



## City Landmark Destroyed

# ARMORY RAZED IN DAWN FIRE



## Walls Collapse; No One Injured

By LUCIEN AGNIEL and DONALD MacDONALD  
Charlotte News Staff Writers

Fire destroyed the Armory-Auditorium about 5:30 this morning, leaving only portions of the brick walls standing.

Fire fighters swarmed around the building and quickly put eight streams of water on the blaze—but they never had a chance to save the 25-year-old structure.

By noon, police had roped off the smoldering ruins and plans were announced to pull down the dangerously bulging and fire blackened walls this afternoon.

On the recommendation of Harry N. Sutton, city building inspector, arrangements were made with the National Guard to use their truck and winch to topple the back wall, and also the west and north walls.

### \$444,846 INSURANCE

City Park & Recreation Commission records show the building was insured for \$444,846. The contents was insured for \$10,000.

Late this morning, firemen attempted to knock the walls down with 300 pounds of water pressure from a hose, but they were only partially successful. Deputy Fire Chief P. C. Hinson watched the operation a few minutes and then ordered the water turned off.

Fire Chief Donald Charles, on the scene minutes after the alarm was turned in, said the fire must have been smoldering and building up inside the building for "a long time."

"Finally," said the Chief, "it got enough oxygen to break through the roof and windows. By then, there was no stopping it. It was just a question of bringing it under control. Our men had it safely in check within 30 minutes of their arrival."

Another early arrival was National Guard Maj. Dan Isom, who with Lt. Harris Morse shuttled the Guard's \$12,000 worth of jeeps out of the basement.

Members of the Guard were sloshing around in the basement water, making certain all their supplies and equipment were safely removed.

The Armory-Auditorium was built that year in the last time of 90 days to accommodate a rally of Confederate Veterans. The architectural motif was a fortress.

This morning, with a heavy, gray smoke pall extending from the fire site to midtown, the flames leaping through the roof and windows, the old building looked like a bastion put to the torch.

Two persons reported the fire. These were Albert H. Pierre, 1820 Mecklenburg Ave., a night worker who spotted the smoke and fire inside the building as he drove home from his night job at 5:30; and an unidentified youth.

"I almost missed it," said Mr. Pierre. "You know how the morning sun sometimes shines on windows and makes it look like there's a fire. That's the way it was today. Then I saw the smoke. I parked my car and turned in the alarm at that firebox down the street."

### BOY TELEPHONED

Other observers say the unidentified youth telephoned the Fire Dept. from a house on N. Cecil St.

The first fire trucks in the general alarm arrived about 5:37. From the outset, it was apparent there was no chance to save the building.

The tremendous force generated inside while the flames ate up all the available oxygen was loosened with a hollow roar as the fire burst through the roof. From then on, the problem was simply to keep the fire from spreading to neighboring houses.

The entire balcony of the auditorium collapsed at 5:45, forcing smoke and fire out the windows with a bel-

lows action.

On the terraced bank which paralleled E. 5th St., a large crowd had gathered.

"Well, this is one way to get rid of it," said one man.

"I never could hear nothing in that place," said another, "but I hate to see it burning up like that."

### CROWD UNEXCITED

A carnival atmosphere prevailed through the early morning hours. No one was hurt; there was no chance to save the building; firemen went about their chores with a sort of deliberate, thorough-going manner and the crowd watched, much as it would watch a not-very-thrilling athletic contest.

A wrestling match last night was the auditorium's swansong to local attractions. Members of the work crew locked the building shortly after 11 p.m.

The next time they saw it, the auditorium was a complete loss.

Deaths or serious injuries were narrowly avoided shortly after the firemen arrived. Three men took

See EARLY on page 2-A

### EVENING PRAYER

Father in Heaven, Thou art a God of love and Thou hast all power. Help us to lift from our thinking our little self-imposed iron curtains of unbelief that would shut us away from Thy saving and healing power. Deliver us from a "seeing is believing" faithlessness, and make real to our hearts the heavenly spiritual truth that believing is seeing. Amen.

The Blazing Armory, Shortly After Firemen Arrived This Morning

(News Staff Photo by Tom Franklin—Franklin)

## Cohn Testifies Adams 'Would Stop At Nothing'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Roy M. Cohn, McCarthy declared yesterday he swore today Army Counselor John G. Adams once said he "would stop at nothing" to prevent the McCarthy subcommittee from questioning members of the Army's top loyalty board.

