

throughout the war, giving many concerts for the German wounded. Questioned recently by *Life* correspondents, Giesekeing stood pat. He believes a pianist's job is simply to play the piano. He hates war but considers that the war was not his fault. He doesn't feel guilty at all, and is rather surprised that others consider him in that light.

Sixty-eight-year-old Alfred Cortot, one of the greatest pianists of his generation, is living in poor health at Neuilly outside Paris waiting for the expiration of a ban which has forbidden him access to the French concert stage for a year. During the Vichy regime he became a National Councillor and virtual dictator of French music, openly sympathised with Nazis and expressed the regret that he was too old to fight with them. Serge Lifar has already served a year's sentence similar to Cortot's and is about to resume his career in France. An effusively cordial collaborationist, Lifar congratulated the Nazis on the conquest of his native Russian



ALFRED CORTOT
Openly sympathised with Nazis

city of Kiev and expressed a fervent desire to dance there under Nazi auspices. The Germans made him director of the Paris Opera. He accepted the honour gladly, remarking later, "To have directed the opera at 35 will always be the honour of my life." Beniamino Gigli, in Italy, sang for the Fascists, sang for the Nazis, was accused of collaboration, published a book describing himself as a strictly "nonpolitical" artist, accused his accusers of blackmail and was formally acquitted by an Italian court. He is singing as lustily as ever. Willem Mengelberg greeted the Nazis in his native Holland like long-lost brothers, spent the years of occupation gleefully conducting the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra and touring in triumph all over Germany. Loyal Dutchmen managed to get a little revenge by buying up all the tickets to his Amsterdam concerts and then staying away while he performed before empty houses. Mengelberg is now in Switzerland and is not likely to go home in the near future.

Most Controversial Figure

Wilhelm Furtwangler, most controversial figure of all to American music lovers, started his career under the Nazis

by protesting violently against Nazi racial policies and by protecting the Jewish musicians in his Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. A patriotic German who was under no compulsion to leave the Third Reich, he chose to stay, hoping he might keep the finest traditions of German music alive in spite of the Nazis. The Nazis finally managed to get him to accept an official post as a Prussian state councillor. In 1936 he was offered the post of conductor of the New York Philharmonic where he was to have succeeded Arturo Toscanini. But public clamour in New York forced him to decline the offer. During the war Furtwangler conspicuously refrained from conducting in occupied countries, with the exception of Austria where he had long been a favourite figure. Furtwangler is now living with his wife and son at a fashionable nursing home at Montreux on Lake Geneva. In Germany and Austria he is seriously referred to as a "resistance artist." He has just made an appearance under American auspices in Vienna and has been invited to conduct again in London. Interviewed by a *Life* correspondent last week, Furtwangler denied any sympathy with Nazism, pointed to the record of his long fight to protect Jewish musicians in Germany, regretted that there is no tribunal before which he could be given a chance to justify his actions before the American public.

There seems to be no discernible relation in these cases between degree of guilt and degree of punishment. The art-loving Latins seem, on the whole, to have let their collaborationists off easier than the more systematic Nordics. Punishment or acquittal seems in most cases to have depended not on any universal principles of justice but upon public emotion. So far, the argument in the United States has been carried on along the same lines. The prosecution's case rests mainly on the assumption that any well-known artist who deliberately chose to remain in occupied Europe under the Nazis has committed a sin against humanity for which there is no expiation.

Practical Issues

On the practical side the prosecution also argues with some justice that these musical collaborators (with the exception of Flagstad) contributed to the Axis war effort by helping Axis morale. The defence contends that, whatever their past sins, the artists in question offer no threat to civilisation to-day. It also contends that their contribution to the Axis war effort was inconsequential compared with that of the Axis physicians who healed the German wounded or that of the German atom-bomb scientists who have been imported by the hundreds to United States laboratories where their knowledge may benefit the future defence of the United States. Experience of past wars indicates that the hue and cry over enemy artists will eventually die down. When it does, United States music lovers will have dropped the hottest musico-political argument that they have had since World War I, when Wagner's operas were banned from the Metropolitan, Legionnaires rioted at Fritz Kreisler's concert in Ithaca, New York, and Conductor Karl Muck was plucked from the podium of the Boston Symphony and jailed as an enemy agent.

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