

ried grim story of the explosion at Eddystone. the paper was published. War was news

## Phila. Areas lled Potential lence Points

DONALD A. McDONOUGH  
JEREMY HEYMSFELD  
*Of The Inquirer Staff*

onfidential report pinpoint-  
even areas of the city  
ng the greatest potential  
itbreaks of violence" has  
compiled by the Commit-  
Community Tensions of  
ellowship Commission, The  
er learned Saturday.

report was written to aid  
and municipal agencies in  
ng remedial action to pre-  
outbreaks during the sum-  
months.

### AS NAMED

se areas named in the re-  
they were not listed in  
of greatest dangers are:

### Sabotage at 1917 War Plant?

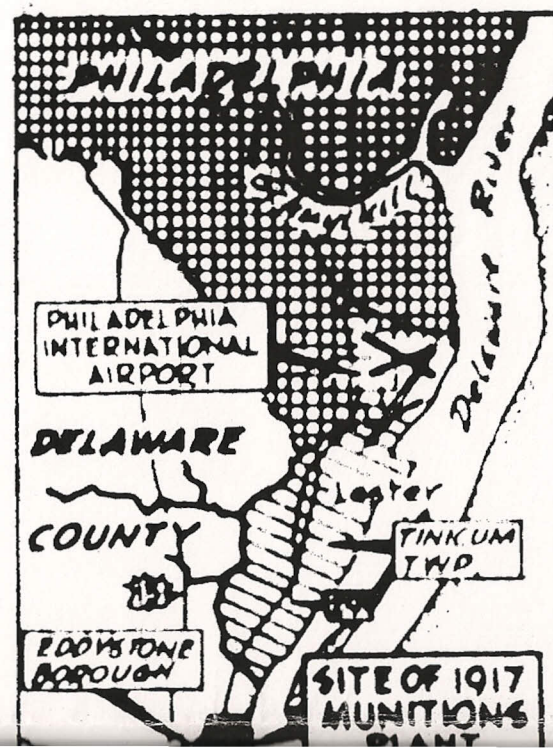
# Eddystone Explosion That Took 139 Lives Is 50-Year Mystery

It was the greatest disaster in the history of the Phila-  
delphia area. It probably was the most vicious act of sabo-  
tage ever perpetrated against a U. S. war plant.

And the cause of the catastro-  
phic explosion at the Eddystone  
Ammunition Corp., just 50 years  
ago Monday, April 10, is as  
much a mystery today as it was  
the day it happened.

### NO ONE PROSECUTED

One hundred thirty-nine per-  
sons—mostly young women—  
were killed in the triple explo-  
sion that rocked the shell-load-  
ing building at the arms plant  
that morning. Another 130-some-  
odd persons were injured, many  
of them permanently maimed.



## Drive to Divorce Gains in

By WARD

*Of The Inqu*

A drive for le  
would revolutioniz  
ata's divorce gra  
ing momentum in

The reforms ar  
a proposed divorc  
has been gathering  
yers' shelves for  
this year the powe  
Association has p  
and is repackagin  
duction.

The code would

—Establish two  
for divorce inclu  
two years' separ  
tual consent.

—Provide for th



they were not listed in of greatest dangers—are: asington, where "Negro -ins hold the greatest po- l for trouble." th Central Philadelphia, its "heavy concentration prooms and overcrowded ng."

**Hawthorne Housing** ct, 13th and Bainbridge where tension has been d in the past by "police lity and misbehavior." and Filbert sts., where ents feel they are "vic- of a Negro removal pro-"

and Tasker sts., where growing Negro population rounded by a white com- y."

t Falls, where "Irish ents regard housing proj- sidents as 'lazy good-for- ing welfare recipients'."

and Green sts., where is "occasional antipathy en Negro and Puerto Ri- sidents."

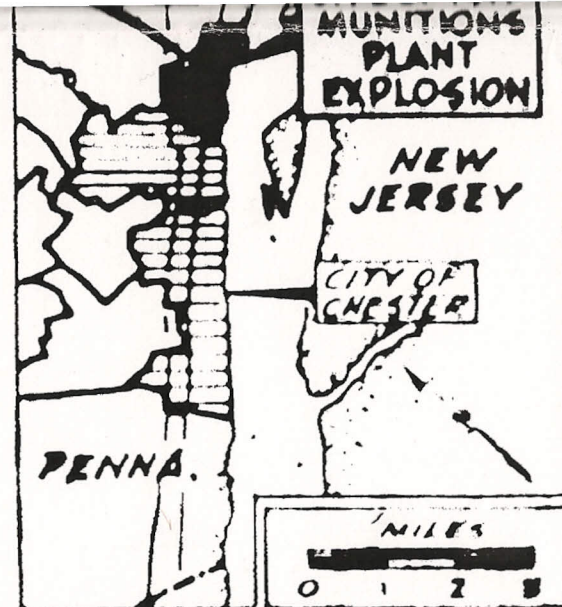
list was compiled by is Hadfield, a staff work- the Commission on Hu- ued on Page 9, Column 1

of them permanently maimed. Company officials and police immediately charged that the blasts, which occurred four days after the United States had declared war on Germany, were sabotage. But no one ever was prosecuted.

