

Senza Sordino

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Ralph Mendelson

The musical grapevine triumphed over ordinary communications again when five hours from Tokyo, over the middle of the Pacific Ocean, I first heard of my selection to the ICSOM chairmanship. I consider this both an honor and an opportunity and I thank all of you for your votes of confidence.

We can all look forward to the next few years with keep anticipation. The implementation of the ICSOM program, as outlined at the Chicago conference, promises to provide the coming years with an abundance of

artist excellence and accomplishment coupled with a reservoir of economic security. This is our task; together we can make it a reality.

At this time I know I speak for all symphony players when I extend deep appreciation to Sam Denov and Gino Raffaelli, retiring Chairman and Treasurer of ICSOM. Their devotion and service to the causes of symphonic music and symphony musicians have been unwavering, expert and in the finest tradition of our symphonic life. It is a source of comfort and pleasure to know that we can continue to count on their counsel and support in the days ahead.

Strike Fund Procedures

On September 14, the trustees of the AFM Symphony Strike Fund met in New York City. Present were Hal C. Davis, AFM President; Stanley Ballard, AFM Secretary-Treasurer; Ted Dreher, Special Assistant to the President; Robert Maisel, ICSOM Secretary; and I, newly appointed trustee.

Procedures were adopted outlining the method of players' payments to the Fund. The trustees then unanimously voted to pay strike benefits to the Cleveland Orchestra players commencing on September 15, the effective date of the Fund. Applications were received from ten orchestras and the following are presently entitled to receive benefits:

Chicago Symphony
Cleveland Orchestra
Houston Symphony
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Minnesota Symphony
National Symphony
New York City Opera Orchestra
New York Philharmonic
Vancouver Symphony

The ICSOM Executive Committee and the International Executive Board of the AFM urge all other qualified orchestras to apply for membership as quickly as possible. This Fund, long sought by symphony orchestras deserves all of our support.

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ICSOM HOLDS 11th ANNUAL MEETING

The eleventh annual International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, with delegates from twenty-seven orchestras attending, met in Chicago the first three days of September. Syracuse was accepted for membership, Milwaukee and New York City Opera had become members through mail balloting during the year and the New Haven Symphony has since qualified for membership. ICSOM orchestras now number thirty-five.

Reporting on Executive Committee activities Chairman Sam Denov listed as plus items the establishing of the Strike Fund and the cooperation between I.E.B. and ICSOM on preparing the format and agenda for the Federation's Symphony Symposium. Some delegates felt the A.F.ofM. has too much control over the Strike Fund and ICSOM not enough. The point was made that the time to talk of administrative changes will be when the \$250,000 loan from the Federation has been repaid. (*There are over 3,000 musicians in ICSOM. If every orchestra joins the fund the loan can be repaid in two and half years.*) Two resolutions passed; one to thank the I.E.B. for its part in setting up the Fund, and one urging every ICSOM orchestra to participate in the Fund.

On the red ink side Denov listed the worsening situation in San Antonio and the fact that the I.E.B. felt it could not pursue actions in San Antonio recommended to it by ICSOM's Executive Committee. A second disappointment was the negotiation of NET and Educational TV contracts by the Federation without consulting ICSOM officers.

Thirteen orchestras reported on their contract negotiations — some concluded and some in progress. Several delegates reported pressure to reduce the size of their orchestras, some by direct action and some by attrition — failing to fill vacancies as they occur. A motion was passed putting ICSOM on record as opposed to this practice and to so notify all orchestra managements.



Attorney Eisner reporting on San Antonio

Exhaustive reports and discussions regarding San Antonio were given. Eugene Eisner, a partner in the law firm of Phil Spiser, detailed the many legal actions taken and the trips he has made to San Antonio on behalf of the beleaguered musicians there. A resolution was passed requesting, "American Federation of Musicians' President Davis to immediately make a detailed investigation of Local 23 and the San Antonio Symphony to determine whether

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

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At this moment the Cleveland Orchestra is ending the third week of a strike with an Association that appears bent on reducing this magnificent orchestra to minor league status. ICSOM orchestras are urged to join ranks to aid our colleagues in Cleveland in any and every possible way. Letters, telegrams of support and financial help to promote the strike objectives would be most appropriate.

