

Gaver Lists Reason Why Youngsters Continue Attempting Broadway Success

By JACK GAVR
United Press Drama Editor
New York — (U.P.) — Here are some more reasons why you can't keep 'em down on the farm or wherever.

The reasons are named Piper Palmer, Benny Gettys, Diana Van Der Vlis and Pippa Scott—all young people who seem to have achieved that big Broadway break without much trouble.

So long as these things continue to happen—and they always do—youngsters with the Broadway bee in their bonnets aren't going to be stopped by stories of the hardships of scores of others who try to storm the

theater every year. At 25, Palmer is the oldest of the four and it may be that he has received the biggest break of all; only time will tell. He has the title role in the big musical version of Al Capp's comic strip, "Li'l Abner." The show is scheduled to begin its try-out phase in Washington next Monday.

Palmer is a former University of Illinois football tackle (played in the 1932 Rose Bowl game) and he was a music major in school. He had gone to Hollywood a couple of years ago for some private voice coaching and to see if he couldn't get a break in the movies. The Army got him first, which may have been

the best thing that could have happened to him at the time.

Communist China to Follow Russian Plan

Tokyo — (U.P.) — Communist China's President Mao Tse Tung said his country will copy Russia in its efforts to become an industrial nation.

A speech by Mao at the opening of China's first Communist convention since World War II, broadcast by the Red radio, said bureaucracy and rigid adherence to party doctrine have caused "serious shortcomings" in "backward" China.

He got a lot of singing experience entertaining troops and wound up last spring on all-Army talent program on Ed Sullivan's CBS-TV show. The musical's producers, already perturbed about finding just the right man to play Li'l Abner, happened to tune into part of the program and heard Palmer singing "Granada." The voice was good, the man had the necessary outside physical qualifications.

The only problem was, could he get out of the Army in time to meet the rigid production program? Palmer just barely made it.

Benny Gettys is a 15-year-

old Dallas sophomore who has done a little theatrical work in her neighborhood. She came to New York a few weeks ago merely for a two-week visit with friends—no stage idea at all.

Benny went to see the "Name That Tune" TV show on CBS and was chosen as a contestant. It just happened that night that Producer Kermit Bloomgarden, who has to be mighty careful about the girl who plays the title role in his prize-winning play, "The Diary of Anne Frank," saw the TV show and was struck by Benny's looks and composure.

Screen Test Scheduled
Bloomgarden sent for her, de-

cided she was right and used her for a week as replacement for the celebrated Susan Strasberg when the latter needed a vacation. Now Benny is staying in New York as the regular understudy and has a screen test coming up with Paramount.

Miss Van Der Vlis is a 20-year-old Canadian beauty with some experience at home, but she came to New York this summer seeking a TV audition, was directed to get an agency contract, did so and was accepted immediately as a client. The agency submitted her for the leading lady role opposite Walter Pidgeon in the impending "The Hap-

El Salvador President Takes Oath of Office

San Salvador — (U.P.) — Col. Jose Maria Lemus took the oath

of office Friday as President of El Salvador, smallest republic in the Western Hemisphere.

Lemus, candidate of the Revolutionary Party of Democratic Unification, was elected without opposition May 13 for a six-year term.

Pippa Scott, 20, had some experience but none on Broadway where she was completely unknown when she went to see famed Producer Jed Harris about his forthcoming "Child of Fortune." He had been interviewing troops of girls to fill the difficult leading role. He and Author Guy Bolton heard her read and signed her immediately. Her leading man is the movies' Edmund Purdom.

Manila — (U.P.) — The Weather Bureau said Saturday that typhoon Freda has developed east of Northern Luzon—the fourth Pacific typhoon in three weeks to threaten the Northern Philippines.

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