WHAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD

by Norman Blair

France

On the 21st of this month the spotlight shifts to Paris, and the beautiful capital of France becomes, in a sense, the capital of the world. That's because, for the next six to ten weeks, the United Nations General Assembly will be holding its regular fall session there, and the consensus among experts is that this will constitute the most important international gathering since the end of the war.

As one of them says, " it is no exaggeration to say that in a large measure the shape and fate of the world may depend for a long time to come on what takes place in the Parisian palace that once graced the grounds of the 1937 World's Fair."

Western and eastern powers, the intermediate states, and even the "postage stamp" nations have been getting ready for a real showdown —all of them convinced that this session may well determine whether there is to be a working agreement between East and West, or whether things are to develop into an all-out armaments race.

To say nothing of the German problem, among the issues probably to be decided are those of Greece, Czechoslovakia, Palestine, Indonesia, Kashmir, Egypt, Korea, Trieste, Spain, South Africa, the Italian colonies, the Italian peace treaties and the abuse of the veto in the Security Council—every one of them a hot spot. And behind every meeting, every discussion, there will lie that one all-important matter—the struggle for power and advantage between East and West.

It is estimated that at least 6,000 persons will attend the Assembly as delegates, officials, secretaries, correspondents and consultants. The newspaper coverage will no doubt be one of the most extensive ever known as European publications, which have been only thinly represented at Lake Success will have correspondents by the score on the spot.

It is the hope and prayer of an overwhelming majority of the world's peoples that the Paris session will be such a success that it will lead to an easing of the fear and tension which now grips most of mankind. Whether those prayers are answered, whether those hopes are fulfilled is, of course, another matter. There are times when one can't help thinking of the man who said that this world is really the Nether Regions where we have been sent because of sins committed in some former existence.

India

Some years ago a favorite selection with concert and parlor tenors used to tell of singing to a loved one "songs of Araby and tales of old Kashmir." But there is little of that sort of sentiment in the news coming from the latter far off land these days—for the Kashmir natives, who lost homes, wives and families when fierce Pathan tribesmen swept therough their country looting, burning and slaying last Fall, have been formed into a militia said to be "the most fiendish fighters on earth."

Their commander is Colonel B. M. Kaul who, when he learned that his dearest friend had been killed in an engagement in Kashmir, immediately left his Embassy post at Washington and had himself transferred to active service. Using as his non-coms seasoned Indian Army veterans who had fought in the Middle East, Greece, Italy, Burma and France, he has recruited as his militia men who have nothing to live for but revenge upon the despoilers of their homes.

The Kashmiri are naturally a gentle folk, and for centuries they have been content to bow before the swords and guns of numerous invaders of their beautiful homeland. Now, for the first time, they are striking back—and striking back viciously. On one occasion, defending a 7,500-foot mountain ridge, they were attacked by double their number of enemy troops—yet in spite of their inexperience, they beat off the foe and inflicted casualties of better than five to one.

They are in all sorts of God-forsaken places. Their little garrison at Leh, in the eternally snow-clad Himalayas, receives its supplies by air; and to reach them, over the lofty foot peaks, Indian pilots have to reach an altitude of 21,600 feet —and that without either oxygen or de-icing equipment. Even at "the roof of the world" it seems that there is no peace.