It is with great pride that I announce the contract settlements in Minneapolis, New York and Chicago.

In Minneapolis, the orchestra agreement was reached after a one week lockout and last-hour efforts by a team consisting of the local union officers, the orchestra committee and ICSOM counsel Sipser. The final agreement included a completely restructured pension plan — a Sipser hallmark. The orchestra members will be paid for the lockout week in the form of vacation.

New York-Chicago Coordinate Negotiations

The negotiations in New York and Chicago were also last minute affairs characterized by a fantastic degree of coordination between the respective negotiating committees. Bill York, the orchestra committee chairman in Chicago, and I were in constant communication, sometimes as often as twice an hour in the final stages. The course of both negotiations and the results obtained bear witness to the absolute necessity of not only continuing this degree of cooperation but improving it. Collective bargaining in the symphonic field has become highly sophisticated. We must meet the challenge.

Congratulations to all.

Fraternally yours,
Ralph Mendelson

ICSOM HOLDS ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

(Continued from Page 1)

the Federation should place Local 23 in trusteeship and whether the San Antonio Symphony and its conductor Victor Alessandro should be placed on the Federation's unfair list. The investigation team to include a member of ICSOM . . ." *(The Kafka-esh tale of San Antonio has been chronicled regularly in Senza Sordino. A handy calendar of events is printed on page 3 for any reader who might have missed a bizarre chapter or two.)*

The Executive Committee was empowered to appoint a special committee to study radio and recording contracts and to recommend that one member of such committee sit with the I.E.B. during contract negotiations.

A highlight of the Conference was a talk on "Pensions and Fringe Benefits," by Phil Sipser, ICSOM Attorney. When Mr. Sipser had finished there was little doubt in the minds of many delegates that musicians know far too little about their pension and health plans, and about the dollars that go into them.

According to Sipser, contributions to pension and health plans should be made by management *only*. Contributions by musicians are made with "after tax dollars". A musician must earn at least \$13 to \$15 per week to permit an "employee contribution" of \$10 per week. What is even worse is that such "employee contribution" to pension funds do not even buy full value for the amount contributed by such employees.

Sipser said that some pension funds are not administered so as to provide maximum benefits to pensioners. Describing the pension plan of one ICSOM orchestra, he showed how its ultra-conservative actuarial assumptions and its funding methods could be modernized, resulting in substantially increased pensions without any increased cost to the management . . . *and by eliminating the employee contribution*. Sipser further discussed the possibility of a refund of all employee contributions and still retaining the same or a somewhat improved benefit formula. How much do you know about the way your pension plan is administered?

Officers elected to new terms of office were: Chairman, Ralph Mendelson, New York Philharmonic; Vice-Chairman, Dave Smiley, San Francisco Symphony; Secretary, Bob Maisel, St. Louis Symphony; Treasurer, Roy Cox, Toronto Symphony; Editor of Senza Sordino, Vance Beach, Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Seattle was chosen as the site for next year's conference. That city will also be hosting the conference of the American Symphony Orchestra League next year.

Victor Fuentealba, Vice-President of the A. F. of M. and Ted Dreher, Assistant to the President attended as representatives of the Federation.

On Oct. 10th Cleveland musicians rejected by 70 to 27 a contract basically unchanged from one offered them last July. Strike benefits are being paid and \$3,000 in ERF funds is available for negotiation expenses.

ONE OF THE GREATEST ORCHESTRAS IN THE WORLD HAS BEEN SILENT FOR SIX WEEKS. LETTERS, TELEGRAMS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE THE MUSIC THAT IS NEEDED NOW.

