

SPECIAL EDITION

16 PAGES OF 'EXCLUSIVE' FIRE PHOTOS

**Headmaster's
Special
Message
(page 8)**

MUSTANG NEWS

All American (NSPA)—International First Place Award (Quill and Scroll)—First Place Rating (Columbia Scholastic Press)—Highest New England Achievement, Scholastic Editing and Publishing (Boston University)—Best Newspaper and News Story of The Year Award (Boston Daily Globe).

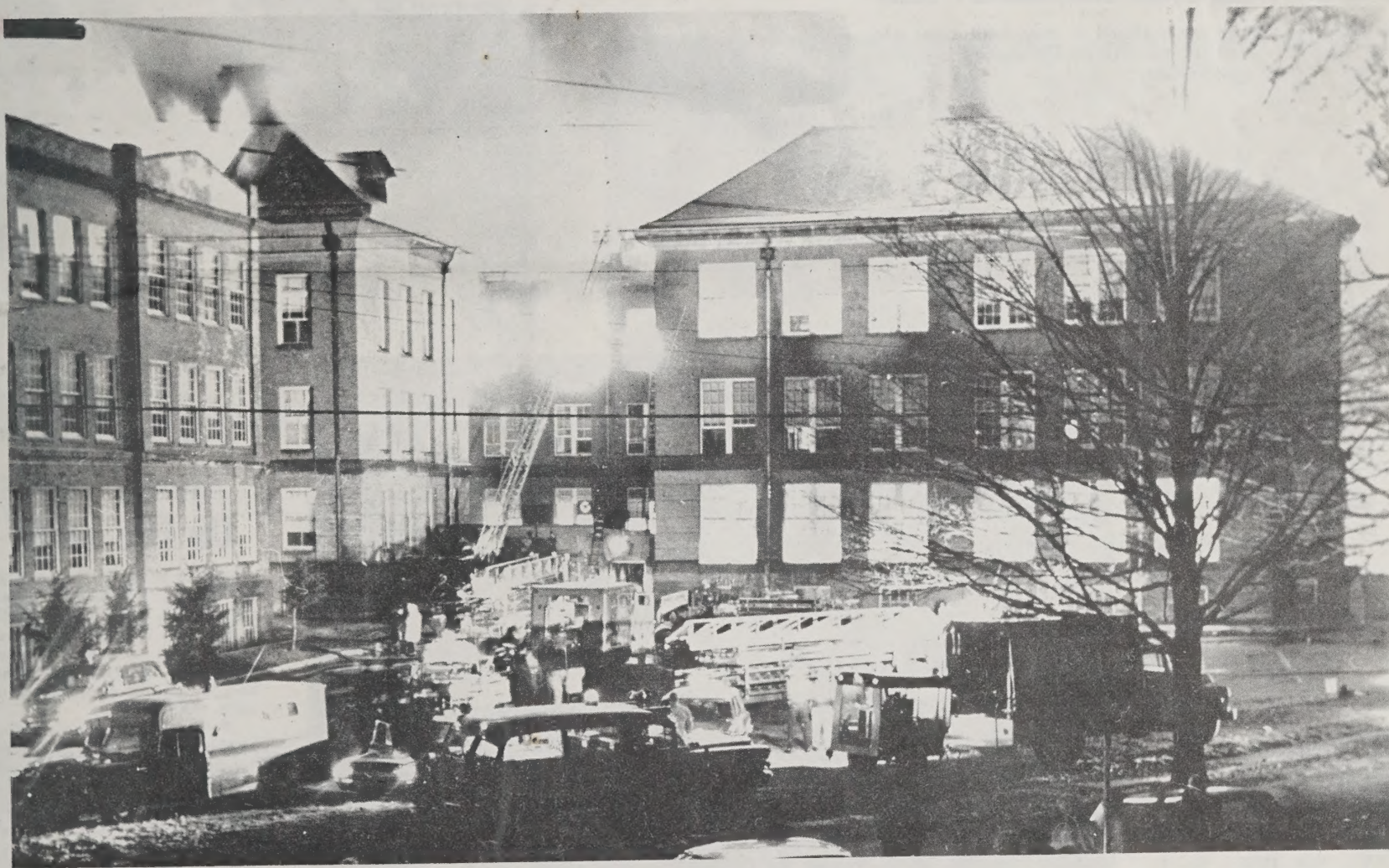
Vol. IV No. 1

MEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL, MEDFORD, MASS.

November, 1965

**Malcolm's
Burnt
Soap Box
(page 15)**

Multi-Million Dollar Fire Wrecks School— DIARY OF A HOLOCAUST



Dramatic shot taken by former NEWS photographer Robert Stanley captures intense excitement of fateful night. Shot shows just a few of many units called in from 18 neighboring communities to combat the multi-million dollar holocaust. Flames which have already destroyed Building B are beginning their devastation of the old Assembly Hall, and the girls' gym. At height of blaze entire roof was eaten away by wind-driven fire. Students enjoyed a forced 9-day vacation as result of disaster.

OUR WEEK TO REMEMBER

by Edmund R. Pignone
Editor

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31st

A quiet Sunday afternoon . . . Early evening oil fire breaks out in boiler room of MHS but is quickly put out . . . Members of the MUSTANG NEWS staff remain at advisor's home till 11 PM preparing final copy for the special Medford-Malden Thanksgiving Day edition.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST

New York City braces for city-wide elections . . . Key Club holds brief meeting in room 237 at 1:35 . . . Box 131,

struck at 6:39 P.M., reports first alarm of what will be a multi-million dollar general alarm fire that summons 300 firefighters from 18 communities and completely destroys 33 classrooms in Buildings B and C.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd

Citizens go to polls to elect new city officials . . . An air of mourning hangs over the usual student gathering places: an old friend has passed away . . . At special 11 A.M. City Council meeting City Manager Howard Reed sets total insured value of school at 13.5 million dollars

. . . \$50,000 appropriated by Council to study possibility of a new high school complex.

