WHAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD

by Norman Blair

Great Britain

There was really important news from the Old Country recently, although it wasn't the sort that got many big newspaper headlines. On August 15th plum and apple jam was finally taken off the rationed list; and only those who recall the first years of World War One, and especially those who floundered through the mud of France and Flanders on a diet of that delicacy combined with bully beef, can realize that "plum-and-apple" is more than just something that comes in tins—its' an institution, more or less sacred.

When the German submarine blockade came within a hairsbreadth of starving Britain into submission more than 30 years ago, the food manufacturers turned almost everything that could be swallowed into a food product. The principal ingredient—the "filler"—in jams was ground-up turnips, mangels, and the like, mixed with unspecified colorings and flavorings. But whatever went with it, always it came out plum-and-apple.

Vaudeville artists told jokes about plum-and-apple; songs were written on the subject; and if there had been radio in those days no doubt it would have been the theme for at least a thousand "humorous" programs. Some of the names the soldiers called it can only be repeated in unmixed company. But in spite of everything it continued to flourish although, after peace was declared, in a considerably revised form and the mangels and turnips were replaced by other ingredients.

(Right here I would like to insert a strictly personal note. I happen to be closely related, by marriage, to a lady who, as a child, went through those years of World War One in the heart of London, and who still has vivid memories of the "quality" of that wartime jam. Here in Canada she does a great deal of canning and preserving of such things as strawberries, raspberries, peaches and all the rest. But one of her prime standbys is—you guessed it—plum and apple jam. The kids and I are fond of it too—although the fact that real plums and real apples are used may make quite a difference.)

Anyway, although such preserves as black currant, raspberry and marmalade still require coupons in Britain—in fact the amount allowed has been cut from a pound to a half-pound per month—good old plum-and-apple isn't rationed any more. It's a real step in the right direction and might prove a bigger boost to United Kingdom morale than most of us suspect—bigger than all the news that comes out of Berlin or Moscow in a month.

The Middle East

Cyprus is a seldom heard of but highly strategic island situated in the eastern Mediterranean; and political unrest there has been greatly stirred by an apparently casual statement made by King Paul of Greece. The King is reported to have said that Britain should give up Cyprus to Greece, in return for British or American military bases in Crete.

The island has a population of some 450,000 who fall into two distinct groups. The majority division consists of Greeks of the Orthodox Faith who are ardent patriots and nationalists, and who for 50 years have been dreaming of union with Greece. The smaller group consists of some 80 thousand Moslem Turks who look for support to the Turkish Republic.

In the present Greek civil war a high centage of the Cyprian people take the side of the Communist rebels, and oppose the monarchy and clerical influences of present-day Greece. These political leanings make them still more unfriendly toward Great Britain; and just a few weeks ago new contingents of British troops were greeted wit' widespread strikes in the mining and other industries of the island.

Some 20 years ago the British tried to give Cyprus some sort of self-administration. But in 1930-31 a revolt broke out which had to be suppressed, and all legislative power is now vested in the British Governor-General.

Economically, the Cypriotes have been doing very well. The mining industry is prospering and the situation of the farmers has improved considerably as compared to what it was in the Turks' days. Today the British are carrying out medical, agricultural and educational developments which profit all inhabitants of the island.

But Cyprus is experiencing a big wave of nationalist sentiment. The majority of the Cypriote Greeks has declined to accept self-government from the British as a substitute for being united with their Greek "fatherland," even though they know they are faring far better as they now are. In fact many Cypriotes openly state that they prefer the inefficient and frequently corrupt but personally congenial Greek official to the more efficient British administrator who, they feel, treats them as "natives."

Some of 50 Army master cadets from all parts of Canada camping in Banff National Park see buffalo from the windows of their touring bus. Due to Park regulations, the cadets could not leave their vehicle because of possible attacks by the animals.

SPORTS-&c

by A SIXBIT CRITIC

Perhaps the most unusual happening at the Olympic Games was something which failed to happen—which may sound, at that, as if we are growing a trifle "punchy" in our old age, and commencing to indulge in double-talk, after the manner of boxers who have stopped too many with their chins.

* * *

Nor was the non-happening referred to the refreshing lack of petty squabbles and two-for-a-nickel controversies which have marred such events in the past—in fact, even if they didn't amass many points, the British certainly showed the rest of the world how successful Olympics can be, when the emphasis is put on "sport" rather than "spectacle".

* * *

But for the first time since the Olympic Games were revived—at Athens in 1906—there was no male athlete good enough to cop even two track events, which should give a pretty good idea of how keen competition is these days, and of how a man must be right at his peak, also favored by a smile from Lady Luck, in order to get down in front. In fact, it's getting to the point where—if we are to have many more track and field records broken—they'll have to use watches that split seconds into hundredths rather than tenths.

