

Friday, July 4, 1986



Lee Iacocca: Promoter of cars and the restoration of Lady Liberty.



Mario Cuomo: Weighing his chances in the next presidential election.



Geraldine Ferraro: Ran for America's second-most important job.



Antonin Scalia: Nominated for a seat on the nation's highest court.

THE RISE OF THE ITALIAN AMERICANS

From Ellis Island to the halls of power

By DEBORAH KAPLAN
Free Press Staff Writer

Whenever they beat their Anglo-Saxon opponents, Antonin Scalia and Jim Quillo link arms and dance the native Italian Tarantella on a Washington tennis court. In a way, they're dancing to America's tune. Sons of Italian immigrants, they've scored big in the nation's capital: Scalia as the recent nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Quillo, former manager of Detroit radio station WJR, as a member of the Federal Communications Commission.

An asphalt court is but one in which Italian-Americans are leaping to prominence. New York Gov. Mario Cuomo eyed readers — and presumably his chances in the next presidential election — from the June 2 cover of Time, as did Chrysler Corp. Chairman Lee Iacocca last year. Indeed, the ubiquitous promoter of cars, capitalism, American can-do and the restoration of Lady Liberty makes headlines faster than you can say, "I gotta tell ya."

As fast as you can say "Yo," Sylvester Stallone straps on a semi-automatic and has his likeness smeared across billboards from coast to coast. Eleanor Cutri Smeal is back in saddle this year as the re-elected president of the National Organization for Women. Native Detroiters John DiBiaggio has taken over the reins at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

Former Yale president A. Bartlett Giamatti last month left the Ivy League to head baseball's National League, joining an impressive Italian-American sports lineup that includes manager Tommy Lasorda of the Los Angeles Dodgers, basketball coach Jim Valvano of North Carolina State and Penn State's Joe Paterno of football coach fame. Paterno made newspaper wires this year by paying more than lip service to academic achievement, giving \$150,000 to Penn State's library and to a scholarship fund for minority athletes.

FROM FOOTBALL fields and ivy towers, from podiums and pulpits such as Chicago Archbishop Joseph Cardinal Bernardin's, from marquees announcing a Martin Scorsese film or Broadway musical by Michael Bennett, Salvatore's son, and from the Statue of Liberty itself, the later generations of one of the last and largest immigrant groups that passed through Ellis Island are emerging on the national scene, indeed busting out all over.

And everywhere dancing the Tarantella.

"They're coming out of the woodwork," says Anthony Floritto, executive director of the Italian-American Culture Community Center in Warren. "There's talk that in 1992 the president will be an Italian-American. Maybe it's just the normal course of evolution. It takes time — and the time is now."

This week the nation celebrates its independence, its ethnic origins and the 100th birthday of the statue that lit that dark passage from the Old World to the New. Almost as much of a national symbol is the passage of Italian-Americans from squalid beginnings like those on New York's lower east side to such places under



Free Press Artwork by CATHY GENDRON

the sun as the New York governor's office on the 57th floor of the World Trade Center.

FOR ANYONE whose ancestors came across the ocean in slaveholds or steerage, and for those recent arrivals who made the trip on foot, planes or boats, the rise of Italian-Americans could represent the real possibilities of the promise that America dangles like a carrot on a stick. As Floritto says, this is no dry lesson of the history books, but history happening now. Italian-Americans are telling us what's cooking in the melting pot.

"We see people popping up in places — on the Supreme Court, as vice-presidential candidates — where we never would've seen them 20 years before," says Richard Alba, director of the Center for Social and Demographic Analysis at the State University of New York in Albany, and author of the recently published "Italian-Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity" (Prentice-Hall; \$18.95).

"We're seeing a generation, a critical mass of Italians come of age and move into positions of power," he says. "The Scalias, Cuomos, Iaccocas are relatively young in terms of achievement, and they're just the first wave. Behind them is an even greater wave of young Italians. Their assimilation and rise to success shows that the melting pot might not have been such a myth after all."

NUMBERING a mere 44,000 in 1880, Italians and their American-born children burgeoned to more than three million by 1924, when the United States virtually shut the door on massive immigration with permanent quotas. Historians regarded these mostly Southern Italian immigrants as slow to assimilate because so many

were illiterate even in their own language, uneducated, unskilled, stigmatized by Americans and constrained by their own bonds of culture and blood.