WED., NOVEMBER 3rd

Lindsay defeats Beame . . . Boiler repairs continue at school . . . Headmaster William A. McCormack outlines plan for double-sessions to begin possibly Monday, November 8th.

THURS., NOVEMBER 4th

The war in Viet Nam drags on . . . Crowds still gather in front of gutted MHS building to stare at the ruins of over half a century's traditions.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5th

Superintendent of Schools John Houston postpones school opening till November 15 . . . also outlines possibilities of Saturday sessions.

SAT., NOVEMBER 6th

Haverhill defeats Medford by a 26 to 6 margin . . . Construction crew begins razing of old MHS building.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7th

A quiet Sunday afternoon . . . Members of the MUSTANG NEWS staff remain at advisor's home till 11 P.M. preparing entirely new November edition.

On The Inside

**THE FIRE
Part One**

**THE AFTERMATH
Part Two**

**THE FUTURE
Part Three**



Heroic deeds of firemen are captured as they shoot hoses into the heart of fire, high on ladders, into the Distributive Education rooms on third floor crossover area.

THE FIRE

(Part One)



Leo McCabe
Medford Fire Chief



Part of the thousands of spectators that watched the school burn look on as flames race out of control.

Mustang News Staff

The MUSTANG NEWS, student publication of Medford High School, is edited and published by the journalism classes at Medford High School, Forest Street, Medford, Massachusetts 02155.

Vol. IV Nov. 1965 No. 1

Headmaster

Mr. William A. McCormack
Newspaper Advisor

Mr. Henry R. Selvitella

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Ladders extend directly into blazing flames in firefighters' attempt to check fire's spread.

Ex 'News' Photographer Really Hot On Fire Story

Robert Stanley was one of the early "pioneers" when the NEWS was born in 1962.

Bob was our top photographer when we were named ALL-AMERICAN last year, and his photos sure helped us earn that honor.

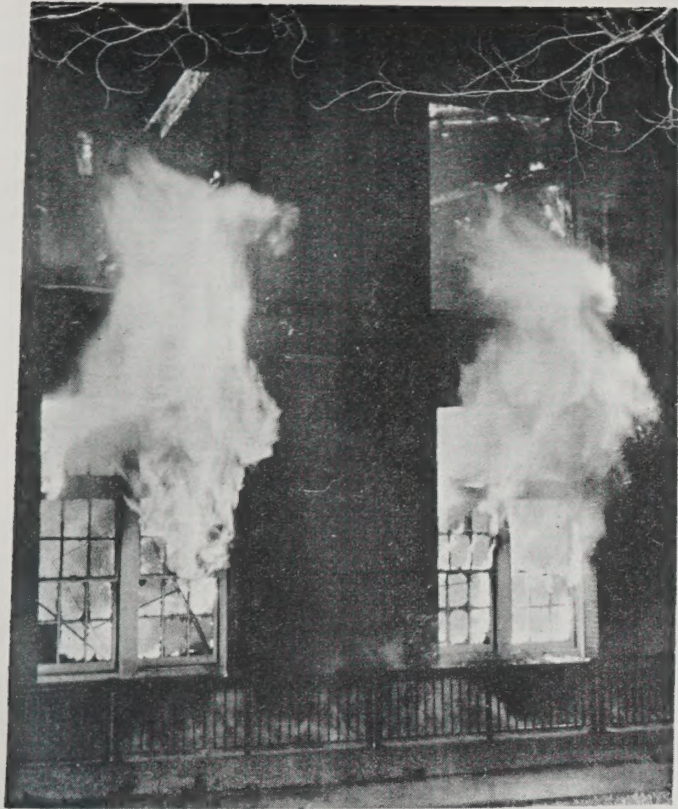
Now an apprentice photographer with Associated Press, we are proud to present some of the work of one of our first graduates whose major photo contributions dominate this issue.

We are sure that you will agree that Bob was really "hot" on this assignment.

