

(ESTABLISHED JAN. 1, 1914)

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1954

12

PHONE FAirfax 8-4000



Picture Highlight Of Blaze

From a wisp of smoke curling out under the eaves of a building to the scene of destruction shown at the right was only a matter of hours here Memorial Day in one of the city's worst fires.

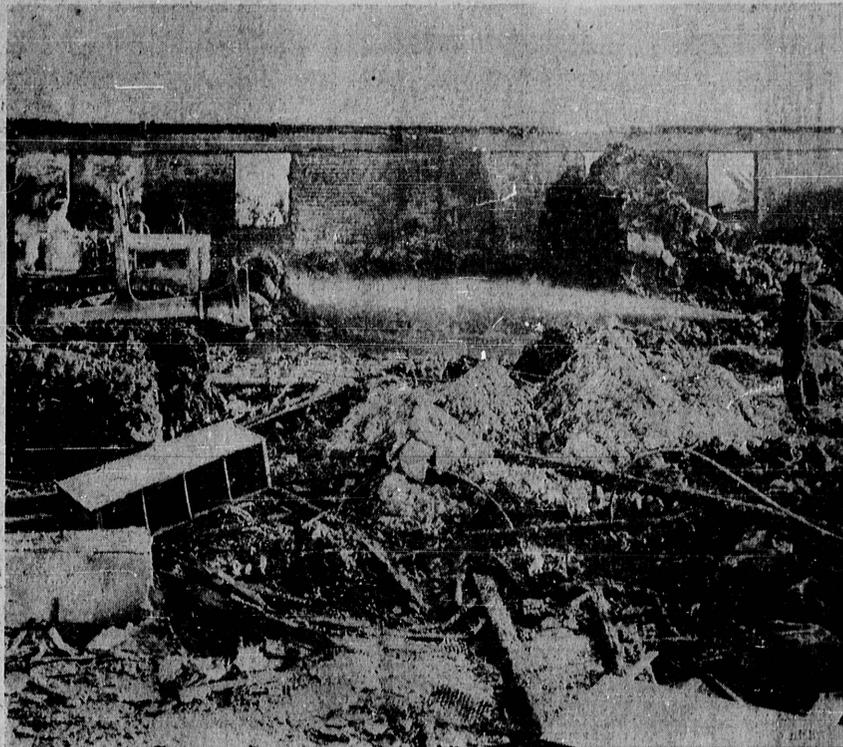
Although radio news reports that a "whole industrial city block" was burning in Torrance were slightly exaggerated, the firemen had their moments with the raging flames as is shown in these Torrance Herald photos on this page.

Torrance firemen laid about 4000 feet of hose and Redondo Beach firemen laid another 2000 feet of hose during the afternoon and evening before bringing the fire under control.

About an hour after the initial blaze at Pacific Waste Products Co., the charred remains of the United Sulphur plant, which had burned down about a year ago, caught fire again and burned for several hours.

Burning sulphur did not cause evacuation of the adjoining trailer court Sunday as it did last year.

The fire attracted hundreds of cars to the area as the huge column of black smoke served as a beacon for motorists out for a Memorial Day spin. Crowds estimated to exceed 1000 persons at times crowded behind fire lines to watch the huge warehouse burn.



WHAT WAS LEFT . . . a bulldozer scrapes out bales of scrap rags Monday, more than 14 hours after the first unit arrived at the scene. The tightly baled scrap smoldered for hours and required painstaking work to extinguish.

GOING FAST . . . Redondo Beach firemen prepare to set up deluge equipment in the foreground while the Torrance Waste Products building pours black smoke hundreds of feet into the air.

THS Youth Wins Contest Award

Larry Radicky, 17, a Torrance High School student, won a second place award in a French language contest sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French, the University of Southern California, which conducted the examinations in this area, announced this week.

Radicky was one of 12 high school winners in the Southland

area. He took second place in the French I division in Southern California with 97½ points. Toby Lee Gerster, 16, of the Chadwick School in Rolling Hills took second in the French III Division with 88½ points.

