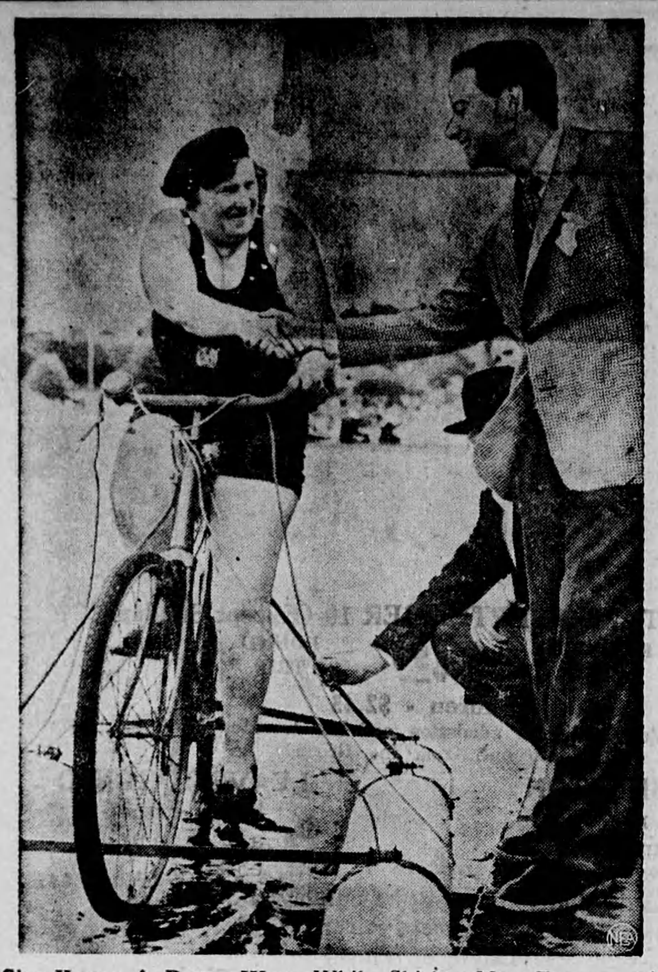


She Knows A Better Way—While Shirley May France and other swimmers train for the grueling task of swimming the English Channel, Mrs. Eetta Hills, above, of Southsea, England, prefers to make the crossing in a more leisurely manner. Astride her "waterbike," Mrs. Hills chats with radio announcer Derek Roy, who has arranged a race across the Channel between Mrs. Hills and a gentleman challenger. The English housewife pedaled across the Channel as a young girl, and is confident she can beat all comers.

SPORTS &c

by A Sixbit Critic

"We have compulsory vaccination against smallpox, and inoculations to prevent measles and all sorts of other things" remarked a friend of ours not so long ago. "But in my opinion it would be far more sensible if we made it compulsory for every kid to learn how to swim and, later on, to drive a car properly."

* * *

All joking aside, we honestly think he has something there. Death from the automobile is a far greater menace today than death from smallpox has become under modern sanitary conditions. Yet any experienced traffic cop will tell you that the percentage of those tooling cars along our streets and highways who really know HOW to drive properly is amazingly low.

* * *

This includes not only beginners and screwballs, but many who have been driving cars for years—present company NOT EXCEPTED, barring ourself. (We have never driven and never intend doing so).

* * *

As for the compulsory swimming lessons—well, you have only to open up any paper during the summer months, and especially on a Monday, and be sickened at the thought of so many lives lost in the water—lives which might have been spared had there been even a rudimentary knowledge of swimming.

* * *

In this connection, it is interesting to note how many swimming fatalities, at the seashore and on lake beaches, are attributed to what is called "the undertow". According to general belief this undertow is a broad, powerful current running below the surface, and returning to the lake or ocean the water which the waves had piled up upon the beach.

* * *

Encyclopedias, dictionaries and even textbooks on geology give their theories about the undertow, their explanations running along the line just quoted above. But it appears that, until lately, no scientist had ever bothered to check up and find out whether or not the undertow theory was correct.

