Remarkable Story Of Ed Sullivan

Horses danced, and so did the Royal Danish Ballet, Ray Bolger, the Moiseyev, Fred Astaire, the Salzburg Marionettes, and Margot Fonteyn; the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company sang, as did Bobby Darin, the Obernkirchen Children's Choir, Julius La Rosa, Maria Callas, the Air Force Academy Glee Club, Elvis Presley, Edith Piaf, Cesare Siepi, and the Mello-Larks; dummies cracked jokes, as did Bob Hope, Jerry Lewis, Noel Coward, Carl Sandburg, Victor Borge, Yehudi Menuhin, Henny Youngman, Oscar Hammerstein, Jack Paar, and Ben Hogan. The list goes on for 14,000 names (although not right here), and includes all but a handful of those who have presented themselves to the Western world as performers in the past fifteen years, and been accepted as such. And they have all, at one time or another, heard their high-priced names shouted at the television-watching public in the same ringing, metallic, New York Irish tones of Ed Sullivan, proprietor of the longest-lived and—cut it how you will—most successful program in television's brief history.

Sullivan and his variety show will have been on the air for fourteen consecutive years, although CBS, a think-big network, refers to it as "the beginning of the fifteenth." For the occasion, Sullivan had lined up a particularly galactic array of mummers, among them Jack Benny, Kate Smith Bing Crosby, and Steve Allen, plus a gimmick: He does not know, he says, what any of these stars will do on the program, and he has been banned from rehearsal so he cannot find out.

If the glittery cast of performers is nothing new for Sullivan's show, his own fogginess about their intended japery is a radical departure. Week after week, summer and winter, through 724 shows that have cost his sponsors about $50 million (and earned him perhaps $5 million), Sullivan has run his petit Palace as a personal fief. He books all acts himself, with son-in-law and producer Bob Precht, and has traveled more than a million miles scouting Australian jugglers, Polish glockenspielers, Nigerian jazzmen, Swiss yodelers, and Catskill comedians. He "routines" each show himself, decides which act will follow which, and serves as well as a booster, confessor, assistant director, and a particularly hard-eyed unofficial member of the Catholic Legion of Decency. "All comics . . ." he says and then stops, spreading his arms to indicate the size of the comic conspiracy. "I have to tell them, this is not only dirty, it's vile. That's where I got my ulcer from."

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Sullivan has also, of course, served as his own master of ceremonies for all these Sundays, and this is where the wonder begins to pile up like one of his human pyramids. Stony-faced, baggy-eyed, so stiff through his bull-neck and shoulders that he is frequently assumed to have broken his back, a mangler of thought and language, a stumbling, bungling, fumbling perpetual amateur who has yet to master the smallest gesture, the simplest phrase, Sullivan is the most painfully unlikely stage figure in all the bizarre history of vaudeville. For most people, however, he is an endearing figure, embodying in his consummate ineptitude all the sincerity, straightforwardness, and democratic virtue that slicker articles lack. Performers see in him not only a showcase and paymaster (as much as $10,000 for the biggest names), but a champion fan. "He is so aware of talent," Helen Hayes has said, "so struck with the splendor of it, so altogether stage-struck in the true sense of the phrase, that one can feel it."

Born 59 years ago—although he looks only about 45, even the '20s, with The New York without make-up — Sullivan caught on as a sportswriter in Evening Mail, then the Graphic. His Broadway column, begun in the late '20s, is now syndicated by the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate. Sullivan organized countless benefits for servicemen and hospitals during the war. He also played host on the News's Harvest Moon Ball, where he was seen in 1947 by a CBS official who was looking for an m.c. for a prospective variety show called "Toast of the Town."

Sullivan's first show went on the air, carried by six stations, on June 20, 1948, with a budget of $1,350 and a cast that included Rodgers and Hammerstein, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, singer Monica Lewis, and the June Taylor dancers. The critics liked the show but howled about Sullivan, in who they saw a certain indefinable nothing. Nevertheless, Lincoln - Mercury picked up the show—as did a sizable audience—and Sullivan settled in for the long siege: NBC threw every star it had against him and beat him for awhile with "The Colgate Comedy Hour"; "Maverick" came along later and for two seasons crushed him in the ratings. Neither of them could keep it up. "The turning point for Ed came when he signed Julius La Rosa after Godfrey fired him in 1953," says an executive on a rival network. "That brought him tremendous empathy, and since then he's been right up at the top."