Now making up seven percent of the population, they earn more on the average than many of their ethnic neighbors, more than 60 percent of their number swelling the labor ranks. They have begun to enter colleges and professional fields in numbers equal to those of earlier ethnic arrivals, the 1980 Census shows. They've advanced into academic, political and religious preserves that had previously boasted few of their number, and are inches from some of the most powerful seats in the land.

Indeed the late political analyst Theodore White in his 1982 book, "America in Search of Itself," reckons Italian-Americans "the most important among rising ethnic groups," because, essentially, they promise to grab the carrot and gobble the moveable feast.

"America has suddenly awakened to the fact that this very large minority group isn't a minority but a big contributor to the country," says Joseph Pellegrino, president of Boston-based Prince Co., which has manufacturing operations in Detroit. Or as Detroit's Frank Stella, president of the Washington-based National Italian American Foundation, conversely says, "The sleeping giant has awakened."

IN RETROSPECT, Italian-Americans may not have slept as much as taken a slower and surer road upward, arriving with such native values as family loyalty intact. A nation that was made of great migrations teaches mobility as a strategy of survival, and to move one must pull up stakes. But Italian-Americans seem to have kept the best of both old and new worlds. They have the foundations of family to sustain their successes.

"You wanted to achieve not only for your sake but your family's," says Michigan State President DiBiaggio, 53, whose father, a Chrysler factory worker in Detroit for more than 30 years, came from the Udine Province in northern Italy.

"You wished to assimilate, you wished to succeed, but you measured every achievement by those values imbued in you since you were a child. Don't dishonor the family, don't embarrass the name of the family; that's what you heard in a first-generation Italian home. The family was over everything."

But the familial embrace could also constrict, and therein lies what Emelise Alessandri, director of the Center for Italian-American Studies at Brooklyn College, terms the "double-edged sword" of Italian-American culture. "The family would say, 'Yes, succeed in business, but don't let them send you to the West Coast,'" she says. "You can always go home as an Italian — but you can't go too far away from home. That tension is there."

First-generation American Floritto, 36, of Dearborn, says, "That emotional bond makes them think twice before making a

See ITALIAN-AMERICANS, Page 4C

427a

From Italy, via Ellis Island, to halls of power



Sylvester Stallone (above): Known from coast to coast in the twinkling of a "Yo." Native Detroitier John DiBiaggio (right), a factory worker's son, has taken over the reins at Michigan State University. Jim Quello (below), who grew up over the grocery store his Piedmontese father owned on Woodward Avenue in Highland Park, is a member of the Federal Communications Commission. "I had a little of What-Makes-Sammy-Run in me," he confesses. "I was going to make it come hell or high water."



ITALIAN-AMERICANS, from Page 1C
move. When you lose a sense of family, you lose a lot."

Successive sieges on the homeland are what first forged those bonds. "Everyone ran over Italy, from the Moors to Napoleon," Aleandri says. "The country wasn't even unified until 1870; before that it was a bunch of little regions. What was important was the town, and more important than the town was the family. Because there was no central government and civil governments were corrupted, you pulled in ranks and depended on the family. That was the most powerful social structure and the only one you could trust."

WHAT CONSTITUTED survival in Italy was considered a backward clan-nishness in America, whose native-born citizens were already suspicious of the millions of immigrants crowding their shores. And Italians in turn were as suspicious of American state, church and school authorities as those they had learned to distrust in Italy, says historian Andrew Rolle in his book, "The Italian-Americans: Troubled Roots" (The Free Press; \$14.95).

That and their great provincial differences, which left them without a common dialect, lack of schooling and skills and late arrival on a scene dense with immigrants tended to shove them into the worst jobs and tenements. As the lowest of the economic low they were stigmatized as "rubes" and worse. That, ultimately, was the biggest hurt of all.

"Growing up in an Anglo-Saxon neighborhood I can remember hurrying home from some racial stir," says DiBiaggio. "Our next-door neighbor told my mother years later that when we first moved in she nailed the windows shut. Inside I used to feel there was something wrong with me because I couldn't be more Anglo."

Though he grew up in the '50s, Fioritto says, "It wasn't too cool to be Italian in those days. There was still a lot of 'dago' and 'wop' talk. The media stereotyped Italians as all spaghetti-eaters, Don Juans and of course, Mafia."

