SEEN and HEARD around the NATIONAL CAPITAL

By Carter Field

Washington.—The Soviet government is confident that despite the military coup by which the fire-eating faction of the Japanese military caste has regained control of the Japanese government after being reversed in the recent election, there is no serious danger of war in the Far East.

Only the possibility that some of the same sort of "young officers" may provoke an incident on the border really threatens that danger. But even this danger, the Soviet authorities believe, is remote, and for two reasons.

One is that the young officers so much talked about are now just rushing into situations without the approval of very much more important heads. This is at least the third time this sort of thing has occurred, though the present is the most flagrant because it denies the right of the Japanese voters to dictate the policies of their government. Each time the action of the "young officers" has had the same objective—complete control of the government by the most fervent saber rattlers in the military establishment.

The Moscow government, according to reliable private advices reaching the State department, does not believe that the "old heads" among the saber rattlers—the high ranking army and navy officers really in command of the situation, and who really inspire these killings occasionally by the apparently irresponsible young officers—want war with the Soviet right now.

The answer is that the Japanese army and navy officers know perfectly well, the Soviet government believes, they would be biting off more possibly than they could chew. At the time the Russo-Japanese war broke out in the old days, it is pointed out, Russia—old Imperial Russia, it was then—had only 40,000 men in the Far East. And they were rather poorly equipped. In fact, there were quite a few scandals about that element later.

Russia's Great Army

Russia is not telling how many men she has in the Far East now, but reports from Moscow are that Soviet officials are rather complacent when the subject is mentioned. It is well known that the Russian army now has considerably in excess of a million men, and that they are excellently equipped with all the most modern war materials, expensive as they may be. It is freely admitted that every sacrifice necessary was made to attain this objective.

Now also, it is pointed out in Moscow, the trans-Siberian railroad has been double-tracked all the way through to Vladivostock. Near the latter city there are forces of bombing and fighting planes calculated to give the Japanese considerable pause.

Moreover, the Russians merely smile when asked about that northward push of the Japanese, apparently aimed at cutting the trans-Siberian railroad. There are plenty of fortifications, and plenty of well equipped soldiers to resist any Japanese attempt to reach the railroad. There have been one or two brushes, they mention grimly, and the Japanese are not unaware of the Russian strength.

Also, the Russians have calculated on the possibility that a bombing squadron or a quick successful push into one salient might cut the trans-Siberian line temporarily. They have built up stocks of everything that might be needed at strategic points. Near Vladivostock they not only have munitions plants, but ship-building yards, which have been very successful in constructing submarines.

Altogether they are more concerned about Germany than about Japan.

Case of West Virginia

Hoping that he has settled the factional row in Maine, so menacing to encouraging returns from the Pine Tree state in September's congressional election, President Roosevelt now turns his attention to West Virginia, where the situation is even more difficult. Maine's moral effect on Democratic workers in the rest of the country may be tremendous, but not even the most optimistic New Dealer thinks any electoral votes are involved there. Whereas West Virginia's eight electoral votes might easily decide who is to be President for the four years beginning next January.

All the New Deal hopes for in Maine, really, is to save Representative Edward C. Moran. No one familiar with the Maine situation hopes to elect a Democrat from the Portland district, where Representative Simon M. Hamlin was swept in on the 1934 Democratic high tide.

The Brann-Moran row threatens even this much salvage. It promises a solid Republican slate from Maine in September, with its resulting word to the rest of the country that the New Deal has slipped. With the full realization of how much attention is paid to Maine's September elections, despite the cold fact that as a barometer Maine has often been wrong, James A. Farley has been holding conference after conference in the hope of placating Louis J. Brann, whose re-election as governor in 1934 proved his popularity, but who has been very much off the reservation since the appointment of Professor Abrahamson of Bowdoin.

Placating Brann

So Brann was summoned to Washington, talked at length with Farley, and was taken to the White House to see if the Roosevelt personality would do the trick. It was rumored later that he could have the assistant secretaryship of the navy if he wanted it. The trouble about placating Brann is that he would have to be given some signal honor outside the state. Anything inside the state would more than ruffle Representative Moran. Moreover Moran has sold the White House and WPA Dictator Harry L. Hopkins pretty thoroughly on the idea that Brann's friends just won't do.

