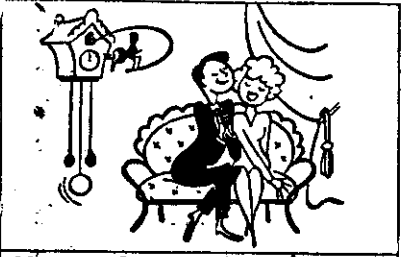
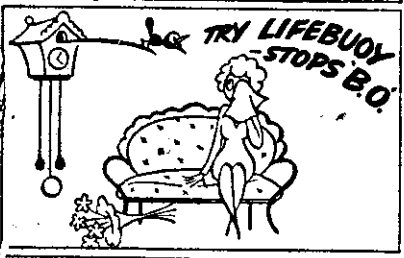
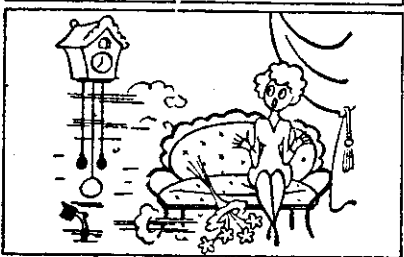


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Speaking Candidly, G.M.

## REVIEW OF MR. RANK

He Now Aims To Change The Face Of Britain As Well As Her Films

WITH all sorts of rumours floating about concerning J. Arthur Rank's intentions towards New Zealand, the time seems ripe to have another look at this colossus of the British film industry who keeps getting his name into the papers almost as frequently as Mr. Bevin does. At the time of writing the position regarding New Zealand is still obscure. The report from London that Mr. Rank has acquired a controlling interest in Kerridge Theatres Ltd. (which, with 133 theatres under its wing, is now the biggest theatre chain in this country) has been denied—categorically by Mr. Kerridge's Auck-

might not last very long. But the second trend is much more clearly defined and may be much more far-reaching. It is also, I think, much more disturbing. For it is becoming increasingly clear to me that Mr. Rank is less interested in making films which will be popular in British countries than in making films which will also be popular in America.

\* \* \*

I SHALL not attempt here to disentangle the highly complex moves which Mr. Rank has been making lately inside the structure of American film finance to acquire tie-ups with U.S. companies and thus ensure distribution of his British-made films in the States. The latest of which I have notice was a deal



CAESAR AND HIS WIFE: A new photograph of J. Arthur Rank, the dominating figure in the British film industry, and Mrs. Rank. They are seen on their estate near Winchester

land representative, a little less precisely in a statement issued in Wellington—so that until we get fuller details we cannot be sure whether this is, or is not, a case where smoke has been produced without fire.

Apart from this, however, Mr. Rank's organisation continues to make headlines. One of the difficulties of studying the Rank growth is that it goes ahead so fast that one cannot keep track of all the offshoots. But two main developments are becoming apparent. One is that Mr. Rank, on the face of it, stands to lose less than almost anybody if the American loan to Britain falls through, since this would inevitably mean a reduction in imports by Britain of such "luxury" commodities as American cigarettes and American films, leaving Mr. Rank even more firmly entrenched than he is at present within the Empire. With Hollywood competition thus removed he would, in fact, be in virtually exclusive control of the total supply of Britain's movie entertainment.

This is speculation; the contingency may not arise, and even if it did, it

with the up-and-coming International Pictures Inc. (which made *Casanova Brown* and *Woman in the Window*) and with Universal Pictures Inc. (which is 20 per cent. Rank-owned), whereby Rank gets the right to put his films into American theatres in return for putting theirs into his British houses.

Even more significant, though, is another move that Rank made at the end of last year and about which I have seen little comment. It is not finance that is involved here, but something perhaps more fundamental. If figures mean little to the average picturegoer, faces should; and Mr. Rank's latest plan appears to be nothing less than an attempt to change the collective face of Britain—by means of cosmetics!

\* \* \*

WHEN he was in the U.S. last year

Mr. Rank remarked, "I want to teach English women to look as well as American women." That remark has borne fruit in a deal announced by *Time* whereby Mr. Rank has handed over the faces of English women to the mercies of Hollywood's famous House of West-

(continued on next page)