ICSOM OFFICERS

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CONDUCTOR EVALUATION SHEET

(name of conductor)	(dates of performance)		
1. BATON TECHNIQUE: How well does his baton technique indicate exactly when and how he wants you to play? (cues, preparatory beats, sub-divisions, size of beats, dynamics, etc.)		Excellent Good Fair Poor	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
2. KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCORE: How thorough is his knowledge of the scores he has conducted?		Excellent Good Fair Poor	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
3. KNOWLEDGE OF THE ORCHESTRA: Evaluate his knowledge of the capabilities and special problems of <u>your instrument group</u> .		Excellent Good Fair Poor	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
4. MUSICAL STYLE: How well do you feel he understands the various musical styles he has conducted? (Classical, Romantic, Contemporary etc.)		Excellent Good Fair Poor	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
5. REHEARSAL TECHNIQUE: Does he use time efficiently, communicate effectively, with confidence and courtesy, and avoid wasted effort?		Excellent Good Fair Poor	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
6. LEADERSHIP: Evaluate his quality of leadership. (Does he command the respect of the Orchestra? Does the Orchestra respond willingly?)		Excellent Good Fair Poor	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
7. RE-ENGAGEMENT: Would you like to have him conduct our Orchestra again?		Yes No Undecided	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
8. SUBJECTIVE RESPONSE: Did you like him as a person?		Yes No	<u> </u> <u> </u>
9. INSTRUMENT GROUP: I am in the string _____ Woodwind _____ Brass-Percussion _____ group.			
10. COMMENTS: Write any personal observations you have of him.			

Legend for Master Evaluation sheet:

Strings	<u> </u>
Woodwinds	<u> </u>
Brass-Percussion	<u> </u>
Entire Orchestra	<u> </u>

A new Conductor Evaluation Sheet was presented to the ICSOM delegates at the Chicago Conference. It met with nearly unanimous approval. The new form is concise and easy to fill out but still covers the essentials of good conducting. Blank forms can be produced in quantity using only a typewriter and a ditto or mimeograph machine. Tabulation of the results takes a fraction of the time required by the old form.

The new form was developed by the "Artistic Liaison Committee" of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. According to Miles Anderson, Committee Chairman, "Response from both Orchestra and Management has been very good. The Orchestra has been exceptionally objective in its ratings. Some conductors who are nobody's 'favorites' as people have nevertheless received high evaluations."

Anderson continued, "Against their own better judgment orchestra managers sometimes engage an inferior conductor because of pressure from concert managers, boards of directors or other 'outside' parties. Worse than that, some very good conducting talents die on the vine just because nobody speaks up for them. It's time the musicians of ICSOM applied some pressure too — for the able conductors as well as against the inept ones."

The Los Angeles committee has offered to receive and compile the evaluations of all ICSOM orchestras. The composite results (but not the evaluation of any single orchestra) will be available to the Orchestra Committee and the Management of any ICSOM orchestra. Master Tabulation sheets should be sent to:

MILES ANDERSON, *Chairman*
Artistic Liaison Committee
Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra
135 North Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90012

Perhaps one of ICSOM's Opera Orchestras would undertake to adjust this form to fit the opera scene and offer to compile the results on opera orchestras.

The new evaluation form is printed on this page. There isn't an orchestra in ICSOM which shouldn't be using it. Ed.

A CALENDAR OF CALUMNY

1946-47

Bob Danielson becomes member of San Antonio Symphony. Max Reiter conductor. Master contract has protective clause for members of Local 23, San Antonio.

1951-52

Victor Alessandro becomes conductor on death of Reiter.

1952-53

Phil Bass joins orchestra — ass't. concertmaster.

1953-54

Protective clause disappears from contract. Orchestra Committee formed.

1957-58

Clarence Bading joins orchestra — 4th horn.

(1954-62 Things relatively quiet. Danielson serves on Committee from time to time.)

1962-63

Danielson on Committee as spokesman. Problems arise and Committee is active. At end of season Danielson receives non-renewal notice. Requests and is denied assistance from Local 23 officials.

1963-64

Bading elected to complete Danielson's Committee term. Bass elected to Committee.

1966-67

Nancy Bobycomb joins orchestra — Ass't. 1st horn. Bading Committee Chairman, holds meetings to discuss joining ICSOM and attends ICSOM Convention in Houston. Bass demoted to "3rd Ass't. concertmaster."

1967-68

Bass attends ICSOM Convention in Detroit. Steve Weger joins orchestra — Associate 1st trumpet. Orchestra votes to join ICSOM.

1968-69

Danielson reinstated — reportedly through IEB pressure. Bodycomb on Committee — attends ICSOM Convention.

