

WASHINGTON SCENE

10/18/1950 By George Dixon

GWENDOLYN CAFRITZ had a party the other night—which isn't particularly astounding news. The astonishing part, however, is that she had an orchestra which spent most of the evening playing songs built around Perle Mesta.

The hired band played the entire musical score of "Call Me Madam." Pixyish guests, with their usual sense of gratitude to Gwendolyn for her hospitality, kept at the musicians to play the numbers over and over.

As a result almost nothing else was played all night but the "Madam" show songs—with vocal accompaniment. By the

Gwendolyn sat with head tilted, in birdlike attention.

BECAUSE it is built around the fabulous career of the lady minister to Luxembourg, "Call Me Madam" has probably had more advance advertising than any play in the history of show business. Everybody should know by now what it's about.

Nevertheless, as the songs about her deadliest party-throwing rival unfolded, Gwen began to look puzzled. This changed to mounting astonishment; then to utter incredulity.

Finally, after the last number was played, she turned to



end of the evening, vocal chords well oiled with champagne, the guests had memorized all the words and were singing lustily along with the band.

AS usual, the fair Gwendolyn was here, there, and everywhere, dropping a bewildering word here and an utterly incomprehensible word there. She had no time for community singing.

At last most of the guests had made their bloated way into the night, and Gwendolyn decided she could relax. Flopping gracefully into a deep chair, and adjusting a jeweled cigarette-holder that cost her husband, Morris, more than you and your whole family have made since you all started working, she called to the orchestra leader:

"I've just been on the go so much all evening I haven't heard a word of those wonderful songs you've been playing. Play and sing them all over again for me."

Once again the orchestra plowed through the entire score.

her husband and declared accusingly:

"MORRIS, THAT PLAY IS ABOUT PERLE MESTA!"