Ten years after the explosion, in 1927, two Federal agents who had headed the investigation of it said they had a telegram indicating that Leon Trotsky, the Russian revolutionist, and later Foreign Minister, had had a hand in the plot. Trotsky at the time was an arch enemy of the newly established Kerensky regime in Russia for which the plant was manufacturing shells.

### SHRAPNEL SHELLS

Specifically, the Eddystone plant, located between the Industrial Highway and the Delaware River, was manufacturing 3-inch shrapnel shells for the Russians. The shells, about 7 inches long, spew sharpnel over a wide area when they burst. There were about 15 carloads of them in the "Old F" building of the plant that morning. About 380 persons, many of them girls and young women, were loading



Map shows location of munitions plant that exploded 50 years ago, killing 139 persons, injuring almost as many.

them with charges of black powder.

### 'BODIES IN AIR'

A ticket agent at the nearby Eddystone station of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway, told The Inquirer that day he had just checked the time on his watch—9:55 A. M.—when:

"There was this explosion, fol- lowed quickly by two others, both much louder. I looked in

Continued on Page 29, Column 2

that consent. —Provide for th alimony. (Pennsy only State that n award alimony.)

—Require a 60 off" period before divorce applicati quire court invest couple has child years old.

—Eliminate th guilt or innocent party in a divorce

—Consolidate f matters in one jurisdictions exci phia and Pittsburgh

Patrick R. Tair burgh, chairman Committee on Far Saturday that th had decided at a B gates meeting in to sponsor the con- islation "to the d can" and seek to this year.

### 'FALLING BEHIN

In its formal r bar said that pro area of family l creased "imm Pennsylvania in years.

"The State is f behind most oth

## vey Reveals 10% Smoke Weed



# 1917 Eddystone Blast Still a Mystery

Continued from First Page

the direction of the Eddystone plant and saw a horrible sight. Black objects were soaring into the air and dropping into a vast mass of yellow smoke. There were screams.

"As I ran outside, I could see bodies in the air. Some were thrown distances of 200 to 300 feet. It seemed only a minute later the first rescuers appeared from all over."

One of the first men on the scene was Capt. F. K. Hyatt, vice president of the nearby Pennsylvania Military Academy.

He said: "Near the collapsed building were mangled bodies; some were alive, others dead. Arms and legs were gone, faces torn away. Limbs and heads were twisted out of place. The cries of many of the victims were horrible."

Several bodies were found in

a swamp between the plant and the common grave, bearing this the Delaware River. Others epitaph:

were believed to have been hurled into the river.

Ambulances went to the scene from Chester, Ridley Park and other Delaware county towns and from almost every hospital in Philadelphia, five miles away. Swarthmore College students organized a rescue squad. PMC cadets joined the guard detail around the plant.

On April 13, three days after the tragedy, 52 caskets were lowered in three tiers in a great trench in Chester Rural Cemetery, a mile and a half from the plant. Eleven clergymen, of all faiths, officiated at the burial. A monument still stands at

"In memory of those who lost their lives in the Eddystone Explosion, April 10, 1917. The unidentified buried here."

Civic authorities were convinced at the time that Philadelphia had been selected as the scene for the beginning of a reign of terrorism now that America had thrown her lot with the Allies against Germany.

State and city police and national guardsmen were assigned to guard duty at industrial plants and public buildings in the city.

City Hall tower was closed. The Inquirer of April 11 re-

ported: "The authorities make no secret of the fact that the loss of lives at Eddystone serves bitter notice that the war is really on and that its first real blood on land has been drawn from the very fountain of liberty—Philadelphia and its environs."

But 10 years later suspicion had shifted from the Germans to the Russian revolutionaries.

Federal investigator Weeks produced a copy of a telegram he said was sent to a man named "Meyers" in New York within one hour after the blast. It read:

"Explosion occurred at Eddystone. Our crowd safe. Work."

"That man Meyers was none other than Trotsky," Weeks said. "At the time of the explosions . . . a great many Russians were employed in the Eddystone plant, including a commission of inspectors . . . But on that day, not one of those inspectors was in the loading room where the blast occurred," he said.

"And the next day, 300 Russians quit the Eddystone plant."

He said his investigation also revealed that many Russians had stayed home from work the day of the explosion.

## Philadelphia Conventions

(Compiled by Philadelphia Convention and Tourist Bureau)

Date	Organization & Place	Attendance Expected
April 9-12	Association of College Unions — Benjamin Franklin	800
April 10-12	Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital (Epithelial-Mesenchymal Interactions) — Sheraton	500
April 10-13	Delaware Valley Restaurant Show — Civic Center	10,000
April 10-14	Post Graduate Institute and Convention, Philadelphia County Medical Society — Bellevue Stratford	2000

PIES! JAMES BOND

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YOUR CHOICE



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• TU  
• MA  
• JAI

STE

No