

TWENTY CENTS

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TIME

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JAMES CAESAR PETRILLO
"I love my enemies, but they don't all love me."

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PETRILLO (AFTER ACQUITTAL)
Piccolos in aspic haunt him.

The Chicago Sun

The Octopus. He heartily dislikes actors and always insists that musicians get the lower berths when traveling with dramatic troupes. He hates the greens on golf courses, and when playing, simply skips them. He is eternally suspicious of lawyers. He believes "they can steal without getting put in jail" and habitually greets them with the cry of "Burglar!" He is against John L. Lewis, amateurs of all kinds, and the custom of eating lunch. He is convinced that the legislative process was conceived for only one purpose—grilling Petrillo like a frankfurter. When annoyed by an opponent, he screams: "Tell him he's nuts—he oughta run for Congress." He trusts only one man with power—Petrillo.

He dips deeply into his reservoirs of energy, belligerency and profanity when dealing with these forces of evil, but he does so with a comparatively relaxed air—something like a lion-tamer lobbing house cats into the chandelier of a Sunday morning. His real enemies are the phonograph record and its cousins, the motion picture sound track and the radio station turntable. He is mortally afraid that without James Caesar Petrillo, all the music in the U.S. would eventually be produced by one non-union musician playing a musical comb into a microphone.

Last week, in his efforts to stave off this eventuality, Petrillo had tangled himself up in the works of the canned-music business with the bellicose ingenuity of an octopus in a pea thresher.

Child of Edison. He was enforcing three musical bans at once—old bans against television and frequency modulation radio stations (which were not allowed to share standard broadcasts of music), and a brand new and bigger ban against the record and transcription business. He had gone to Washington to let the House Education and Labor Committee ask him why he had done it. He beamed happily, thumbs in suspenders (*see cut*), over having beaten the rap in a Chicago federal court test of the Lea Act—a piece of legislation which had been written for the specific purpose of bringing him to trial for making radio stations hire standby musicians. He was also negotiating a new contract with the major U.S. radio networks, a process which involved the threat of a walkout by his musicians.

As always, his activity was accompanied by great public outcry. Millions of U.S. citizens considered him a putty-nosed Canute trying to hold back the tide of progress. The nation was full of editorial writers who swore they could see foam dribbling down his jowls and wanted him clapped forthwith into a strait jacket. There was a certain irony in this. Petrillo's carnivorous methods of "getting something for the boys" made him the natural foe of the canned-music business, but he was also part and product of it, as much a child of Edison and Marconi as

LABOR

The Pied Piper of Chi

(See Cover)

James Caesar Petrillo cannot see germs, at least not very well, but they do not fool him. He knows there are armies of them all around him: hairy ones with millions of eyes, wiggly ones with transparent heads, sloppy ones shaped like tomato surprises, stiff ones which look like piccolos in aspic. He never forgets that they are coming at him, morning, noon & night. But he is not intimidated. He fights them.

As grand sachem, lord paramount and international president of the American Federation of Musicians, Caesar Petrillo has an imperial disdain for convention, and, when confronted by bacteria, he will stop at nothing. He roars like a wounded lion if a photographer lays a camera down near him; he believes microbes use cameras as invasion barges to leap out at him. When drinking ale he often retires to a lavatory and scrubs feverishly at his glass to get the bugs off it. He frequently refuses to shake hands. Instead, he extends only his little finger, thus exposing a minimum of his person to bacilli and micrococci.

While germs are the smallest and possibly the most numerous of Petrillo's enemies, they are by no means the only ones. He maintains a noisy state of war with countless members of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms.

and righteously demanded to know "what excuse the Department of Justice had for arresting to deport a man whom six federal administrations had not molested during 28 years of open Communist activity."

In Miami, where Bittelman and wife lived quietly in an expensive apartment, spending most of their time reading on the lawn, neighbors were floored. Said one of them: "He was a very nice gentleman, very timid." The Department of Justice thought differently. It charged him with advocating the violent "overthrow of the U.S. Government," released him on \$5,000 bail.

