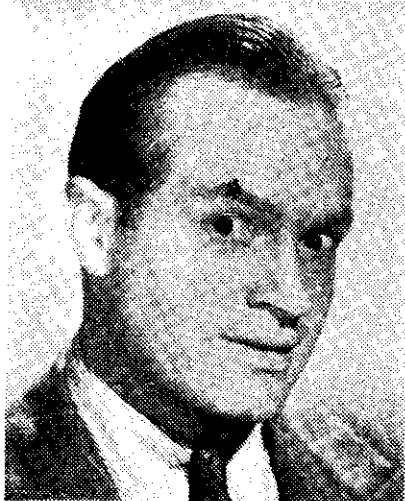


# SPEAKING CANDIDLY

## LOUISIANA PURCHASE

(Paramount)

I SUSPECT that it was the Americans in the audience (I trust I'm not giving away any secrets by saying that there were some) who laughed loudest and most frequently at *Louisiana Purchase*. But even if we others missed the point of some of the local references and the wisecracks about Republicans and Democrats (it's always an effort for me to remember which is



BOB HOPE

Wiggles out of a scrape and into a girdle

which), there was still more than enough in this genial show to keep a Saturday night crowd in the best of spirits throughout.

*Louisiana Purchase* has nothing to do with the way in which the Americans originally acquired this territory from the French. It concerns a much less reputable transaction involving various shady New Orleans politicians and civic dignitaries who have been selling public property back to the State and collecting two or three times on the same deal, and what happens when Senator Oliver P. Loganberry arrives in New Orleans with a Government mandate to investigate the situation. One of the chief things that happens is that the crooks leave Bob Hope, who is at least innocent

(Continued from previous page)

consciously affected. If I did give the film a "good slating" as propaganda (which is putting it too strongly), it was because I believe that stupidity, inefficiency—and the waste of public money here involved—is to be deplored wherever it occurs. Apart from this, what did happen to the theme of the "undefended frontier" implied by the title and stressed in the publicity? Was it because the title of *49th Parallel* was so irrelevant that in America they have called the film *The Invaders*? Concerning *The Little Foxes*, mentioned by "Mrs. R.S.," a "B" grading in *The Listener* simply means, in general, that a film is just one grade off the top of its class.

As for "Londoner," can she deny that she felt any compassion for that "cornered rat" of a Nazi who wanted to join the Hitlerites and was shot as a result? Not that I think she should be ashamed of herself if she did. In both cases, however, I should like to say that I appreciate the correspondents' interest.]

of felony though he may be guilty of other things, to hold their scandalous baby. He in turn tries to dispose of it by involving Senator Loganberry in a scandal with Vera Zorina, the ballet-dancer, but it takes a filibuster in the State Senate (an uproarious burlesque on *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*) to save the honour of New Orleans and Mr. Hope's skin.

It's a toss-up who is the real star of *Louisiana Purchase*: the veteran actor Victor Moore as the droll, lovable Senator Loganberry, who is as incorruptible as Robespierre and as gentle-hearted as Robespierre wasn't, or the wily, ingratiating Bob Hope, with his torrent of wisecracks (some of which sound as if they might be extempore), and his deadly serious manner in the most ridiculous situations—for example, his demonstration of the correct way for a woman to wriggle into a girdle. Which is not to overlook the very considerable contribution to the fun by Zorina, who acts almost as well as she dances. Not that she dances enough.

Technicolour and originality of direction are other assets of the film, the latter particularly at the opening, where Paramount have gone to elaborate trouble to avoid any, by insisting that the forthcoming disclosures of graft in Louisiana have absolutely no relation to fact. Methinks they do protest too much. Wasn't there somebody called Huey Long who came from Louisiana?

Although the film has a score by Irving Berlin it is a musical-comedy with much more comedy than music. And that suits me—and I hope you too.

## TANKS A MILLION

(Hal Roach-United Artists)

TANKS A MILLION belongs to the custard-pie throwing tradition of comedy. Actually, they throw everything but custard-pies, and the comedy is as refreshingly funny as it must have been in the early days of the cinema when the first paperhanger sat down in his bucket of paste. There is a certain advantage in the laughter that results from action rather than from dialogue, for no matter how heartily the audience laughs, the next bit of fooling isn't muffled by delayed-action roars. And it's good occasionally to find yourself in the safe world of traditional comedy, the kind of world where you can be sure that the brutal sergeant will be seen eating the dust in the second to last scene, and that in the last scene the crotchety colonel (heart of gold revealed), will be found giving the Victoria Cross and three extra stripes to the accidentally valorous and up till now misunderstood young hero. And knowing all this, you're free to laugh at the sergeant's triumphs and the hero's sufferings because you know that in the end right (or at least the hero), will triumph.

William Tracy is excellent as Double-day, the Information Please railway clerk who gets caught in the draft. He's rather like Mickey Rooney, but with-

out the latter's aggravating bumptiousness, and as far as I know, he can't sing or dance. Then there's James Gleason as the colonel with mike-fright, who makes an effective first appearance in a toga of towelling, and talks to a hair-brush, and Noah Beery, jun., as the brutal sergeant, who, bereft by the Hays Office of his customary means of self-expression, has to convey everything by facial contortions, and does it very well. It's the stereotyped framework of an army comedy, but within this framework the film is refreshing, and gives no reason for supposing that Hal Roach is losing his reputation as the leading exponent of slapstick.

**THROAT EASED**

**COLD STOPPED**

*Pulmonas*

1/1, 1/7, 2/7

## From town car to ambulance

Lady CYNTHIA TOTHILL on War Service

LADY Cynthia Tothill, the only sister of the 5th Earl of Bandon, has been through many a London blitz. Since the war started she has worked as an Ambulance Driver, but she still has time to think about and care for her complexion. "It is especially hard on one's complexion, being out in all weathers," she says, "but Pond's creams are a splendid standby. They keep my skin in perfect condition."



"On War Service,  
or at home, Pond's  
two marvellous creams  
keep my complexion  
smooth and clear,"

says LADY CYNTHIA TOTHILL



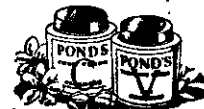
Lady Cynthia Tothill has shining dark eyes, dark hair, and a smooth "peachy" skin.

Lady Cynthia says, "Elaborate beauty care isn't necessary—for Pond's Creams keep my skin in perfect condition. Since I started using them I've been amazed at the improvement in my complexion."

Pond's two creams can do as much for your complexion as they have done for hers—but you must use Pond's Two Creams together. First, Pond's Cold Cream for thorough cleansing. Pond's Cold Cream sinks right down into the pores and

floats out all the dust and powder that has accumulated there. Your skin becomes clearer.

Then, smooth on Pond's Vanishing Cream, and away go those tiny bits of dry skin that roughen and dull your complexion. Your skin looks delicate, clearer—and it feels definitely softer. Pond's Vanishing Cream gives a lovely matt finish that takes powder with exquisite smoothness.



Sold at all Stores and Chemists in tubes for your handbags, and in jars for your dressing table.