What Goes On In The World

By Norman Blair

Holland

"The youth and sex of the new Monarch, and the deep sincerity with which she voiced her closing words, so deeply impressed all present that there were few eyes which were not dimmed with tears."

That is how a contemporary newspaper described the accession to the throne of The Netherlands of young Queen Wilhelmina on September 7th 1898. And there were tears in the eyes of many who listened to the 68-year-old Monarch when, early this month, she announced her intention of giving up the throne immediately after her golden jubilee celebration this September. In her radio speech Queen Wilhelmina spoke of the "utter tiredness" and "the burden of advancing years" which had decided her to take this step. She will turn

Wilhelmina

the throne over to her daughter, Crown Princess Juliana who, as she said, "not only has wise opinions but who has the advantage of being young."

In the half century during which she ruled, Queen Wilhelmina has guided her country through bad times and good, including two World Wars and colonial war which left

Juliana

the Netherlands Empire in a greatly weakened condition. She gained the respect and admiration, not only of her own people, but of the world at large. There are few who will blame her for letting someone else "take over" — and even fewer who do not wish her many more years in which to enjoy a well-earned rest.

Great Britain

According to another Conservative Member of Parliament — a Colonel J. R. H. Hutchinson — Winston Churchill's advice about how British visitors to the United States should act is brief and to the point — comprising just three short sentences.

"When you get to the United States you have to forget this blank, blank Socialist government of Great Britain" says Churchill, as quoted by Hutchinson. "It is the government of Britain and you do not criticize it. But when you get back home — you make up for lost time!"

And the London Daily Telegraph apparently doesn't think very much of the Foreign Secretary as a speech maker. "The sort of speech Mr. Bevin has nowadays to read aloud defies attention," it reported recently. "Toward the end even Mr. Bevin himself seemed affected; and one recalled the story of the peer who once dreamed he was speaking in the House of Lords, and woke up to find he was."

Palestine

When the Union Jack came down from Government House on "The Hill of Evil Council" at Sunset of Friday May 14th, it marked the termination of Britain's 31-year rule over Palestine. For it was on December 9th, 1917 that Jerusalem surrendered to Britain, thus marking the success of the British Troops in driving the Turks out of Palestine during World War One. The League of Nations mandate to Britain officially came into force some six years later, in 1923.

Lieutenant General MacMillan, commander of the British Forces in the Holy Land, issued special orders for martial law in territory deemed vital for the withdrawal of troops from Palestine, this territory including parts of Jerusalem through which they would have to pass.

Russia

Even when it comes to cigarettes, the Russians can't seem to keep up with their announced manufacturing quotas. Recently a Russian trade union paper quoted the Food Industries Minister who had been telling to what extent the cigarette industry had met its planned production And although that industry was 42 per cent over quota on the higher-priced grades of "smokes" only 12 per cent of the cheapest kinds, 49 per cent of the medium-grade, had been put on the market.

The cheapest Soviet cigarettes cost [illegible] rubles a package — which is about ten per cent of the daily wage of a low-paid worker. Medium-priced smokes run from 6 to 9 rubles per pack, while more expensive grades run from 10 to 20 rubbles a package.

Germany

On the surface, things have been quieter in Berlin. But in spite of repeated warnings that the Western Allies have no intention of abandoning the German capital, the Russians are quietly continuing their attempts to transform it into a wholly Soviet-dominated city.

In spite of their threats to do so after the breakdown of the joint inquiry into the Gatow air disaster, the Russians have as yet made little attempt to further restrict air traffic to and from Berlin. They have also shown signs of a slightly more conciliatory attitude regarding other types of transportation.

But these developments are not sufficient to indicate that the Russians have abandoned their intention to force the Western Powers to leave the city. Taken together with other moves, they would rather seem to indicate only a change in tactics. Now the Russians apear to be trying to demonstrate to the Germans that the Soviet authorities are the real masters of the capital.