In West Virginia the situation is even more difficult. The two strong figures of the Democratic party, who happen to be the two senators, are at such loggerheads that the fight has flamed out on the senate floor, with the boy senator, Rush D. Holt, denouncing the whole relief and WPA administration in the state.

For a Democratic senator to charge that Harry Hopkins and his organization are playing cheap factional politics in behalf of the other Democratic senator, Matthew M. Neely, is very bad medicine, indeed. Holt said on the floor that the West Virginia administrator, F. W. McCullough, "is a disgrace to the state of West Virginia and to the Works Progress administration."

What has been happening, according to insiders, is not very different from what has happened in many states, except in one particular. People wanting jobs had to have the endorsement of local political leaders. The difference in West Virginia is that the leaders whose approval was necessary were always allied with the Neely organization, and never the Holt faction.

Apparently Senator Holt missed the boat when he did not have an agreement with his colleague before McCullough was appointed.

Mail Contracts

Present indications are that President Roosevelt will extend the present mail contracts, 42 in number, with the shipping companies, for a period of one year. He has the authority to do this under existing law, assuming that no new shipping legislation is enacted. And best information on Capitol Hill and in New Deal circles is that none will be.

There was quite a stir recently over the drafting of a new ship subsidy bill by New Dealers. Much mystery was made about the new measure, which was, it was said, to be introduced by Senator Guffey of Pennsylvania. The new measure, according to gossip accepted for a few days, was to have the Presidential blessing as against the Copeland bill and the ideas of Senator Black of Alabama. It was Senator Black, those interested recalled, who directed the investigation which seemed, to put it mildly, to be a little unfriendly to the shipping companies.

Underneath all the mystery as to the Guffey bill and the discussions of merits of the plans of Senators Copeland and Black, the determining factor is simply this—that President Roosevelt is willing to do more to aid American merchant marine than congress is willing to do at this time.

The wheel within these wheels is that the President at the moment is concerned very much over the economy issue. He is going through a lot of motions, what with all these conferences of the spending and lending agencies and whatnot, to give the country the impression that he is going to stage a Calvin Coolidge economy act and get the federal treasury back on a sort of Andrew Mellon basis.

Balk at Subsidy

So this would be no time to launch out into what would be, in many sections of the country, a very unpopular spending campaign in the interest of the merchant marine. The mere fact that actually the cost would be no greater than under the present mail contracts would not help the picture. It is the prejudice against the word, "subsidy" so strongly built up in the hinterland all these years that President Roosevelt and members of the house and senate fear.

So the good old subterfuge of calling a subsidy pay for carrying the mails is to continue for another year. Maybe after election congress will have the nerve to call a spade a spade. But such ideas die hard, and the house of representatives is never more than 22 months from an election.

Meanwhile the navy is still impatient and anxious to see the whole merchant marine policy overhauled. The navy wants subsidies, to be frankly called subsidies, paid to ship owners who will agree to build ships capable of being taken over as auxiliaries in the event of war—ships built to navy specifications. It wants ships to be subsidized by the government just as the ships of all other sea power nations are.

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Railroad Building in Nicaragua.

Prepared by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.—WNU Service.

NICARAGUA has an area of some 50,000 square miles, about equal to that of New York state, and a population of approximately 650,000, close to that of the city of Buffalo. It is the largest of the Central American republics; many consider it the most beautiful. Much of the interior is mountainous; the coasts are generally flat. It faces the Pacific, with its back door to the Atlantic. Most of its people live in the cities in the western part of the republic, for the rainfall here is moderate as compared with that of the eastern coast; the climate, although tropical, is agreeable, and the land is fertile.

The cities of Chinandega, Leon, Managua, Masaya and Granada are located near the west coast and along the one line of railroad, extending from the port of Corinto, on the Pacific, to Granada, the main port on Lake Nicaragua.

Managua, the capital, is the largest, and, although badly set back by the earthquake and fire that almost destroyed the city in the spring of 1931, will in time again become the most important business center of the country.

Leon and Chinandega, cities of artisans and small proprietors, are located among very fertile farming lands and are the centers of the sugar trade. Masaya is an Indian town and owes its importance to the coffee-growing district on the Sierras, located between the lakes and the Pacific.