State Department officials last week refused to let Brazilian Architect Oscar Niemeyer into the U.S. when Niemeyer recently asked for a visa so that he could deliver a lecture series at Yale. Niemeyer, who helped design the proposed New York capital of the United Nations, is one of the world's best known architects. He is also one of Brazil's best known Communists.

Last week New York's Communist Councilman Benjamin J. Davis explained why it is Communists all think and act alike. "Communism is a science," he declared, "and science is the same everywhere. H₂O is water in Moscow and H₂O is water in America. We are not against water because it happens to be H₂O in Moscow. It is ridiculous."

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

the electric tone arm and the portable radio.

The Product. The world of music had changed radically in the half century since brass bands pumped lugubriously before U.S. saloons and Americans fought mosquitoes at park concerts for the sweet sake of culture. Music was now a product to be seized by machinery, to be packaged, distributed and sold in wholesale lots. Canning and transmitting musical effects was a huge and complicated industry in which the artist, the advertiser, the salesman and the inventor fought ceaselessly for expression and profit. Its impact upon the people of the U.S. and the world was tremendous—it had given them both the Beethoven *Ninth* and *Too Fat Polka* ("I don't want her, You can have her, She's too fat for me"). It had also made possible the use of either Beethoven or boogie-woogie in the sale of elevator shoes or political propoganda.

The change began with the phonograph. The machine which Edison invented in 1877 was an impractical toy which, as its needle scratched a cylinder of tin foil, made noises like a man strangling to death. The commercial "gramophones" which followed (colloquially called screech boxes) were not much better. But the early disc phonographs, which delivered both Caruso and *Cohen on the Telephone*, were too delightful to be resisted. The speed with which they became a national obsession was reflected by the financial statements of the Victor Talking Machine Co., which did \$500 worth of business in 1901 and \$12 million in 1905.

Music in the Air. The canned-music business grew like a tropical plant. In the late '20s, when radio emerged from its crystal-set stage and became a multi-knobbed, multi-tubed wonder, it seemed that the day of the phonograph was done. Actually, the awful slump in the sales of records and machines simply heralded a

new era. The phonograph business modernized itself. Electrical pickups, mechanical record changers, radio-phonograph combinations, and cheap, electrically transcribed records of popular bands and singers built it bigger than ever. The radio business burgeoned, too. The sound track brought music to the screen. The three mediums augmented one another; there was an intermingling of interests (RCA-Victor, CBS-Columbia Records, MGM-MGM Records) and a great reciprocal trading in music and performers.

Today the industry pumps such an enormous volume of its product into the homes, automobiles, bars, restaurants, motion picture theaters and streets of the nation that it is next to impossible for anyone to avoid hearing some of it on any given day.

Last year the ever increasing production of records by 771 companies, big & small, reached a new peak: 325 million records were sold in fiscal 1947. The music stemmed from a multitude of sources: Tin Pan Alley, musical comedies, motion pictures, classical archives and the vanished bawdyhouses of New Orleans' Storyville. It was played by symphony orchestras and hillbilly bands, sung by vocalists who ranged from Traubel through Crosby to Jo Stafford. It sold for \$243,750,000.

And this was only the beginning of the product's earning power. It was rented to the public through half a million glittering jukeboxes, each of which took in from \$10 to \$35 a week. Companies like Muzak Corp. wired recorded music into restaurants and bars. Others dispensed it for pennies and nickels from shiny little speakers set up at the edge of soda counters and tavern tables. The nation's 1,800 standard-broadcast radio stations played records too, a majority of them on all-local advertising programs. Radio personalities like Ted Husing, Paul Whiteman,



Mark Kauffman—LIFE
SPIKE JONES



Wide World
ARTURO TOSCANINI



SUSAN REED

Gjon Mili—LIFE



JOSEPH SZIGETI

Ruth Orkin

The iceman doesn't make the electric refrigerator.