Sullivan has always had what he calls "a newspaperman's eye" for the timeliness of a performer, and he often signs up do-nothing guests—especially athletes—for walk-on appearances solely because they are in the news. But his best eye is that of a showman. An enthusiastic if untutored opera lover since his youth, he found that grand opera would stop the show cold "if you put the high-class stuff in with the pop." (Soprano Roberta Peters, with 35 appearances, has been on his show more often any other performer except the Canadian comics Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster.) Just once he tried to make culture carry the main load, hiring Callas, Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Metropolitan Opera orchestra, for an eighteen-minute version of "Tosca." "The reaction to this single achievement," he says, "was ghastly. I'd made a deal to do six operas. I did three and got the hell out."

Sullivan has enormous faith in his ability to gauge public reaction. "Public opinion is the voice of God," he says. "The greatest thing for this show is the dress rehearsal. One act can give strength to another, or it can come on and go boom. What the hell, until I play it in front of an audience, I never know. I've never once gone on at night (all but a few shows are done live) with the same running order I had that afternoon for rehearsal."

After all his exposure, Sullivan is unruffled by "my lack of performing talent," and in fact regards it as a secret weapon. "If I bring Jimmy Durante to your home," he said last month, exploding the words "Jimmy Durante" as if they were Ten Commandments, "and then I do all the talking, you'd say, Heaven's sake Edward shut up. The audience is the same way. They say, why don't you put the act on? Every other variety show has always had a star, a performer, I don't think you could ever get anybody but me content just to introduce an act and get off."

From NEWSWEEK

Photo Courtesy LUFTHANSA German Airlines

AIR FARES COMING DOWN? Less than half a cent per mile was the fare for this cat "Bonzo" for a quarter trip around the globe. For $25.38 from Vancouver to Berlin including a refreshing drink of milk served by Lufthansa hostess Elau Roos during a stopover in Montreal was the travel bargain for this tiny passenger.

Chronicles of Ginger Farm

Gwendoline P. Clarke

Laboring forces are getting to be so contradictory we hardly know what to expect any more. We hear of strikes and rowdyism and then we run into a situation that makes us wonder if white collar outfits will soon be the universal garb for all workers. It came about this way. Township workmen were doing a tar-patching job along the suburban roads. When they stopped outside our place one of the fellows asked Partner if he would get him a drink of water. "Sure," said Partner, and he went off to the house, put water into a small aluminium pot and added half a dozen ice cubes. When he handed it to the man the fellow looked from the water to Partner and said "How am I supposed to drink it?" Partner just about blew a fuse. "Holy Moses," he exclaimed, "didn't you ever drink out of a tin can?" When Partner told me about it I remembered when the children and I used to run out to the field in haying time with a can of fresh, cold water, straight from the well. No one asked then how he was supposed to drink — nor in the army either. Partner said maybe this fellow would have known better how to deal with a bottle!

Well, things moved so fast last week we could hardly keep pace with them. Weather-wise we had everything — cold weather, hot weather, thunderstorms . . . and even rain! Everything in he garden jumped about three inches. More of our shrubs have come into bloom, including a climbing honeysuckle. As a result we now have humming-birds to visit us. Socially, there have been teas, garden parties and such like. Maybe in some cases they are a welcome alternative to political meetings and televised broadcasts. Now at long last they have come to an end and this week we shall know which party the people have chosen to guide our destiny for the next few years. I only hope there will be a working majority of some kind so we are not faced with another election inside of six months. That would be awful.

To me one of the most interesting events last week was the running of the Queen's Plate with her Majesty, the Queen Mother, awarding the prize to Mr. E. P. Taylor, owner of the winning filly, "Flaming Page". We had visitors here yesterday who had been there and they said the Queen Mother, young-looking and charming, was still her gracious self and quite obviously interested in the set-up for running the race as compared with similar events in England. As often as she must hear the National Anthem I would imagine that even the Queen Mother must be conscious of a certain thrill every time she hears it — to think the Queen referred to in the Anthem is her own daughter. Young members of the Royal Family are also in the news these days. The latest is Princess Anne spending her first week-end in a Girl Guide camp, helping with the cooking and washing the dishes. Girl Guides everywhere will be proud of the fact that Princess Anne is now one of their number.

