

With Hal Boyle



Mrs. Virginia O'Hanlon Douglas

Virginia O'Hanlon's Faith in Santa Claus Unshaken for 50 Years

NEW YORK—(AP)—Just fifty years ago a small girl, panged with doubt, sat down and wrote a letter to a newspaper that asked an immortal question—and received an immortal answer.

The girl was 8-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon. Her troubled question: "Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?"

Today a little Virginia is a 58-year-old school principal who never since has questioned the reality of Santa Claus. The newspaperman who answered her back in 1897 with an unsigned editorial published in the New York Sun was Francis P. Church, and his reply has become a part of American Christmas folklore: "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love, generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy."

Church went on to point out that there is nothing else real and abiding but the beauty of the unseen whose passwords are faith, fancy, poetry and romance, and concluded:

"No Santa Claus! Thank God, he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, may ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

Now A Widow

Church died a number of years ago, and the little Virginia whose faith in Santa Claus he kept is now Mrs. Edward Douglas, a widow and principal of a public school in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Curiously, the girl who asked the famous question and the man who gave the famous answer never met or saw each other.

"A friend of my family, however, was a neighbor to Mr. Church and complained that he kept dogs that barked too much," she laughed. "That was all I knew of him."

A trim, pleasant-faced woman with gray hair and blue eyes, Mrs. Douglas recalled that at first she was mildly displeased by the original publication of her letter because schoolmates teased her.

"But the editorial that Mr. Church wrote means even more to me now than then. As each year passes I see more in it."

Close To Childhood

Mrs. Douglas has a daughter and six grandchildren, and her lifetime teaching career has kept her close to the world of childhood. Her school is in a poor neighborhood which is predominantly Jewish. Until the Board of Education banned trees as fire hazards on a market arranged each year to provide a Christmas tree for every room in the school.

"I doubt if he observed Christmas in his own home," said Mrs. Douglas. "But he always saw that the school had plenty of trees."

"Children today are more sophisticated than when I was young," she said. "They begin to have doubts about Santa Claus at an earlier age. One reason is they are more mechanically minded, and they just can't figure how Santa can do what he's supposed to with nothing but reindeer pulling him."

And Mrs. Edward Douglas says she still believes in him just as much today as little Virginia O'Hanlon did half a century ago.

Home Superintendent Dies
WALLINGFORD, Conn.—(AP)—George H. Haines, 64, superintendent of the Masonic Home here for the past 12 years, died yesterday after a brief illness. He formerly was state purchasing agent for Rhode Island.

Survivors include a son, Lt. Col. George H. Haines Jr., of Plattsburgh, N. Y.

Three Killed, Two Wounded In Gang War

'Mad Dog Killers' Go on Rampage In South Chicago

CHICAGO — (AP) — Three gunmen, described by police as "mad dog killers," went on a shooting rampage last night and early today, shot and killed three men and wounded two others before one of the gunmen was slain by police and a second was seized.

Bodies of two of the victims of the gang's shooting spree were found in Western suburbs at 7 a. m. today, about 10 hours after the trio had slain one man in a South Side garage and abducted four men.

Two others who had been taken on the "gang ride" had been shot and wounded and also dumped into a highway in suburban Brookfield.

The four had been kidnaped at the South Side garage of Nick Kuesis, 40, after the gunmen had fatally shot Nick's brother, John, 33, owner of a used furniture store.

Kuesis' slayer was identified by police as Tom Daley, 42, an ex-convict, who was slain by a squad of detectives early today as he attempted to flee from a West Side apartment. His slaying following the seizure of one of his companions.

Daley's companion, Capt. Andrew Barry said, told him that after shooting John Kuesis and abducting four men in the garage they drove to Brookfield where they shot John Kuesis' brother, Nick, and Frank Baker, 17, and pushed their bodies from the car.

Nick, not seriously wounded, telephoned police.

Later, Barry said the gunman told him, they shot and killed Emil Schmikal, 18, and a youth identified as James Alex and dumped their bodies into a ditch.

Police Lt. John McNamara said that the shootings started after three gunmen appeared at the Kuesis garage last night and argued with John Kuesis over an automobile repair bill.