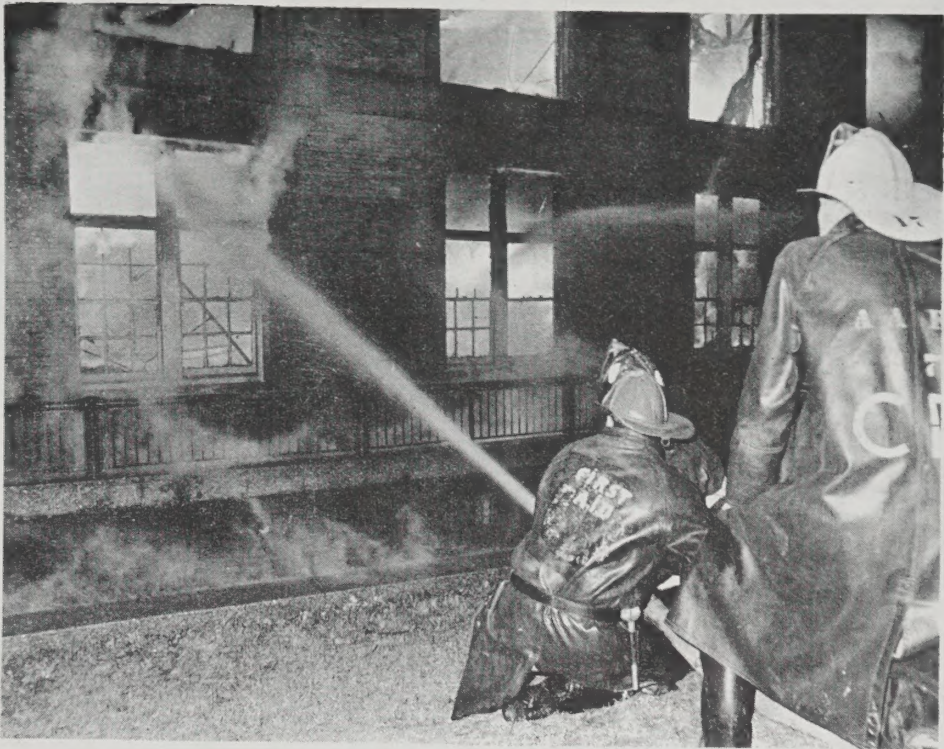
While They Last

Copies of this special edition can be purchased in the Mustang News office now located in the Teachers Lunchroom, Room 023, directly beneath the School Committee Room or from the main office adjacent to the Headmasters office.

All proceeds will be applied to the Carol Baxter Journalism Scholarship Assistance Fund.



Tongues of flame shoot out of window in Dwight Davis' rear-view photo of Building C, which was completely destroyed.



Firefighters pour millions of gallons of water into girls' gym in a hard but vain attempt to save what remained of Building C. The effort of these typifies that displayed by all concerned with disaster.
(Boston Globe photo)



The Salvation Army and the Red Cross were on the job quickly and efficiently supplying coffee to the weary firefighters. (Photo by NEWS photographer Robert Crockford.)



Aerial hoses shower Building B at climax of multi-million dollar disaster.
(Boston Globe photo)



Girls' gym takes in torrents of water from ground hoses while Building C rages out of control.
(Boston Globe photo)



Hot air expulsion. Dramatic photo taken by Stanley, who was knocked backwards, causing his camera to jolt as the entire building flared up. Seven firefighters working on a ladder were rushed to the Lawrence Memorial Hospital with injuries received in this explosion.



Every window ablaze, Everett firemen can do little to save historic building.



Eerie cloud of light illuminates roof and staircase windows as seen from surrounding street below.



NEWS photographer Marc Gorenstein captures emotions of aghast onlookers.

Carol Baxter Scholarship Fund Created

Proceeds from this special edition will go into a Journalism Scholarship Assistance Fund.

The Fund is named for Carol Ann Baxter, who died this summer of cancer. She was a two-year veteran of the NEWS staff and would have graduated this June. Carol had just turned 17.

