



—Stufoto

George Wright Tells Off 'Bad Apples' at Rialto Concert

During his Rialto Theatre concert, George Wright said a few things to conventioners which he felt should be clarified regarding his former "non-appearances" during ATOE functions. It has long been known that tactless approaches and brusque demands by those planning concerts have tended to alienate him from participation in organ hobby activities. But just before the closing selection of his first national ATOE convention concert he turned to his audience in a serious demeanor and chose his words very carefully. He said that within the last few days he had heard rumors that: (1) he was broke, (2) his studio was padlocked because of unpaid taxes, and (3) he had been ordered not to leave the state on account of these "difficulties."

Then George listed some of his assets, which were considerable, and stated that he was "loaded." As for the order not to leave the state, he said that he must have played those concerts in the Northwest, Detroit, and Rochester, New York, by "osmosis."

The unkindest cut of all came when

rumormongers spread the word among conventioners that the accidental burn-out of George's studio organ blower motor was "just another cop-out in a long series." This reporter has seen the blackened insulation and inhaled the pungent odor of overheated and fused windings in the blower room and can testify that the damage is real enough. Would anyone in his right mind ruin a valuable motor just for an "out?"

The "cop-out" lie was what caused George to announce the reasons why he had been unavailable for ATOE concerts on so many occasions. He did this in a straight-forward manner in language that was to the point and occasionally a bit salty. He appealed to the conventioners to resist the propagation of unfounded and oftentimes harmful rumors about artists. George made it clear that it wasn't just for himself that he was protesting, but for all artists who suffer at the hands of rumor-mongers and malicious detractors. He added that he forgave his detractors, in accordance with the tenets of his religion (George is a

devout church member). There was a moment of silence, then a female voice from high in the balcony shrieked, "We love you, George!"

The roar of agreement which followed was loud and long. It was obvious that many in the packed house had heard the false rumors and were glad to hear them exploded. There also must have been a number of red faces in the crowd—the "bad apples," as George described the willful minority in the otherwise good "barrel." When the tumult died down, George turned to the waiting Wurlitzer and played his final selection.

Undoubtedly, some of the assembled conventioners were puzzled by George's "sermon." What he said was a long time coming and it consisted of things which were long overdue for an airing. It is anticipated that a new and better understanding between George Wright and his many admirers, especially those represented by hobby organizations, can now be realized.

—Stu Green
Hollywood

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GEORGE ON CAMERA—At the Annual Banquet, our photographer followed George Wright around for a few minutes and recorded a variety of expressions. Here he's seen (top left) with long-time friend and colleague, Gordon Kibbee—and an adoring onlooker. Top-right: A more serious George (his Burpsi-Booma glass is empty!) poses with ATOE's new National Secretary, Betty Mason. Bottom-left: George accepts the handshake of two of the many well-wishers who button-holed him during and after the banquet. Bottom-right: George congratulates retiring National President Dick Schrum on Martha Lake's performance at the annual banquet (Schrum is Martha's exclusive agent), while Lyn Larsen looks on.