THE MOST adhesive and abhorred of all labels was *mafioso*. Just as chaos in Italy produced tight families bonds, so it produced outlaws bound by blood in secret societies. But in 19th-Century

America the Mafia was a whole different, hybrid breed, writes Rolle. The country, however, was prepared to brand the Mafia as exclusively Italian and most Italian-Americans as somehow suspect.

"If an Italian wanted to get in a certain club, there'd be a little more scrutiny on one or two lines of his application," says Stella, a food-service entrepreneur, national Republican party committeeman and member of the Detroit Country Club. "The feeling was, 'Watch out, they're not all pure, they're clannish, their interest goes way beyond any good American's.'"

Quello remembers that in the 1974 congressional hearings for his appointment to the FCC, "Right away they had to ask the question, 'Have you ever been a member or do you have connections with the Mafia?'"

SUCH LABELS have pretty much been laid to rest, Italian-Americans say, largely because of the drive to excel that they inspired. "You feel you have to work that much harder to get there when somebody looks down their nose at you," says Quello, 72, who grew up over the grocery store his Piedmontese father owned on Woodward Avenue in Highland Park. "I worked my ass off. I had a little of What-Makes-Sammy-Run in me. I was going to make it come hell or high water."

The National Italian American Foundation that Stella heads was founded specifically to build image, succeeding in that and in building up a lot of prestige and power in Washington as well. "We're beyond the pizza-eat-, organ-grinder, criminal stereotypes," Stella says. "They wash off like water off a trench coat. Our deeds and achievements are there."

Ironic that Italian-Americans now flaunt the ethnicity they once tried to forget. But that, says Aleandri, is how the melting pot percolates. "The first and second generations wanted to assimilate and Americanize themselves during that time of great patriotism, war and Eisenhower," she says. "The impetus was to make it big. They changed their names, dropped the vowels and didn't speak Italian at home. Now that third generation is going out and learning Italian, pushing for an Italian image and trying to get away from pizza this and Rocco that."

"They want to discover their roots."

We now have a record that
the court said about them -- Insufficient record -- ^{make}
it sufficient record, definitely substantiated -- in fact ^{the public interest} ~~made~~
must carry. Not a true marketplace -- unfair, disproportionate

Resulted in an unprecedented outcry from Congress
and broadcasters.



Sylvester Stallone (above): Known from coast to coast in the twinkling of a "Yo." Native Detroit **John DiBiaggio (right),** a factory worker's son, has taken over the reins at Michigan State University. **Jim Quello (below),** who grew up over the grocery store his Piedmontese father owned on Woodward Avenue in Highland Park, is a member of the Federal Communications Commission. "I had a little of What-Makes-Sammy-Run in me," he confesses. "I was going to make it come hell or high water."



In tro
es ou
ake e
and t
er sh
way t
you
un, S
-mille
mpio
ago
go so
race
WOR
SD
(ph
ent
m
st
k
p
st
e
o
g
t
I

From Italy, via Ellis Island, to halls of power

ITALIAN-AMERICANS, from Page 1C
move. When you lose a sense of family,
you lose a lot."

Successive sieges on the homeland are what first forged those bonds. "Everyone ran over Italy, from the Moors to Napoleon," Aleandri says. "The country wasn't even unified until 1870; before that it was a bunch of little regions. What was important was the town, and more important than the town was the family. Because there was no central government and civil governments were corrupted, you pulled in ranks and depended on the family. That was the most powerful social structure and the only one you could trust."

WHAT CONSTITUTED survival in Italy was considered a backward clan-nishness in America, whose native-born citizens were already suspicious of the millions of immigrants crowding their shores. And Italians in turn were as suspicious of American state, church and school authorities as those they had learned to distrust in Italy, says historian Andrew Rolle in his book, "The Italian-Americans: Troubled Roots" (The Free Press; \$14.95).

That and their great provincial differences, which left them without a common dialect, lack of schooling and skills and late arrival on a scene dense with immigrants tended to shove them into the worst jobs and tenements. As the lowest of the economic low they were stigmatized as "rubes" and worse. That, ultimately, was the biggest hurt of all.