1969-70

Weger elected Committee Chairman. Bass demoted to "1st or 2nd violin." Resigns. Bodycomb receives contract for "4th horn, asst. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 1st horn as required by musical director." She resigns. Weger, Kline and Danielson and five other members face such charges as, "making excessive noises when taking in air," "gave appearance he was sleeping," "wore red tie," "went uninvited to conference with conductor." Officials of Local 23 brought the charges, tried the cases, found all guilty and levied fines of from \$200 to \$400. Not one witness testified against a single defendant in his presence. The musicians appealed to the IEB. Bading involved as one of their representatives. (Sipsier, Isner and local attorneys were counsel.) IEB reversed Local action. One week later Danielson, Weger, Kline and Bading received non-renewal notices, four days after legal time limit set in master contract for mailing of such notices. Appealed to Local — told Local considered notices legal. Redress now being sought in federal courts, including \$600,000 in damages.

EPILOGUE:

Weger signed with Kansas City. Bass is assistant concertmaster with Oklahoma City. Bodycomb has quit symphony work. Kline teaches at Texas A & I Danielson and Bading hope to re-join San Antonio Symphony. For Danielson the third time might be a charm.

Editorial Comment: The true culprits in this incredible calendar are listed in what we consider an order of increasing guilt. First, the Symphony Society. Its obligation is to preserve and protect the San Antonio Symphony. By permitting its employees, either managerial or conductorial, to take any part in the repressive actions listed above, it stands convicted of failing in this obligation. Second, the local union. It charged, tried and found guilty its own members, and levied punishment beyond any reason. Third, the conductor. The conductor of an American orchestra is given great power of authority. No musician is hired or fired without his approval. No musician is promoted or demoted without his approval. No musician will be fined \$400 for wearing a red tie if his conductor protests in his behalf. There is no way to escape the unpleasant fact that one man in San Antonio has had the power to prevent these problems. He has not done so.

NEW ORCHESTRA CONTRACTS**Buffalo**

The Buffalo Philharmonic musicians have agreed to a new one-year contract. A \$42.50 increase brings the weekly salary minimum to \$225. There will be 35 work weeks plus one week of paid vacation. Jesse Levine, Committee Chairman reports other improvements including paid health insurance. The Orchestra has received a \$360,000 grant from the "New York State Foundation for the Arts," to extend its geographical coverage and enlarge its programs for school children.

Chicago-New York

Basic details of the new 3-year Chicago Orchestra pact are minimums of \$295, \$310 and \$320; six weeks vacation this year, seven thereafter; pension and severance pay increases plus seniority pay in the second and third years. Reduction in the number of services to an average of 7½ per week was also won.

The new New York Philharmonic contract differs very little from the Chicago agreement. New York accepted \$305, \$320 and \$330, with seven weeks vacation with improvements in all fringe areas.

New Haven

On Sept. 3 a representative of the New Haven Symphony spoke to ICSOM delegates in Chicago. He reported it appeared their Association planned to present solo recitals in place of the orchestra if contract negotiations failed, and he asked if ICSOM could help. Experience counts and in a matter of hours ICSOM was protesting such treatment of musicians and preparing to ask the IEB to impose sanctions on the orchestra's management. Since then the New Haven Symphony has joined ICSOM and has concluded a new contract agreement. Concert pay for tenured members rises from \$25 to \$30 and rehearsal pay from \$5 to \$7 per hour.

Montreal

The Montreal Symphony is currently working under a temporary 4-week contract pending completion of negotiations. Improvements gained so far are a \$20 across the board raise, bringing the minimum to \$200, and strengthening of hiring and non-reengagement procedures with conductor and an orchestra committee having equal voice. A problem area is management demand for greatly increased freedom in scheduling services. Our correspondent reports fine cooperation from the Local.

Minnesota

Minnesota has ratified a three-year pact after a one week lock-out. Precedent shattering changes in the pension plan highlight the contract. The Association will continue its normal contribution to the plan and also pick up the 3% contribution previously made by the musicians. (This amounts to an average of \$9 weekly in take home pay increase.) In addition to this the Association will refund all past contributions made by the musicians — an average of \$1,600 per musician.