LOUIS ARMSTRONG

John T. McCullough

NATIONAL AFFAIRS



EDISON & EARLY PHONOGRAPH
Like a strangling man.

The Bettmann Archive

Martin Block and Tommy Dorsey earned enormous salaries as disc jockeys. And still more canned music helped Hollywood earn its profits on talking pictures.

\$46,000 per Annum. This was the noisy nest which had hatched Petrillo. Now he sat on its edge making moans like a mourning dove because the industry was getting more & more millions with fewer & fewer musicians.

As the nation's highest paid labor leader (he earns \$26,000 a year as head of Chicago's Local No. 10 and \$20,000 a year as head of the A.F.M.), he lives a part of his life against luxurious backgrounds. He wears expensive double-breasted suits, expensive shoes, shirts and ties. He has two offices, one in Chicago which boasts a gleaming eight-foot walnut desk ("the biggest damned desk I could find at Marshall Field's") and another at international headquarters in New York's G.E. Building. When in Manhattan he lives at the plush Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. He has a summer house (the gift of his grateful union) on Wisconsin's Lake Geneva. Under a clause in the A.F.M. constitution he is provided with an automobile (a black, gleaming, eight-cylinder Chrysler sedan) and a chauffeur.

No matter where he is—Chicago, New York, Los Angeles or Washington—he lives in a portable bedlam of telephone calls, popping flashbulbs and profane argument. But his pleasures are simple. He enjoys baseball and heavy German food. He loves ale, seldom drinks hard liquor and never smokes. He enjoys allowing union members to come in and admire him, though he complains wildly when they linger. "It takes them 20 minutes just to look at me," he says. He works ten, twelve, 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

Family Man. Despite the showiness of his existence as a union president, his private life is almost humble. His home is a modest, five-room apartment on Chi-

cago's middle-class North Austin Boulevard. He is passionately devoted to his family. He still sorrows over his son, Lester, who died 15 years ago after a football accident. He seldom travels without bringing home princely bundles of expensive clothes, books and toys for his six grandchildren. The family regards him with awed admiration. His brother, Radio Executive Caesar James Petrillo,* says: "Sometimes his mind scares me."

The musicians' chieftain began life in the squalid tenements of Chicago's old 19th ward. He grew up on garbage-littered streets where gangs of Italian, Jewish and Irish kids fought like little animals. He was a hard-eyed conqueror from the time he could toddle—he would swing his fists against any odds and for any reason. He quit school after the fourth grade; he rebelled against the discipline and, besides, the Petrillo family needed the money he could make as a peanut and newspaper vendor. But he learned to play the trumpet. His father, a city sewer digger, sent \$24 to Italy to buy the instrument, unpacked it from the box of hay in which it arrived, and grimly set Jimmy to tooting it six nights a week.

By the time he was 14 it was "strictly a business trumpet." He organized a four-piece band, got jobs at picnics, weddings and at dances at the Hod Carriers Hall at Harrison and Green Streets. In the summer, he donned chaps and a big hat, and tooted his brass on horseback with traveling Wild West shows.

He was a mediocre musician. But he was a good mixer, a loud and confident talker. By 1915 he was running Chicago's independent American Musicians at \$150 a month. Three years later he joined the more powerful Local 10 of the American Federation of Musicians, and in 1922 was elected its president. He was a labor boss for good and he liked it.

* By reversing names, their mother used the same for both.

No Artists. Times were hard. Prohibition had thrown hundreds of cabaret and saloon musicians out of work, the union wage was a sad fiction. Even worse, many a musician had no use for the union. Says Petrillo with scorn: "They thought they were artists." He went to work to change all that. He organized the Chinese restaurants. He organized the theaters. He screamed, cajoled, and "pulled out the boys." He built Local 10 into a disciplined, airtight and ruthless organization. And he made it Petrillo's union—where nobody muscled in on Jimmy.