One move in this direction came when the Soviet Commandant, Genearl Kotikov, made a statement accusing the Americans of allowing their sector to become a centre of crime and lawlessness comparable to Chicago and the Wild West in their most violent days. The Americans are also charged with failing to keep their own troops under control and of trying to set up a separate police force. This campaign was probably also designed to offset damage done to the Russian reputation by the disclosure of a considerable number of abductions and political arrests carried out right in Berlin by Soviet agents.

Other steps in the same direction were the requisitioning by Soviet authorities of construction equipment belonging to building firms with headquarters in the western sectors of the city, and the holding up of all parcel post addressed to Western Germany unless mailed from Post Offices in the Russian-occupied part of Berlin.

So althogther, in spite of the surface calm, underneath the Russians don't appear to be overlooking a thing that will increase their prestige in German eyes, and lower that of Britain, France and the United States.

United States

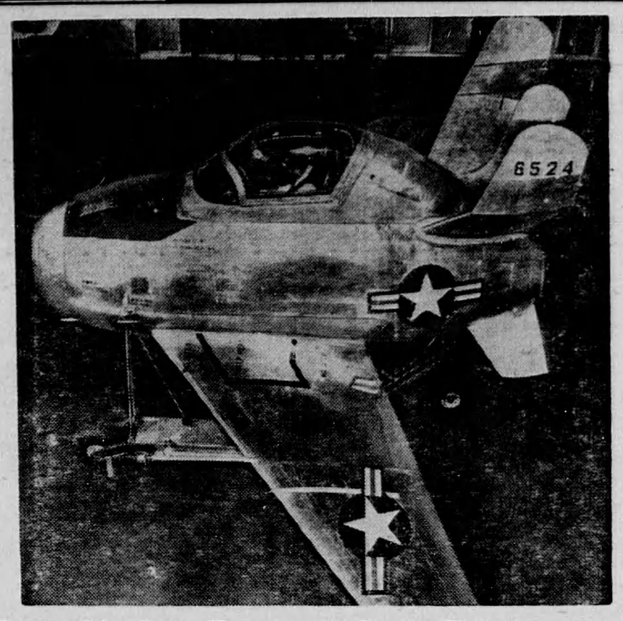
In spite of the seriousness of the matter, many Republicans were secretly pleased at the plight President Truman found himself in the "secret Russian talks" affair; and there are some who think that Stalin and Molotov didn't overlook the American political angle, especially in an election year, when they decided to broadcast the news of these same talks.

There seems to be no doubt that the United States acted clumsily, to say the least, in permitting such talks to occur without first informing Britain and France of what was going on. In both London and Paris — particularly the latter — there was real fear for a while that Moscow and Washington might be secretly dealing with one another, and excluding other members of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

These fears were allayed, to some extent at least, when the United States assured Britain and France that no official note was given to Molotov by U. S. Ambassador Walter Bedell Smith, and that there never was the slightest intention of seeking bilateral negotiations with Moscow. It was explained that when General Smith called on the Soviet Foreign Minister it was merely for the purpose of making the United States' position perfectly clear, and of seeking to ascertain the Russian position and intentions.

However, for a while it looked as if it might develop into a rather nasty situation; and no doubt some of the "top brass" Russians are having a quiet chuckle over the at least partial success of their plan for sowing seeds of discord among the Western Allies. Diplomacy, as played by the Soviets, is decidely no game for an amateur; and as one Washington onlooker phrased it, "The whole thing reminds me of a beginner sitting down to a game of chess with a Master player. The beginner is figuring one or perhaps two moves ahead of the one he is making. But the Master may be figuring on as many as ten ahead."

Great Britain has already admitted more "displaced persons" from the war-zones of Europe than any other country in the world.



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Sports – And One Thing or Another

By FRANK MANN HARRIS

("A Sixbit Critic")

It isn't only on race tracks — or in radio studios — that they have jockeys. Baseball has them too — lance-to..gued gents who are highly expert at "riding" opposition players to such a pitch of rage that they fall far below their best form, and commit errors of ommission and commission they otherwise would have avoided. Some of them operate from the bench; some from their playing positions on the field; and a catcher who is also a good "jockey" can be worth a great deal to a pitcher by needling a batter to a point where he is paying far more attention to what is being said than to the ball.