Well, in my last column I was telling you I had been making pyjamas for some of my grandsons. That meant a lot of cuttings left over so I went to work and made up most of the pieces into four-inch blocks until I had enough to make a top for a single-bed quilt. By Saturday I had the top finished. The next problem was setting up the quilt — how and where was I to find room for it? I thought about our big rooms at the farm — one room sixteen feet square — in which we thought nothing of setting up two quilts at one time. Here even one single quilt is a problem although our rooms are by no means small. Partner wanted to shift things around in the livingroom and put it there. But I wouldn't consider it because I knew exactly what would happen — I would be working at it every spare minute to get it out of the way. I finally set it up down in the basement where there is plenty of room and it is also cool. Now I find our neighbours are very interested in my quilt. "Oh, I remember my mother used to have quilts like that!" "Well, for goodness sake, is that how quilting is done?" But not one of them knew how to quilt! It is becoming a lost art. If this quilt were for some organization I could invite a few old-timers in to help me. But this quilt is being made for use at the cottage so I don't feel I should ask help in doing what is actually my own work. So there it is — fascinating work for anyone but I expect I shall wind up doing most of the work myself. I shall enjoy doing it — but it does take time.

Goodbye . . . Partner is calling me . . . we are on our way to vote!

REALLY TAKEN

At a fashionable nightclub, a girl-about-town boasted to a friend in the powder room, "I had my nose bobbed for eight hundred dollars and already I've been taken for Kim Novak." "You've been taken all right," sneered the friend — "for eight hundred dollars."

Being Different In Hollywood

I was not quite four when Mamma moved all of us and all our wordly goods to Hollywood. Mamma's sister's husband, Uncle Trax, first arranged for my sisters, and then for me, to get work as child-extras in motion pictures, and Mamma to open a Boarding House.

What we kids earned at the studio was very welcome in the family kitty. Mamma was as selective of her paying guests and as solicitous of their comfort and convenience, once they passed her Kentucky-bred standards, as though they were her house guests, and in no way connected with anyone's livelihood.

So we never had much money. But we always had a rich abundance of all the things money can't buy. Love, trust, discipline, religious training. And we had lots and lots of fun! . . .

I remember when I transferred from the first school to the other. At the first one we had to wear uniforms, at the second one we didn't.

I had the uniforms Our funds being what they were, the cost of the uniforms was enough that, having them, I had no dresses. No problems, I thought. I simply wore my uniforms to the new school. They marked me as different, set me apart. Some of my classmates made me realize this fact and then I did have a problem. The day that one of the girls asked, "Haven't you any dresses at all?" her tone really shriveled my pride and I came home crying.

I sobbed my story to Mamma. She put her arms around me, but without any excess of sympathy. She said firmly: "Now see here, Gretchen. Whatever you wear is always neat. It is always clean. The other children may have very fine clothes, but they cannot be more immaculate than your uniforms. It's nice to have fine clothes, but it's not important. It is important to be clean. 'Cleanliness is next to Godliness.'"

As far as Mamma was concerned, that was the end of it.

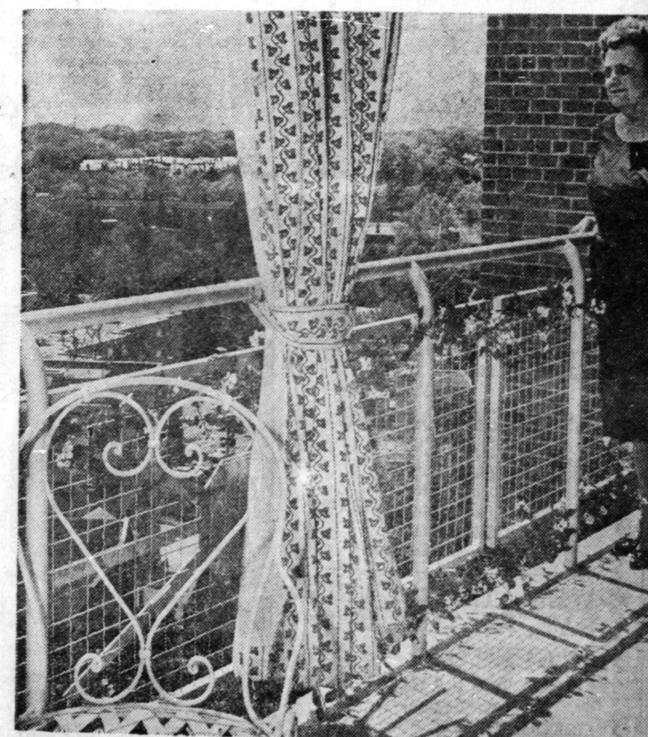
Of course her arms were comforting, but there was no nonsense in her attitude. She expected me to adjust to the fact that the uniforms had to be worn. She made me feel proud of their cleanliness. She made me proud to be different. And I know that gave me an independence which has helped me in my work and in my life.—From "The Things I had to Learn," by Loretta Young as told to Helen Ferguson.