* * *

A week or so ago Dr. Francis Shephard, a very noted marine geologist, came out with some statements which all who like to disport themselves in the water, whether swimmers or not, might do well to note for future use. Writing in the magazine PHYSICS TODAY he tells of extensive experiments and measurments of beachside water flow. And he says that —"The net movement at the surface is ordinarily in approximately the same direction as it is at intermediate depths and even near the bottom."

* * *

Dr. Shephard hastens to explain that this does not mean that there is no seaward current. Water brought in by the waves has to get back somehow, and everybody knows that bathers are often dragged out beyond their depth by some hydralic force. But this countermovement of the water is not a GENERAL UNDERTOW. It is a well-defined and LOCALIZED rip current, (sometimes called a rip tide.)

* * *

A rip current is formed when an incoming wave is bent by a ridge in the lake or ocean floor, or even by a pier or jetty. The ends of the wave converge in a pincers movement, causing a pile-up of water. Then the piled-up water rushes back, generally along a narrow pathway defined by a miniature submarine canyon. Beyond the breakers this rip current fans out and loses its force.

* * *

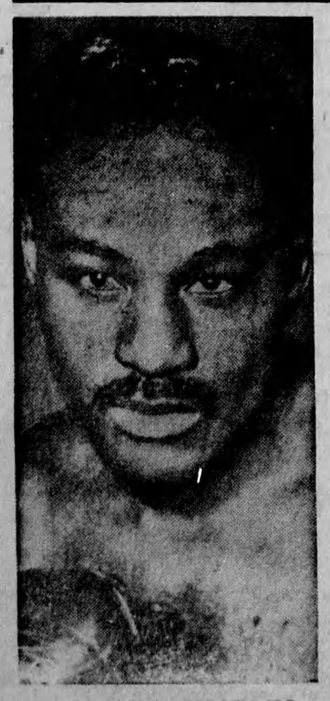
A poor swimmer, Shephard warns, should be on his guard against rips when breakers are more than 3 feet high. The height can be judged by standing knee-deep in water during upsurges and gazing seaward at the horizon. If waves breaking near shore do not cut off the view of the horizon, it is pretty safe to assume that the surf is not violent enough to cause dangerous rips.

* * *

He gives this advice to swimmers: "If the breakers are large, the poor swimmer should keep in shallow water, never getting deeper than waist high even during the largest waves. He should also avoid bottom irregularities, which indicate the existence of channels cut by the feeder currents of the rips. Even if the water in the channels appears to have little current, a series of large waves may send a concentrated surge along the channel, sweeping the bather off his feet and out into the zone of large breakers."

* * *

The bather who blunders into a rip and feels himself being carried out beyond his depth should conserve his strength and not try to fight his way to shore against a powerful current. Since rips are narrow, the best strategy is to head at right angles from the current and parallel to the beach. A few strokes will often land the swimmer on a shoal bordering the rip channel or at least in quieter water.



EZZARD CHARLES
Heavyweight

WHAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD

by Norman Blair

PALESTINE

Shouting for "Bread and Work" some 400 Israeli broke into the courtyard of the Parliament Building at Tel Aviv and battled with the police. One New York newspaper correspondent reported that at least 15,000 of the new republic's population are seeking visas that will permit them to emigrate to the United States; and a Times reporter, after visiting one of the 330 camps housing 66,000 immigrants found the inhabitants "enveloped in hopeless idleness and too tired to understand that the State (of Israel) is new and that its funds are inadequate."

After fifteen months of existence the Israeli Republic appears to face a bleak future. It is over populated and under capitalized. At the beginning of the year immigrants were arriving at the rate of 225,000 annually, while homes were going up for less than a quarter that number.

Alarmed at the effect in foreign lands of reports on the existing situation, the Israeli Finance Ministry called in reporters a few weeks ago and scoffed at predictions of the country's collapse. During the first half of 1949, according to the spokesman, $60,000,000 had been invested in Israel, while immigration had dropped by almost one-half.

