Downtown Ducks—Some establishments have skeletons in the closet, some have bats in the belfry, but this retail store keeps ducks on the roof. The ducks lead a happy life on the rooftop of the downtown building. Their purpose is to keep fungi out of water used in the store's air-conditioning system.

WHAT GOES ON IN THE WORLD

by Norman Blair

GREAT BRITAIN

"Two world wars — neither of which reached your American shores and both of which benefited your economy — have drained the life-blood out of Britain. Now, with American aid and our own prodigious effort we are busily pumping the lifeblood back again."

This is just one paragraph, and by no means the most bitter one, from a recent article in the London Sunday Pictorial — which sells five million copies each week throughout the United Kingdom. Under the heading "We British are tired of Yankee Insults" the mass circulation tabloid lashed back at United States criticism of the British post-war effort.

As an example of this criticism the Pictorial published a reproduction of an American cartoon which showed a tattered John Bull begging a copper from a well-dressed Uncle Sam at the door of a "Socoalism Saloon".

Complaining that this cartoon was typical of hundreds of others appearing in the U.S. press, the Pictorial invited American visitors to Britain to post a copy of the issue to friends at home, "since they might like to hear the other side of the case."

"We in Britain are d—— tired of being written off as good-for-nothing beggars," the Open Letter went on to say. "Does Uncle Sam imagine his dollars have bought soul and sovereignty of the Marshall-aid countries — and of Britain in particular."

Bitter words! But possibly justified by the provocation, which has been great, especially in some sections of the United States press. Still, the British needn't go outside their own shores to hear real criticism. Speaking in Edinburgh about the projected 1951 British musical festival, Sir Thomas Beecham pounded a table with his fists and declaimed "We are going to celebrate fifty years of the most abominable misgovernment by having an exhibition and festival at the expense of the United States' money."

Maybe it's the weather. When temperatures drop, possibly tempers and language will also drop to less feverish levels!

AUSTRALIA

They had ten-foot snowdrifts in Australia during July, and in August a new cold front swept in, threatening even worse blizzards. And for almost two months Australia had been in the grip of a coal-mine strike which cut off fuel for heating and cooking, tied up transportation and left homes, streets, shops and offices in darkness.

The Australian walkout was an open challenge to a Labor Government by a Communist-led union. The 24,000 members of the Coal Miner's Federation had never rejected a recommendation by ther leaders; and when their Communist leader, Idris Williams, called upon them to by-pass the 50-year-old government Arbitration Court and strike, they struck without asking questions.

The Labor Government met the challenge by impounding union strike funds. Williams and other leaders who disobeyed the order were jailed.

The miners then refused to negotiate, and other Communist-led unions, such as the dock workers, supported them with token sympathy strikes.

But still the government remained firm. "We will use the army against them, the navy against them, and the air force against them," stated Information Minister Arthur Calwell.

Not long after that statement was made, victory was with the government. The miners voted by more than 2 to 1 to accept arbitration and shouted down union officials who urged them to continue striking. Badly beaten, the union central executive issued a back-to-work order for the middle of August.

GERMANY

On August 14, for the first time since 1933, Germans in the Western Reich enjoyed free and secret elections; and in spite of a rather dull campaign nearly 80% of the eligible voters turned out.

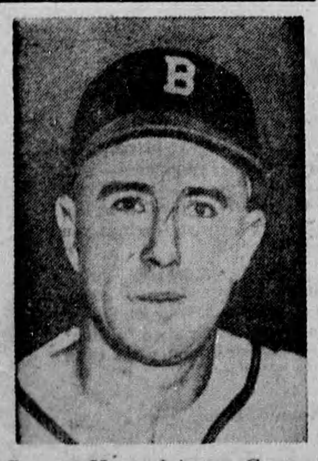
When the votes were counted, Germans had chosen free enterprise and a conservative government by big margin; and this conservative victory probably means that the country's economic policies will be more in tune with American occupation tendencies than with the British.