He made an alliance with George Browne, the notorious pandering boss of the stagehands' union—but kept the alliance only as long as it pleased him. "Browne used to be a good guy," says Petrillo, "but when he got screwy and started mixing himself up in trouble I washed my hands of him."

In 1933 Chicago rang with a rumor that Petrillo had been kidnaped from a suburban nightclub and that other union officers had seen fit to buy him back for \$50,000. Jimmy issued shrill denials, distributed a C.P.A. report on the union's finances which showed no \$50,000 deduction. But he took to riding in a \$25,000 armored car, and recruited a force of bodyguards which included two city detectives.

He became a force in Chicago, an intimate of Mayor Ed Kelly, and a park commissioner. He used these connections to "give service to the boys." He persuaded political candidates to abandon sound trucks for vanloads of live musicians during campaigns; he promoted municipally financed concerts in Grant Park. In 1939 he expressed his gratitude for this largesse with a concert honoring Mayor



DISC JOCKEY BLOCK
Like a tropical plant.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Kelly. In so doing he gave a dramatic demonstration of his own power. At his "suggestion," 23 band leaders, among them Paul Whiteman, Fred Waring, Tommy Dorsey and Kay Kyser, brought their orchestras to Chicago at their own expense. The concert orchestras of the National, Columbia and Mutual broadcasting systems came, too.

The next year Petrillo was elected international president of the A.F.M. With grandiose magnanimity, he gave his predecessor, 73-year-old Joseph Weber, a \$20,000-a-year pension for life.

War. Petrillo had already begun his war on canned music. Talking pictures had thrown 18,000 U.S. theater musicians out of work. Petrillo listened to radio broadcasts of recorded music as though he heard the rumble of doom. "Electric refrigerators put the iceman out of work," he screamed, "but the iceman didn't have to make them. The musician is being asked to destroy himself." In 1936, unabashed by the fact that he was simply the head of one local union, he announced that union musicians would no longer make records in Chicago. He also forced radio stations to hire standby workers—*i.e.*, extra musicians they did not need.

Both practices set off public protest, but both worked. Petrillo had one vast advantage over other labor leaders. A music strike, unlike a coal strike, caused little or no public suffering; in fact it hardly diluted the endless flow of recorded sound which dined daily in the nation's ears. As international president of A.F.M., Petrillo assumed unlimited power. The union's bylaws solemnly assert: "It shall be his duty . . . to (a) enforce the constitution, bylaws, standing resolutions or other laws and resolutions or (b) annul or set aside same or any portion thereof . . . and substitute other . . . provisions of his own making. . . ." He began making war on a grander scale.

He immediately demonstrated a genius for bad public relations. He banned a broadcast by 160 boys & girls from the National Music Camp at Interlochen, Mich. The press reacted as though he had burned off their heads with an acetylene torch; Congress and the Justice Department jostled each other in their rush to investigate him. He plunged on, hauled the nation's big symphony orchestras into the union, and with them artists like Iturbi, Spalding and Zimbalist. "They're mine," he cried. "What's the difference between Heifetz and a fiddler in a tavern?"

Indeed, as far as Petrillo is concerned, there is no difference at all. Such is his power that any person who wants to play any instrument for profit must be a member of his union—or just play for his friends. This means everyone from Spike Jones, whose City Slickers would rather murder a tune than play it, to Concert Violinist Joseph Szigeti; from Louis ("Satchmo") Armstrong, the king of swing trumpeters, to Susan Reed, who

