

BILL LANE from HOLLYWOOD

SHORT TAKES

Melvin Van Peebles, the fellow who went to Europe to get to be somebody behind the camera in films, and got the French government to subsidize him, is getting ready to make his mark as a director of a major American-made motion picture. He is to be the director of "The Night The Sun Came Out on Happy Hollow Lane," an unusual picture which will star comic-actor Godfrey Cambridge and blond Estelle Parsons, the Oscar winner from "Bonnie & Clyde." The title alone should sell the movie, but the story itself deserves a laughing look. It is the story of a white insurance man, played by Cambridge, married to Miss Parsons. The man awakens one night to find he's suddently become black. That's when the fun, or trouble starts. Aiding to lend credence, visually, to this melanin-personality mixup will be the makeup people at Columbia, where it is said it will take three hours daily to make up Godfrey as white. And even then, it is said, the makeup is a bit weird when Godfrey is placed in visual proximity to other whites in the pic.

PRESTON RETURNS

Billy Preston, one of the swinglest organ players around, no sooner had returned here from a sojourn in England where he's been working with the Beatles than his longtime boss, Ray Charles, scooped him up and hurried him over to NYC's Apollo to rock the place during the recent holiday. George Harrison of the Beatles has turned out a new tune which Preston has recorded for current release. It is "That's The Way God Planned It." Preston will return to England in September.

ACTRESS DIANA?

News has it that singer Diana Ross of The Supremes might break away from the famed singing group not to go first into movies and television, but into a musical stage play on Broadway. This is the buzz, since it is reported that Motown is the backer of the new Broadway opus, "Beau."

Scoey Mitchell, the black Milton Berle, now playing the Riviera in Las Vegas, where Chez Voltaire planist-singer Alice Darr hurries to so often these days to do her after-hour bit in Dino's Room of the play place.

Tom Jones says he's going to get with the (See BILL LANE, page 11).

Veterans Administration statistics reveal that there are 30,000 veterans under 20 years of age.

The Veterans Administration's 166 hospitals have a daily average of 93,636 patients.

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TENSE SITUATION -- Barbara McNair, portraying a nurse-nun, meets resistance from Ji-Tu Cumbuka (left) and Bill Elliott (actorhusband of actress-singer Dionne Warwick), two militants who object to her presence in the ghetto in this scene from the movie, "Change of Habit."

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VA INFORMATION

Q -- I have a 10 per cent service-connected disability incurred in 1963. I am receiving \$18 a month. Why don't I receive \$23.

A -- Your disability was incurred during a peacetime period, so you are paid the authorized peacetime rate, which is 80 per cent (to the nearest dollar) of the wartime rate. The period from Feb. 1, 1955, through Aug. 4, 1964, is considered peacetime. The Viet-Nam era, from Aug. 5, 1964, to some future date, is considered wartime.



