WHAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD

by Norman Blair

RUSSIA

A few months ago the so-called Molotov Plan was being loudly acclaimed — from behind "The Iron Curtain" — the perfect Russian answer to the Marshall Plan. Now, throughout the diplomatic world, it is being dismissed as a pretty flat failure.

The experts base their conclusions to this effect on pieces of evidence seeping out of the land of the Soviets regarding increasing economic difficulties in Russian satellite countries.

The plight of these countries is blamed on their utter lack of western imports, and on the fact that instead of pouring recovery goods into Eastern Europe, the Russians have been draining the resources of those countries for their own benefit.

Now there are reports of possible very drastic moves by Russia, or by the satellite countries, to try and ease the situation. The most dramatic of these reports come by way of former Czechoslovak officials now in exile on this side of the Atlantic. These men say that the Communist government, under Moscow direction, plans to put a number of non-Communists into official positions in Czechoslovakia —the object being to make the whole regime appear more acceptable to Britain, the United States and other western countries.

The purpose of such a manoeuver would be to interest the western nations in relaxing controls on shipments to Czechoslovakia, and possibly giving other assistance.

Whether or not the Czech government is to be actually reorganized, such reports reflect a grave concern in Prague over the country's economic condition. Poland, too, has been pressing hard for an easing of the controls which prevent it from getting any of the Marshall Plan "gravy"—but, so far, the Poles do not seem to have made much headway in softening up the Kremlin top brass.

Two other developments which have created considerable interest are a heavy emphasis in Russian propaganda broadcasts on revival of East-West trade, and a reported move by Romania to try and interest Great Britain in making investments in that country.

THE UNITED STATES

A rather new note in Labor Capital relationships is sounded in a recent dispatch from Chicago.

The Avildsen Tools and Machine Company manufactures twist drills, cutting tools and things of that sort, and during the past few months business hasn't been so good. Orders fell off to such an extent that the management felt that a cut in the overhead was absolutely necessary; but, instead of laying off a lot of employees, they put the matter up to the workers themselves.

The workers—who had been averaging around $1.61 per hour, came right back with an offer to take a twenty per cent wage cut, in order to help the company "enjoy prosperity."

If business improves, the company has promised that it will pay the workers a salary recovery bonus later out of any profits before it pays any dividends to stockholders.

Company officials say that Avildsen Tools and Machine Company has enjoyed especially friendly relations with its workers and that, since the war it has turned over to them one-third of its profits before taxes. In the last three years the company has given its employees some $380,000—or around a thousand dollars per person—in the form of bonuses.

'So we asked our employees to temporarily share our losses, just as they shared our profits," one official put it.

Dyed-in-the-wool trade union officials will, of course, look upon such voluntary action on the part of workers with something akin to horror. (The Avildsen workers are non-union, by the way.) But to an unbiased onlooker it would seem like a far more reasonable method of settling disputes that the usual way of both sides taking an "adamant" stand — forcing a strike in which both sides lose heavily — and then coming to the sort of compromise which was inevitable from the very beginning.

Still, as a Unionist friend remarked when he heard about this incident, the Chicago firm's management did its share, too, in prosperous times toward building up to such a friendly settlement when the real pinch came.

BY PROXY

A large woman and her meek little husband stood before the judge in traffic court.

"What were you doing at the time of the accident?" asked the judge.

The woman spoke up, "Your honor, I was driving down Main Street, with my husband at the wheel . . ."

Trotting Toward Hambletonian—With trainer Del Miller at the reins, trotter Rapidan, owned by W. N. Reynolds, works out at Roosevelt Raceway. If Reynolds' Hambletonian luck holds up, Rapidan should at least be in the money, for the tobacco man leads all other owners by having backed eight money-winners in previous runnings of the trotting classic. Rapidan's dam, Mary Reynolds, won the Hambletonian in 1933.

SPORTS—&

by A SIXBIT CRITIC

Down at Woodbine Park on King's Plate Day, several prominent Progressive Conservatives were very much disgusted when a gentleman who had backed the winner, Epic, and who was feeling very gleeful about it, pointed out in tones that could be heard for half a block that what had just happened was the very finest sort of a bunch for the future.

