

Established Dec. 8, 1888.



## Two Killed By Train

An engaged couple, Robert Smelser and Mrs. Ruth Crook, both of Bonaux, Va., were killed yesterday when their car was struck by a train at a Bonaux crossing.

## Filibuster Showdown Shapes Up

WASHINGTON (AP)—Senate Democratic leader Lyndon B. Johnson said today he was agreeable to a quick showdown on a move to substitute a stiffer proposal for his own compromise anti-filibuster plan.

The Texan's offer indicated he was confident of mustering the votes to beat back a counter-attack planned by strategists for a bipartisan bloc of senators advocating a tougher clampdown on filibusters.

Johnson outflanked them yesterday by advancing his compromise at the opening of the new Senate session before they had a chance to offer their own proposal.

As the Senate plunged into the rules scrap today, Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.), the assistant majority leader, defended Johnson against charges of high-handed tactics.

Mansfield said there had been "talk of hijacking and blackjacking" because Johnson had jumped the gun on the bipartisan coalition by acting first.

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But Mansfield said he wanted to make it clear that Johnson's move would not prevent the Senate from voting on any and all alternate proposals for revising the Senate's anti-filibuster rule.

Johnson used his position as majority leader to seize the initiative at the opening session of the new Senate Wednesday, and won the first skirmish in the rules battle.

Bull. Sens. Paul H. Douglas (D-Ill.) and Jacob K. Javits (R-NY) included the anti-filibuster coalition in their attack. They also made clear they are banking on continued help from Vice President Richard M. Nixon, the Senate's president pro tempore.

The point is important because if Nixon's view is sustained, a simple majority could vote to end the filibuster rule, opening the way to the restrictions of prior rules. The rules now permit unlimited debate on any motion to amend or repeal any law.

Opposing that is the view that because only one-third of the senators are elected each two years, the filibuster should be retained. Instead, Johnson proposed a change in rules to permit filibusters to be halted by two-thirds of the senators present and voting.

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# Mount Holy Store Blaze Damage Above \$250,000

## Ammunition, Paint Feed Massey Hardware Fire

By BILL HUGHES  
News Staff Writer

MOUNT HOLLY—A smoldering fire crept unnoticed through a downtown Mount Holy hardware store and erupted in violent fury about 4:30 a. m. today.

Flames, fed by paint and ammunition, destroyed Massey Hardware, one of east Gaston County's largest hardware firms. Damage was estimated in excess of \$250,000.

Several firemen were overcome by smoke and were treated at the scene.

Sgt. J. N. Paik of the Mount Holy Police Dept. said he first noticed smoke about 3:55 a. m.

SMOKE SEEPING OUT  
"The store was filling with smoke," Sgt. Paik said, "and smoke was seeping out from under the doors."

Firemen arrived shortly after 4 a. m. and attempted to enter the rear of the store but were driven back by smoke and flames.

"Then paint, varnish and stuff began to explode, and the fire spread to guns and ammunition. Ammunition began to explode, and the whole building erupted," Sgt. Paik said.

Across the street from the store, a window glass was flying everywhere. It's a wonder somebody wasn't killed.

"As soon as the ammo went off the crowd scattered."

Although Sgt. Paik said traffic piled up "pretty bad," police prevented crowds from interfering with firemen.

Fire departments from Mount Holy, Stanley, Lowell, Gastonia, Belmont, Catawba Heights and New Hope community responded to the alarm.

Firemen arrived from the fire seriously damaging a movie theater adjoining the Main St. hardware store.

An alley runs along the other side of the hardware store's three-story quarters.

PAINT BLISTERED  
Intensive heat from the flames blistered paint and cracked glass at the River Valley Motor Co. across the street from the blaze.

Firemen continued to extinguish smoldering embers and knock down falling walls. This morning's interior of the store was reduced to ashes, twisted steel beams and charred bulks of refrigerators, stoves and other appliances.

O. E. Massey, chairman of the Gaston County board of commissioners, is owner of the store.

Mr. Massey, who arrived at the scene shortly after the first firemen, said the fire apparently began in the basement. He could, however, give no apparent cause.

The store's heating plant was located in the basement and was situated in a separate enclosure at the rear of the one-story brick building—the only portion of the store, oddly enough, still intact after the blaze.

Mr. Massey said this was the first time in his 40 years in the hardware business it was described locally as the worst downtown fire in this industrial community.

Mount Holy police were aided by a force of Gaston County police under Capt. J. K. Davis.

GRINDING HALT  
YESTERDAY MORNING—President Nasser's plan for an Arab economic union has about ground to a halt on objections thrown up by the Iraqi delegation in the current Arab League council meeting.

Cloudy and mild with occasional rain today and tonight. Friday clearing.

Our Weather  
High tomorrow 45  
Low tomorrow morning 32  
High today 46  
Low today 36  
Sunrise today 7:32 a. m.  
Sunset today 5:28 p. m.

More Weather Data on Page 3-A  
Rank of Charlotte area 70th interval  
Rank of news service 46  
Accuracy of 1000 or more %.

## 15 Already Dead

# Quick Trials Face Batista's Key Men

HAVANA (AP)—Speedy "war crimes" trials for followers of fallen Dictator Fulgencio Batista have begun in Cuba. Fifteen military leaders already have been executed.

Provisional President Manuel Urrutia said thousands of persons will be tried by revolutionary courts in "the same manner as war criminals were tried in Germany." They will be charged with crimes against the Cuban people.

Some of the accused still are being sought, Urrutia told a news conference Wednesday night. At least 1,100 persons have been reported arrested since Batista fled to the Dominican Republic a week ago and victorious rebel leader Fidel Castro proclaimed Urrutia as provisional president.