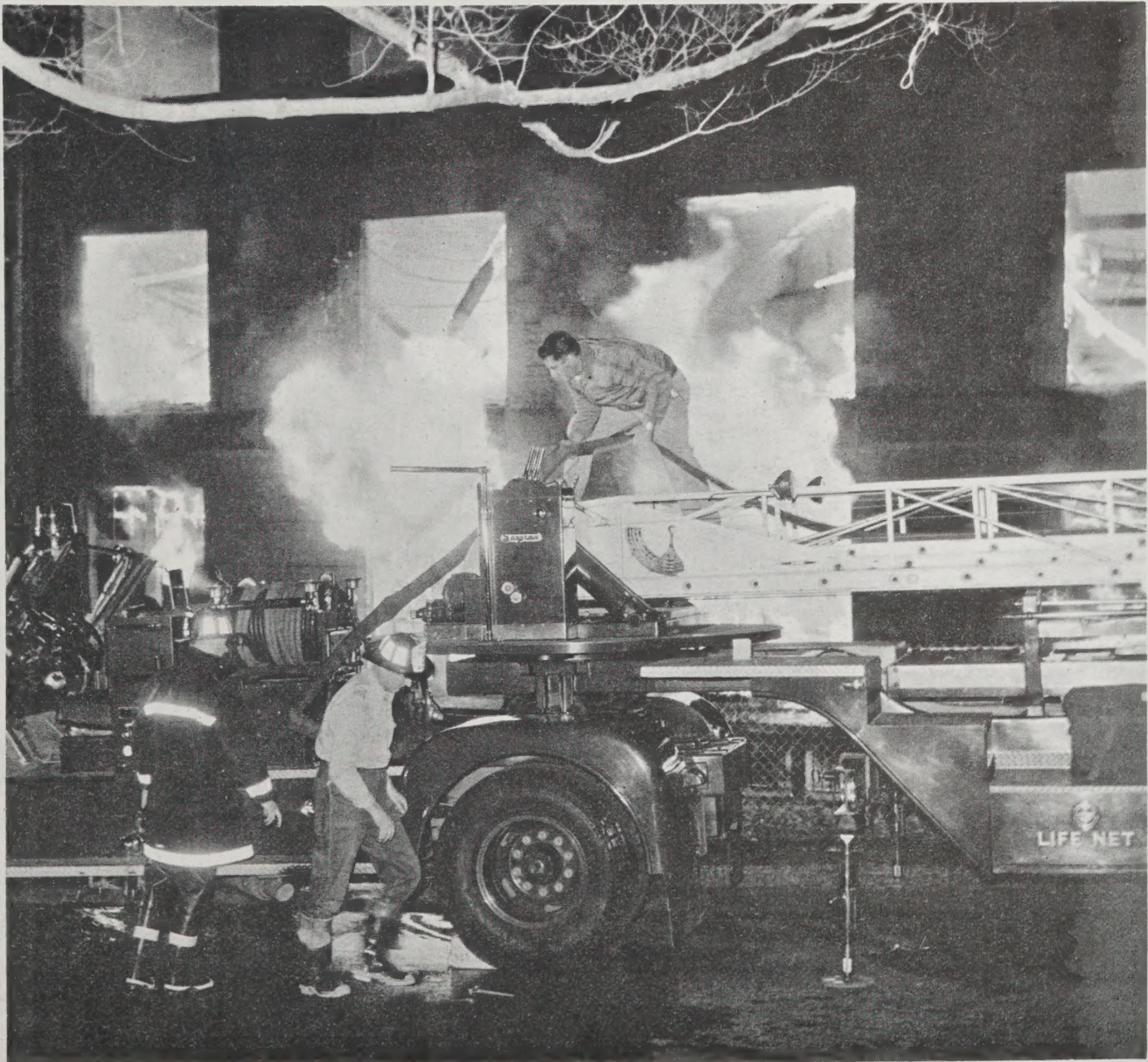
Unsung Hero's

Little publicity has been given to the custodian staff of MHS out of the office of Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds William Corbett.

Working around the clock the past two weeks under the direction of Acting Senior Custodian Godfrey "Jeff" Zirpolo these men have done a fantastic job in cleaning up the ruins along with the reshuffling of classroom materials.

Included in the crew were Sal Menna, Bertram Thistle, William Sampson, Bernard Lynch and John Shotwell.

Also John Harrington, William Kelly, Gerald Gibson, Raymond Jackson, William Lewis and Kenneth Minor.



His back nearly in the searing flames, Everett firefighter reels off hose line in losing battle to save Building C in this shot by Davis.



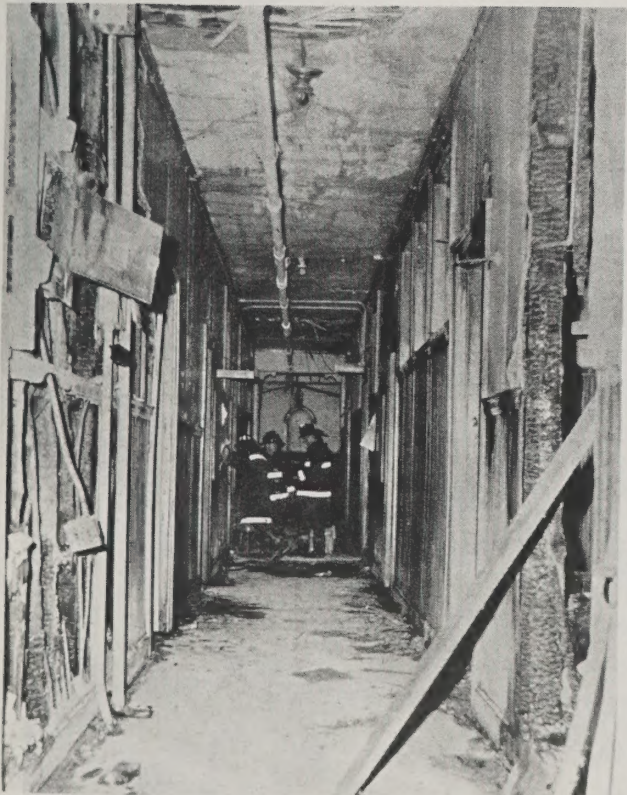
**THE
AFTER-
MATH**
(Part Two)

The terrible affects of fire are clearly shown by these three shots.





Dramatic photos illustrate aftermath of catastrophe. Exposed walls and rooms are all that remains of our old school.





At special 11 A.M. Council session, City Manager Howard Reed illustrates height of flames with hand gestures to city officials Matera, Marotta, Campbell, Marchetti, Grant, and Sullivan.



Grateful that no lives were lost, City Manager Howard Reed and Mayor John McGlynn discuss the future of MHS students with Dr. Leonard Meade of Tufts University, Superintendent John Houston, and Assistant Superintendent Daniel Manley

"WE CAN BE GRATEFUL"

HEADMASTER PENS SPECIAL MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

The night of November 1, 1965, will be long remembered as the community loss of the old sections of the Medford High School complex gutted by a general alarm fire. The Medford firefighters, under the leadership of Chief Leo McCabe, assisted by other firefighters from almost a dozen neighboring communities, battled courageously the raging inferno, and, at the height of the holocaust, they succeeded in saving those segments of the physical plant structure which will be more than adequate for the implementation of a double session schedule to serve the best academic interests of the enrolled student body.

It was, of course, obvious how very, very important it is to understand completely the significance of fire drills and evacuation. Fortunately, no classes were scheduled at the time of the fire, and the test of evacuating the buildings was not an acute necessity. There is an indefinable lesson to be realized from this incident of magnitude for proper, orderly evacuations without confusion and without panic.

It will, of course, be continued school policy to effect fire drills regularly for stud-

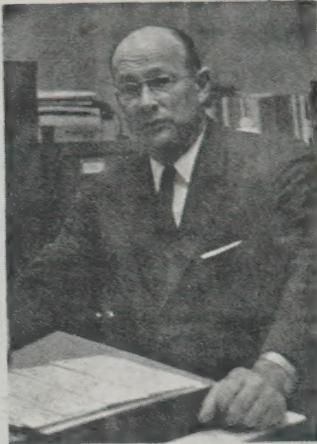
ents on both morning and afternoon class schedules.

It was also fortunate that our losses were not nearly as great as one may have imagined, because all laboratories, with the exception of the physics laboratory, escaped the ruinous spread of this devastating fire. The School Library, the boys' gymnasium, Chevalier Auditorium, the mechanical drawing room, and the Art workshop were spared from destruction by virtue of their locations in buildings "A" and "D".