"Growing up in an Anglo-Saxon neighborhood I can remember hurrying home from some racial slur," says DiBiaggio. "Our next-door neighbor told my mother years later that when we first moved in she nailed the windows shut. Inside I used to feel there was something wrong with me because I couldn't be more Anglo."

Though he grew up in the '50s, Floritto says, "it wasn't too cool to be Italian in those days. There was still a lot of 'dago' and 'wop' talk. The media stereotyped Italians as all spaghetti-

America the Mafia was a whole different, hybrid breed, writes Rolle. The country, however, was prepared to brand the Mafia as exclusively Italian and most Italian-Americans as somehow suspect.

"If an Italian wanted to get in a certain club, there'd be a little more scrutiny on one or two lines of his application," says Stella, a food-service entrepreneur, national Republican party committeeman and member of the Detroit Country Club. "The feeling was, 'Watch out, they're not all pure, they're clannish, their interest goes way beyond any good American's.'"

Quello remembers that in the 1974 congressional hearings for his appointment to the FCC, "Right away they had to ask the question, 'Have you ever been a member or do you have connections with the Mafia?'"

SUCH LABELS have pretty much been laid to rest, Italian-Americans say, largely because of the drive to excel that they inspired. "You feel you have to work that much harder to get there when somebody looks down their nose at you," says Quello, 72, who grew up over the grocery store his Piedmontese father owned on Woodward Avenue in Highland Park. "I worked my ass off. I had a little of What-Makes-Sammy-Run in me. I was going to make it come hell or high water."

The National Italian American Foundation that Stella heads was founded specifically to build image, succeeding in that and in building up a lot of prestige and power in Washington as well. "We're beyond the pizza-eater, organ-grinder, criminal stereotypes," Stella says. "They wash off like water off a trench coat. Our deeds and achievements are there."

Ironic that Italian-Americans now flaunt the ethnicity they once tried to forget. But that, says Aleandri, is how the melting pot percolates. "The first and second generations wanted to assimilate and Americanize themselves during that time of great patriotism, war and Eisenhower," she says. "The impetus was to make it big. They

Shop at
REDFO
Riverlar
Roches
Southfie
Wildwo
575-9510



Nickie McWhirter

Two documents deserve some of our tribute, too

Happy Independence Day! It's the nation's birthday and a holiday not to be denied, especially this year.

Toasts to the Statue of Liberty are the order of the day. Bands are playing, flags are flying, fireworks are popping (or soon will be) and smoke from burned offerings to the gods of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness rise from every backyard barbecue in America.

There is an orgy of sorts in progress in New York Harbor. All stops have been pulled. Glory, glory to the statue called Liberty, around whose feet the celebrants dance in a frenzy of red, white and blue delight.

The newly refurbished statue; Ellis Island, which served as a clearing station for immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the City of New York, where so many immigrants began their American adventures — all serve to glorify our melting pot heritage. That's just fine.

Personally, I miss 1776.

The Statue of Liberty is a fairly recent symbol of our nation's promise, after all. Immigration is just another word for a long move to a new neighborhood.

The first symbols

The true cause for our annual celebration springs from that 18th-Century revolution in which we won our freedom from the Crown of England, long before any of us was born, long before most of our forebears thought of immigrating to the country called America. Without that revolution the statue would mean little and immigrations less.

The first symbols of the miracle bought with the spilling of blood, even before the flag which we have come to call Old Glory, were a couple of pieces of paper. One is the Declaration of Independence. The other is the Constitution of the United States of America.

Suddenly, through these documents, the ages-



Lee Iacocca: Promoter of cars and the restoration of Lady Liberty.



Mario Cuomo: Weighing his chances in the next presidential election.



