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theatre managers should at least exercise their discretion and screen them only when there is a reasonably full house. Only then have they the slightest chance of arousing the response on which they wholly depend for success. I have sat through some of them at five o'clock sessions when the attendance was small and the atmosphere was intolerably frigid. It is bad enough to feel that your time is being wasted, but it is the giddy limit when you are made to feel embarrassed into the bargain.

## Hitler's Taste in Films

I WONDER if I was as wrong as some persons on the extreme left seem to think I was in not being very enthusiastic about *Mission to Moscow*? I wouldn't raise the issue again if it were not for a recent report in the New York Times that official files unearthed in Hitler's Chancellery reveal that the Fuehrer, Goebbels, and other high-ranking Nazis were rabidly interested in American films and meticulously reported on those they were able to see. Apparently they saw a good many: the Hollywood pictures, which were stolen or duplicated by the Nazis in Lisbon and other neutral ports, were screened for the Fuehrer in surprisingly large doses.

These files show that although *Watch on the Rhine*, *The Moon Is Down*, and *Five Graves to Cairo* (in which Erich von Stroheim played Rommel) were classified as "Hetzfilms," or hatred-arousing productions, Hitler heartily recommended *Mission to Moscow* with the note "unbedingt sehen" (see it by all means)! One might, of course, argue that Hitler must have approved of this film because it strengthened his propagandist story that the war was caused by a Bolshevik conspiracy and that Britain and the U.S.A. had gone as red as Russia. All the same it makes one wonder; and those extreme Leftists who uncritically applauded *Mission to Moscow*, and flayed anybody who didn't, are now seen to have been in curious company. Stalin, himself, of course, did not like the picture.

OTHER interesting facts concerning Hitler's film taste emerge from these Chancellery files. For instance, he was completely ecstatic about *The Blue Angel* (the early film with Marlene Dietrich, mostly banned outside Germany). Oddly enough, one of his favourite film tunes was "Danke fuer die Erinnerung" (Thanks for the Memory), which the Nazis stole from a Bob Hope picture and published as an original German song. Westerns left Hitler cold, but *Ten Gentlemen from West Point* drew a good notice, to which Der Fuehrer added, "Well photographed."

Although, as the report states, Hitler patiently sat through hundreds of films, some were "abgebrochen" (broken off, or stopped). Among these were *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* and *Shanghai Gesture*. And in the case of the Joe Louis-Max Schmeling championship fight pictures,

Hitler was ruffled to the extent of commenting, "The Fuehrer agrees with the Propaganda Minister, the fight film must be forbidden."

### NATIONAL FILM UNIT

Sport has a good share of the National Film Unit's Weekly Review, due for release on February 1. The full running of the Wellington Cup, won by Golden Souvenir, is an obvious highlight, and there are also shots of the yearling sales at Trentham, where one colt changed owners at 3,750 guineas. The New Zealand bowling championships at Christchurch are also featured, as well as a news-item entitled "Outdoor Draughts at Invercargill" which it at least sounds sporting. And among the items of general interest is one showing the 20,000th State house to be completed and another of "Cranes at the Wellington Zoo."

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