There were many students who were a living part of the throngs of thousands who ringed a safe perimeter of the school during a long night vigil while firemen waged their tremendous battle against the terrible respecter of no human or inanimate object.

Our commendations and gratitude go out to all the firemen, to all the police officers, whose performances were equally outstanding in this crisis, and to the custodians out of Mr. Corbett's Department, who gave of their assistance wherever they could during and after this November 1st nightmare of activity.

The Medford High School



William A. McCormack
Headmaster

Faculty can assure all the students and their parents and the community at large that every possible administrative effort has been expended to develop complete programs to meet all academic measurements and college admission requirements.

We can be thankful in this hour that the students and teachers are of such caliber as to conquer all obstacles which we face now and will continue to face during the next two school years at least. It is a time when each student and each teacher will emerge with talents and abilities in score to offset completely the disadvantages and inconveniences of any schedules and inevitable adjustments.

We, indeed, can be grateful.
WILLIAM A. McCORMACK
HEADMASTER



City Manager Howard Reed, already formulating plans for the future, pensively watches school inferno.

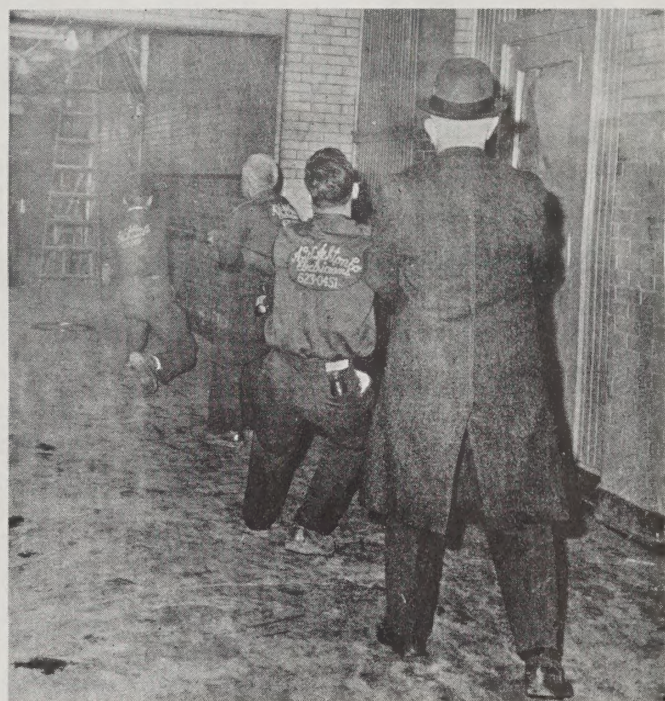




Once full of happy students, staircase outside Mr. Walter Bezubka's math room is covered with fallen debris, as reminders of what could have been a national disaster had the students been trapped in the inferno.
(Photo by Stanley)



Firefighter R. Fiartrone warms his numbed fingers over one of the many portable heaters used to dry out Buildings A and D, the two saved wings.



Three electricians and a volunteer helper strain to dislodge a fallen steam duct beneath gutted Building B.



The aftermath. Still on the job 16 hours later, tired Medford firefighters stand numb in cold air trying to catch their second wind. Ladder truck rests against Science Office window as years of traditional ivy hangs against fire-gutted building.



Bizarre shot captures the halo of light from welders' torches as workmen labor deep within the boiler.

Total destruction was the scene outside Mr. Close's math computer room on third floor corridor. Also destroyed were earth science room, physics and physiology labs, men teachers' lounge, and Mr. Pancratz's science office. (Stanley photo)



Remains of windows overlooking former crossover staircase. (Photo by Phil Robertson of Knox Photo, Inc.)