Crushed Under Truck
OLD CHATHAM — (AP) — Rose Marie Hansen, 21 months old, crawled under her uncle's truck yesterday and was crushed to death beneath its wheels, police reported.

Pedestrian Killed
GENESESE — (AP) — Fremont W. Mosher, 38, of the Livingston town of Portage, died yesterday at this knuckling under to a law he wanted to fight all the way.

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2. General application of the community tax principle under which husbands and wives in some states are permitted to divide their incomes for tax purposes. Cost in revenue, \$600,000,000.

3. Percentage cuts—30 per cent on taxable incomes up to \$1,000; 20 per cent on taxable incomes in the \$1,000-\$4,000 bracket; 10 per cent on taxable incomes over \$4,000. Revenue loss, \$2,400,000,000.

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GOP Congressional Leaders Hold Door Open for Federal Controls

UMW Pulls Out of AFL Strike in Once More

John L. Left Free to Vote Own Way in '48

WASHINGTON — (AP) — John L. Lewis has divorced his 600,000 miners for the AFL again in a move viewed by some labor men today as a sign that he intends to play independent in the 1948 presidential election.

The second split between the United Mine Workers and the American Federation of Labor came 11 years after Lewis first marched them out of the parent body and less than two years after he marched them in again. It was no surprise.

The 67-year-old Lewis had had his hat in his hand ever since the last AFL convention, when the executive council refused to go along with him in an all-out fight against the non-Communist provision of the Taft-Hartley Act.

The formal break came last night with a typical Lewis gesture of contempt and a typical five-syllable word which fell like an epithet—"Disaffiliate."

"Green AFL—We disaffiliate. Lewis, 12/12/47."

These words, scrawled in green crayon on a torn-off half sheet of cheap paper, were all the notice Lewis sent President William Green of the AFL.

Wants Free Vote

While other union officials declined to be quoted offhand, several said a desire by Lewis for political independence next year probably hastened the end.

In view of his strained relations with other AFL leaders they said it was likely that he did not want to be committed to whatever political role may be played by the new AFL "Labor's Educational and Political League."

K. C. Adams, editor of the UMW journal, told reporters there had been "no deal" with any labor organization to combine forces for the election campaign.

Lewis has exhibited his political independence before. He broke with the CIO in 1940 when the CIO plumed for President Roosevelt against his wishes.

The miners, after 46 years with the AFL, had joined the CIO in 1936 during the great split between proponents of craft and industrial type unions which Lewis himself brought about.

Quit Council
The miners came back to the AFL in January, 1946, and Lewis was promptly elected to the 15-member council.

He quit the council at the October convention in San Francisco when the members voted to change the constitution so that they would not be "officers" of the AFL within the meaning of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Thus they got around the requirement that all officers of a union must sign the non-Communist pledge if its affiliates are to have any standing with the National Labor Relations Board.

Although strongly anti-Communist himself, Lewis was furious at this knuckling under to a law he wanted to fight all the way.

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Mine Blast Toll Reaches Eight
WILKES-BARRE, Pa., — (AP) — The number of dead in the Franklin Colliery disaster has been raised to eight with the death of the last of three critically burned miners.

Edmund Orjeski, 42, of Mountain Top, Pa., succumbed to his burns at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital last night. Two other miners previously died of burns. Five men were killed outright as two gas explosions ripped through a section of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company mine near here Thursday.

20 KILLED IN CRASH OF ARMY C-47—This was the largest piece remaining from the crash of a C-47 Army transport near municipal airport at Memphis, Tenn. The wrecked plane burned after the crash, and 20 persons lost their lives. (AP Wirephoto).

Deadlock Follows Molotov's Attack On Western Powers

Both Sides Claim Victory; Police Power Surprises

ROME — (AP) — A 48-hour Communist-led general strike in Rome—the latest skirmish in the Left's unceasing war against Italy's middle-of-the-road cabinet—ended today after a steady show of government might. Both sides claimed victory.

Jeep loads of riot police circulated throughout Rome this morning, as the Eternal City quickly got back to normal, keeping an eye peeled for possible post-strike trouble, but, they said, finding none.

The Communist-dominated Chamber of Labor of Rome Province, which ordered the work stoppage Wednesday night and called it off last night, effective at midnight, used only one word in its daily news bulletin this morning—"Victory."