Granada owes her early growth to the fact that she was the chief port for the trade between Central America and Spain, by way of Lake Nicaragua and the San Juan river. Her leading citizens are not only landed proprietors, but merchants who sell goods in person over the counters of their stores.

Matagalpa, the largest town off the railroad, is the center of an important coffee-growing district. Because of its altitude, it has a more agreeable climate than the cities located in the plains; but the absence of a railroad, or even a good highway connection with the outside world, has thwarted its growth.

East and West Are Divided.

Eastern and western Nicaragua are divided by mountains and jungle covered country, which have effectively prevented intercommunication except to a very minor degree. The physical separation has operated to prevent close political union and a common national outlook; to hamper trade and commerce; and to obstruct a desirable interchange of people and ideas.

In addition, the lack of a practicable route to its east coast has forced virtually all of Nicaragua's foreign commerce to seek a longer and more roundabout route via the west coast and the Panama canal. For these reasons it has been the desire of the government of Nicaragua for many years to open a means of communication between the west and east, either by a canalization of the San Juan river or by the construction of a highway or a railroad. A highway has been under construction from Managua through Tipitapa to Rama, on the Bluefields river, where boat connections can be made with Bluefields, the largest port town on the Caribbean.

The population of the country is overwhelmingly of mixed Spanish and Indian blood, with Spanish the universal language, although one finds in Granada and the other large towns many families of pure Spanish blood. Perhaps 10 per cent of the population is pure Indian, found mostly in the area around Masaya and Matagalpa and in the thinly settled cattle-raising sections of the province of Chontales, east of Lake Nicaragua.

Still farther to the east, along the rivers that drain into the Caribbean north of Greytown, the Sumo Indians have their homes. They are a wild and timid race and have resisted all Spanish influence. Their huts are simple structures, thatched with palm leaves and located on the banks of streams. Their worldly possessions are confined to bows, arrows, blowguns, and one or two pots and pans.

The Mosquito Coast.

Part of Nicaragua's Caribbean coast has the world's worst real estate title, "The Mosquito Coast." It gets its name, not from the prevalence of mosquitoes, but from the Misskito Indians. Here there is decided evidence of negro blood, partly a heritage from the cargo of a slave ship that was wrecked on the coast years ago. These blacks, or mixed Indians and blacks, called "Sambos" or "Zambos," were augmented by escaped slaves from the plantations that sparsely dotted the coast in later years and by renegade slaves from Jamaica and other islands of the West Indies.

The Mosquito coast was also a refuge for buccaneers and pirates and was visited by many trading ships seeking turtle shells. As a result, the blood of the inhabitants became badly mixed, and characteristics of many races can be detected in the present-day population.

San Juan del Norte (Greytown), at the mouth of the San Juan river, has an English-speaking negro population. Long ago the port had an excellent harbor and was a thriving community, but drifting sands have closed the entrance from the sea, and now only an occasional schooner calls.

In the boom days, when the Maritime Canal company undertook the construction of a canal, Greytown had visions of being a metropolis; now it is only a dreary community of rusted tin and frame shacks, with a population of 250 people.

In spite of the financial difficulties that have been general throughout the world and have been particularly trying in Nicaragua, the president of the republic has improved the public schools and built new roads and railroads.

Along the country's roads you will occasionally meet a high-powered car snorting its way over ruts and bumps, carrying some government official or landed proprietor on business best known to himself. The car has a number of occupants, usually half a dozen in excess of its normal capacity, for the government official travels with his guards, his friends, and perhaps a large part of his family, while the usual car-owner always has his entire family in the car and baggage and other impediments strapped on the running board and anywhere else that it can be suspended or attached.

Cars Nearly All American.

Practically all cars are American make, and it is a tribute to their sturdiness that they can stand the usage to which they are subjected. New cars are frequently equipped with extra spring leaves, as spare parts are hard to get, and for service on Nicaraguan roads springs have to be strong.

The cars on the roads are few and far between, but they add the touch which shows that you are traveling in a civilized country.

Coffee Is the Main Crop.