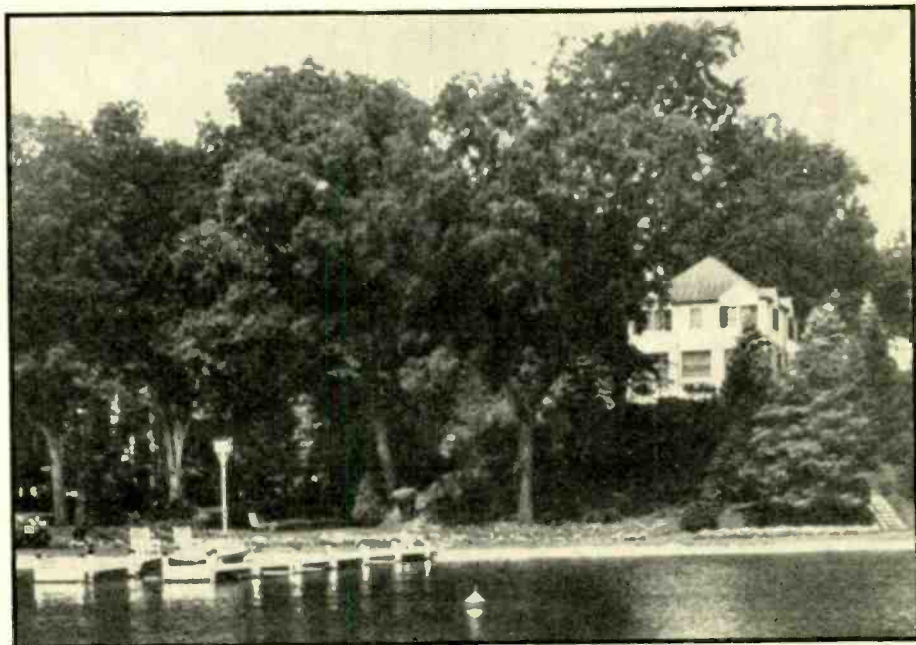
plays a polite zither in nightclubs. Arturo Toscanini is an honorary member but other symphony conductors, like the men in their orchestras, are obedient members of Petrillo's union.

Something for the Boys. In 1942 Petrillo took his biggest gamble. He pulled musicians out of all the nation's recording studios and demanded a royalty on every record sold. Before the ban was over Franklin Roosevelt himself had asked Petrillo to relent. He refused. Some minor companies had already capitulated and, after 27 months, the big record companies surrendered.

Record royalties (\$1,756,435 in 1946, about \$2,000,000 in 1947) gave Petrillo an enviable opportunity to soothe and

right owner shall receive music royalties—ignoring the musician and recording firm, the artificers who put the music into salable form. If a disc jockey and a radio station collect revenue from the commercial use of the product, why not the men who made it? Petrillo was not the first to ask this question, but he was a man with a lever to pry out an answer.

Battle Lines. Last week this good will among his membership stood him in good stead. He had announced that the musicians were out of the recording business for good & all. This could be interpreted as meaning that he wanted the companies to discover a way of giving him royalties (now forbidden by the Taft-Hartley Act), and of shouldering the responsibility of



Allen Dale

PETRILLO'S SUMMER HOUSE ON LAKE GENEVA

Like an octopus in a pea thresher.

comfort his followers and dramatize his fierce boast that he toiled only for the welfare of "the boys." He spent the royalty money employing musicians in free public concerts, the lion's share of it outside New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, the three big cities of the music world. Thus records provided extra employment—though not for the men who made them.

This conformed to the political pattern by which Petrillo has always governed and maintained authority within the union. Of the A.F.M.'s 215,000 members, only 80,000 are full-time musicians. By cultivating the tavern pianist, the burlesque-show drummer, the small-town clerk who plays a piccolo, Petrillo insures himself a long and presumably happy reign.