Gunfire flared briefly in Havana again Wednesday night. Machine-guns and other automatic weapons fired for about 15 minutes near the American-occupied National Hotel as rebel militia reportedly pursued several carloads of men who had been shooting at random in the streets.

FIGHTING STILL  
The militia still is trying to eliminate diehard Batista supporters, including members of a private army called the Tigers which belonged to former Sen. Rolando Masferrer.

Mastered fled by yacht to Key West, Fla. Minister of the Presidency Luis Bosh said Cuba will demand his extradition on charges of taking away 17 million dollars belonging to the people. U. S. Customs officials said Masferrer's party of 38 men had about \$90,000 when it landed. The men were put on parole to the Miami Immigration Office.

The government banned sales of alcoholic drinks in Havana today in expectation that Batista's would reach the capital. Officials hoped the ban would prevent heavy drinking that might add to the unstable security situation.

SOME PROGRESS  
Castro reached Matanzas, 60 miles east of Havana, Wednesday on his slow progress through adobe roads. His 20-car column careened into Matanzas at breakneck speed and the rebel leader

they called the tower at Daytona Beach municipal airport. They said they knew how to fly the "U. S. airways," apparently meaning the authorized routes of U. S. air defense. The Daytona Beach Morning Journal said today.

Apparently, the Air Force doesn't believe the enemy was bombing the Cape, the newspaper quoted a federal aviation spokesman. The Pentagon in Washington began checking the report, the paper said.

Two Cuban Air Force men fleeing after the downfall of President Fulgencio Batista's government landed the plane here, seeking asylum.

They told the Morning Journal they flew into the United States without a flight plan and made no radio contact during the 300-mile trip up the coast

NO INFORMATION  
First Lt. Chester J. Lowe, federal information officer at Dobbin's Air Force Base, Ga., said neither the 32nd Air Division nor the 10th Air Force, 739 fighters from McCoy Air Force Base at Orlando check it out.

Albert H. Chambers, chief of the Federal Aviation Agency (formerly the CAA) at the Daytona Beach airport, said he understood the tower had no knowledge of the Cubans until they asked for landing instructions from the tower.

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## Small Home Burns

# 16 Persons Killed In Oklahoma Fire

BOSWELL, Okla. (AP)—Sixteen persons, 15 of them children or teen-agers, died today in a roaring fire in a four-room wooden home.

All the bodies except that of one child were piled on and around a bed in a rear room which had no outside door.

Apparently someone successfully pushed the one child out at a window before succumbing. But the effort was in vain, for the child was dead.

The victims were Mrs. Arva Gardner, 38; her 10 children, three orphaned nieces, and two visiting nephews from Oklahoma City.

Booker Gardner, the father, was away hunting.

Almost in shock and his face haggard, Gardner cried over and over.

"My Lord, My Lord, My Lord" he wailed aimlessly, apparently unable to comprehend immediately the disaster which struck his family.

He said that when he started north from his hunting trip before dawn this morning, "I felt funny."

He received the news at the farm home of Vernon Lowe, who drove him to the disaster scene.

Gardner told Tony Price, reporter of the Paris, Tex. News, that he started on a hunt about 3:30 p. m. last night and hunted all night. Hunting with him was a nephew from Oklahoma City, who was visiting in the home.

The volunteer fire department could only use a pumper truck because no fire hydrant was within usable distance. The truck made four trips to obtain water.

Constable J. B. Richburg, who drove the pumper to the fire, said the roof had collapsed before firemen arrived. By that time it was obvious there was no help for the victims.

Gardner said when he left for his hunting trip, two stoves, burning wood, were in use. Richburg said he believed the disaster was caused by the stoves.

He said the family apparently panicked when the fire was discovered and rushed into an room.

PERSECUTION CRIES FOLLOW  
Church officials said the lay members of that church, identified only as "Bob," was responsible for the persecution, not the church.

Many churches and other groups were running bingo games before recent legalization.

As the bingo session got under way yesterday, about 30 women and several men were taking part.

"GET OUT OF HERE"  
When Edward Doyle, assistant license commissioner, appeared with a summons, there were cries of "Leave us alone" and "Get out of here."

Doyle attempted to hand the summons to the Rev. Walter M. Propeta, dean of priests at the church.

The Rev. Mr. Propeta ignored the summons, and Doyle played the summons on the clerk's knees. It was brushed to the floor.

Official action against the church had been taken Tuesday night when church officials were notified that the bingo license had been suspended.

YESTERDAY MORNING—Mr. Propeta sent a telegram to Mayor Robert F. Wagner in part, it read: "Our church is small and poor and heavily depends on the revenue derived from bingo."

Wagner did not intervene and the summons serving followed. Commenting on the action, Mr. Propeta said: "We are being persecuted since we are a minority."

The summons calls for the clergyman to appear in magistrate's court Jan. 22.

Cat Rescued After Three Days In Tree

NEW YORK (AP)—A bingo game in a Bronx church went on as scheduled yesterday despite the serving of a license suspension summons while the game was in progress.

The Church of the Holy Resurrection, the first group in the city to get a bingo license under a new state law which became effective here Jan. 1, was the first to suffer license suspension.

It proved a disturbing Christmas Day for the church, whose Ukrainian Orthodox congregation was celebrating the holiday under their ancient calendar.

The license suspension stemmed from a bingo game conducted under auspices of the church last summer. During that game three women won \$1,000.

They complained that they never received the money. The district attorney's office has been investigating the matter.

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