

War Left Scars on Europe's Youth, Young Traveler Says

EDITOR'S NOTE: When Tom Manhard went to Europe this summer on the Robert C. J. Traub memorial scholarship, The Birmingham Post-Herald asked the recent Bloomfield Hills high school graduate to write a story about European teenagers. He found them friendly toward Americans. Their impressions of the United States, Tom reports, were gained from American films, from American exhibits and jazz artists at expositions like the Brussels world's fair, and from the study of America in their schools. Surprisingly, Tom feels Europe's young people have a fairly accurate picture of American life. Here 18-year-old Tom reports his impressions of what life is like for a European teenager.

Cartoons and story by:
By TOM MANHARD
Special Writer

In today's Europe, there is a new generation of young people. Born into the world of collapsing governments and economies during World War II, these children really know the cruel meaning of war and destruction. Families, homes, and land—all semblance of an ordered life disappeared for them—usually in the acid fumes of an exploding shell—and all the things that a child needs—love, attention, and guidance—were shattered in the same blast.

In the aftermath of that holocaust, Europe's children grew into adolescence, and the scars of years of war have taken their toll. Smiles come less easily, and a steady glint is seen as often as a sparkle in their eyes. Unwanted maturity was forced upon these teenagers by the war—they are old before their time. Hardened to accept the cruel realities of life, these young people, at an age when American children were out playing in the streets, were picking through rubble, trying to pick up the lost threads of their lives.

I met many young people this summer, from small laughing towns in London to sober-minded youth who had served in the Hitler Youth. In many ways these boys

and girls are like us—they enjoy the same pleasures, have the same doubts and worries; in action, they could be our twin. Yet they are not really like us, for they face a still troubled future.

THEY ARE usually only a few hundred miles from Soviet-occupied territory, which means but a few moments from attack, should one come. Then, too, the economies of many countries, while getting steadily better, are still very low. And behind everything else is the great sorrow stemming from the war.

No, these young people are not really like us, for they face prob-

lems today which many of us may never face. How can one expect them to be the same?

And yet, in spite of everything, it seems to be an unwritten law that when a European teenager joins a group of friends, and all problems are forgotten, and the high spirits of the many prevail. And in Europe everyone moves in groups. It is not uncommon in the Low Countries, for example, to see a great "herd" of boys and girls on bicycles pedaling down the narrow roads towards some lush picnic spot by the sea, or in France, to see thirty or so teenagers walking down the Left Bank to swim at one of the "piscines," or swimming pools which float on the quiet Seine.

YOUNG PEOPLE also go in groups while travelling. I met, while in Nice (along the Cote d'Azur), a group of 16 girls who had packed a large tent and toured from Lyon, over 200 miles away. By themselves, these girls spent their days on the beach and at night returned to their tent, several kilometers away on the outskirts of the city. And then in Paris I met two German boys who had bicycled from Frankfurt with seven friends. To economize they slept beside their bikes on the quays along the Seine.

It may seem strange to bicycle such a long way, only to sleep in the open, but most European teenagers, I found, will go to almost any extreme to travel. In Germany and Austria, for instance, hiking is one of the most popular and least expensive ways to get around. The young people will pick

up a place, pack their gear, and set out, ignoring such small obstacles as the Alps. In fact, when my tour was crossing the Brenner Pass by bus, we saw three separate groups hiking along. Two of them several hundred feet higher than our road, which was over 8,000 feet high.

Next to walking, bicycling is the least expensive, and by far the most popular, mode of travel. Nearly everyone owns one, and at any given time and place, it appears that at least half Europe's population is there, pedaling gaily along, making the way impassable for the few motor vehicles that are on the road.

AND OF course, in the cities, the Vespa and the Labretta are the acknowledged rules of the road. No matter where you look as you cross a street in Paris or Rome, it appears that you are about to be run down by one or more of the two-cylinder monsters, erratically guided by leering, crash-helmeted drivers. I may add, here that there is a humorous side to these close brushes with doom. Bouncing along on the rear of those horrible little conveyances there is usually a pretty young girl, skirts flying, who is trying madly, with one hand, to keep her knees invisible, and with the other clinging tenaciously to the motor scooter, as it careens down the cobble streets.

Now that we have watched Europe's young people go off to places unknown, let's see what they do when they finally arrive. They dance. Rock and roll music is popular everywhere in Europe, and each country's young people have developed some gyrations to do to it.

IN ENGLAND, for instance, a fast form of the Lindy is the thing, done to records by Eng-

land's most popular singer, Tony Martin. And remember, Lennie Bonner and his "Rock Island Line" of several years ago? Well, his type of singing, called "skiffing," is also going strong.