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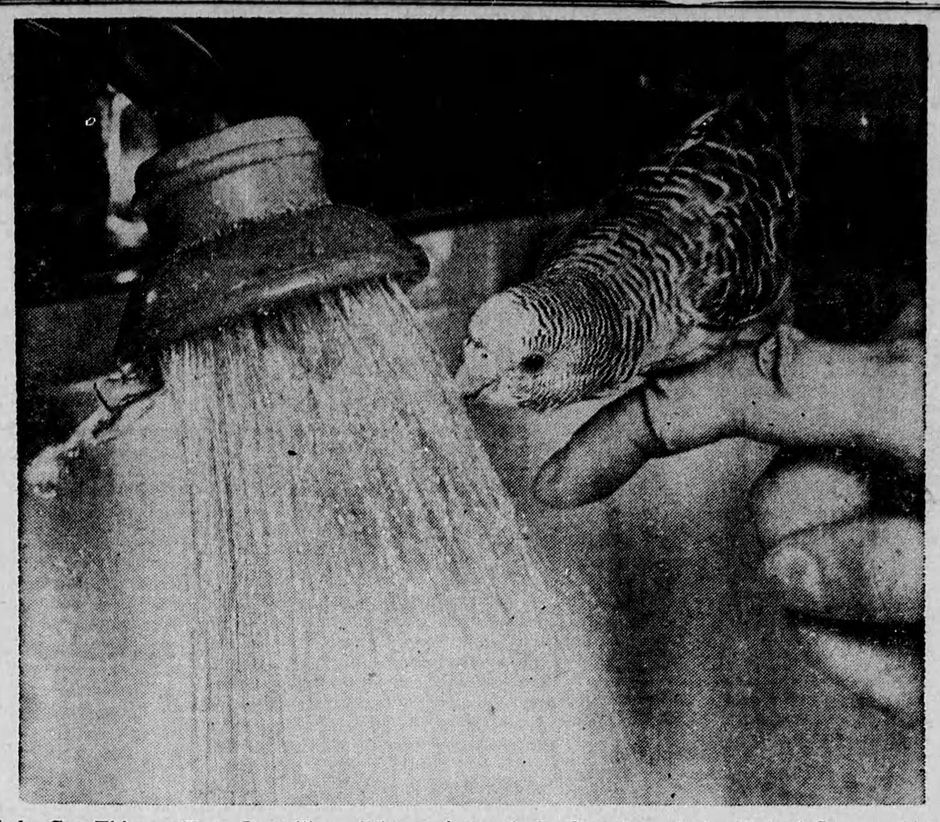
Hadn't Passed Out

Mrs Wilson left her gloves, as usual, in the restaurant. She discovered her loss at the door and turned back. They weren't on the table, so she got down on all fours and began to search underneath. A waiter tapped her on the shoulder. "If it's your husband you're looking for, madam," he said respectfully, "I think you'll find him in the washroom."

★



Birds Get Thirsty Too—Just like millions of people in Canada and the United States, this pet parrakeet felt the recent severe heat wave and seems to be really enjoying a fresh, cooling drink of running water. That's a neat job of balancing he—or maybe it's she—is doing on its owner's finger.

SPORTS-&c

by A SIXBIT CRITIC

Those Argonauts seem to be at it again. Although the football season is hardly more than well begun, already you see creeping into the newspaper accounts of their games the old familiar phrases. And it might be interesting to look through the files of the past few years and see how often the Argos were "outplayed for the biggest part of the game but got the breaks" — how frequently they "got all the smiles from Lady Luck" — on how many occasions their opponents "should have won on the play, but finished on the wrong end of the score".

* * *

If you went only by what you saw in the papers—and believe all you read—you might think that the Scullers were fortunate to be in a big league at all. Yet, somehow or other, when the end of the season comes, you generally find them up there in the finals and, more often than not, finishing on top of the heap. But, almost invariably, through a fluke, or because, as a team, they're festooned with horseshoes.

* * *

But if you have any notion that this in any way represents the true state of affairs—forget it! The Argonauts always remind us of the gentleman who, many long years ago, attempted to teach us the art of draw poker—a useless task because of our ineradicable belief that two pair was a big hand coupled with a love for trying to fill inside straights.

* * *

In the opening session of our poker education we chanced somehow to hold—all at the same time —four queens; and when the showdown came we slapped the four royal ladies, face up, on the table and grabbed the stakes with a whoop of triumph. Our mentor looked at us dourly. "Listen, bud," he told us "Three of them there queens would be plenty to take that pot—so why show more of them than you got to? 'Tain't poker!"

* * *

And, as we said before, whenever we read about the Argonauts outlucking their adversaries, we cannot help recalling that incident of days long gone by. In other words we have a strong suspicion that the Argonauts are generally a trifle better coached—that they possess more and cleverer plays — and have a slight but definite edge in strength over rival teams. But, like a really good poker player, they seldom if ever show down more than enough to take that jackpot. Anyway, those who back them consistently usually collect in the long run, and who could ask more of a team—or a racehorse— than that?