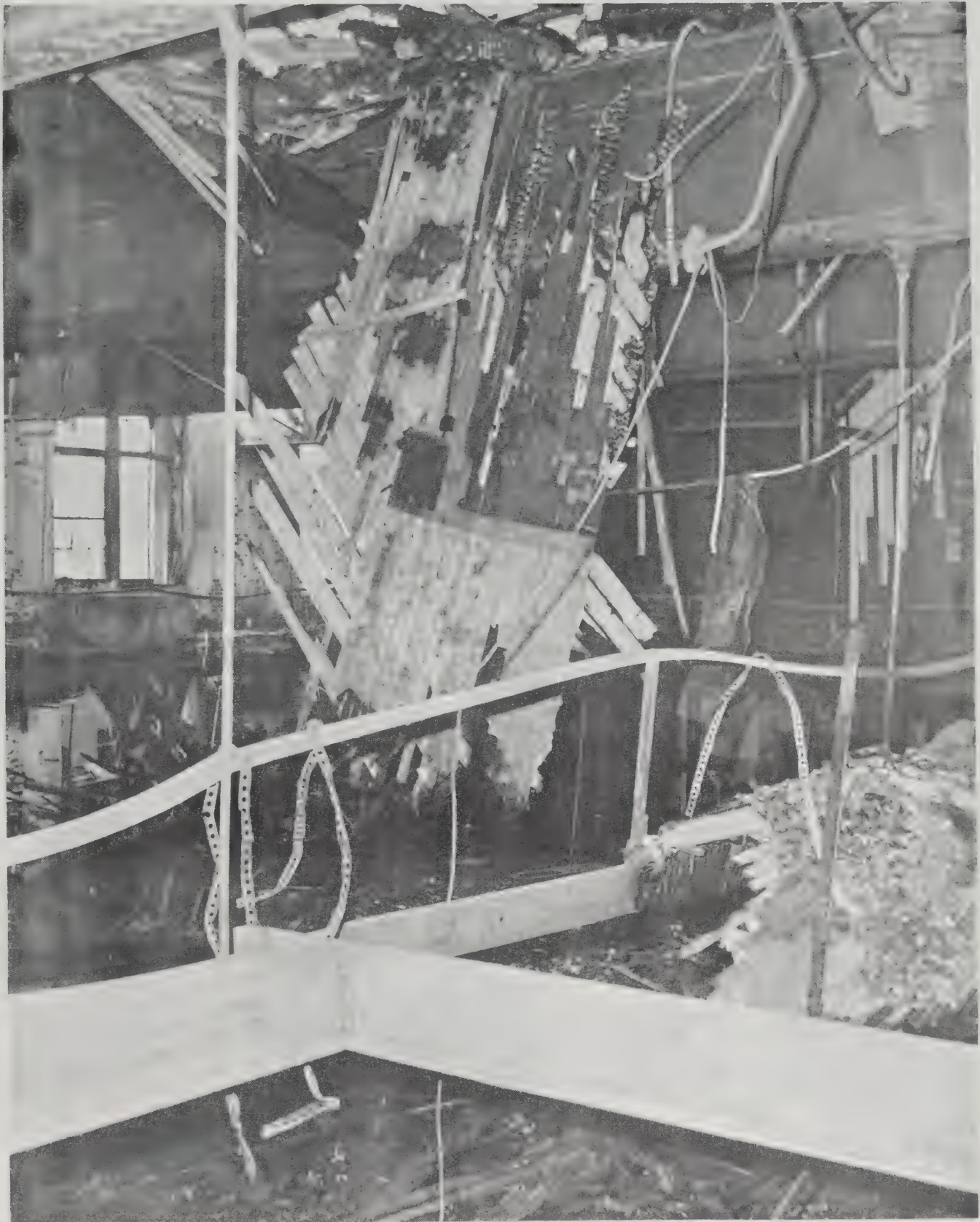


Workmen start tedious task of ripping down charred walls.



Boston Globe aerial shot captures burnt out remains of Buildings B and C.

Hanging section of girls' gym roof dangles precariously in mid-air. Note the steel girders of track metal in roller coaster fashion twisted by the heat of the flames. (Stanley photo)



We wish to thank the Boston Daily Globe Co., the Record-American, and the Herald-Traveler Corp. for allowing us to print some of their photos. Our gratitude to the Globe and Medford Daily Mercury for coverage of this photo special. Our thanks also to photographers Dwight Davis, Phil Robertson, Robert Stanley, and the entire NEWS photo staff for the pictures that made this edition possible.



Morning after the night before. Looking from battered window into what was once Mr. Zirpolo's Distributive Education classes, one sees dull November sky where formerly rose slated roof.





On morning of November 2nd, sun rose upon a vastly different High School scene. Firefighters still remain to put down occasional flare-ups in ruined Buildings B and C.
(Dwight Davis photo)



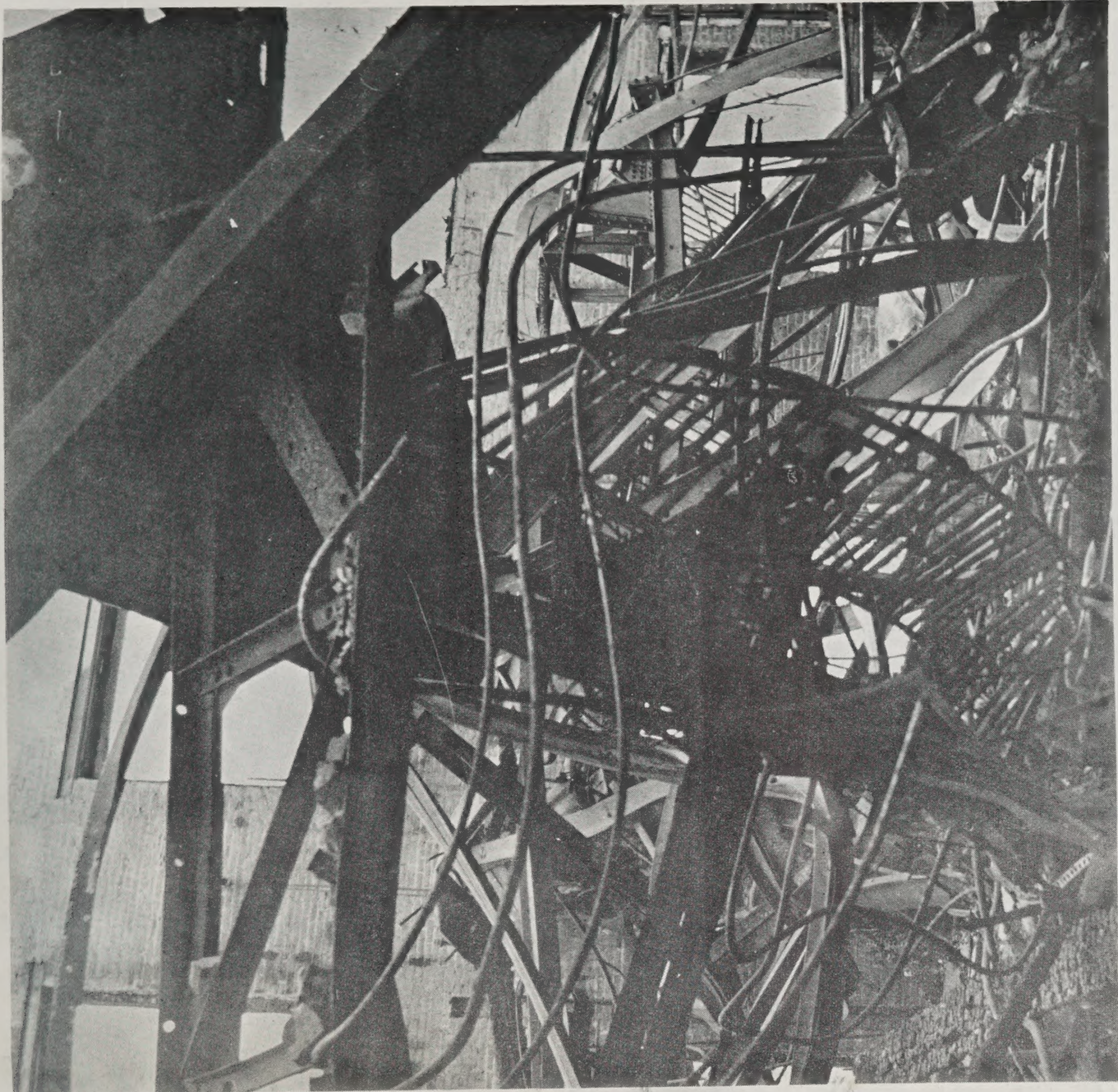
Silhouetted fireman stands in sea of water outside Mr. Robert Keefe's English room. On opposite side of corridor, fire was brought under control just outside NEWS room. (Stanley photo)