And, Cohn testified, Adams threatened to cause an "embarrassing" report to be "circulated" about him unless the subcommittee withdrew subpoenas for loyalty board members.

Cohn, 27-year-old chief counsel to the McCarthy subcommittee, was back in the witness chair for cross-examination in the McCarthy-Army hearings.

His testimony on this point was in support of the McCarthy camp's contention the Army was trying to stop Sen. McCarthy's investigation of communism in the Army when it accused the senator and his aides of improper pressures for favored treatment for Pvt. G. David Schine.

**LATE START**  
Today's forenoon session of the 28th day of the televised hearings got underway 5 minutes late because the senators first held a closed door meeting to discuss the possibility of speeding up the hearings. There were reports of considerable sentiment to try to wind them up this week.

However, the closed meeting apparently produced little beyond another clash between Sen. Symington (D-Mo.) and Sen. McCarthy. Other senators described it as similar to their public row of yesterday.

The Democrats, noting McCarthy's demand that Clark Clifford be called as a witness, made a formal motion that Clifford be summoned to the witness chair immediately. The Republicans voted it down 4-3.

Clifford, a Washington lawyer, was special counsel to President Truman during part of the time Truman occupied the White House.

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## Rigid Farm Prices Voted

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rejecting administration proposals for flexible supports, the House Agriculture Committee voted today to recommend continued farm price supports at the present rigid 90 per cent of parity through 1955.

The 90 per cent level would apply to basic farm crops.

In a rebuttal to Secretary of Agriculture Benson, who has campaigned for the flexible supports, the committee voted 21-8 to write the omnibus farm bill it will present to the House. Parity is a price declared by law to be fair in relation to the prices farmers must pay for products they buy.

Under existing law, the flexible system of price supports, ranging from 75 to 90 per cent of parity, goes into effect at the end of the 1954 crop year. For an extension of the present 90 per cent of parity system new legislation is required.

Benson has said he would recommend a presidential veto of the high fixed price level.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

IF DR. OPPENHEIMER IS A SECURITY RISK, say the Alsop brothers, so are many other men, including scientists, businessmen, administration advisers. See their column on the editorial page, 4-A.

A TRIBUTE TO VOLUNTEER FIREMEN is paid today by Dr. Herbert Spangh, the News' Everyday Counselor. Since he lives outside the city limits himself, he knows the value of those men who volunteer their services. His column appears daily on Page 2-B.

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## Dulles Says Reds Talk Peace, Push War Effort

WASHINGTON (AP)—Secretary of State Dulles said today the Communist government received terms from Communist Europe held that post until 1948.

He said the reaction to the Eisenhower administration's call for a united front of Allied nations has not reached the point of general acceptance that would make an appeal to Congress a matter of practical politics.

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Dulles also said on other matters.

1. The past six months there have been more high level defections from the Soviet Union than ever before in Soviet history. He declined to amplify this comment in any way.

2. Very considerable progress, in Dulles' opinion, has been made on the course of negotiations under way at London.

3. The United States favors a special meeting of the American republic foreign ministers to consider measures to deal with the

## Higgins Succeeds Ervin On State Supreme Court

RALEIGH (AP)—Gov. Umstead today named Carlisle Higgins, Winston-Salem attorney who managed his campaign for governor, as an associate justice of the State Supreme Court.

He fills the vacancy created by the recent appointment of Associate Justice Sam J. Ervin Jr. to the U. S. Senate.

Higgins, 64, is the state's Democratic National Committeeman. He was born and reared in Allegheny County and graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1912. He was a member of the State House of Representatives in 1925 and of the State Senate in 1929.

He served as solicitor of the 11th Judicial District, and in 1934 he was appointed U. S. District Attorney for the Middle District. He

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Inside Armory: Last Night The Wrestling Ring Was About Here

(News Staff Photo by Tom Franklin—Franklin)

## OUR WEATHER

Sunny and quite warm today. Tomorrow, sunny and warm with widely scattered afternoon and evening showers.

High temperature yesterday, 90 degrees.

High temperature expected today, 92 degrees.

Low temperature this morning, 62 degrees.

Low temperature expected tonight, 68 degrees.

Sunrise, 5:08 a.m.; sunset, 7:38 p.m.

More Weather Data on Page 2-A