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A million people made sport their escape from a world where material values still reigned supreme. Thousands of others found comfort in faith. At Stockport in Cheshire a three deep queue forms daily outside St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. They are all talking about seven-year-old Pauline Byrne and a bunch of roses. Nearly six months ago, Pauline went to Church here. On a statue of the Virgin Mary, she placed a bunch of golden roses. Today, 180 days after, these flowers have neither faded nor shed their petals. The Catholic Church does not claim that this is a miracle. In a cold matter-of-fact world, (whatever is the significance of this act of faith), it is there for all to see. As the pilgrims went back to their every day life, other happenings claimed their attention.

Fire struck Goole dockyard in Yorkshire. As Pathe cameras fly over the port, smoke pours from a gutted warehouse. Within a few minutes, the roof and floors of the four-storey building caved in.

Only twisted girders now remain. Damage is set at a million pounds. 800 tons of sugar - a week's rations for two and a half million people - was among the food destroyed.

The week also brought to the people news of great moment in world affairs. For Burma it meant independence after a long period of domestic strife. At Downing Street, Prime Minister Attlee and Burma's Premier Signed an Agreement which will make Burma an Independent country outside the British Commonwealth of Nations. As the signatures were appended to the new Treaty, few Burmese would predict the future course of events. Would independence bring to Burma domestic upheaval similar to that suffered by her neighbour India? For the latest report from Pakistan told that the unholy communal bloodshed was in no way abating. Civil war has so far brought death, to more than fifty thousand people. In the trail of murder and arson come the refugees. Their suffering is the new tragedy of India. Already, a million and a half have been exchanged between the two Dominions. Another two million are preparing for their trek. Many will never reach their new land. To them may come starvation and death.

While the two Indian Dominions struggled for the ideals their leaders had proclaimed, momentous events in France were making history. From the turmoil of

bickering party politics, General De Gaulle was arising as the strong man of France.

Following a strike wave which hardened many people's resistance to the invitations of Left-wing parties, De Gaulle's rally of the French people had swept the Board at the Municipal elections. The General's policy rests on three principals: the necessity of a strong, resurgent France, a close link with the United States and uncompromising warfare on the Communists.

As the election results became known, it was clear that De Gaulle had gained his victory at the expense of the centre parties. His support has come mostly from moderate and Conservative circles. The Communists, led by Maurice Thorez, virtually retained their voting strength and are now the second strongest party. The French Government are in an embarrassing position. From President Vincent Auriol and Ramadier's Cabinet must come the next move.

Behind the election results, which in themselves are of no importance, was this: the French political battlefield had at last been cleared for action. The fight between Communism and the anti-Communist group, headed by De Gaulle, would now be openly joined. The question every Frenchman asked was, whether a possible referendum would result in the General becoming head of State and whether, in that event, De Gaulle could command enough support from the workers in France, a New French Revolution had been born. While political Europe debated the French elections, Britain's politicians were starting a new Parliamentary session. As the King left Buckingham Palace for the State Opening of Parliament it was certain that the new session would be controversial.

Although the Government had soft-pedalled on steel nationalisation, the Gas industry was due for public ownership. An Autumn budget was also listed. The announcement by the King that the powers of the House of Lords were to be curbed came as a surprise. It could mean that the Government, from a tactical point of view, were preparing to go to the country on a slogan of "Peers versus the people." At present, the Lords can hold up all legislation, except money bills, for two years. As the King indicated the proposals of the Government, the people had plenty to talk about.