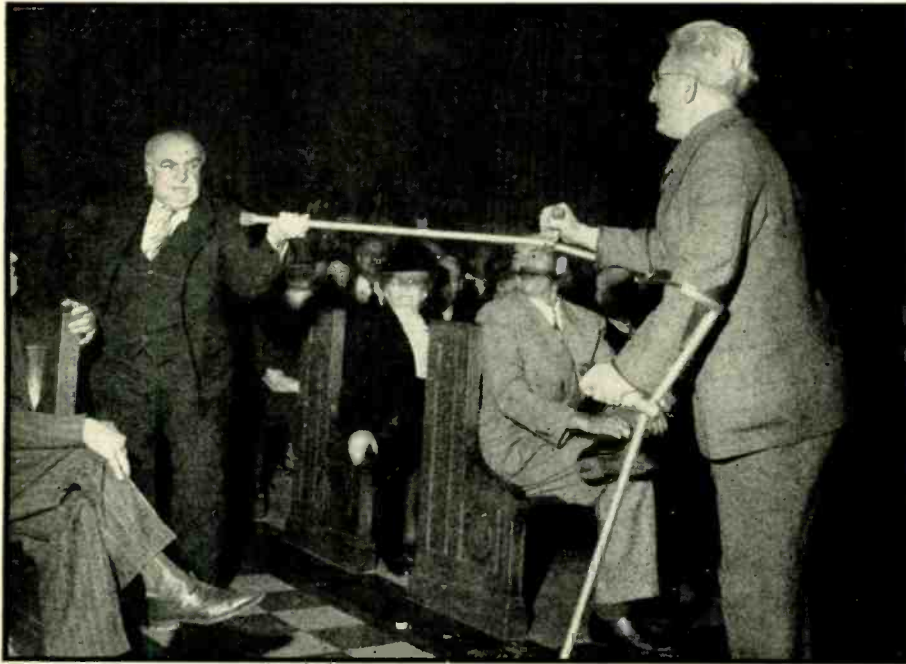
This did not mean that the big-time musician resented Petrillo or particularly criticized his royal plan for dispensing royalties. For Petrillo had at least blasted a way toward discussion of the ownership of canned music. The antiquated U.S. copyright laws provide that only the copy-

suggesting it. Whatever happened would not happen soon. Last week nothing would have horrified the big record producers more than an end to the ban. They had built up huge stockpiles of master recordings, a great many of which fell far short of their usual critical standards, and they needed months to sell them.

The radio networks, through spokesmen for the American Association of Broadcasters, began lambasting Petrillo hard, using the congressional investigation of his affairs as a sounding board. Their contracts with Petrillo run out on Jan. 31. They were prepared to demand music for television, and an end to Petrillo's refusal to give FM outlets free use of regular musical broadcasts. They had stored up hundreds of recorded musical cues and singing commercials, in case he called a strike.

But while any negotiations involving Petrillo were always as unstable as nitroglycerin, neither side seemed to yearn for a showdown battle. For all their public

NATIONAL AFFAIRS



COMMITTEEMAN SCULLY (WITH CRUTCH) & HECKLER
"Sit down, you mug!"

Peter Stackpole—Life

outcry against him, the big men of the music industry respected, and in some cases, admired, Caesar Petrillo. He was honest, and until his mind was set, he was always open to persuasion. His word was as good as gold.

In the jungle of labor relations, he was the lion who always came out on top. He was no more solicitous of the general welfare than John L. Lewis; his methods were those of a barroom fighter. Many citizens could approve of his general aims, but he lived solely by the maxim that the end justifies the means. His greatest virtue seemed to be that he was a success.

What did Jimmy want this time? "I love my enemies," he cried, "but they don't all love me. They say Petrillo's a son-of-a-bitch. All I want to do is keep up with the times. These companies progress—well, I just want to go along with them."

ARMED FORCES

A Ramp to the Middle East

Mellaha airfield in Libya, on the north coast of Africa, will soon be reopened as a U.S. base. Government officials reported last week that Britain, which administers the former Italian colony, has temporarily turned the base back to the U.S.

Used during World War II as an Air Transport Command base, Mellaha is strategically located for the diplomatic war in the Mediterranean. It is a ramp from which A.T.C. planes, carrying a steadily increasing military traffic, can take off to southern Europe and the Middle East. From desolate Mellaha's three strips, it is 775 miles to Athens, 900 miles to the Dardanelles, 1,300 miles to Palestine.

POLITICAL NOTES

Near Zero

Henry Wallace was miles away, but he caused quite a commotion in Los Angeles last week.