A total of 130 boys and girls in 557 public, private and parochial schools took part in the contest.

Credit Union Records Safe

The office of Alex Bernstein, one of the owners of Pacific Waste Products Co., was also the office of the Torrance Credit Union, a cooperative credit union servicing city employees and employees of small business and industrial plants in Torrance.

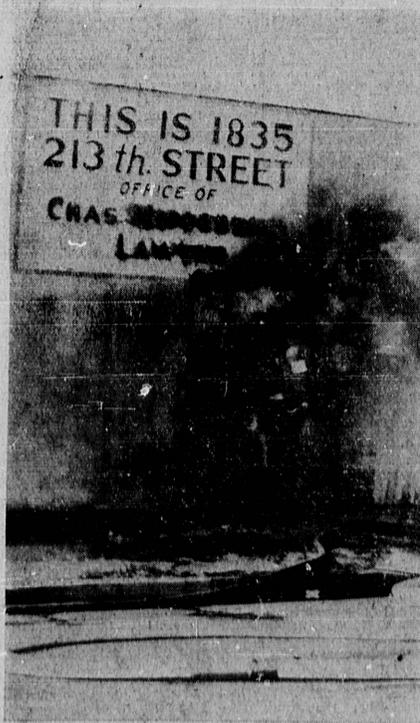
Bernstein's first worry when he arrived at the scene of the fire Sunday afternoon was the salvaging of credit union records.

What he had forgotten, however, was that the records were not in the building—they had been taken out by the Torrance Police Department for auditing over the weekend.

The balance of Bernstein's records in the office files were damaged beyond salvaging, he said.



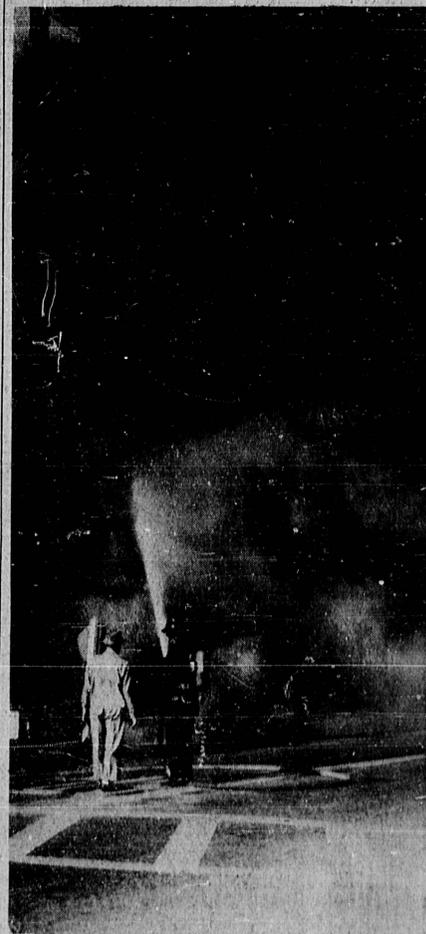
RETURN VISIT . . . Firemen lay hose past pile of fire scarred timbers stacked up from fire in United Sulphur Plant nearly a year ago as they move in to battle sulphur flames again during the Memorial Day fire here.



FIRST LOOK . . . Firemen wearing masks enter burning building on 213th St. side shortly after arriving. Although only a small amount of smoke was visible from the outside, firemen found that the entire interior was burning.



FRONT GOES . . . During height of fire the front wall of the plant buckled and caved in, sending a shower of sparks and flame into the air. Before the fire was brought under control, only one corner of the building remained.



DWARFED . . . A Torrance fireman and a curious bystander are dwarfed beside the billowing clouds of black smoke rising from the industrial fire here Sunday afternoon. Firemen battled the blaze more than five hours before getting it under control. Only casualty in the long battle to control the fire was Queenie, German Shepherd dog owned by Alex Bernstein. The dog had the run of the building and served as a watchdog.