

All Pre-War Stuff—**Another Era Of Wonderful Wackiness Merrily Crops Up To Face Us Again**

By ANDREW TULLY, Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, Sept. 2.—If only the planners will leave this world of ours alone everything's going to be normal again—with plenty of channel swimmers and flagpole sitters to go around.

Pending notification from the neighborhood racketeer that he is once again distilling gin in the bathtub, it is probably dangerous to go completely out on a limb. But it's safe to say that, with a little encouragement from the right places, we can't miss plunging merrily into another Era of Wonderful Wackiness.

The omens are there for all to see. All that was needed was a female channel swimmer and a plump babe named Shirley May France has taken care of that. She was even going to do her dog-paddling in the altogether until some busybodies stepped in and hollered cop.

Miss France's antics have been furnishing a kind of sustaining climax in the current drama of a world struggling to return to normalcy. But the supporting cast is all right, too. From the man sitting on a Cleveland flagpole with his television set to the character who swallowed a live crab, they are all genuine pre-war stuff.

There's already a champ among them—the flagpole sitter, a chap named Charley Lupica. He broke the old pole-sitting record of 71 days more than two weeks ago. Charley went up on his pole on May 31 and said he'd stay there until the Cleveland Indians baseball club took over first place in the American League. He stayed there while his wife had a baby—with the Cleveland club picking up the tab—then he saw the proud mamma and Charley Jr. on television a couple of nights later.

Peeping Tom Bared

It's so much like old times you almost expect to see pictures in the papers of Al Capone having tea with a governor. Nudists are fashionable again and having conventions all over the country. One outfit got more than the customary publicity when some of its members caught a Peeping Tom and made him come in and undress.

There haven't been any marathons dances yet, but in Southbridge, Mass., a young married couple started out to walk to Los Angeles just for the hell of it. They're in New York State now. Stowaways are getting almost as common as they were in the Twenties and one of 'em even put on a show before they hitched onto him. Took and tossed into the sea 10 fire hoses, six ashtrays, two fire extinguishers, 10 50-pound potted trees and a lot of dishes. Then jumped in himself. They pulled him out.

In the gangster department, we have Micky Cohen, the lower-case Luciano of Los Angeles, who got shot outside a Sunset Strip night-club. Shortly thereafter the police came up with a flock of recorded conversations tapped from Micky's phone and ever since have been smacking their chops over what they call a nation-wide crime syndicate.

And, of course, under the heading Teapot Dome, et al., you can put the Interesting Case of Gen. Vaughan and the Deep Freezers. This has about everything, including muttered charges that a former Greek shoeshine boy from Kansas City named John Maragon made himself at home in the White House as a friend of Gen. Harry Vaughan.

Love's Old Sweet Song

But the thing that comes closest to being normal in this year 1949 is L-O-V-E. For a long time, what with the war and all, we had to be content with a certain conservatism among our lovers. Men were stealing other men's wives with what can only be described as a craven unwillingness and the dames thought it fashionable to have their pictures taken in cute little aprons whipping up a pot of alum gullion for hubby.

Now things are getting better. The Prince Aly Khan and Rita Hayworth careened all over Europe together before finally getting pitched in a little French town. Each course at the wedding dinner was named after one

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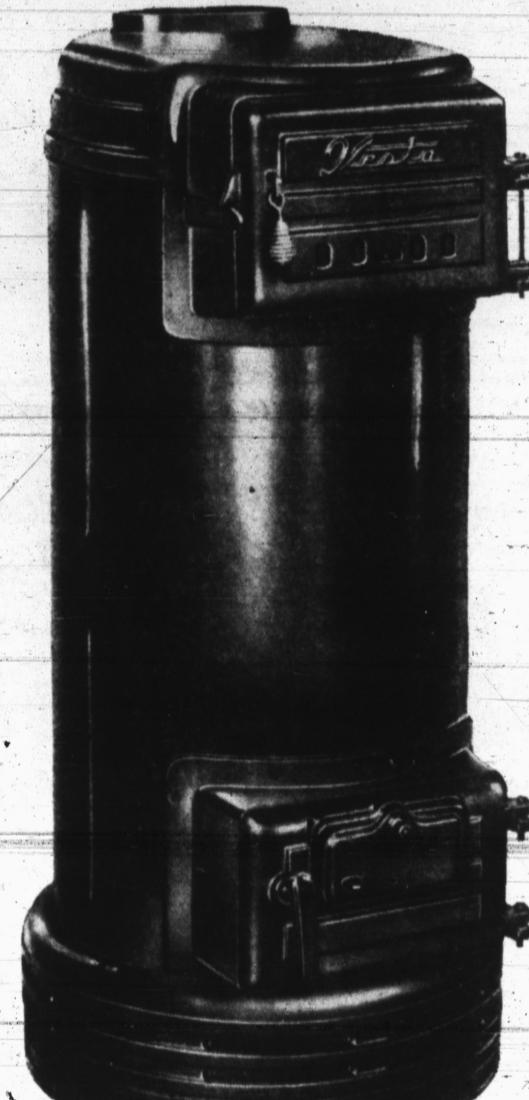
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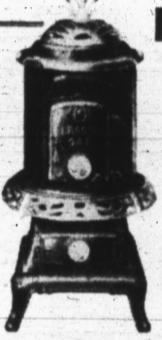
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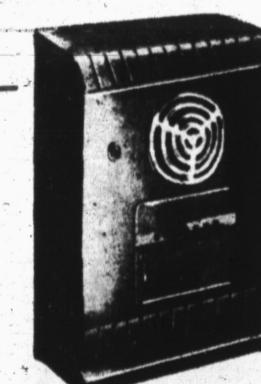
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