (UP)—House Republicans today beat down an attempt by one of their own members to make their drastic union-control bill even tougher. The move came after debate on the measure was ended. A voice vote defeated a motion by Rep. Clare E. Hoffman of Michigan to ban union shop and maintenance of membership labor contracts. The bill already would forbid closed shop contracts.

See an editorial, "Trying to Do Too Much," Page 12.

WASHINGTON, April 16 (UP)—House Democrats today opened a full-scale attack on the Republican bill for sweeping curbs against labor unions.

But it seemed a certainty that many Southern Democrats would join Republicans in passing the bill tomorrow or Friday.

The Massachusetts Democrat lashed out at the bill as "simply another piece of evidence of the confused, uncertain, desperate" Republican leadership.

Rep. John F. Kennedy, also a Massachusetts Democrat and a member of the House Labor Committee, opened the second day of debate on the measure with a warning to his colleagues that if they vote for it "you will be voting for industrial warfare—you will be voting for a bill which seeks to strangle by legal restraints the American labor movement."

But their criticism was not shared by Rep. O. C. Fisher, Texas Democrat, who planned to introduce an amendment that would make the tough Republican bill even tougher.

Despite the Democratic attacks, Republican leaders predicted the bill would pass by a better than 2 to 1 margin.

Mr. Fisher's proposed amendment drew opposition from Republicans.

The amendment would place an absolute ban on union shop contracts, which the pending bill would permit under some circumstances. Closed shop contracts would be forbidden under the present terms of the legislation.

Chairman Robert A. Taft, of the Senate Labor Committee, was finding it more difficult to control things in his committee.

A triumvirate of Republican members (Continued On Page 6, Column 11)

## Thief Undergoes Operation To Try to Become Honest

### Weeks, Even Months May Pass Before Doctors Can Determine Results

Millard Wright, 38, habitual burglar, underwent an operation yesterday in the hope of becoming an honest man again.

The Leechburg thief who faces a possible life sentence as a habitual criminal volunteered for the operation.

Known as a "pre-frontal lobotomy," it reduces anxiety and mental "drive" by partially separating the two front portions of the brain.

It may be weeks or even months before doctors and officials can determine whether the operation was a success, or even whether Wright will retain his normal mentality.

He is not expected to be even rational for days, doctors said, and (Continued On Page 6, Column 11)



Wright

### THE WEATHER

Local—Cloudy and windy with intermittent rain and a few thunderstorms today. High 50, low 30, and a few showers tonight. Thursday partly cloudy and continued rain. High 50, low 30, and a few showers tonight.

Time	Temp	Wind	Clouds
12 M	50	W 10	Partly Cloudy
1 P M	48	W 10	Partly Cloudy
2 P M	46	W 10	Partly Cloudy
3 P M	44	W 10	Partly Cloudy
4 P M	42	W 10	Partly Cloudy
5 P M	40	W 10	Partly Cloudy
6 P M	38	W 10	Partly Cloudy
7 P M	36	W 10	Partly Cloudy
8 P M	34	W 10	Partly Cloudy
9 P M	32	W 10	Partly Cloudy
10 P M	30	W 10	Partly Cloudy
11 P M	28	W 10	Partly Cloudy
12 N	26	W 10	Partly Cloudy

Temp at Pittsburgh last 24 hours: High 50, low 30, and a few showers tonight.

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### Press Telephones

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Other Depts.	Court 7200