The prosperity of the country depends upon the coffee crop and its price. Crops have been good in recent years, but the price has been very low. For its future Nicaragua looks to the building of the canal linking the Pacific and the Caribbean. A prosperous Nicaragua will no doubt mean a quiet Nicaragua, for prosperity will mean roads, railroads, and other public improvements. A hungry man in Nicaragua is a prospective recruit for one of the bandit gangs. Banditry probably will cease when any man seeking work can get it and when every man can boast of the few dollars rattling around in his pocket.

Gold in small quantities has been produced in Nicaragua for hundreds of years. The richest mines are in the province of Chontales. This area is also bandit-infested, and the mines are a favorite field for bandit activities. This situation has prevented the installation of modern machinery or the development of the properties on a large scale.

The Babilonia mine at La Libertad has the distinction of having had a young mining engineer named Herbert Hoover connected at one time with its management. Here only the richest strikes are now worked, the ore being brought to the mill by pack mules.

Putting a canal across Nicaragua is a matter of utilizing some geographic features and overcoming others. Of outstanding importance physically are the country's mountains and its two great fresh-water lakes in its southern part, "the Great Lakes of Central America."

BRISBANE THIS WEEK

Pretending Costs Money
A Japanese Widow
The Five Babies Are Well
Democratic Edward VIII

Even imitation war is costly. England's battleships, submarines and airplanes in the Mediterranean, intended to intimidate Italy and keep down discontent in Egypt, represent no real war.

Arthur Brisbane

England occasionally discharges light "depth bombs" in the Mediterranean, "bringing Italian submarines popping like corks to the surface." Yet the government tells the house of commons this imitation war costs British taxpayers five hundred thousand pounds a month.

The twenty-four-year-old widow of a Japanese officer who committed suicide after the recent rebellion sends a letter of apology to "Your august majesty," the Japanese emperor, saying: "I believe the spirit of my husband, whose body lies in a coffin before me, also sorrows for those who fell."

A most serious people, the Japanese.

Doctor Dafoe, modest man from Canada, who understands quintuplets, dropped in to say the five little girls are doing well, fighting frequently, sign of a normal condition. They like sleeping outdoors with the weather 30 below zero, but in daytime only. It would delight you to see their red cheeks.

Three hundred and seventy-five thousand visitors, nearly all from the United States, came to look through a fence at the quintuplets last year; 500,000 are expected this year. The baby girls are a wonderful advertisement for Canada. Many that go to see them will buy farms and stay.

A democratic young person is Edward the Eighth, new king of England and emperor of India. Broadcasting to 200,000,000 that live under the British flag and occupy one-quarter of the earth's surface, he does not refer to them as "my subjects" or "my people," as his predecessors did, but calls them "fellow men."

And Edward VIII does not refer to himself as "we," which is customary with other rulers. His father spoke of "my empire" and "my dear people" and called himself "we."

President Roosevelt submits to congress a plan to increase heavily income taxes of corporations suspected of holding many billions of profits not distributed. The taxes might run to over 33 per cent.

You never can tell what Wall Street will think. President Roosevelt's taxation program sends stocks up. Perhaps Wall Street has no "undistributed reserves." Great industries will not be forbidden reasonable cash surpluses, presumably. Such a rule would make expansion and increased employment impossible.

A joint resolution in the house and senate suggests a congressional medal of honor for the late Gen. William Mitchell, head of the American air forces in the big war. Few congressmen would vote against a tribute to a man who fought so well for his country, and the medal would please his widow and children.

Uncle Sam paying rent to Panama for the canal, offering the usual $250,000 rent installment, was told: "No, we do not take 59-cent dollars."

Washington admits that while it may try interesting experiments with its own money, and tell its own citizens "Gold is too good for you," it has no right to make the outside world suffer. Panama will get an amount of money equal to 250,000 of our dollars before we slid off the gold basis and into the "inflation bond" era.

Sometimes government ownership gets things done. Germany's postal ministry opens the first long-distance television-telephone in the world, between Berlin and Leipzig—the charge for three minutes only $1.40. When you call up a "strong, bluish light" illuminates your face, which is seen by the person at the other end of the line. That would have been improbable when telephones were installed in the big Paris exposition, not so long ago.

Four years ago the Lindbergh child was kidnaped. Bruno Hauptmann, convicted of kidnaping and murder, caught spending the marked gold certificates that Lindbergh paid in a vain effort to get back his child, is still alive.

