

HALASZ, Laszlo

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PETRILLO FROWNS ON BATON TOSSING

One More and 'I'll Throw Him
Out Myself,' He Warns
Haslasz in Chicago

By RICHARD J. H. JOHNSTON

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CHICAGO, Nov. 29—An uneasy cease-fire prevailed today for the orchestra of the New York City Opera Company and its director, Laszlo Halasz, following the negotiation of a truce between Mr. Halasz and the orchestra's first violinist, Alfred Bruening, last night by James C. Petrillo, president of the American Federation of Musicians.

Two points remained unsettled as the company left this morning for a performance of "Aida" in Milwaukee. The first was whether or not Mr. Halasz, during a performance of "Madama Butterfly" in the Chicago Opera House Saturday night, had hurled his baton at Mr. Bruening's head. The second was whether Mr. Halasz, in the presence of Mr. Petrillo, had apologized last night to Mr. Bruening or only had seemed to do so.

While these matters remained unclear, the position of Mr. Petrillo was established by the czar of musicians himself in these words:

"If that guy throws one more baton or anything else, out he goes. I'll throw him out myself."

"Carmen" Is Held Up

Mr. Petrillo declined to discuss the nuances of Mr. Halasz' disputed apology, the negotiation of which at Mr. Petrillo's orders held up the curtain on "Carmen" for fifteen minutes last night.

"The issue's closed until that leader opens his mouth again," Mr. Petrillo declared.

As the troupe left for Milwaukee in a cavalcade of buses, it was the consensus of the artists that Mr. Bruening's feelings had not been assuaged sufficiently.

It was true that 3,500 Chicago opera-goers had been forced to wait while the matter had been argued out backstage from 8 to 8:30 o'clock last night that Mr. Petrillo had ruled the matter closed after emptying the orchestra pit for the hearing.

Today, Mr. Bruening recalled that it was in the third act of the disputed performance of "Madama Butterfly" hat "little things began to happen."

The violinist declared:

"There was a mistake in my section and Mr. Halasz took it out on me as leader of the section, which he had done on several occasions."

The director's dissatisfaction, Mr. Bruening recalled, reached a high point. Mr. Halasz, he said, hurled his baton, striking the first violinist in the face.

"Ridiculous," said Mr. Halasz.

Plans to Give Up Baton

"The baton flew from my hand accidentally, as it often does. I plan to conduct without the baton to avoid such misunderstood incidents."

Mr. Bruening and the other fifty-nine musicians made no comment on this assurance. It was agreed that Mr. Halasz' repentance should be couched in formal phrases of apology.

Both in New York Local

Mr. Petrillo declared that he was not greatly concerned with the fine points of diplomacy. Both Mr. Bruening and Mr. Halasz are members of Mr. Petrillo's Local 802 in New York.

"All I want," Mr. Petrillo said today, "is for this guy to stop throwing things. Who does he think he is?"

"I've had trouble with this guy before and I'm not going to have it again."

The troupe was scheduled to return to Chicago late tonight.

Mr. Halasz explained that the relations between himself and the 28-year-old violinist had been satisfactory up to the time recently when the director had brought Mr. Bruening from the "back row" of violins to the first chair.

Mr. Halasz said that since then Mr. Bruening had been inclined to be "a bit temperamental."

The company will resume its Chicago engagement tomorrow night with a performance of "The Tales of Hoffman."