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"WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS"

Dramatic American Programme On United Nations Day



★ **NORMAN CORWIN** (above), who won radio's Peabody Award for his script of "We Hold These Truths," has been hailed as the foremost dramatist in radio. "His programme," declared the committee which made the award, "demonstrated what patriotism and a fine dramatic sense could do seven days after Pearl Harbour." Mr. Corwin, who is 31 years old, entered radio by accident. He was a reporter on a Springfield (Massachusetts) newspaper when he was given an audition for a spare-time job of reading news bulletins over his local station. A short time later he was bound for New York and a career in radio. A phenomenal worker, during one six months' period he wrote and directed an original drama every week. Currently he is writing a Saturday night programme "This Is War," which is broadcast over combined U.S. news networks. His best scripts have been collected in a book "Thirteen by Corwin," with a preface of Carl Van Doren.

UNITED NATIONS DAY was celebrated fittingly by both the NBS and CBS, one of the most striking programmes being *We Hold These Truths*, a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the signing of the American Bill of Rights, broadcast in the first instance in the United States on December 15, 1941, eight days after Pearl Harbour and 150 years to the day after the signing of the document. Reaching American listeners over a combined hook-up of the NBC, CBS, and Mutual networks, *We Hold These Truths* was heard by an audience claimed to be the "greatest ever."

We Hold These Truths, which was secured from America by the CBS and broadcast in New Zealand over all Commercial and the main National stations, won for its author and director, Norman Corwin, the Peabody Award, which is to American broadcasting what the Academy Award is to Hollywood. The climax was an address by President Roosevelt, and the cast included Lionel Barrymore, Edward Arnold, Walter Huston, Walter Brennan, Orson Welles, Edward G. Robinson, Rudy Vallee, Bob Burns, Marjorie Main, and Leopold Stokowski and the NBC Symphony Orchestra.

The compère was James Stewart, now a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Just as he did in the film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, Stewart took listeners on a radio tour of the capital city of America, pointing out the significance of this and that monument, noting the many and varied inscriptions written up here and there on buildings, and then pausing to consider the background to the Bill of Rights, and the motives which prompted the citizens of the newly-constituted United States to set down on paper the liberties and rights upon which they intended to build.



LIEUT. JAMES STEWART

Amendment by amendment the Bill was discussed, and to the average New Zealand listener it must have been a dramatic lesson in American history.

Stewart's peroration was typical of the high level which the programme reached. "... United proudly on a solemn day, knit more strongly than we were 150 years ago this day, can it not be progress if our Bill of Rights is stronger now than when it was conceived? Is not that what you would call wearing well? The incubation of invincibility? Is not our Bill of Rights more cherished now than ever, the blood more zealous to preserve it whole? Americans shall answer it, for they alone know the answer—the people of America from East, from West, from North, from South."

THE WORLD AFTER THE WAR

(Continued from previous page)

folio of Education will become the one of greatest importance, and that the Finance Minister will be its humble if also its vigilant servant. This will be because Education will be regarded not only as the greatest single agency of change but as a means of transforming both people and the society they compose. The education of the young will be the most important part of the school's task, but the education of adults, which will go on from 20 to 70, will receive even more time, means and attention. In the case of the young there will be less learning and far more activity. In the case of the grown-ups there will be (or should be) sufficient leisure to master the ideas that enable one to change with a changing world."

MAN IN UNIFORM

"BLUEPRINTS for a new world order?" asked the young New Zealander in uniform. "My own opinion is that a lot of it is so much wool being pulled over our eyes. Maybe I'm too particular about motives. But that

doesn't alter the fact that I believe there will be a new world order after the war, and that it's on its way even now. Security is what I will demand, and there are millions like me. That is why I believe that whatever political system we have, the profit motive must give way to the security motive. I don't give two hoots what the system is after the war as long as it isn't totalitarian. We don't want totalitarian security. Personally I'm inclined to think that the framework of the present system will serve fairly well as a basis to build on. I'm optimistic enough to believe that this time we really will learn some lessons."

GIRL IN UNIFORM

"WE'RE not fighting for a new way of life, we're fighting for self-preservation," said a W.W.S.A. girl. "I think it's rather silly of people to suppose that everything's going to be so much brighter and better after the war. Things certainly weren't brighter and better after the last war. After this war

(Continued on next page)



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