THE RISE OF THE ITALIAN AMERICANS

From Ellis Island to the halls of power

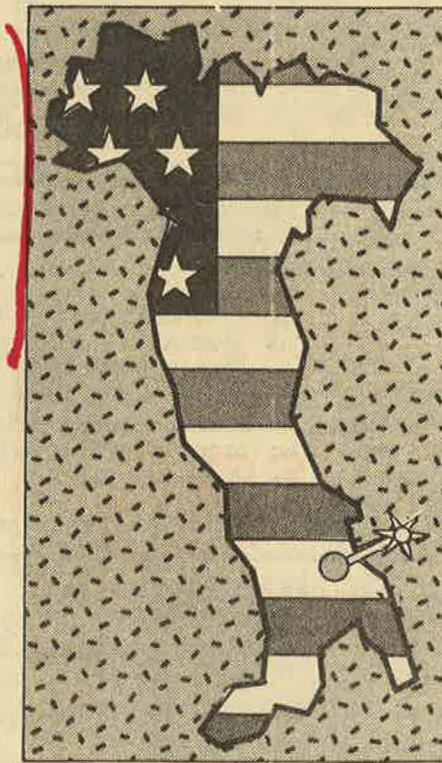
By DEBORAH KAPLAN
Free Press Staff Writer

Whenever they beat their Anglo-Saxon opponents, Antonin Scalia and Jim Quello link arms and dance the native Italian Tarantella on a Washington tennis court. In a way, they're dancing to America's tune. Sons of Italian immigrants, they've scored big in the nation's capital: Scalia as the recent nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Quello, former manager of Detroit radio station WJR, as a member of the Federal Communications Commission.

An asphalt court is but one in which Italian-Americans are leaping to prominence. New York Gov. Mario Cuomo eyed readers — and presumably his chances in the next presidential election — from the June 2 cover of Time, as did Chrysler Corp. Chairman Lee Iacocca last year. Indeed, the ubiquitous promoter of cars, capitalism, American can-do and the restoration of Lady Liberty makes headlines faster than you can say, "I gotta tell ya."

As fast as you can say "Yo," Sylvester Stallone straps on a semi-automatic and has his likeness smeared across billboards from coast to coast. Eleanor Cutri Smeal is back in saddle this year as the re-elected president of the National Organization for Women. Native Detroiter John DiBiaggio has taken over the reins at Michigan State University in East Lansing.

Former Yale president A. Bartlett Giamatti last month left the Ivy League to head baseball's National League, joining an impressive Italian American



Free Press Artwork by CATHY GENDRON

were illiterate even in their own language, uneducated, unskilled, stigmatized by Americans and constrained by their own bonds of culture and blood.

Now making up seven percent of the population, they earn more on the average than many of their ethnic neighbors, more than 60 percent of their number swelling the labor ranks. They have begun to enter colleges and professional fields in numbers equal to those of earlier ethnic arrivals, the 1980 Census shows. They've advanced into academic, political and religious preserves that had previously boasted few of their number, and are inches from some of the most powerful seats in the land.

Indeed the late political analyst Theodore White in his 1982 book, "America in Search of Itself," reckons Italian-Americans "the most important among rising ethnic groups," because, essentially, they promise to grab the carrot and gobble the moveable feast.

"America has suddenly awakened to the fact that this very large minority group isn't a minority but a big contributor to the country," says Joseph Pellegrino, president of Boston-based Prince Co., which has manufacturing operations in Detroit. Or as Detroit's Frank Stella, president of the Washington-based National Italian American Foundation, conversely says, "The sleeping giant has awakened."

the sun as the New York governor's office on the 57th floor of the World Trade Center.

IN RETROSPECT, Italian-Americans may not have slept as much as taken a clover and sugar road upward, arriving

FOR ANYONE whose ancestors came

When in the course of human events... We hold these truths to be self-evident... In order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility...

That's what the Fourth of July is about. That's what the statue celebrates. That's what the immigrants sought in their long, difficult move to a new neighborhood.

The documents contain ideas that shook the world, and continue to change it. The documents contain ideals, implemented for the first time in a government, which inspired the world, and continue to inspire it.

The true light

As much as we may admire the stately beauty of the statue called Liberty, she is nothing compared with the vaulting beauty of the concepts contained in those two documents. As important a portal as Ellis Island may have been to thousands of immigrants from hundreds of nations, it was never the gateway to freedom. Those documents were and are the gateway.

Amid the celebration of the statue, the little island and the courageous immigrants of our past, I hope we will remember 1776. I hope we will celebrate the true light marking the golden door.

It was and is the light that sparked the vision of our founders, then leapt to flaming brilliance in their simple words, recorded in the Declaration and in the Constitution. The light has never dimmed. It continues to illuminate the world. Here's my toast to those true icons.



Geraldine Ferraro: Ran for America's second-most important job.



Antonin Scalia: Nominated for a seat on the nation's highest court.