But expert observers say that the outstanding feature of German feeling today is a bitter, personal hatred not only of the Reds, but against all Russians. Poverty-stricken refugees from Russian-occupied areas in particular cherish the idea of sometime, somehow-or-other, regaining the lands taken from them by the Soviets. As one German put it, "They would fight the Russians with knives and forks if they got the chance."

As a result of this feeling Communism in Germany is said to be as dead as Nazism. Even in once-Red Hamburg the local Commies are regarded as agents of a foreign power.

Nor in the opinion of most thinking Germans is there any real chance that a deal of any kind could be made with the Russians — a possibility that has caused many misgivings in London and Washington. "The only people who may ever be in a position to make a deal with the Russians are those who now most bitterly oppose them—whether Socialists or Ruhr industrialists", a German spokesman commented. "They know perfectly well what would happen if they made any deal that would turn Germany over to Communism. We know that the Western Powers may beat us. But we know that the Soviets will certainly shoot us; and frankly we prefer to be beaten than shot."

Which sounds like pretty fair reasoning, at that.



Cooney Up — Johnny Cooney, former major league pitcher and outfielder, will pilot the Boston Braves for the rest of the season. The Braves' manager, Billy Southworth, has taken a leave of absence because of ill health. Cooney had been one of Southworth's coaching staff.

SPORTS-&-

by A SIXBIT CRITIC

They used to tell the tale of a character out West, in the bad old days, who was found by some of his friends sitting on the edge of the sidewalk with his head buried between his hands and looking extremely disconsolate. Somebody asked him just what seemed to be the matter.

* * *

"It don't seem a bit fair, in fact it's enough to make a guy sick of life," was the mournful reply. "Here's me, that's played poker, shot dice and pegged keno all my life, yet nobody never called me a gambler. I've drank pretty near every kind of liquor there is most all my life, yet nobody never called me a drunkard. I've got into plenty of fights and ructions, one way or another, yet nobody never called me a brawler or a rough neck.

* * *

"But now," he continued, "but now — just because I stole one measley little horse — everybody in the world calls me a horse thief, and it ain't fair!"

* * *

And there are ball players who, when their playing days were done, must have felt in a similar mood to this Western gentleman. For they knew that they were destined to be remembered, not by all the fine hitting they had done, not by the wonderful catches they had made — but solely on account of some mental or physical lapse which won for them the name of "bonehead".

* * *

And some of them deserved nothing of the sort, as Arthur Daley recently recalled. One of the best known of all such plays was the one that has gone down in history as "Zim's boner". It occurred in the 1917 World Series between the Philadelphia Athletics and the New York Giants; and it saw Heinie Zimmerman—no ball of fire afoot—vainly chase the speedy Eddie Collins all the way from third base to home plate, failing to tag him by several feet as the A's captain scored a highly important run standing up.

* * *

It so happened that Zimmerman was doing the only thing he could under the circumstances as the Giants' catcher, Bill Rariden, had left home plate unattended. "Who was I gonna throw the ball to—the umps?" inquired Zimmerman afterwards — a fair enough question as umpire Bill Klem was the only person in the immediate vicinity. Yet, as we said before, it has gone down in baseball history as Zimmerman's boner.

* * *

Then there was Fred Merkle, still known as "Bonehead Merkle" in certain circles — although he only did what 999 out of 1000 ball players of that era would have done under similar circumstances. But the Merkle incident is still too well remembered to require a re-creation here. Personally we think the Giants' 1st-base coach was the guilty person, as Johnny Evers of the Cubs had pulled a similar play, nullifying a run in exactly the same manner, in Pittsburgh just a week before.

* * *

But there have been "boners" which honestly earned the name — and no mistake. Del Bissonette, who has just led the Toronto Maple Leafs through a highly successful season — at least artistically and financially — was closely concerned in one of the best known — although don't get the idea that he was the sinner.

* * *

The very remarkable Babe Herman of the old Brooklyn Dodgers was the "hero". The Babe was standing on first base when his team mate, Bissonette, blasted out a terrific drive to deep centre. Herman dawdled about halfway to second base, then stopped to admire the speed and trajectory of Del's hit. Bisonette, head down and anxious to get all the distance possible out of his hit, passed the Babe without even noticing him; and Mr. Herman thus became an automatic out, while poor Del's inside-the-park homer was reduced to a measly single.