It is said that he will have another reprieve. Our system of justice is not hasty.

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HOW ARE YOU TODAY

DR. JAMES W. BARTON Talks About

Reducing and Nervousness

THE difficult part about reducing weight is the cutting down on the starch or sugar foods—sugar, bread, potatoes, pastry.

Everybody, whether thin or fat, needs these particular foods, as they are the "energy givers," and the body must have foods to supply this energy.

Meats, fruits, minerals, vitamins are all necessary to health and all give a certain amount of energy, but it is the starch, that is, really the sugar foods, that give energy in the amounts the body needs.

In the overweight individual, nature has been kind or generous, as it were, in that the sugar foods eaten not only supply the energy but a portion of them is stored away in the liver, muscles, and other tissues and can be used if the individual is unable to get a further supply at any time.

Dr. Barton

The point here, and it is very plain, is that if the overweight will do without quite as much starch food, this sugar that is stored in the liver and other tissues can be used to supply energy. Less starch food being eaten will prevent any gain in weight, and after a time will bring about a loss of the fat tissue (which will be used as fuel for the body's needs).

Source of Nervousness.

Now when the overweight begins doing without his or her usual amount of starch or sugar foods, one of the first symptoms noticed is a weak or nervous feeling. This is because the amount of sugar in their blood or tissues is not as much as usual; it is the sugar that gives the energy—the feeling of strength. It is only natural then that they turn to starch or sugar foods again and many of them give up the whole idea of trying to reduce weight.

However, the very fact that sugar is so helpful in overcoming this nervous or weak feeling, has been used by some physicians in reducing the weight in their patients.

Thus with the usual amount of food cut down by one-quarter to one-half, when the patient begins to feel nervous or weak, he is given some sugar—candy or in some other form—and this overcomes the weakness or nervousness until the regular meal time arrives.

In the Medical Journal and Record, Drs. Y. Yoshida and I. J. Roberts record their method of reducing weight, which consists of cutting down the usual diet by about one-half and giving dextrose (sugar) when there are symptoms of fatigue, hunger, nervousness or weakness the result of an insufficient amount of sugar in the blood.

Doctors' Daily Plan.

Their daily plan is as follows:

The daily diet consists of clear soup, a liberal helping of vegetables, two or three pieces of bread and butter, one average portion of meat, two glasses of milk and one orange.

In addition the patient takes about one ounce of dextrose daily in the form of pleasantly flavored lozenges—each lozenge containing about a half teaspoonful—one lozenge being dissolved in the mouth every half hour from 9:30 to 11:00 a. m., 2:30 to 5:30 p. m. Liquids must be cut down as much as possible and only five glasses—water, tea, coffee, soft or hard drinks or any other form of liquid—are to be taken daily. Absolutely no food should be taken between meals except the dextrose mentioned above.

Moderate exercise in the form of walking is advised but no severe gymnastic exercises.

Thus while sugar is fattening and must be cut down in all reducing diets, yet using a piece of candy, a chocolate bar, or a banana (the meat of which is rapidly turned into sugar) when that hungry, nervous, weak feeling comes, not only overcomes this feeling, but is really a safeguard whilst reducing.

The use of an alkali—common baking soda is always at hand—prevents the acidosis which occurs during the reduction of weight; a level teaspoonful two or three times a day in a half glass of water is sufficient.

* * *

Getting Out of Bed

THERE has been a feeling for some time in the minds of many surgeons that patients after severe illness should be sitting up and actually getting out on their feet for a few minutes daily, much sooner than is usually the case at present.

Thus in appendix cases, operations on the stomach and gall bladder, or in repairing a hernia or rupture, Dr. A. Chalier, Lyons, France, states that he gets his patients up between the third and fifth day—that is to say, as soon as the wound is healed. He states that the following operation has proved safe. For the first few days, of course, the patient only stays up 15 to 30 minutes.

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Still Drumming Up Church Attendance in Dutch Towns

An attendance drummer has been newly appointed at Hoogeveen, Holland, to call the people to church. The old custom of drumming up church attendance persists there as in some other Dutch towns. Every Sunday morning and evening, the drummer marches through the main streets of Hoogeveen, drumming with all his might, to let the faithful know that it is time to get ready for divine service.

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