* * *

It must be said, however, that such a catcher is always in grave danger of getting crowned with a nice hefty piece of second-growth ash; and we can remember many cases of sudden, "unprovoked" assaults on receivers, much to the amazement of the spectators in the stands. Later on, when the umpire who was working behind the plate told what led to the attack, we couldn't blame the batter too much.

* * *

Of course such "riding" doesn't always work in favor of the jockey or his club. That's because there is a type of player who is only stirred up to greater efforts by opposition needling — as, for example, the one and only Tyrus Raymond Cobb. In the days of the Georgian's greatness rival managers used to warn their players — "Don't stir Cobb up". But there have also been plenty of players whose stay in the big leagues was greatly shortened because of their sensitiveness and inability to "take it".

* * *

Not so long ago Billy Evans — the reformed umpire who is now general manager of the Detroit Tigers — was talking to newspapermen about some of the jockeys he had seen and heard in action, and of some of their exploits. Among others he mentioned a great outfielder who was almost ridden out of baseball, and who took years to live down a chance remark he once made.

When just a raw rookie, this outfielder was taken by a teammate on a double date. The evening ended up at the home of one of the girls who said — when it came time to eat — "Pardon me while I go out and put on my percolator." (It might be explained here that this was in an age when coffe percolators were something quite new.) "Aw, gee," blurted the raw recruit, "why should you bother to change. You look swell in what you got on now!"

* * *

The teammate must have been something of a flannelmouth, or else one of the girls spilled the beans. Anyway it didn't take long for the story to make the rounds of the league. And whenever that young outfielder strode toward the batter's box in a tight spot, a shrill voice from the enemy dugout was sure to be heard saying, "Pardon me while I put on my percolator" whereupon a deeper voice would reply, "Why bother to change? You look swell in what you got on now." Those jockeys almost needled the poor fellow into the minors before he finally got a grip on himself and ignored them.

* * *

Another victim of his own chance remark was the eminent "Schoolboy" Rowe. Some of our readers may even remember the radio broadcast, during the 1934 World's Series, on which Rowe spoke. Knowing that his fiancee would be listening, and not realizing that he would be overheard by millions, Schoolboy said "How'm I doin', Edna?" The St. Louis Cardinals — against whom the Schoolboy's team was playing — drove him wild for the rest of the series by repeating the thoughtless remark; and even today, 14 years later, when Rowe toes the mound somebody is almost bound to yell 'How'm I doin', Edna?"

* * *

Harry Covaleskie, in his day, was a pretty fair sort of pitcher. But, according to Evans, he was seldom able to win, or even finish a game against the Philadelphia Athletics, just because they'd found out one of his secrets. It seemed that in his younger days Covaleskie had been in the habit of serenading his lady-love on the cornet. Joe Bus' of the A's could imitate a cornet perfectly; and whenever Covaleskie was working Bush would tootle away on Harry's masterpiece "Silver Threads Among the Gold" until the pitcher blew up.

* * *

Bench jockeys used to try and work on Waite Hoyt — another good pitcher — but they never did so for long, as Hoyt was one of the sharpest-witted men in the game, and seldom failed to find a way of shutting them up. One classic example of this was when, toward the end of his career, ex-Yankee Hoyt was performing for the Pittsburgh Pirates against the Chicago Cub

* * *

It was early in the Spring; and the previous Autumn the Cubs had been crushed and flattened in the World's Series by the New York Yankees, losing four straight. The afternoon we speak of the Cub bench jockeys began riding Hoyt very nastily. He stood it for a while, then called for time-out. Striding over to the Cubs' dugout he yelled, loud enough for folks in the stands to hear, "If you guys don't shut up I'll put on my old Yankee uniform — and scare you to death." After that there was silence, and plenty of it, from the Chicago bench.

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