In more mundane areas gains were made in overtime, doubling and penalty payments, in rehearsal lengths and non-renewal procedures. Basic terms are: 45, 46 and 47 weeks. Across the board raises of \$29, \$10 and \$10 bringing scale to \$234, \$244 and \$254.

Carl Holub, Committee Chairman, gives high praise to Phil Sipsper, ICSOM Attorney, and to Local 73 and its President, Robert Bigelow.

New York City Opera

Negotiators for the New York City Opera Orchestra have agreed in principle to a new 3-year pact. Ratification will wait until contract language is finalized. A \$50 increase will be spread over the three years resulting in minimums of \$280, \$290 and \$300. Although the opera season is 20 weeks, the negotiators were able to retain their previous guarantee of 33 work weeks and even increase it to 34 in the third year — an important triumph over one of the special problems that face opera orchestras. Other improvements include a raise in rehearsal pay and a reduction in the work load during rehearsal weeks. In the third year performances will be reduced to six per week.

EDITOR'S DESK

ICSOM came into being in Chicago at a meeting of musicians from, if memory serves, eight or nine orchestras. The year was 1960 and it was my privilege to attend that meeting. At the 1970 Conference, again in Chicago, I found myself constantly comparing that first meeting with what was happening at the eleventh.

In ten short years ICSOM has grown from eight or nine orchestras to thirty-five, quadrupling in size and potential strength. In 1960 the problems troubling delegates, problems which really brought ICSOM into being, were:

1. The right of ratification. Few had it then, the vast majority do now.
2. Orchestra participation in negotiations. Few did then, almost all do today.
3. Keeping informed about our mutual problems. In 1970 we have the ICSOM CHART and the Rapid Communications Center with its file of all current contracts, plus Senza Sordino and special bulletins from the Vice-Chairman.
4. Getting across to the Federation and Locals that symphony musicians have special problems that require special Union assistance and understanding. In 1970 we have the Strike Fund. There have been many Federation sponsored and financed Symphony Symposiums. In 1960 some delegates paid their own expenses. In 1970 sixteen Locals paid all or part of their delegate's expenses.

In 1960 a union official attending the meetings was hardly welcomed with open arms. In 1970 Vic Fuentealba, Vice-President of the Federation and Ted Dreher, Special Assistant to the President attended all meetings, not as observers but as very active, very welcome and very helpful participants.

In 1960 an orchestra facing contract troubles likely felt itself to be alone with few friends to turn to. In 1970 Kansas City reported that during its prolonged work stoppage it received over \$8,000 in aid from other orchestras and the Emergency Relief Fund of ICSOM.

The list of accomplishments is too long to print. Some space must be saved to list those things that might have been.

In 1960 a plan to set up an ICSOM Strike Fund was presented. It was turned down because, "The Federation should do that — they have the money," and "Our players just wouldn't go for it." The Federation did it, ten years later! We could, and should have done it for ourselves ten years ago.

Plans for evaluating conductors, plans for improving the quality of manuscript, programs of lobbying for federal and local subsidies have all started nobly but withered away simply from lack of interest and a lack of manpower. The accomplishments of the last ten years have been pretty spectacular. Just stop and think what they might have been!

It was astounding to hear one delegate state that members of his orchestra doubted that ICSOM was relevant to them. The following is addressed to any such Doubting Thomas: Compare your 1960 and 1970 master contracts. Were all those improvements due solely to the enterprise, knowledge and unity of your orchestra? Was there not another factor — ICSOM? Did not the actions, indeed even the mere presence of ICSOM affect both you and your management? Consider the future. All our orchestras face a myriad of problems. Will the funds for survival be found? Is the Symphony Orchestra going to be a viable part of our culture 50, 20, or even 10 years from now? Will your orchestra survive as an important artistic unit if others do not? Are you doing something about these problems? If your orchestra is in ICSOM, the answer is "yes." And, you have the opportunity to do a lot more.

The question is not really whether ICSOM is relevant to you, but whether you are relevant to the future of the Symphony Orchestra. To plagiarize John Donne, "Dear Colleague, do you really think the bell tolls for me — but not for thee?"