* * *

But with the ladies, it was entirely different. Mrs. Fanny Blankers-Koen of the Netherlands won three races on her own, also ran the anchor lap of the relay to bring victory to the Dutch team. Her four—count them four—gold medals are just double the number won by Babe Didrickson Zaharias at Los Angeles back in 1932; and some of us who have been three-cheering "the Babe" as the greatest all-rounder who ever lived are beginning to wonder if we didn't open our big mouths too soon. In all probability some smart promoter will be trying to smoke up an athletic contest between the two ladies; but while it might draw like a porous plaster it would hardly be fair, as Babe would be spotting her rival five years in age and has been devoting most of her attention to golf for the last two or three.

* * *

Mrs. Blankers-Koen is thirty years old and the mother of two children—and while we know nothing about the latter, and haven't even seen pictures of them, there's one matter we wouldn't mind laying liberal odds on in their connection. One will get you five that those Blankers-Koen youngsters never tried to hook cookies out of the kitchen and then outsprint mama to the gate—or at all events that they never attempted it twice.

* * *

The United States, with a total of thirty-eight firsts quite naturally led all the rest of the nations; which, all things considered, is just about as surprising as to find Tuesday coming after Monday. But when you think of comparative wealth, population, climate and other factors, in our opinion the performance of Sweden—with seventeen firsts—was far more outstanding, in fact the most remarkable thing about the entire affair.

* * *

As for Canada's showing—well, perhaps the best thing to do would be to draw a merciful veil of silence and say nothing about that part of it at all. However, few of us expected very much, and so didn't receive any great nervous shock; and all the officials, at least, had a nice summer outing at a very little personal outlay, and should have many interesting tales to entertain friends with during the long, cold winter nights. And that's something; for so long as the coaches, committee-men and assorted badgers are satisfied, who cares about the athletes, or how they fared?

* * *

Yet somehow or other when you think of Jamaica taking one first place; Austria one first place; Norway one first place; India one first place; even Peru, of all things, one first place, it makes you wonder if our much vaunted natural Canadian athletic ability and love for sport hasn't been slightly overrated.

* * *

There's certainly something screwy somewhere—when a country as big as Canada couldn't produce even one athlete who could show competition where to head in; and in our opinion the fault is right up at the top. Far too many of those nominally at the head of our amateur sports affairs are more greatly concerned with committee-room victories than with winnings in actual competition.

* * *

But it's all over now; and track and field sports in Canada will be allowed to peter out to nothing for another three-and-a half years—or until there is another free trip—to Finland is it?—in the offing. Then we'll begin to see some action!

* * *

Which may be all very well for those who take charge of such matters, and who make those trips. But as for the rest of us Canadians—who stand by and suffer, more or less, in silence, we're in something the same position as that of the beaten boxer, who was sitting disconsolate in the dressing room after his most recent fight. "Cheer up, buddy," said somebody, slapping him on the shoulder. "Even if you didn't get the decision, you fought a good game fight."

* * *

"Listen, mister," was the earnest reply, "I'm just about sick of being told what a good game loser I am; I'd like to find out what it was like to be a good game winner, just for a change."

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What The Party Really Stands For

Recently the noted Toronto columnist, J. V. McAree, expressed doubt that one Canadian out of ten could fill in the letters following C C F. "There is little in either the abbreviation or the full title of the party — the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation—to suggest that it is really the Socialist Party of Canada, no less, no more," he went on to say. "It corresponds precisely with the party which now supports the British Government.

"But recently a statement of its ends ought to clarify any former vagueness and misunderstanding. The clarification may bring strength to it from some quarters and weaken it in others. The statement announces the intention of the CCF, when it attains power, to nationalize the banks, the transportation system, the manufacture of farm implements and other essential services.

"This is socialism. It is the same program that is being put into effect by the British Labor Party, which is really the British Socialist Party. If you like it, and the prospect of further nationalizing as time goes on, you will like the CCF. On the other hand you may be relieved to learn that not a word is said about nationalizing Canadian women."

Commenting on the above a well known Canadian said, "Mr. McAree might have said 'if' it attains power rather than 'when.' After all the voters still have some power—when they bother to use it."

Just For Fun

He was a lawyer who specialized in accident cases and, walking along Yonge Street one day, he happened to notice a lady who had been knocked down by a passing car. After helping her to her feet he said:

"Here's my card, lady. I'll get you plenty of damages."

"Don't be a fool," she replied as she dusted herself off. "I don't need any more damages. What I need is repairs."

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