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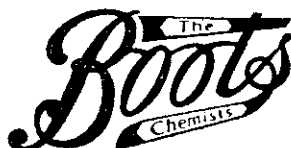
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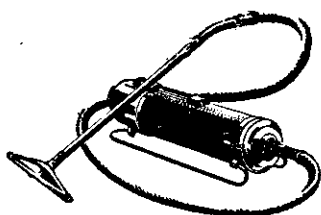
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Speaking Candidly, by G.M.

## HOLLYWOOD EDUCATION FOR THE GERMANS?

THE other week *The Listener* reprinted an article by Sam Goldwyn entitled "The Future Challenges the Movies." Mr. Goldwyn was, on the whole, very well satisfied with what the movies have achieved up to the present and highly optimistic about what they are going to achieve in the future, especially in the international sphere. This was only to be expected, since Mr. Goldwyn is a very interested party, as much responsible as anyone for what the movies have done up till now, and I have no doubt he also hopes to be equally responsible for what they will do in years to come.

Soon after Mr. Goldwyn's article appeared the papers carried a news item describing how eleven Hollywood magnates, including Jack Warner (one of the two Warner Bros.) and Darryl Zanuck (head of 20th Century - Fox), were visiting Germany in a luxury plane, taking with them two cases of beer and a special steward to attend to their material needs and fortify them for the distressing scenes they would witness as they travelled up the Rhine in Hitler's yacht. Their object, it was reported, was to study conditions in Germany as a guide in the making of future pictures, including one designed for the "edu-



"... Travelled up the Rhine in Hitler's yacht"

cation of German youth."

It was doubtless hoped that the reaction we would feel on reading these two items would be one of relief and gratification that Hollywood is aware of its responsibilities to the post-war world and is going to do something about them. This was not my reaction. On the contrary, these two items—and especially the one about the eleven luxurious magnates—strike me as being highly disturbing. I do not question the sincerity of Sam Goldwyn in his prophetic vision; I do not doubt that Messrs. Zanuck, Warner, and the other nine Big Shots from Hollywood are all, according to their own lights, well-meaning men; but the prospect that they are going to cast themselves in the roles of educators of the German people fills me with alarm and despondency.

The re-education of Germany by means of the Hollywood film! Surely even Germany's guilt is not heavy enough to warrant such retribution as this. But seriously, you cannot divorce the films that are made from the men who make them. I do not want to single anybody out for undue distinction, but according to Dr. Leo Rosten, who knows what he is talking about, the leader

of the party, Darryl Zanuck, has "the greatest nickelodeon mind in America." Therefore, even disregarding the beer and the yacht trip, it seems doubtful whether the present magnates of Hollywood are the right types for the job, whether they are fitted for it by education, cultural background, and social outlook. For it is a reasonable assumption that the way of life and the standards of value towards which they will strive to re-educate the Germans will be something very like the Hollywood way of life and the standards of value of the average Hollywood film. Since this is

the way of life under which they flourish, enabling them to travel in luxury planes with their own beer and a steward and a three-course meal, they naturally regard it as the best possible way of life for the whole world, and want to ensure its continuance by proclaiming its virtues far and wide. It would be strange if they did not. Is it ungenerous, however, to hope that the Germans will be bad pupils and will refuse to be impressed?

In any case, unless the visiting Americans can reach some agreement with the Russians, I imagine that there will be as much confusion in the new Germany as in a school with two or three radically different headmasters—for the Russians have already embarked on an extensive programme of their own for German re-education, and their ideal way of life is not exactly that of Hollywood.

BUT this is only one particular aspect of the whole problem of the cinema's future international influence which Sam Goldwyn's article opened up. One can only estimate what that influence is likely to be in years to come by studying its influence in the past and the present, and I suggest that the record of the movies to date, as a social instrument and a medium for international