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The Lyons Den

By Leonard Lyons



Paul Hoffman is leaving the Eisenhower campaign quarters and returning to his Pasadena home. He opposes the terms of the General's reconciliation with the Taft and Dirksen groups and the effect it will have on independent voters . . . Gen. MacArthur would make a campaign speech if asked to do so by Eisenhower. He feels Dewey is the barrier to this . . . The "Big-Fish-Who-Got-Away," referred to by Judge Samuel Leibowitz last week—in pronouncing sentence in the police-bookie tieup—still is high on the municipal payroll. He will be named in the Grand Jury's presentment which will be released after Labor Day.

Gypsy Rose Lee's one-night stands through Europe have netted her over half a million dollars. She's on her way home with the loot now . . . The Charles Chaplins will be in N. Y. this week. To help promote his new film, "Limelight," Chaplin has approved women's page interviews with his wife, for the first time since their marriage . . . Sen. Ferguson came to N. Y. last night for Senate subcommittee hearings on Communist influence in our schools. The first witness at the Foley Sq. hearings will be an ex-Red teacher . . . At his Copa opening Joe E. Lewis raised a drink and proposed a toast to Sir Cedric Hardwicke: "To the Empire." Hardwicke responded: "To the Empire." Then horse player Lewis continued: "Yes, to Empire and Hialeah, Saratoga and Tropical Park."

Beardsley Ruml, head of the finance committee for Stevenson's campaign, went to Springfield to present the fund-raising program he wrote. Col. Jack Arvey and the other Stevenson mentors told him it was a fine program, but would require six months of work—and there are only eight weeks of campaigning left . . . On the flight back to N. Y. Ruml wrote his solution of the problem of jamming six months' work into eight weeks: "Six months—that's 25 weeks plus vacation. Twenty-five weeks, at 40 hours a week—that's 1,000 work-hours. If we make it a 125 work-hours per week, for eight weeks, that's 1,000 hours. All we have to do, therefore, is work about 18 hours each day, for eight weeks, thus producing 1,000 work-hours or the equivalent of six months work."

President Truman's plans, after leaving the White House, include a flight around the world, first crossing the Pacific to Japan, then the Near East—and Israel, where he'll spend the Passover holidays at Kfar Truman, the kibbutz named in his honor . . . Katharine Cornell's tour in "The Constant Wife" will open at Ford's Theater in Baltimore Oct. 13. She'll visit 75 cities before ending the tour in the spring . . . A hat check girl who worked at the Alibi Club is the latest one to blow a whistle at Mickey Jelke . . . The "For Sale" sign on Millrose Island in the East River has been moved. The city will convert it into a playground.

Robert Capa, the cameraman who covered the wars in Spain, China and Europe, now is president of a cooperative company of cameramen who work out of Paris under their corporate name, Magnum. They're all top men and therefore have peculiarities . . . Capa prefers his colleagues to have no attachments, so that they can be free to fulfill assignments at any hour in any place of the world. He recently assigned one of his associates to do a

Gen. Walter Bedell Smith received a memo requesting a day off for one of his aides, Capt. Ken GINGER of Prentice-Hall. The memo explained that Capt. GINGER wanted the day off so that he could be married. Gen. Smith's replying memo was: "Does he have to do it on our time?" . . . Jose Ferrer, who produced and directed, "Stalag 17" in N. Y., sent for one of the authors to join him in Paris and make revisions of the play for the London run . . . One of Marilyn Monroe's friends who heard of Joe DiMaggio's boast that Marilyn is a good cook, sampled the cooking of the dazzling blond, who served the dishes herself. "If you're a man, and not blindfolded, Marilyn can cook," was the report. "But if you're blindfolded, or a woman—she can't."

The "Magic Carpet to Mecca" project, the transporting of Moslem pilgrims by American Air Force planes in the Middle East, won immeasurable good will for the nation. The request for the use of the planes came from the State Dept. to the Secretary of Defense. The request arrived late in the afternoon, and chanced to be placed on the desk of Asst. Secretary of Defense Anna Rosenberg . . . When Mrs. Rosenberg was appointed to her post, strenuous opposition to her was voiced by the Arab League . . . Mrs. Rosenberg read the request for the Magic Carpet to Mecca, and within 15 minutes she had Secretary Finletter's approval of the project.

Roberta Peters and her ex-husband, Robert Merrill, will both sing in "Rigoletto" at the Met, Merrill's first opera of the new season . . . Merrill, incidentally wears gold cuff-links with an unusual design—the proscenium arch at the Met. They were made by the Met violinist Kasten, who once was a jeweler. He just made gold violin cuff-links for Heifetz . . . The McCarran Committee is not finished with the Owen Lattimore case, and may reopen it soon with a new witness . . . Victor Lasky, co-author of "Seeds of Treason," received a wedding gift last week from Rep. Donald Jackson—bound copies of the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee. The love-happy groom deserves an Oscar for the way he beamed: "Just what we wanted."

Only an illness which proved fatal ever could make Gertrude Lawrence miss a performance. To her friend, Constance Carpenter, fell the task of understudying her and going on in her place in "The King and I"—a difficult task, because the star was a unique one and none could bring to a performance the quality she gave it . . . Moss Hart once auditioned an actress who claimed to have understudied Miss Lawrence in "Susan and God." "I know you were an understudy in 'Susan and God,' you must've been understudying for God."