

"MY FAIR LADY" AT MEADOWS

One of the most electrifying pieces of news of the theatre season is the announcement that tickets will be placed on sale at the box office of The Meadows Playhouse effective immediately for MY FAIR LADY. The play opened July 6 for the general public and runs through July 31.

Generating waves of excitement wherever MY FAIR LADY has opened from Australia to Iceland, Tokyo to Tel Aviv, Stockholm to Buenos Aires, New York to Johannesburg, this kind of announcement has invariably resulted in long lines of people clamoring at box offices to see this most popular musical in theatrical history.

Judith Brenner, Artistic Director of The Meadows Playhouse and director of MY FAIR LADY, expects that it will be the traditional story in Las Vegas for the presentation that will star Harry Hambley (Henry Higgins) as the charming but arrogant phonetics professor of the play, and B. J. Doolan (Eliza) as the dirty ragamuffin he turns into a lady. Bobby Sargent (Alfred Doolittle) will have the role of the slum girl's dissolute father who will sing the show's much favored Cockney songs -- "A Little Bit of Luck" and "Get Me to the Church on Time." Israelite "Vegastars" columnist and Variety's Vegas chief, Bill Willard performs the friend who takes the speech professor's bet; Verloree Bader (Mrs. Higgins) is the professor's gracious mother and Scott Davidson (Freddie) is the bumbling fellow who falls in love with the transformed Cinderella.

It is no news that the original New York production of MY FAIR LADY enchanted everybody, young, old, rich, poor, avant-garde and rear-guard. There were some people, however, for whom this record-breaking hit was something of a dose of gall and wormwood. Noel Coward, for example, had been asked to write a musical version of Bernard Shaw's PYGMALION, on which MY FAIR LADY is based, and declined; so also did Rogers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter and the team of Sady and Harburg; all of them losing the chance for the greatest

musical success of the century and around four million dollars of royalties.

Richard Maney, press agent for the New York run of MY FAIR LADY for a special 16 page Sunday Magazine Supplement of the N.Y. Times of March 27, 1960, captured the essence of MY FAIR LADY opening in New Haven on February 4, 1956. "Its reception rocked the needle on the seismograph at Fordham University, seventy-five miles away. At its tryout in Philadelphia the musical created a commotion unequalled on the Schuylkill since the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The news of this out-of-town hysteria swept Broadway like a flash fire in a mesquite patch and sent ticket brokers into tribal snake dances.... Tickets to the show became symbols of the unattainable."

MY FAIR LADY was by all odds the most successful show in all theatrical history. During its New York run 3,750 people paid more than \$24,000,000 to get in, nearly 65,000 of them for standing room only. By the time MY FAIR LADY ended its New York run on September 29, 1962, it had run six and a half years, for a total of 2,717 performances -- more than any other musical in stage history, surpassed only by the runs of two non-musicals, LIFE WITH

NEW YORK (WNS) -- While expressing regret over the resignation of Secretary of State Alexander Haig, representatives of leading American Jewish organizations viewed with cautious optimism the nomination of George Shultz as Haig's successor. The apprehension

FATHER and TO-BACCO ROAD. Warner Brothers paid \$5,500,000 for the film rights and in 1963 made a movie version with Rex Harrison in the role he originated on stage and Audrey Hepburn as Eliza, that was planned for release in the fall of 1964.

The Meadows Playhouse final play of its fifth season opened July 6 with Judith Brenner as the director. Terry E. McFall designed the costumes and properties, and Richard Hall created the lighting and set design. For early ticket reservation call the box office at 739-7525. Group theatre parties are also available.

over the nomination by President Reagan of Shultz stems from what some Jewish leaders see as his pro-Arab slant attributed in part to his previous position as president of the Bechtel Corporation, the same corporation which Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger was president of and which has extensive business contacts with Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries.

Howard Squadron, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations said Haig's departure is a "matter of concern and regret." While he noted Shultz's "reputation for integrity, competency and distinguished government service," Squadron said Shultz "must surely recognize the importance to American interests of a strong and secure Israel, and of the need for continuing the longstanding American commitment to Israel's safety and survival."

Rabbi Alexander

Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, also expressed regret at the departure of Haig. Schindler said that while little is known of Shultz's foreign policy views, he nevertheless hoped that they will not be "overly influenced" by the fact that Shultz worked for the Bechtel Corporation.

Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, was less optimistic and said the nomination of

Shultz arouses "the gravest apprehension."

Ivan Novick, president of the Zionist Organization of America, (ZOA) said that the ZOA was "confident that Secretary Haig's perception of America's interest in the Middle East, including the need for Israel and the Lebanese people to be free of all threats from the PLO and Syria, will be a policy continued by the Administration and supported by his successor George Shultz."

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