We think it was Hedda Gabler—anyway, one of Mr. Isben's characters — who exclaimed "At last a noble deed—at last a beautiful action" or words to that effect. And the fact that she said them on receiving news that her boy-friend had knocked himself off with a revolver has nothing to do with the case, Ibsen's works being full of folks who perform in a slightly screwball manner.

* * *

What we are getting at is that similar sentiments rose in our mind on learning that the magnates of the National Hockey League had at last done something of which we heartily approved—or, rather, refrained from doing something which would have made professional hockey a laughing-stock to any but its most fanatical followers.

* * *

Before said magnates went into executive huddle there were widely spread and apparently well-grounded rumors to the effect that—acting on the principle of "get it while the getting's good"—they intended increasing their regular playing schedule by some twelve games or so per team. But when the meeting was over, such rumors proved to have been groundless. That is to say things were left just as they had been—and in our opinion, it's just as well they were.

* * *

Some claim that real, blown-in-the-bottle hockey fans, male or female, are people who will stand for anything—and that if they didn't see anything ridiculous in playing five months for the purpose of eliminating just two teams out of a total of six, they'd see nothing wrong in extending the elimination process for another month.

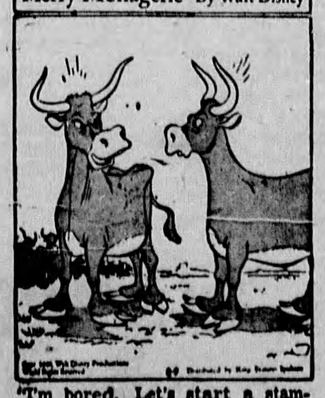
* * *

But there's no telling. Gluttons for punishment though they are, hockey fans might finally turn out to be like Cousin Egbert, in the book "Ruggles of Red Gap" who used to protest that he "could be pushed just so far and no farther." Just because big league hockey has been favored with sell-out crowds for several years back is no guarantee that such a condition will exist forever. Moving picutre shows and other forms of alleged entertainment are already feeling the pinch, and — perish the though! — there might come a time when hockey box-offices would be welcoming cash customers, instead of dealing out tickets with the air of conferring a rare favor.

* * *

At all events hockey's top brass has decided——for the time being at least—not to make Canada's national game "a year-round business. 'Tis well. Slightly altering the words of another great dramatist—Shakespeare this time—we say "It is a far, far better thing you do than you have ever done." Enough is enough!

Merry Menagerie—By Walt Disney



"I'm bored. Let's start a stampede!"

Just For Fun

Milton Berle tells about the first time he went to Hollywood and a terriffic lawn party was given to welcome him. All the movie glamour girls went to fantastic length to surpass one another in grandeur. One wore six strands of genuine pearls. Another wore a pendant that made the Hope Diamond look like something from the five-and-ten. A third arrived in a Rolls Royce with her Pekingese following behind in a Lincoln.

But one of the girls topped all the others completely. She brought along her own swimming pool!

Every Forest Fire Is To Be Probed

From now on every forest fire in Ontario is to be thoroughly investigated, according to the Ministry of Lands and Forests, and in cases where carelessness is proved, those responsible will be assessed for the cost of fighting the fire and for loss of timber.

It is reported that while loss in the largest fires was heavy, salvage possibilities are good and operations have already started to save some of the scorched timber. In 1948 the Department has already fought, and extinguished, more than 800 fires. Two of the fires, in the Chapleau and Sault Ste. Marie forest districts, raged for more than three weeks, despite the efforts of thousands of men and a million dollars' worth of fire fighting equipment.

Estimates of timber loss reached $35 million, a figure not entirely agreed with by the Department. In some places, fires jumped from one place to another, leaving large patches of untouched timber in between. These areas are now being surveyed and cutting operations will start as soon as possible. While a lot of trees were killed, they were not completely spoiled for timbering purposes.

In a survey flight, it was found that the west end of the province had been relatively untouched by fires, as well as the French River, Timagami, Parry Sound, Algonquin Park and clay belt districts.

The Department has commended the northern timber operators, tourist camp operators and mining companies for their work in checking the major blazes.

★

Longer Make-Ready

"Yes, sir," asserted Mr. Ekhamer vehemently — perhaps a shade too vehemently, "my wife is just as beautiful today as she was when I married her twenty years ago." Then he added, "Of course, it takes her longer."

★

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