Il Popolo, the organ of Premier Alcide De Gasperi's Christian Democrat Party, declared just as flatly in a secretly set and printed issue timed to appear as the strike ended: "Strike Fails."

Many observers here said they believed growing resentment of Rome's citizens against the strike, which crippled all but railroads and essential services, may have influenced the chambers decision.

Giuseppe Di Vittorio, Communist secretary-general of the National Labor Confederation, said the work stoppage served a useful purpose in obtaining immediate public works appropriations to relieve widespread unemployment and in focusing national attention on the plight of an estimated 1,300,000 jobless.

Even before the official end of the strike, thousands of workers defied the leaders and went back to their jobs under the protection of 67,000 police, the strongest such force ever assembled in Rome.

Labor leaders were frank to admit that the efficiency of Interior Minister Mario Scelba's security precautions surprised them.

There was no immediate indication as to what the next move of the Left might be in its so-called winter campaign against De Gasperi's government.

Di Vittorio told the 120 union leaders last night they must instruct their men not to attack police.

Income Tax Cut Prepared
WASHINGTON — (AP) — Chairman Knutson (R-Minn.) of the House ways and means committee said today he will introduce on the last day of the special session a bill to cut income taxes by perhaps \$5,000,000,000 a year.

This will place the measure in position for early action when Congress meets again in January.

For the first time since the tug of war with the Democrats over tax reduction began this year, Republicans may call for increased personal exemptions as well as percentage slashes in various brackets.

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Senate Mulls Full Probe of Speculation

Pauley Testimony Leaves Committee Ready for Check

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The Senate appropriations committee today promised an early discussion on whether to touch off a full scale investigation of commodity market speculation by government officials.

The group has decided in any case that it wishes to hear further from Edwin W. Pauley, special assistant to the Secretary of the Army, who already has disclosed himself as a speculator in the million dollar class. The date of the next appearance by Pauley, a former Democratic national treasurer, has yet to be fixed.

Chairman Bridges (R-NH) said the decision whether to expand the inquiry will be made after the committee examines reports from the heads of five government departments on whether any of their personnel are using inside knowledge to profit in the grain markets.

Checks Underway
Bridges told a reporter this probably will be done early next week, since the committee has been advised that checks are under way in the State, Treasury and Agriculture Departments. The committee has asked for similar information from the Departments of Commerce and National Defense.

Pauley told the committee yesterday that there was "no impropriety" in his trading in commodities.

He said he has disposed of nine-tenths of his holdings since he became Royall's aide last Sept. 3 and that he is \$100,000 "worse off" as a result. He told the senators his holdings when he came to the Department of the Army were something under \$1,000,000.

To Probe Other Deals
In addition to the reports from the government departments, Bridges continued, his committee wants to look into:

1. "The sources of information imparted to others by those 'in the know,' which we haven't inquired about."

2. A list of large grain traders which the committee has heard is in the hands of Secretary of Agriculture Anderson and the Commodity Exchange Authority.

Senator Ferguson (R-Mich.) said J. M. Mehl, administrator of the Authority, told him the law forbids forwarding the list to Congress.

Ferguson insisted the compilation of traders buying more than 200,000 bushels of grain on one market was made specifically for the information of Congress.

Mother Fatally Injured
HERKIMER — (AP) — Mrs. Ruth K. Decj, 29, mother of two children, was injured fatally yesterday in a two-car collision near here.

Ball Would Curb Aid Fund Uses
PHILADELPHIA — (AP) — Senator Ball (R-Minn.) suggested today that the time may come for "a little interfering" in the internal affairs of the European nations which are asking for long-range help under the Marshall Plan.

"They don't have to take our money if they don't want it," Ball told the Foreign Policy Association.

He said in a prepared address that the Marshall Plan would raise the European standard of living "in most cases above pre-war levels."

I have no quarrel whatever with the fundamental premise of the Marshall Plan," Ball said.

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Price Cut Proposals Readied
Loop-hole Seen If Voluntary Methods Fail

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The House banking committee said today it has not slammed the door on President Truman's anti-inflation program but contended some of his proposals might lead to "distortions" and "diversion."

The committee said the president himself feared a year ago that selective price controls might lead to these things.