When the boss says: "I'll think it over and let you know," you knew.

SALLY'S SALLIES

"Which one of these bears died last?"

'Mostest' in Apartments, Too---



Perle Mesta, Washington's legendary "hostess with the mostest," has new quarters for her new career as writer-lecturer. Mrs. Mesta gave up her mansion, "Les Ormes," to Vice President and Mrs Lyndon Johnson, and now lives with her mementos and collectors' items in a 15-room penthouse atop a co operative apartment overlooking Washington and a portion of the Virginia countryside. At left, Mrs Mesta poses with a French figurine in the music room Cabinetlike piece is a desk once used by Marie Atoinette At right, she surveys the Washington scene from one of two 40-foot long terrace type balconies To meet Mrs Mesta's requirements, four two-bedroom units were changed to provide living, dining music and drawing rooms, seven bedrooms and baths The penthouse apartment includes an office, kitchens, and butler's pantry.

Trying To Save Red's Right Arm

The taxi was waiting at the rear exit of Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital one morning recently. Twelve-year-old Everett (Red) Knowles paused, turned, and waved his left arm at the small cluster of doctors in the doorway. Then, taking care not to bump his other arm, held in a cast in front of his body, he ducked into the cab and began the 4-mile trip to his home in Somerville. It had been three weeks to the day since a fire-department ambulance had rushed the redheaded youngster to Massachusetts General's emergency entrance. Dazed with shock, the boy had been found clutching his right arm which had been torn completely off just below the shoulder in a train accident. Within six hours of his arrival, three waves of surgeons—aided by dozens of physicians and technicians—had sewn the arm back, a piece of medical derring-do seldom tried and so far never successful.

First, the doctors carefully rejoined the two major veins and single artery of the arm, watching triumphantly as a pulse returned to the wrist and the fingertips flushed pink with life. Then orthopedists drove a 9-inch stainless-steel rod into each end of broken bone, firmly reattaching the arm. Plastic surgeons joined the four main muscle groups and, in another operation five days later, covered the raw wound at arm and shoulder with skin from Everett's thigh.

Despite the shock of the accident and rapid succession of operations, the freckled youngster was soon eating regular meals, playing electric football with his nurses ("But they didn't know anything at all about setting up their men"), and learning to write with his left hand. While doctors worried about possible infection which would require immediate amputation, Everett had only one concern: Would he ever be able to pitch again for his Little League team, the shoe - company - sponsored Stride - Rites? Encouragement came from some of the people who counted most. American League president Joe Cronin sent Everett an autographed baseball. Yankee lefthander Bud Daley wired: "I'm a pitcher like you and you may not know it, my right arm is withered from polio, so don't lose all hope." "I just wanted to drop you a line," wrote Ted Williams, "and tell you to hurry up and . . . get back into that baseball uniform."

But doctors are in no hurry to put Everett back on the mound. The most critical operation of all—to reattach the nerves of Everett's now useless arm—still lies ahead. "We have to wait for the bones to heal and the tissues to soften," said Dr. Ronald A. Malt, who is in immediate charge of the case. Hopefully, in two to five months neurosurgeons will hook up the three main nerve branches, now held by temporary sutures to keep them from shriveling. Whether the thousands of nerve fibers controlling the arm will grow together and restore function will not be known for a year or two.

Everett, greeting fellow Little Leaguers in the living room of the Knowles' modest home, was confident about the next, most crucial operation. "I'm not the least bit worried," he said firmly. "Besides, if I can't pitch again, I'll switch to third base."

ROUGH SPORT

A skinny lad, weighing 150 pounds or less, turned out for the first football practice at one of the Big Ten colleges last fall, but soon thought better of his impulse. "I didn't mind a thing," he reported, "till one bruiser grabbed my left leg, another my right leg, and the first one said to the other, 'Make a wish!'"