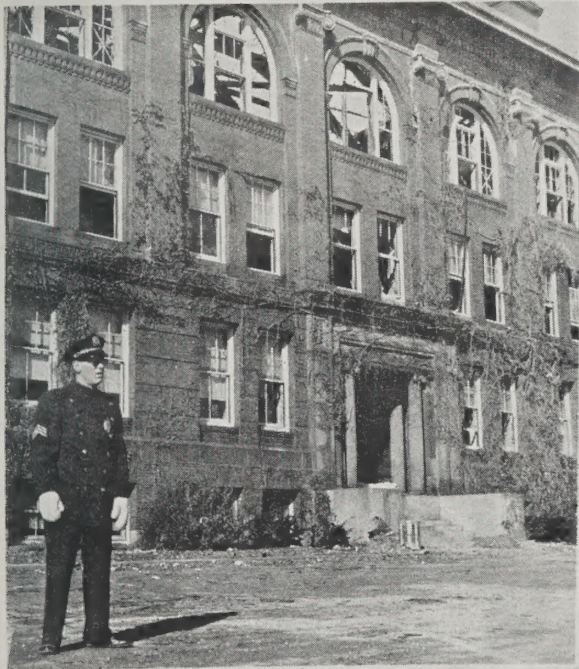
Behind a heap of salvaged typewriters, office clerks Miss Anna Doherty and Mrs. Helen Collomb work furiously to prepare new homercom lists for double session classes and a million other problems that arose for the tired women.



No school today. MHS girls examine girls' gym after cheers of happiness over excitement of burning school turned into heavy gloom as school goes into double sessions with loss of vacation weeks ahead.



Fire symphony of steel.
(Stanley photo)



Medford's finest, Sgt. J. Humphrey, stands a lonely vigil before destroyed building. Inside, end of first floor crossover and Mr. Buckley's lab show extensive damage and fallen roof, while custodians and firemen work long hours to repair soaked boilers.





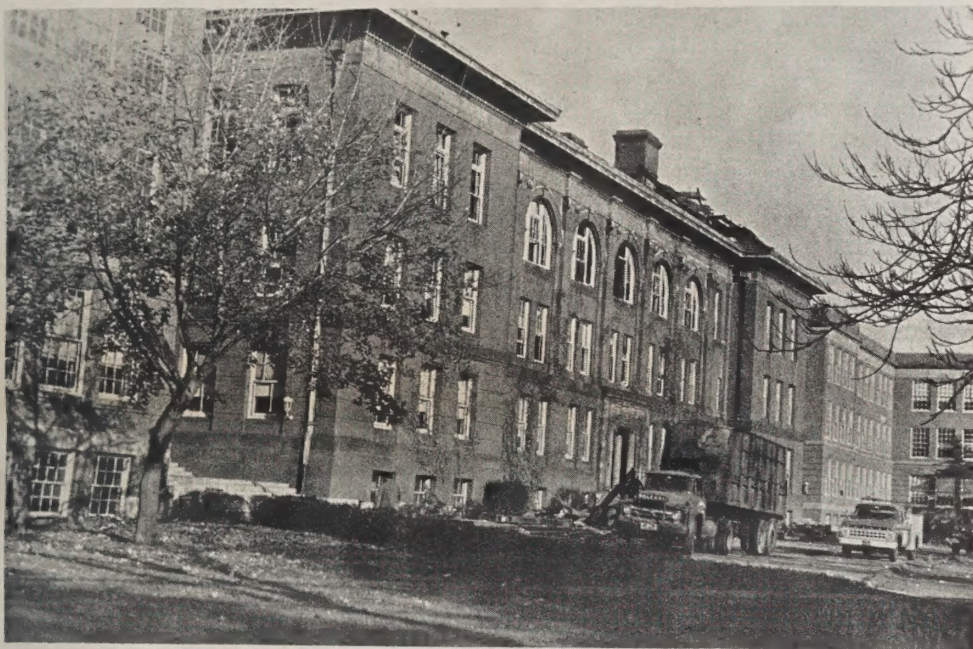
Scorched lockers, hanging beams, and massed rubble are all that remain of demolished 3rd floor.



"Moments of decision."



Firemen and wreckers examine classroom (or what's left of it) on third floor.