... coach Jim Valvano of North Carolina State and Penn State's Joe Paterno of football coach fame. Paterno made newspaper wires this year by paying more than lip service to academic achievement, giving \$150,000 to Penn State's library and to a scholarship fund for minority athletes.

FROM FOOTBALL fields and ivy towers, from podiums and pulpits such as Chicago Archbishop Joseph Cardinal Bernardin's, from marquees announcing a Martin Scorsese film or Broadway musical by Michael Bennett, Salvatore's son, and from the Statue of Liberty itself, the later generations of one of the last and largest immigrant groups that passed through Ellis Island are emerging on the national scene, indeed busting out all over.

And everywhere dancing the Tarantella.

"They're coming out of the woodwork," says Anthony Fioritto, executive director of the Italian-American Culture Community Center in Warren. "There's talk that in 1992 the president will be an Italian-American. Maybe it's just the normal course of evolution. It takes time — and the time is now."

This week the nation celebrates its independence, its ethnic origins and the 100th birthday of the statue that lit that dark passage from the Old World to the New. Almost as much of a national symbol is the passage of Italian-Americans from squalid beginnings like those on New York's lower east side to such places under

Italian-Americans could represent the real possibilities of the promise that America dangles like a carrot on a stick. As Fioritto says, this is no dry lesson of the history books, but history happening now. Italian-Americans are telling us what's cooking in the melting pot.

"We see people popping up in places — on the Supreme Court, as vice-presidential candidates — where we never would've seen them 20 years before," says Richard Alba, director of the Center for Social and Demographic Analysis at the State University of New York in Albany, and author of the recently published "Italian-Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity" (Prentice-Hall; \$18.95).

"We're seeing a generation, a critical mass of Italians come of age and move into positions of power," he says. "The Scalias, Cuomos, Iaccocas are relatively young in terms of achievement, and they're just the first wave. Behind them is an even greater wave of young Italians. Their assimilation and rise to success shows that the melting pot might not have been such a myth after all."

NUMBERING a mere 44,000 in 1880, Italians and their American-born children burgeoned to more than three million by 1924, when the United States virtually shut the door on massive immigration with permanent quotas. Historians regarded these mostly Southern Italian immigrants as slow to assimilate because so many

of survival, and to move one must pull up stakes. But Italian-Americans seem to have kept the best of both old and new worlds. They have the foundations of family to sustain their successes.

"You wanted to achieve not only for your sake but your family's," says Michigan State President DiBiaggio, 53, whose father, a Chrysler factory worker in Detroit for more than 30 years, came from the Udine Province in northern Italy.

"You wished to assimilate, you wished to succeed, but you measured every achievement by those values imbued in you since you were a child. 'Don't dishonor the family, don't embarrass the name of the family,' that's what you heard in a first-generation Italian home. The family was over everything."

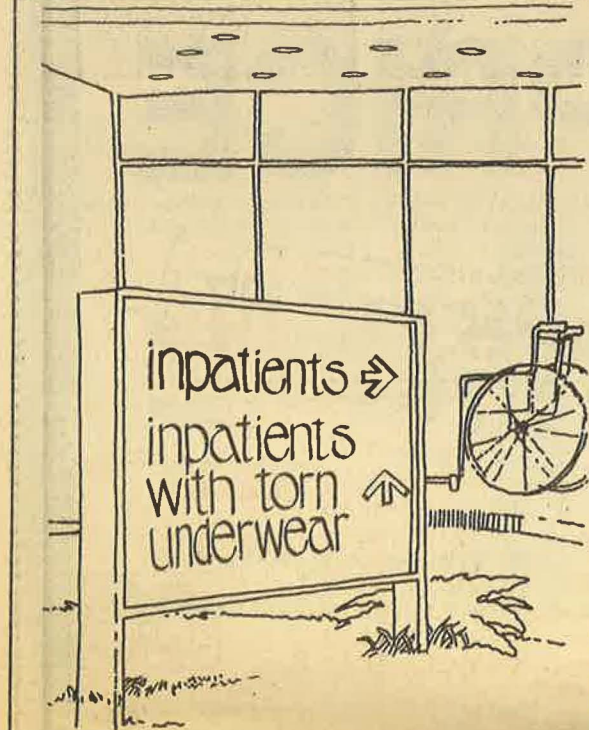
But the familial embrace could also constrict, and therein lies what Emelise Aleandri, director of the Center for Italian-American Studies at Brooklyn College, terms the "double-edged sword" of Italian-American culture. "The family would say, 'Yes, succeed in business, but don't let them send you to the West Coast,'" she says. "You can always go home as an Italian — but you can't go too far away from home. That tension is there."