Of course, you just might be able to guess who's the most popular in Germany. . . . If you didn't say Elvis within a quarter of a second of reading the preceding sentence, hang your head in shame and turn in your "teenager" button.

Coming right after dancing as accepted recreation, we find . . . in all seriousness . . . drinking. Wine is a staple in France, just as is "biere" in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, and every other country seems to have some alcoholic beverage as its national drink. So, teenagers will gather at a pub, or sidewalk cafe, or wherever, and talk. Groups will sit around a table all afternoon and enjoy conversation over a single glass of wine or beer, and no one says a word about the time. In fact, it's like a law—if you sit down and buy a drink, the table you have is yours until you decide to leave, which may or may not be the same day.

THAT'S ANOTHER thing about Europe's young people. No matter how frenzied they may feel inside, they take everything easily. Lunch usually takes two hours or so, and the summer afternoons are too hot to do much in the way of work, so the young people go somewhere to relax. In Paris there are the cool quays to rest on as the river traffic goes by, or if you are more energetic you can swim. In Rome you sit under the umbrellas along the Via Veneto if you are rich, and if you are poor you go to the park and sit on the metal benches. In Innsbruck you walk through the floral gardens of Maria Theresa Strasse, eating some of the best ice cream in the world, which you bought for four

seven days or so.

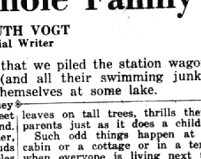
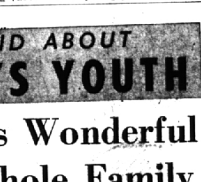
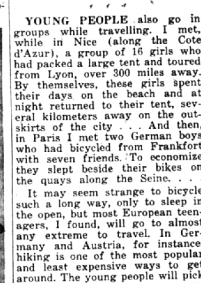
A woman thinks she knows her charms well. But when a catcher of wild life races up to her with a jar full of the most unusual worms, she is amazed at how bright the blue shines in her son's interested eyes. Or when a seven year old invites inspection of a newly made castle erected from wet sand.

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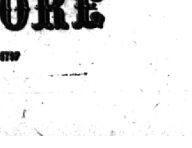
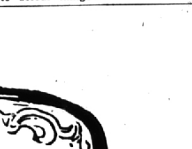
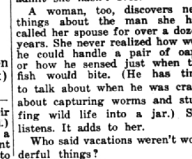
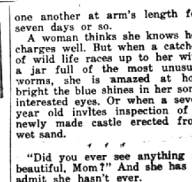
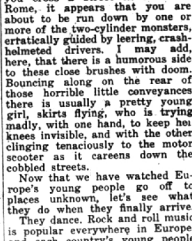
A woman, too, discovers new things about the man she has called her spouse for over a dozen years. She never realized how well he could handle a pair of oars, or how he sensed just when the fish would bite. (He has time to talk about when he was crazy about capturing worms and stuffing wild life into a jar.) She listens. It adds to her.

Who said vacations weren't wonderful things?

TOM MANHARD



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BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN

SECTION D

When one is tempted to depart from the performance of the demands of his job, he eventually will lose it. When one departs from sincere dedication to exemplify tried and true virtues, he pays the penalty. So in regard to the demands of freedom: failure to measure up to the demands to protect and defend freedom results in the loss of freedom. Freedom is not a gift; it is a reward.

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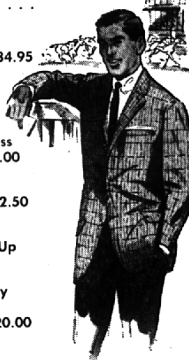
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FOR AND ABOUT
TODAY'S YOUTH

Vacation Is Wonderful For the Whole Family

By RUTH VOGT
Special Writer

Let the little ones think that we piled the station wagon to the top with supplies (and all their swimming junk) just so they could enjoy themselves at some lake.

Let them believe that only they experience the joy inside as feet are pushed into nice hot sand. (It wouldn't be dignified, either, to declare that the sky, the clouds and the way the breeze ruffles

leaves on tall trees, thrills their parents just as it does a child.) Such odd things happen at a cabin or a cottage or in a tent when everyone is living next to

another at arm's length for seven days or so.

A woman thinks she knows her charms well. But when a catcher of wild life races up to her with a jar full of the most unusual worms, she is amazed at how bright the blue shines in her son's interested eyes. Or when a seven year old invites inspection of a newly made castle erected from wet sand.

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Who said vacations weren't wonderful things?

Always do when I want to look my best. Here see three from my fall collection of quietly elegant, ladylike wools.

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