But to sustain the Finance Ministry's optimistic outlook, Israel is going to need far more capital than it is getting from outside. Large private investments are slow to develop. New businesses, according to the Official Gazette, are generally capitalized at around $3,000. And a speaker warned the Tel Aviv Commercial Club that 200 American business men, representing an investment potential of one hundred million dollars, had visited the country and then left without signing any contracts at all.

In other words shouting for the new Republic and damning the British for retarding its creation was one thing. Investing hard cash in it, now that it has got started, quite another!

CHINA

United States experts are trying to line up the Western Powers in an agreement not to extend any credits to Communist China. They figure that without big credits from the West the Chinese Reds will have to turn to Russia for extensive help — help that Moscow cannot afford to give without making either the Russian people, or other Russian satellites, go short.

Thus, in theory, if the West stands firm in refusing economic help, world Communism is bound to suffer, no matter what policy the Kremlin adopts.

Only time, of course, can prove whether or not this theory is sound. But there seems to be no doubt that the Chinese Communists are having their troubles. Depression and inflation are crippling both Nanking and Shanghai. Since the Reds took overe checks passing through the Nanking clearing-house have dropped from 20,000 to 200 a day.

Up to a week or so ago only one ship had dared to run the Nationalist blockade into Shanghai — and her cargo of cotton just doubled its value in the course of a voyage from Hong Kong.

Trying to keep the city administration going, the Reds increased the Shanghai land tax one hundredfold. And in an effort to impose discipline on the hopelessly corrupt city then even cracked down on the mah-jongg gamblers, rounding them up in droves and putting them to work cleaning lavatories and sweeping the city streets.

THE UNITED STATES

Mr. Truman has been having rather tough going since he pulled the great surprise last November; but even his worst enemies cannot deny that he, personally, has been doing his utmost to keep his election promises, in the face of stiff opposition from all sides, including his own.

His most clear-cut triumph, up to now, was the passage of a federal housing bill over the opposition of a well-financed, real estate lobby. This measure will provide funds for an immense program of housing for low-income families, slum clearance, and rural housing improvements.

Then, just a couple of weeks ago, the House of Representatives approved a bill to broaden the coverage and raise the benefits of the federal social security system. Average benefits for old age would be raised 80 per cent, and 11 million workers would be added to the 35 million now covered by social security.

Passage of this measure at the next session of Congress is now regarded as nearly certain; and although it is somewhat less than the President originally requested, it will be the most important social security improvement in the past decade.

There are those who say that there is a certain lack of skill in President Truman's leadership. Nevertheless the stubborness with which he fights for his liberal convictions are undoubtedly bearing fruit — backed, as it appears to be, by a strong tide of public opinion behind his social reforms.

INDIA

India has just celebrated its second anniversary as an independent; and the record of accomplishment, in that comparatively short time, is surprisingly good.

Because of monsoons and other disasters to crops, India has had to cope with more than the normal food shortage. But she met the emergency by the importation of foodstuffs and by the most ambitious rationing scheme ever attempted anywhere — a rationing system affecting 140,000,000 people. And this scheme proved amazingly effective.

Now India, handicapped by an unfavorable balance of trade, wants to end her importations of food and aims to become self-sufficient in the matter of food by the end of 1951.

This, in a sense, is bad news for Canada, which shipped 10 million bushels of wheat to India in the past 12 months. Nor is Canada's export outlook brightened by the new Indian program of locomotive manufacture. India has been importing railway stock from Canada and other countries in the past, but hopes to be making her own within a year and a half.

But an increasingly prosperous India should eventually develop a higher standard of living, and will not only require Canadian goods but will have goods of her own to trade for them. At all events the progress has been made since India struck out, "on her own" is far greater than nine-tenths of the "experts" were predicting two years ago, when the great event finally occurred.

Some Party!

Two Scotsmen who had been at a party met the following morning, and one said to the other: "Weel, Donald, and did ye get hame all richt?"

"Aye," replied Donald, "I got hame all richt, except that just as I turned a corner a policeman trod on ma knuckles."

Naturally!

An artist who always painted pictures of people with no clothes on was asked:

"Why do you always paint people in the nude?"

"Oh," he replied, "I suppose it's because I was born that way."

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