

Louisiana's Singing Governor Becomes Hollywood Film Hero

By Pericles Alexander.

To qualify for political office these days, a candidate must be an all-purpose feller who not only can lend his voice to oratory but to singing a ballad as well. The better he can make with the pretty tunes, the better are his chances for election. Music education has replaced Abe Lincoln's log cabin background as a vital prerequisite for public office.

As motion picture actor, singer, songwriter, maestro of a hillbilly band, recording artist and possessor of a clear, sweet tenor voice, Gov. Jimmy Davis of Louisiana has it all over his contemporary gubernatorial crooners.

Louisiana's movie star Governor will be in Dallas for a luncheon given in his honor at 12:15 p.m. Wednesday in the Skyway Suite of Hotel Adolphus and to attend the Majestic premiere of "Variety Girl."

At the moment the Governor has more than a passing interest in the movies for he's the star of "Louisiana," a new movie from Monogram Studios which is slightly on the autobiographical side. With

Governor Davis as the hero, "Louisiana" tells the rise of a share-cropper's son to Governor of his state.

Governor Davis' political campaigning could best be covered by theatrical critics and Hollywood talent scouts.

Before he was Governor, he sang his way into a job as Shreveport's Commissioner of Public Safety in 1938. In 1942 he strummed his way into a post on the Louisiana Public Service Commission. The state's music lovers elected him Governor in 1944.

No Johnny-Come-Lately to Hollywood is Governor Davis. At a salary of about \$1,000 a week, he had good parts in several western pic-

tures but he was never top man. It is no novelty to see Louisiana theater marquees reading "Gov. Jimmie Davis and Charles Starrett in 'Cyclone Prairie Rangers.'"

Or to walk up to a juke box in the Pelican State and find "You Are My Sunshine" as sung by the Governor and his hillbilly band. In fact, Davis has been called "King of the Juke Box."

He not only plays hillbilly tunes, he's the composer of most of them.

Among his hits are "You Are My Sunshine," "It Makes No Difference Now" and "Nobody's Darlin' But Mine." The number of his recordings sold is slightly less than Bing Crosby's, Sinatra's and Gene Autry's.

Governor Davis carries a guitar but actually knows only a couple of chords. What would happen if he had a lesson or two on the piano and started campaigning for President!