CREATING A SPLASH — One way to solve Chicago's traffic problem would seem to be to drive right into the lake You'd need an "Amphicar," however, which is what is being demonstrated above in Lake Michigan. The Amphicar is a two-door, four-passenger convertible equipped with everything a car needs, plus navigation lights bilge pump and twin propellers. Built in Germany, it has a cruising speed of 70 m.p.h. on land and about 14 m.p.h in water.

His Scarred Face Made Him A Crook

The cashier was busy counting fivers when he heard the swing-door open. He looked up with an automatic can-I-help-you-sir smile, but the smile froze as he saw the man's face.

With his right foot he sounded the electric alarm-bell by pressing the button under the counter.

Two minutes later, Charles Aram — as we shall call him— was being questioned by police officers. They knew him as a professional criminal.

"I wanted to cash a cheque," he said, and showed it to them.

"True, he didn't try to rob the bank," the cashier admitted, "but I wasn't going to take chances on a bloke with a face like that."

Aram had a boxer's broken nose, a wrestler's folded right ear and a scar from the chin through the lips up to the eye.

"Isn't that enough to ring the alarm for?" asked the cashier.

* * *

In a smart office in the City of London a tall, handsome man with shining dark hair, grey temples and bushy black eyebrows greeted me with a warm smile.

"Yes, I'm Charles Aram," he said, "I used to be a criminal . . . a professional screwsman. I don't make a secret of why I turned to crime. It was because of my face."

I looked again at the smooth, well-groomed skin, the straight, almost aquiline nose, the bold, thick-set eyes.

"Not this face. Once, it was quite different."

Charles was seven. He was playing with other kids in a narrow alley near the London docks. He was the cop chasing a couple of robbers who had escaped through a warehouse door.

He looked for them outside through a low-silled window, overbalanced and toppled head-first twenty feet on to a heap of scrap metal.

He regained consciousness in hospital.

"I had a broken leg, my face was badly cut and I was lucky that they could save my eye," Charles said.

As a result of the accident he had a scar right across his cheek. Soon kids were calling him "Scarface" all over the district.

Other boys provoked him "Let's see how tough you are, Scarface," they taunted him. He was always getting involved in fights and was often beaten up — because he was not as tough as he looked. To learn to defend himself better, he took up wrestling.

When he was eleven, two brothers of his own age in his class jeered him till he punched one of them in the face. The other one began to cry.

Next day their father, Fred Kelsey, waited for Charles to come out of school. Then he grabbed him and beat him with a stick.

Charlie ran home with a bleeding and broken nose.

That night Charlie's father, a docker, swore to kill the man who had beaten up his son But Charlie wouldn't tell who it was. He would get revenge himself he decided.

In order to gain more strength and fighting skill, Charlie trained hard as a wrestler at a club.

His coach made him turn pro —and soon he had his lips permanently twisted and his right ear smashed.

Having lost his father soon after leaving school, Charlie — his face now hideously deformed — applied for a job at a factory. They turned him away.

A local newsagent laughed at him when he wanted to become a paperboy.

At a dairy, the foreman told him bluntly: "You'd never sell any milk with your face. No, my boy. Housewives wouldn't dare open the door to you."

Next night Charlie broke into the newsagent's shop, stole 300 cigarettes and £2 17s. cash. He was caught within twenty-four hours.

Borstal was no help to him.

"There I learned the value of my face," Charles said. "The boys accepted me as a leader at once—just on face-value. Now, all I needed was more experience. And I was determined to get it."

Soon after he got out of Borstal, he did a small job which earned him three months in prison. He found jail a real university of crime. He knew he would have to go back—to graduate.

The long-delayed revenge on the Kelseys seemed to be a good opportunity to achieve that.

When he first broke into Kelsey's house the boys and their mother saw him stealing a radio, some cash and a suit.

They were so terrified by his face that they did not dare stop him—even when he smashed the windows and furniture.

For that he got another six months.

The prison governor wanted him to learn a craft. Charlie was good at figures, so they let him study accountancy.

Charles told me: "Of course, they didn't know my idea was to become boss of a big gang."

With his cuts from the "profits" he could get his suits from Savile Row, wear handmade shoes, dine at the best places and win any girl.

To attract girls—perhaps that was one of Charles Aram's strongest motives for turning to crime.

In his teens no good-looking girl wanted to talk to him or dance with him. Once he had fallen in love with a girl called Sheila. But she would have nothing to do with him. "I want to be proud of the boy I go out with," she told him.

