

# DEMAND TO SEE GABBERS



## Lecture Bureaus Up Bookings of Radio Commentators, Especially Those Who Can Spiel on Far East

**I-T-HAD-TO-HAPPEN DEPT.:** Mel Marvin's p. a. claims that the band leader had two tires stolen from his Packard roadster during his engagement at the Van Cleve Hotel, Dayton, O., and that the thieves left a note reading: "We had to have the tires. You can keep the car. Hope we didn't inconvenience you too much." The car is in dead storage now and the p. a. says it's for sale. . . . When Camp Shows, Inc., held auditions at Palm Gardens Wednesday more than 70 acts responded and the auditors had to stay far, far into the night. One of the acts, tho, was seen in a curtailed version. It was Beebe's Bears; a cub had arrived a few days before, so at the audition Papa Bear had to do all the work. . . . The *You Tell 'Em* Soldier program over WHN recently had station execs frantic for a while. It originates at the Service Club at Fort Hancock, N. J., and just as equipment was being set up and participants readied a blackout was ordered and all the soldiers rushed to their posts. Ten minutes before broadcast time the blackout was still in effect, with WHN getting more and more jittery. Finally, just five minutes before the program went on the air, the "all clear" sounded. . . . They tell the story of an out-of-the-world hot jazz pianist who was always broke but who, when he finally landed a steady job, determined to go commercial. He did; he went so commercial that when a writer planted a story about him the pianist demanded his cut. . . . Then, of course, there's the character who got a 1-A draft classification and, in order to get a little publicity, announced that he was volunteering. When questioned as to what branch of the service he intended to enter, he answered, "To tell the truth, I'm torn between the Air Corps and the Quartermaster Corps." And he kept a straight face, too.

**NEW YORK, Jan. 17.**—With the war situation increasingly affecting everybody, the business of booking radio news commentators and foreign correspondents for lecture tours has received an additional impetus. The field had been booming the past year, but since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States declaration of war against the Axis countries, the demand for the gab artists has jumped to new heights. Prices for top radio names are between \$1,000 and \$1,500, with rare exceptions occasionally going as high as \$2,500. Latter figure is reportedly the price for Dorothy Thompson, but Miss Thompson is not doing much lecture work at present.

Lesser personalities get anything down to \$100 and \$200. Top radio names who are currently lecturing or have recently lectured, and who have been getting between \$1,000 and \$1,500, include Ed Morrow, William L. Shirer, Raymond Clapper and Raymond Gram Swing. Journalists in the heavy money brackets include Vincent Sheean, Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt, Walter Duranty, Leland Stowe, H. R. Knickerbocker, Quentin Reynolds, James R. Young, Carl Crow and Eve Curie. Some of these, including Miss Curie and Reynolds, are now abroad but will lecture when they return to this country.

Owing to greatly hyped public interest in the Far Eastern theater of the war, great current demand is for Far Eastern experts of the caliber of Vincent Sheean and James R. Young. W. Colston Leigh, Inc., Sheean's agent, sent him on tour immediately after the Pearl Harbor incident. He has already made 25 to 30 appearances and is set for about 75 more. Leigh, Inc., won't say what Sheean is getting for his dates, but it is figured as comparable to what Ed Murrow is getting on his present tour, now being handled by Columbia Lecture Bureau. Murrow is known to be getting up to \$1,500, the entire tour probably netting him a terrific amount of hay. He began his trek with a Boston date January 5, and followed this with dates at Ithaca, Philadelphia, Hartford and Buffalo on January 6, 7, 8 and 9. Followed with Roanoke, Va., January 11; Columbus, O., January 13; Chicago, January 16; then five dates around Los Angeles for Columbia's Coast outlet, KNX. Following this Murrow goes home to Seattle for a brief rest and then carries on with Minneapolis, February 1; St. Paul, February 2; Kansas City, February 3; Cleveland, February 4; Abilene, February 9; San Antonio, February 10; Houston, February 12; Shreveport, February 13; Birmingham, February 16; Greensboro, N. C., February 17, and New York Town Hall February 18. On Murrow's dates from Boston thru Buffalo he is being sponsored by Columbia stations but not carried on the air.