* * *

Turning a two-base hit into a double play was another of Herman's triumphs; and if there hadn't been one out at the time, he would have gone one better than that and turned it into a triple killing.

* * *

Chick Fewster was on first and Dazzy Vance on second when Herman took his "Sunday swing" and connected solidly. Fearing that the ball would be caught, Vance held up at second for a space before getting into motion. But Fewster was off with the crack of the bat, and so was Herman, both tearing along with such disregard for surroundings that, when the dust settled all three — Herman, Fewster and Vance—were all trying to occupy third base at one and the same time.

* * *

That was the occasion when "Uncle Robbie" Robinson, the sorely tried pilot of the Dodgers, sourly remarked, "It's the first time those three guys have been together all season.

"The Chicken Of Tomorrow"—Today

Some three years ago the national poultry research director of a great chain of food stores suggested to the poultry industry that a real effort be made to improve chickens grown for meat, in the same way that turkey growers had improved their product through the development of the broad-breasted varieties. With the suggestion went the offer of a $10,000 prize fund. The result was the formation of a national "chicken-to-tomorrow" committee. A breeding and feeding program was set up, with committees in 44 states. So successful was it that a new program of competition was launched this spring. As a result, at least 20,000,000 bigger and better birds will reach the markets this year. And this number is expected to be greatly increased next year.

Under the stimulus of this program breeders in many states from coast to coast have been able to produce in quantity, and to reproduce, chickens that weigh from 4 to 5 pounds at 12 weeks of age, as compared with the former average of two to three pounds at this age. Less feed, smaller cost and better quality—such is the picture. Before the inauguration of the "chicken-of-tomorrow" program, emphasis was on the production of eggs. Now the broiler industry has become a billion-dollar business. The remarkable results have been attained both by selective breeding within standard breeds of poultry and by cross-breeding. They bear witness again to the fact that opportunities for pioneering are not dead.

Hits The Haccent

Hal Block met a little cockney who enthused over a cruise he had made to South America. 'First," he reported, "we stops in Cuba, and thn we puts in at Haiti." "And what comes after Haiti?" asked Block politely. "H'eighty-one," said the cockney.

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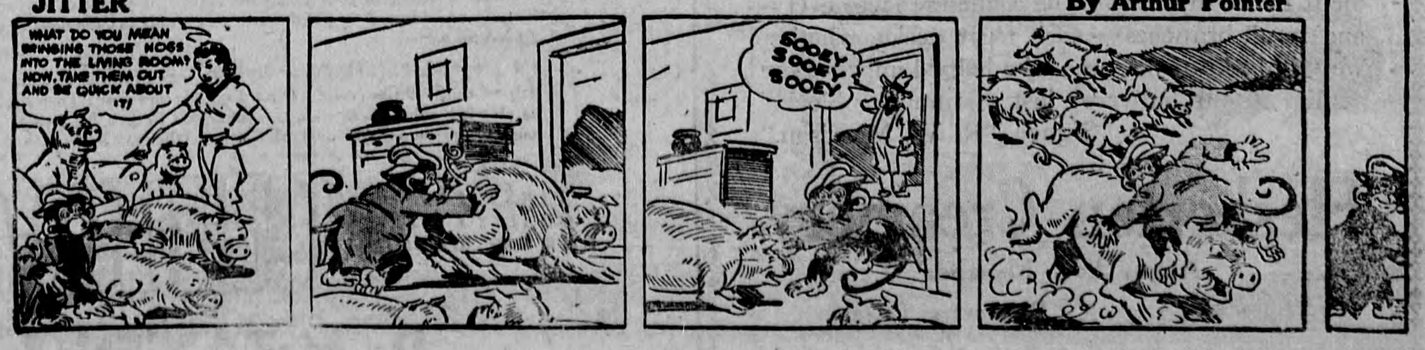
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