The county's Democratic Central Committee met there to steer its course for 1948. Perhaps no political organization has fewer inhibitions or more inner tensions than the Central Committee. Its 225 members are a rare assortment of Upton Sinclairites, Socialists, Communists, PCasters, Hollywood leftists, Roosevelt New Dealers and Ed Pauley conservatives. Their meeting was not serene.

Chairman Rollin McNitt, a needle-nosed lawyer who was once a Republican, began with a demand that each committeeman sign a pledge dedicating all his 1948 campaign work to the nominees of the Democratic Party, forsaking all others. It was high time, snorted Rollin McNitt, that Wallace supporters "either fish or cut bait." They had no business backing a third-party candidate in California's Democratic primary.

With that, the catcalls began. Cried one Wallace supporter: "I'm not excited about Truman." Screamed a Trumanite: "Why don'tcha go home?" The meeting was rapidly getting out of hand when Hollywood's Frank Scully, one-legged author of *Fun in Bed*, onetime candidate for the California assembly (his slogan: "Out of the Gully with Candidate Scully"), took the floor. Supporting himself on chrome-plated crutches, he began an oil-on-the-waters speech. "Let's not divide ourselves to the point where we're zero," he said. "We're damn near that now."

When a heckler interrupted Scully on a point of order, Scully snarled: "Sit down,

you mug!" The heckler kept clamoring. Scully calmly eased himself to within a few feet of him, hoisted up his right crutch and whacked him on the shoulder.

That about ended the meeting. The committeemen agreed that they would support the regular Democratic nominees after the state's primary on June 1. But until then, Wallace supporters were free to wreak whatever havoc they could.

Bonfire

In 1944, coming up to his fourth term, Franklin Roosevelt gave the Democrats a choice between Harry Truman and Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas as the man to run with him. Last week some influential Democrats excitedly built a bonfire under a loof Bill Douglas to make him Harry Truman's running mate.

The kindling was laid a month ago by a group of western national committeemen, who wanted Democratic headquarters to take the lead in luring Justice Douglas out of his marble building. It was touched off last week by Washington Columnists Joseph and Stewart Alsop. Their story, which went scrupulously un-denied, said that the Big Bosses—New York's Ed Flynn, Chicago's Ed Kelly and Jake Arvey, New Jersey's Frank Hague, *et al.*—had agreed on Douglas and had sent word to him that he could have the No. 2 spot if he wanted it. Justice Douglas' answer was not revealed.

There was no doubt that Democratic professionals would be very happy if Justice Douglas assented. He had the right specifications: he is a Protestant and geographically correct (home state: Washington); most important, he would carry New Dealish weight in the big cities of the East and Midwest.

The pros discounted in advance the howls of conservative Southerners. But the howling began immediately. In the Senate, up rose Mississippi's triple-chinned James O. Eastland and cried: "The Southern wing of the party will not follow Mr. Hague's direction and will not vote for any candidate . . . we think is inimical to the welfare of our people. . . ."

Snowball

The Gallup poll, measuring the effect of Henry Wallace's candidacy on the popular vote this week, found it almost nil. The pollsters reported that, if the election were held now with Henry in the race, Harry Truman would beat Tom Dewey (46% to 41%) and would wallop Bob Taft (51% to 31%). They also reported that Ike Eisenhower, with no help from Henry, would defeat the President, 47% to 40%. (In none of the three trial heats did Wallace get more than 8% of the vote.)

There was no longer any doubt that General Ike's candidacy was snowballing. This caused repercussions all around. Just as if he had known in advance of the Gallup trial heats, Governor Dewey decided

"You might say I'm
careful, that's why I say
Chesterfields SATISFY me!"

Risë Stevens

METROPOLITAN OPERA'S
WORLD FAMOUS
CARMEN

SATISFY YOURSELF

...like *Risë Stevens*, that Chesterfields

are **A ALWAYS MILDER**
B BETTER TASTING
C COOLER SMOKING

THE RIGHT COMBINATION...
WORLD'S BEST TOBACCOS



ALWAYS BUY

CHESTERFIELD