First-generation American Fioritto, 36, of Dearborn, says, "That emotional bond makes them think twice before making a

See ITALIAN-AMERICANS, Page 4C



Guindon's Detroit



Guindon Detroit Free Press

Oh, say, would you rather sing something else?

By HOLLIE I. WEST
Free Press Staff Writer

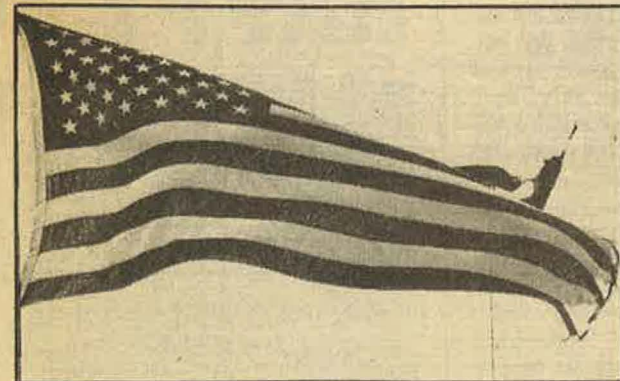
If you had to pick one song you have heard more than any other, it probably would be "The Star Spangled Banner." And chances are that if you attend a baseball game, community picnic or town celebration this July Fourth, you'll raise your voice in singing the national anthem.

But ask yourself: How many times have I really sung it? America's official song has a roller-coaster melody that has choked opera singers and pop superstars. It just plain humbles most of the general public.

So, every so often a familiar cry goes out to change the national anthem to "America the Beautiful." The controversy has been percolating for years, but the movement is light years away from being a burning national issue.

In 1985, Democratic Rep. Andrew Jacobs Jr. of Indiana thought he'd bring the issue to a boil by introducing a bill that would replace The Banner with The Beautiful. But he hasn't lit a fire, yet. His bill is stalled in committee, without enough co-sponsors to prompt a hearing.

GENERALLY, people who want to replace The Banner make four main points about it:



Would you like to switch anthems? See Soundoff, Page 15A.

- It's not as hallowed and written in stone as most assume; it has been America's song only since 1931.
- The melody of the anthem is not American, but English in origin, having been written by John Stafford Smith as a drinking song for a London social club.
- The melody, which jumps suddenly from highs to lows, is unsingable.
- The song's militaristic tone doesn't represent the nation's peaceful values.

No matter how you look at it, the song is a long way from its origins. Smith wrote the tune for the Anacreontic Society, a group of London "gentlemen" of the 1770s. Their muse was Anacreon, the ancient Greek poet who delighted in wine and lovemaking. And, by all accounts, the 18th-Century Englishmen did their best to keep his spirit alive.

Not until 1814 did the lyrics come along, when the British

See ANTHEM, Page 2C

Hype so bright it begins to dim the Lady's light

By ANNA QUINDLEN
The New York Times

I must admit that over the course of my lifetime I have not thought of the Statue of Liberty often. Four, maybe five times a year, six tops. Something would come up, a Trivial Pursuit question, and I'd think to myself, "Statue of Liberty. Good idea. Great execution. So-so color."

My thoughts were fond. About 100 years ago, the French wanted to give the Americans a little something special, and they came up with this statue, which no one can deny makes a strong design statement. The French have a lot of experience in design, nice clothes, jewelry. But a statue, now that's original. And to top it off they put it in the middle of the water. Terrific.

In the last month, I have had to think about the Statue of Liberty almost constantly, and I've got to say that now my thoughts are no longer so nice. Yesterday, I was cooking bacon and the Statue of Liberty was on the package, right next to the representative slice. The other day in my local paper there was a photograph of a Statue of Liberty fashioned of chopped liver.

It seems to me that if the Statue of Liberty was meant to be made from chopped liver, the French, who have some serious background in the chopped liver department, would

See OVERKILL, Page 2C