Charles knew that if he was rich he would have plenty of girl friends. But he could never make enough money in a job. So crime became the main source of income to him.

The underworld was the only place which would accept him, crime was his only refuge, the only way he could earn the money that, with his brain, he should be getting. When a girl who refused to talk to him married one of the Kelsey boys. Charles broke into their house for a second time.

Then, only the old man, Fred, was at home. Charlie robbed the house and beat up Fred. The charges brought against him failed. He made up a false alibi which convinced the jury.

But a few months later he was sent to jail—for two years. He was found guilty of fraudulent conversion. He was thirty-two. He had nine convictions and served seven years in jail.

It was the prison chaplain who really saved Charles Aram—and society—from himself.

At first, he tried to convince the prisoner that he didn't need to turn to crime. As a good accountant he could earn much more.

Charles laughed at him: "With my face? An office job? I'm not pretty enough to make a milkman. Housewives wouldn't trust me with their money. So why should businessmen?"

Next day, the chaplain returned with another man.

"He's a plastic surgeon," the chaplain explained. "Perhaps one of the best in the country. If you agree, he'll operate on you and you won't have to worry about your looks any more."

"Who'll pay for it? Doesn't it cost a lot of money? I haven't got a penny," Charles snapped.

"It'll be done through the Health Service," the chaplain said.

Aram had three operations. After the third—he could not recognize himself.

When released from the hospital he walked straight down to the docks where most of his friends—and enemies—lived.

No one greeted him.

No one recognized him. He was just a stranger.

He saw a girl walking towards him. There was something familiar about her. Then he remembered. It was Sheila. He stopped her.

The girl did not remember him. He had to tell someone — so he told her all about himself. To his amazement, she listened and agreed to meet him in the evening.

It was Charlie's first proper date—at the age of thirty-four. And Shelia did not stand him up.

A few days later a probation officer introduced him to a big firm of accountants in the City.

The partners knew of his criminal record but—in view of the circumstances—agreed to employ him under a different name. He got a job of minor importance.

Two years later he became a partner—with a luxurious office to himself. When I met him he looked and behaved like a business tycoon—and leader among men as he had always wanted to be.

There was a baby boy's picture in a metal frame on the huge kidney-shaped desk.

"My son, though a bit older now," Charles said.

He took a photograph of a pretty blonde out of his pocket. "And that's Sheila—my wife." "And that's Sheila—my wife."—by Stephen Barley in "Tit-Bits."

Still The Boy Who Never Grew Up

It hardly seemed plausible that actor Mickey Rooney could be on his uppers. Bouncy as ever at 41, he was stepping from one featured role in "Requiem for a Heavyweight" into another in "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World." His current wife (No. 5) sported a $4,300 leopard-skin coat. And in a generation as a Hollywood star—going back to 1935, when he enchanted moviegoers as Puck in "A Mid-summer Night's Dream" — the pug-nosed little trouper has earned about $15 million. Yet last month Rooney pleaded bankruptcy, listing liabilities of $484,914 and assets of $500, and told newsmen: "I'm going to concentrate on getting back in the blue." Declaring himself hamstrung by unpaid taxes and other debts, race-track losses, and alimony and child support claimed by three of his ex-wives, Rooney noted in his petition that even the leopard-skin coat wasn't paid for in full. What made him buy it, if things were so tough? Rooney's lawyer explained: "Mickey's career wasn't going so well, the baby was sick . . . you know, when feelings run low, you buy something expensive to brighten the day."

Faith in the ability of a leader is of slight service unless it be united with faith in his justice.

—*George W. Goethals*

BECK GOES TO PRISON — Former Teamsters Union President Dave Beck (left) follows a U.S. marshal as they leave for McNeil Island federal prison in Tacoma, Wash. Beck paid a $20,000 fine and entered prison to begin serving a five-year term. Beck was found guilty of income tax violations three years ago.

How Can I?

By Roberta Lee

Q. How can I clean my oil mop?

A. You can do a good job with hot soapsuds in which a little ammonia has been added. Or, soak the oil mop in soda water, then wash in hot soapsuds. Rinse well, and shake occasionally while it is drying. To apply fresh oil, pour some polish into a shallow pan, and allow the mop to stand in this until it is absorbed.

HOT STUFF — James Trono-lone, four months, wears a toy fireman's helmet as a perfect topper for his big smile.