

GOODBYE NEW ZEALAND

(Some extracts from a radio address by SYDNEY GREENBIE, Special Assistant to the Minister and General Representative of the U.S. Office of War Information.)

I HAVE visited nearly every town of any size in New Zealand and covered some 15,000 miles by train, by air, by car and by boat. Apart from the radio, I have talked to over 20,000 people and my wife has talked to another 10,000. It has been a year of happy service. If now and again I have felt baffled by an air of watchful aloofness on your part, it has been no more than I expected. In fact, your reception, your patience and forbearance have in the circumstances often astonished me. In a world of nationalistic vanities and touchy suspicion, for any people to lay aside their ingrown antipathies long enough to listen to a stranger is in itself something to be thankful for. For that I am deeply grateful to you people of New Zealand. Nations are accustomed to traders, come to buy and sell; they endure missionaries, come to preach; and stage Olympic sports festivals to fight each other down. But when it comes to their customs, habits, prejudices, tastes, thoughts and inhibitions, they can smell out a stranger an ocean-span away. But New Zealand can no more remain in intellectual isolation than America could remain in geographical and military isolation. For better or for worse, you must take your place in this crossway of world cultures, to yield to influence and to influence the thoughts, the customs, the habits, and the tastes of the world about you.

When I was asked to undertake this mission to New Zealand it had become evident that in the first year of the war in the Pacific, after the American troops had gone north-west, certain tensions had already developed. These tensions could not be cured by ignoring them.

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the detective was 36 years old or 60. The film, being a film, roams much farther afield than the play did; it wanders all round Thornton Square and even goes to Italy, and in the process the suspense, which in the play was concentrated into a single setting, inevitably tends to be dissipated. Dramatic unity is lessened. But there is still plenty to make *Gaslight* a far-better-than-average chiller, thanks mainly to the ideas which the playwright originally put into it, then to the disciplined finely-graduated performances of Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer, and finally to the richly emotional style of George Cukor's direction which invests the lush Victorian atmosphere with subtle terror.

THE MASK OF DIMITRIOS

(Warner Bros.)

FOR once I find myself in agreement with a film advertisement. This picture is described there as "the Warner Bros.' kind of thriller," and this is an adequate guide to the type of entertainment you may expect—provided, of course, that you know what is meant by the Warner Bros.' kind of thriller. But if you have seen films like *The Maltese Falcon* and *Casablanca* you should have little real difficulty in deciding whether *The Mask of Dimitrios* is worth your 1/6 or 2/3. For all their air of realism, they are all highly artificial and rather heavily theatrical, these

I have made the point in many places in New Zealand—and it will bear repeating—that the danger in this modern world is not that a nation is misunderstood by another nation, but that it misunderstands. It mattered less to America that Japan misunderstood us than that we misunderstood Japan. Had we not misunderstood Japan we would never have been caught unawares at Pearl Harbour. Again, how near to disaster the Allies might have come if they had listened to those who misunderstood Russia and accepted the stereotyped notion that Russia would go down in six weeks. Germany set out to demoralise the world by her propaganda. But because Germany accepted stereotyped notions about the psychology of other nations, Germany has gone down in defeat. One of the common stereotyped statements by friends and fascists alike was that America had grown soft with good living. This was believed by Germany and Japan to their undoing.

What we free people of the world must do, having won half the war, is to pool our intelligence not only that the other half of the war may be won, but that we may keep clear the goal for freedom. This can be done only if we refuse to permit the petty rivalries of trade, of tradition, and stereotyped thinking about each other to break us up into little nationalities instead of keeping us dignified and self-respecting United Nations. Therefore we must do everything in our power to keep up informational services between nation and nation. It must be full, all round, four-dimensional information. I can assure you that when I return to America I shall work as earnestly for a true appreciation of New Zealand life and character as I worked here to give you an honest version of American ways.

thrillers; the characters talk rather too much and too glibly; the plots are a little too ingeniously involved and the climaxes are achieved with almost mechanical precision. What you get here, in fact, is not literature but journales—but journales of a very efficient kind; as slick and lively and entertaining as it is superficial.

I shall not attempt to tell you the plot of this film, except to mention that in general (and as usual) it concerns the efforts of certain tough and shady characters to out-manoeuvre and outwit other equally tough and shady characters; and that in particular it recounts the efforts of a writer of detective thrillers to trace the "story" behind a certain corpse in a Turkish morgue. In the course of his researches he visits several other European capitals, hears stories of spy rings and assassinations, and keeps bumping into a suave but sinister fat man named Mr. Peters. Those picture-goers who saw *The Maltese Falcon* will know roughly what to expect when told that this rotund rascal is portrayed by Sidney Greenstreet, but for the same reason they may find it hard to accept Peter Lorre in his role of innocent investigator. Mr. Lorre has so often dabbled in murder on the screen that the very look of him has come to suggest the knife in the back or the silken noose, and it is therefore some time before you can satisfy yourself that on this occasion his interest in homicide is purely academic.



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