* * *

"There," he said, "is an exact picture of what is going to come off on June 27. The George McCullagh entry gets away from the gate badly, is slow to get going, and although continuing with real courage through the stretch, is never able to seriously threaten the winner, who ran as though considerably the best."

* * *

Just in case you do not happen to catch the meaning of the allusion we shall merely inform you that the "George McCullagh entry" in the Dominion Stakes set for June 27 is a gentleman named George Drew—and let it go at that.

* * *

When they make a baseball movie, almost invariably they include the incident about the ball player who slips and slips—due to one thing or another, generally booze—until finally he is cut adrift by the club he has served so long and loves so dearly.

* * *

Then, toward the end of the piece, he always does a comeback —"saved by the power of a true woman's love"—and the next-to-final scene is when he either pitches a 19-inning no hitter—or slams out a homer with the bases jammed—to beat out the team which tossed him into the discard in the final frame of the World Series.

* * *

Such things happen, as we said before, with the greatest frequency in the dear old cinema—but in real life, not so often. And although some of the essential elements of the drama were lacking, what happened at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn the other day must have brought a deal of satisfaction to a ball player named Pete Reiser.

* * *

Last winter Burt Shotton, master mind of the Brooklyn Dodgers, decided that Reiser was either too brittle or too erratic for that team, so Petie was traded to the Boston Braves in exchange for Mike McCormick.

* * *

Before the start of the game alluded to, the Braves and the Bums were deadlocked for first place in the National League scramble—20 wins and 15 losses apiece. And when the Braves came in for their eighth-inning whacks, the Brooklynites were coasting along on a nice 6-3 lead, and there was great joy among the Flatbush rooters, as it looked like a cinch.

* * *

But Phil Masi and Connie Ryan —pinch hitters both of them— tangled and, after Eddie Stanky had fouled out, Elbie Fletcher walked. So, when our discarded hero, Mr. Reiser stepped up to the plate, he found the sacks—as one observer put it—F.O.B.—Full of Braves.

* * *

And did our gallant Petie emulate one, Casey, of immortal memory? Did he take three healthy swings and hit nothing but that pure Brooklyn ozone? He did not! All Petie did was take a nice toehold and smite one of Palica's shoots clear out of the park into Bedford Avenue. And as he jogged around the bases, who could blame Petie if, to himself, he was humming that little ditty about "revenge being sweet"?

* * *

Just what Manager Shotton had to say about it, however, we haven't heard as yet; and if we had, we doubt if we could reproduce it in a journal meant for family consumption. For the final score was Braves, 7; Dodgers, 6.

* * *

Our reading, of late, has been confined mostly to horse racing information — our desire, of course, being to get a certain King's Plate winner for our long-suffering readers. (We'll go as far as to say that, at least, we picked you one that you couldn't lose money on—the filly of our choice failing even to get to the post).

* * *

Anyway, we missed the details of a tennis match which set up a flock of records, some of which are liable to stand for quite a space. It was the match in which Ted Schroeder and Bob Falkenburg defeated Pancho Gonzales and Hugh Stewart for the Southern California doubles championship—and just in case you, too, overlooked it, here are a few of the highlights, and the new marks set.

The match went five full sets—and in the first set, no less than 70 —count 'em—70 games were played Schroeder and Falkenburg taking it 36-34. Other set scores were 3-6, 4-6, 6-4, 19-17, a total of 135 games.

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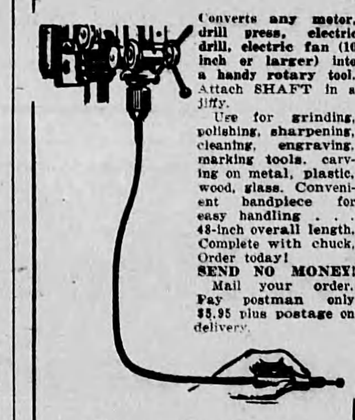

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