



WALTER BURRELL

Hollywood Happenings

Fair-skinned Negroes apparently aren't the only ones who occasionally "pass" for white.

When Vikki Carr, glamorous young singer whose hit recording of "It Must Be Him" has hugged the number one position on charts for several weeks, began her career she claimed to be Spanish, rather than Mexican or Mexican-American.

"I believed there was a special kind of aura attached to 'Spanish' that was denied to Mexicans or Mexican-Americans," she says almost unbelievably now.

"Then one day I suddenly took stock and realized how idiotic my stand was. My father and his father before him were construction engineers whose history can be traced to the famed California missions. My brothers and parents are militantly proud of this heritage. So who the devil was I to deny it?"

Since Vikki (who changed her name to fit a theatre marquee) has re-assessed her heritage, she isn't only as proud of it as the rest of her family, but makes sure her audiences know she was born Florencia Bisenta de Casillas Martinez Cardona. She also includes at least one Spanish language number in her nightclub routine and concert dates.

ONE OF HER most gratifying moments came this past summer when the Federal Government asked her to record a message in Spanish to be broadcast over some 300 Spanish-language radio stations throughout the Southwest informing the Spanish-speaking public of that area of the recently established Cabinet Committee on Mexican-Americans to improve their lot and open up new opportunities to them. A message from President Johnson was part of the recording.

This pride and public emphasis on being a member of a minority group has obviously not hurt the petite, Texas-born singer who grew up in Southern California's San Gabriel Valley.

A longtime British favorite, she was the only American female entertainer invited to this year's Royal Command Performance at London's famed Palladium and be presented to Queen Elizabeth II.

Her first smash hit record, "It Must Be Him," reached the top of British and U.S. charts recently and her just-released album of the same title got off to such a fast start it should soon duplicate the single's success.

To top it all off, she made her major New York nightclub debut at the posh Persian Room, considered the leading nitery in the country, on Dec. 6 for a three-week stand.

THE ELDEST of seven children, the tiny singer with the big-volume voice made her public debut at four, singing "Adesta Fidelis" and "Silent Night" in Latin at a Christmas program.

Yet she was so strictly brought up that she wasn't allowed to attend school dances unless she was singing with the band. Once, as a special bonus, she was allowed to go to a high school football game without an escort.

Now, the svelte little singer's public reaches from Los Angeles to Las Vegas to New York in the U.S. and from London to Tokyo to Australia abroad. Last Christmas she interrupted her honeymoon to accompany Danny Kaye to Viet Nam to entertain the troops--an experience she rates as "one of the most rewarding of my life."

Vikki is undeniably on her way to a brilliant career now and you can believe the only thing she's "passing" for these days is the talented and gifted singer she is.

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Little Girl - Big Voice



VIKKI CARR -- pint-sized singer, whose great singing voice is conversely as big as she is small, is profiled in Walter Burrell's "Hollywood Happenings," this page... An interesting insight on the dynamic young singing star who learned to take pride in her heritage.

Segregation Succession

POINTE A LA HACHE, La. - (NPI)--Old segregationists never die. They just fade away, while continuing to rule the roost.

If they're like Leander H. Perez, 76, they formally resign, but keep the political power in the family.

Perez retired as president of the Plaquemines parish (county) commission council--but he was still in there pulling the strings.

His son, Chalin O. Perez, 44, was "elected" commission council president to replace him. And that left the elder Perez as much in power as ever.

The 76-year-old segregationist has been the parish's ruler for 48 years.

Excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church in 1962 for obstructing the opening of a desegregated parochial school, he continued to fight school integration and supported George Wallace's Presidential candidacy.

Xmas School Vacation

All Clark County public schools will be closed for the Christmas vacation at the end of the day on Thursday, December 21. THURSDAY WILL BE A REGULAR DAY WITH DISMISSAL AT THE REGULAR TIME FOR EACH SCHOOL.

Classes for the District's 63,200 students will resume on Tuesday, January 2.

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