**N**OW it appears that the Ink Spots have been caught up by the "war of nerves" discussions. The A side of their latest recording bears the title, *It's a Sin To Tell a Lie*, while a quick flip-over to the B side reveals the label, *Is It a Sin?* . . . Bernie Green is the fifth Broadway press agent to move to the Church-and-Flat-bush section in Brooklyn, the others being Ed Aaronoff, Sid Garfield, Al Rylander and Leo Guild. The flacks claim that the neighborhood is the only one in Brooklyn where they can buy the morning editions at 8:20 p.m. . . . Jack Zero, back in Miami, where he worked at the Latin Quarter Club as Sultan in the Harem Room, says it isn't true that he stooged for anybody and had no lines to speak. He did have lines—but didn't have the strength to speak them because his turban was so heavy. . . . He-Knows-What-He-Wants Dept.: Joe, the chimpanzee in the Central Park Menagerie, is frequently brought out of his cage by his keeper to go thru his repertory of tricks, which includes shaking hands with visitors. Recently Martha Jones, *Blithe Spirit* understudy and a former Connover model, visited the menagerie with a couple of friends while Joe was going thru his stint. The chimp dutifully shook hands with everybody else, but each time he came to Miss Jones he knocked down her proffered hand, squealed and threw his arms around her. . . . Bernard Maxwell, p. a., is now doing volunteer publicity for the Bronx Office for Civilian Defense. . . . Ralph Gleason, CBS trade press editor, who is an expert on swing and hot music generally, used to stable a horse in his garage at Chappaqua, where he lives. He bought the oat-burner for 75 bucks at a yearling sale at Saratoga, trained it, sent it around to race meetings—and finally sold it for \$500.

### Coast Prices Highest

Prices for radio and journalistic personalities are highest on the West Coast, according to the Leigh office, and prices seem to grow in direct proportion to the distance away from New York. Reasons are various, one being that a booking office will send only names on far-away assignments, and these names are expensive; another is that the big cities, notably New York, have a plethora of names in town; another is that fares and traveling expenses are a terrific item.

But even on dates in and around New York the radio commentators are able to pick up considerable side money, and some of them prefer to do their gabbing around town rather than go on tour, the tour sometimes necessitating breaking of radio dates. Johannes Steel, handled by Columbia Lecture Bureau, has done approximately 60 lectures around New York in the past three months, and claims he is now turning them down at the rate of two or three a week. According to Steel, prices for these dates vary between \$150 and \$500, with the average about \$150 to \$200 about 100 miles outside of New York. Offers from outlying spots, such as Fort Worth, Tex., however, are likely to come to \$600.

John Vandercook, Helen Hyatt, Lisa Sergio and others all do dates around New York. According to the Lecture Division of National Concerts and Artists Corporation (formerly the NBC Artists Corporation) (See Demand to See Gabbers on page 27)

## Shapiro, Bernstein Circularize Nebraska Users; Skirmish Starts

**LINCOLN, Neb., Jan. 17.**—Initial skirmish of ASCAP's members and Nebraska music users started this week when the Shapiro, Bernstein & Company came into the State with a circular letter announcing that the company had been left to its own devices in protecting its rights in Nebraska. Development comes as a result of the State's anti-ASCAP law, already approved by the

Supreme Court, which makes it illegal for ASCAP to operate here.

However, according to indications here, Shapiro, Bernstein & Company did not act in accordance with the Nebraska law, which provides that before doing business the publisher must file copies of his music copyrights at 25 cents a copy.

As matters stand now, very few will take notice of Shapiro, Bernstein & Company's desire to do business until the filing has been completed.

Some of the ballroom operators have stated they would take no chances and, whenever a band is booked in the future, the band's library will be checked before the music starts in the evening—so as to make sure that no S-B music is used.

Altho the filing fee of 25 cents seems exorbitant and may run to \$2,000 for a publisher's catalog, the Copyright Act allows \$250 per infringement plus court costs and legal fees, and it would only take a few of such cases to pay for the whole filing.

Prospect of dealing with ASCAP members individually is beginning to tell on ballroom men especially, and there is some indication that ASCAP's membership, if conducting a no-quarter fight, will have the users crying to legislators for repeal and a chance to forget the whole thing.

### "Son" Weak in Minne

**MINNEAPOLIS, Jan. 17.**—A disappointing \$3,300 for four performances was grossed by *Native Son*, playing the Lyceum Theater here January 12-14. The play, presented at St. Paul Auditorium Theater January 15, following the Minneapolis engagement, enjoyed better attendance, thanks to the excellent publicity the production received in Minneapolis newspapers.



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