Wrecking trucks wait in line to carry away remains of wrecked school.



Burned, but still standing, our school name is still there.

MALCOLM'S BURNT SOAP BOX

ASHES
TO
ASHES



Some people seem to think that Medford High burnt down. In returning to the charred halls to collect the remains of my burnt soapbox, I realized that they were wrong: tradition can't burn.

During the ensuing months the true test of that tradition and heritage will come to face us each and every day . . . for the road ahead is going to be tough.

True, there stands only a brick framework where assemblies, physical recreation, and various classes were once housed. The roof that protected the numerous activities of education collapsed. But there was something in the air that prevailed stronger than the musty smell of smoke and water . . . it was tradition. While the customs and heritage handed down from graduating class to graduating class had escaped the destruction of fire, the man-made bricks and wood were ruined.

Wading through the water that was still being pumped from the exhausted building, my sandals had taken just about all that they could hold. Then I spotted the heroes of that tragic day, our firemen. These devoted men had watched the school day and night, even after the blaze was under control. They had also taken courageous steps on that fateful "eve of destruction" to fight the overpowering force. Let's all join in "a tip of the fire helmet" to the local and neighboring community firemen.

Noticing ashes, stray bricks, slate and debris scattered about, I couldn't complain about THIS mess around MHS. There wouldn't be any basketball with ice-cream wrappers in the lunchroom for some time. The crossovers would never be crowded with over-anxious, hurrying students. Gone are my gripes of mass compression during the "between bell" period on congested stairways.

There was a bright side of things, though. We had no school for at least two weeks. Even that was no consolation since we'd probably lose our vacations to make up for the loss of time. Many inconveniences would be thrust upon my fellow students. Sacrifices would have to be made at the expensive price of education. Under the circumstances, co-operation with the teachers is the only answer. It was similar to a test, not like a math or an English test, but a trial of the true heritage of our alma mater.

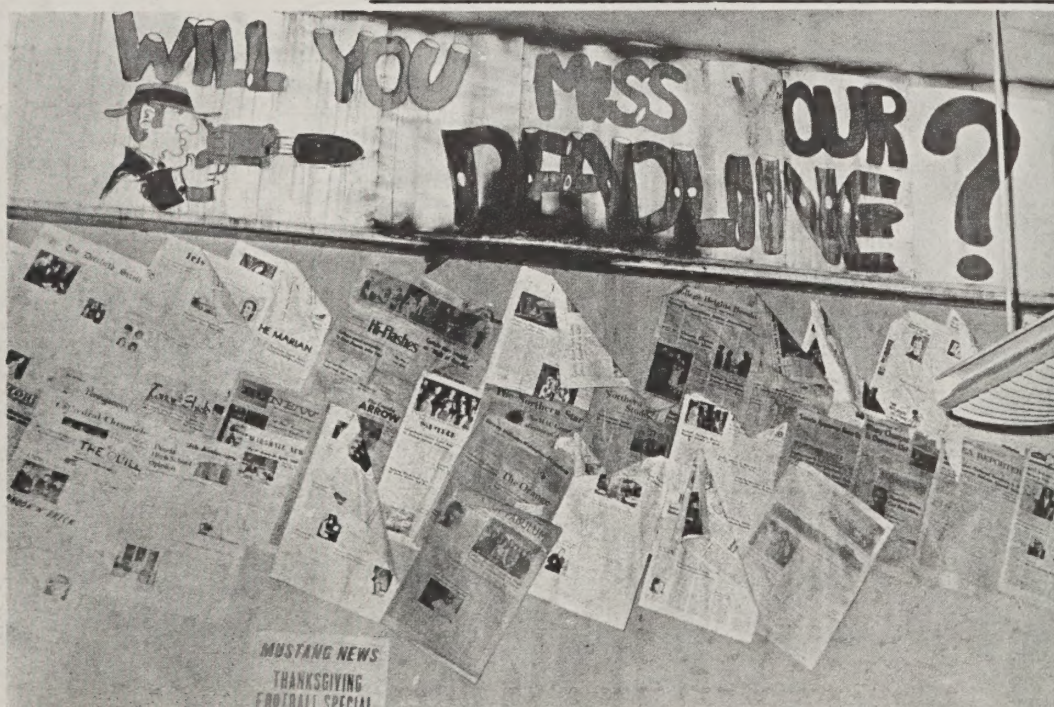
It's up to us, as students, to show our eagerness in the response to this difficult situation. We've seen the courage of the firemen and the police, the spirit of the school officials, and the effort of the teachers in deciding the next step; now it's our turn to show them that we've got what it takes. It makes me feel even prouder to wear the skinny white "M" on my blue jersey. Medford High School may be physically down but we're not spiritually out.

We are very lucky in a way to be a part of a segment in our school's history that will be recorded as one of its darkest moments. History has touched our shoulders. Let us work hard TOGETHER to record a new segment of our proud heritage.

The entire city and state is watching us.

— MALCOLM

THE FUTURE



"Will You Miss Your Deadline?" Huge poster and exchange newspapers high on wall show how fire started to eat away the wall between submaster John Ricker's office and Mr. Henry Selvitella's journalism room. Poster of cancelled Thanksgiving edition is below, but journalism students WERE able to meet their new deadline.



Still smoldering the next day, dramatic aerial photo by Ollie Noonan of the Record-American captures full impact of holocaust. Buildings B and C, once part of the daily life of thousands of Medford students, stand broken in a scene reminiscent of World War II photos of war-torn Europe. Wreckers have already knocked down the scorched walls and all that remains for MHS students is the rich tradition and heritage which is buried forever in its hollow land.