The group filed with the House a formal report approving GOP substitute for Mr. Truman's plan, centering around permission for business to make agreements to cut prices without violating the anti-trust laws.

The Republican measure is slated for House consideration Monday.

As the report was filed, Republican Senators prepared to review a cost of living statement submitted by Senator Taft. (R-Ohio). Senators who saw the preliminary draft said that it too left a loop-hole through which the GOP could fall back on some form of compulsory action if its proposed voluntary methods fail to halt rising prices.

Aims to Conform
Taft's statement proposes to set out GOP aims.

The banking committee said it "has endeavored to comply with that part of the president's program which it believes can safely be put into effect immediately."

"The committee expects," it said, "to continue to study the whole program and to explore its potential consequences in the next regular session of the Congress."

The committee said no administrative witnesses have been able to tell how the stand-by controls asked by Mr. Truman would operate until voluntary efforts had been tried, so it "became clear" that no action is necessary on them at the special session.

The statement of Republican aims was said to list, point by point, the measures the Republican leadership intends to lay before the regular session of Congress starting in January, as well as the proposals on which action will be sought before the special sessions shut up shop next week-end.

Four Points Same
Taft already has said that three of the four points covered in the Wolcott Bill, approved by the House banking committee, are included in the over-all policy statement.

He listed these as an extension of President Truman's authority over exports, expansion of transportation controls and a proposal under which industry and agriculture could reach voluntary agreements for parceling out scarce goods and possibly for reducing prices.

This would require partial suspension of the anti-trust act, which Mr. Truman said at a news conference Thursday he would oppose.

However, the White House later advised that Mr. Truman would agree to relaxation of the anti-trust act in cases approved by the attorney general in advance.

Tax Cut Included
House majority leader Halleck of Indiana said that shows "President Truman himself does not know how the anti-inflation program that he submitted to the Congress would be carried out." Halleck added that the country thus was confronted by the spectacle of the president having to "eat crow."

Other points the Republicans are expected to stress include a call for sharp reductions in government spending, a cut in individual income taxes, extension of rent controls and restoration of the curbs on installment buying which expired Nov. 1.

While Republican senators busied themselves with the policy statement, their House colleagues maneuvered to get the Wolcott Bill before the House next week under a parliamentary situation which would prevent the Democrats from offering amendments. It will take a two-thirds vote of the House to set up such a ruling.

Even if this strategy succeeds in speeding House passage, the road through the Senate remains rocky. Taft has indicated that the leadership wants the Senate banking committee to approve the measure without hearings, but Chairman Tobey (R-NH) of that group seems likely to balk.

Even committee approval would carry no guarantees against extended Senate debate which might make passage impossible in the special session.



JOHNNY ARRIVES — Johnny Fagan, 7, who doesn't remember his parents or his nationality and who has lived with U. S. troops since the Battle of the Bulge three years ago, shows the money he has saved as he reached New York by boat from Bremerhaven, Germany.

204 Killed In Palestine City Riots
Mobs Storm Damascus Gate Of Old Section

JERUSALEM — (AP) — A bomb exploded near the Damascus gate of Jerusalem's old city today, killing six Arabs and injuring others.

Police opened up with machine gun fire over the heads of milling Arab crowds.

Eyewitnesses said the bomb was thrown from a Jewish taxi.

The bomb casualties advanced the death toll in Palestine to 204 as Arab-Jewish communal rioting went into its 14th day.

Associated Press photographer James Pringle who was at the scene of the explosion said that angry Arab mobs had gathered in the area and "seem to be rallying for a march" into the modern section of Jerusalem.

"Even the police are scared," Pringle said.

"The dead and injured are lying in the street and the police are struggling with the mob leaders," Pringle said.

It was reported the license number of the machine from which the bomb was thrown was taken down.

Jews Take Offensive
Almost simultaneously with the explosion a fire broke out in a Jewish typewriter firm and living quarters in midtown Jaffa road, leading to a report that the bomb had exploded in the center of the heavily fortified post office and police headquarters zone.

The report was denied officially and a spokesman said the "downtown incident was only an ordinary fire."

The Jewish underground took the offensive yesterday against Arabs from Haifa to Hebron and the underground Irgun Zvai Leumi threatened new attacks against the British if they "continue to turn to page 3 under head HOLY LAND

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