

Picture Prompts Behind-the-Door Scene

By STEVE DIMEO
Entertainment Editor

Pictures like "The Heroes of Telemark" now at the Fox really make moviegoing worthwhile. After all, where else—barring classes at the University—can you have the opportunity to heave heavy sighs while waiting for something good, suspenseful, exciting, entertaining or at least interesting to happen?

Movies like this really make you wonder just how imaginary a scene like the following would be.

PRODUCER: I understand "Se Guns of Navarone" made a grand splash at se boxoffice. Maybe ve ought to make more of sis Nazi business—like maybe a low-budget copy mit Kirk Douglas for Gregory Peck, Richard Harris for Anthony Quinn and Ulla Jacobsson for Freud. Douglas just acts, Harris overacts and Fraulein Jacobsson doesn't act at all. But das macht nichts.

WRITER: Oh, boy!

PRODUCER: How about vorking on dat little-known adventure in Norway during se World Var ven sosome men shtopped de dirty Nazis from making se atomic bombs, huh?

WRITER: Can we have maybe one firing squad?

PRODUCER: Iss okay mit me.

WRITER: And airplanes and explosions?

PRODUCER: Not too much now. Ve don't want to keep se audience awake.

WRITER: Can we have trains like "The Train" and "Von Ryan's Express"?

PRODUCER: Maybe vun—ven se heavy water is being shipped to Germany.

WRITER: Oh, great! And here's a perfect place to throw in one of those whistling marches like in "The Bridge on the River

Kwai," "The Great Escape" and "Von Ryan's Express." The audience oughta really eat that up. We'll even have the bad guy whistle along.

PRODUCER: Dressed in black?

WRITER: Of course.

PRODUCER: Vell, make sure sis one's not vearing se swastika. WRITER: A great idea, A.M. But we gotta tell the good guys from the bad guys with somebody like Douglas in there fighting against the Germans. The "dumb Nazi" bit seems to be in. Why don't we make all the krauts so stupid anybody'd know 'em?

PRODUCER: Vell—

WRITER: Let's have a place when this Nazi official encounters Douglas and Ulla after they've got the hidden negatives of the floor plan to the factory with the heavy water. We'll have the Nazi actually pick up the hymn book and even finger the marker where the negative's hidden. Boy, THAT oughta make him look stupid.

PRODUCER: Aber—

WRITER: And we'll really make the sabotage of the plant so easy. The ten men'll pass right by all the guards and easily miss being hit by hundreds of machine guns. No suspense or anything. Might as well throw in the dumb German professor who can't find his glasses when they're on his head, too. And here's a place where we can have a couple of Nazis try to get their guns out of their holsters or unjammed and fumble long enough to be shot by Michael Redgrave.

PRODUCER: But vut about action?

WRITER: Let's have Douglas and Harris have a fight right about here.

PRODUCER: But sere's no reason.

WRITER: Let's let it be the theme they fight over. Douglas wants to bomb the factory and risk the lives of 6,000 people but Harris wants to risk only ten lives—though he changes his mind later on (the audience'll never catch the inconsistency).

PRODUCER: Who'd ever fight about that?

WRITER: Who cares? All the audience wants to see is the fists and the blood. They'll just have to bear the melodrama.

PRODUCER: Ve ought to try to make sem cry, too.

WRITER: Easy. This girl's about to have a baby and her husband gets killed the first time the ten marauders destroy the heavy water supply.

PRODUCER: Sat ought to really break sem up.

WRITER: Or crack them up.

PRODUCER: Vatch sat. Ve can't have any of sat vit for sis picture. Ven Douglas leaves the bedroom of his ex-Frau, have him say just, "Sleep well," and ven men are about to parachute, have se commander say, "Happy landing."

WRITER: How about having Harris, when looking at the Norwegian landscape, say, "It's beautiful, isn't it?" and have Douglas respond, "Yes, if you're a reindeer."

PRODUCER: Ha! Ja, but no better san sat.

WRITER: Let's make it at least a little artistic, though. Can't I have the camera keep shooting drops of heavy water plunking into a container? It'll symbolize the inexorability of the Nazi army and maybe boredom, too.

PRODUCER: Iss okay, but it shtill must be realistic in parts.

WRITER: Realism! Oh, boy! Then we oughta make Ulla definitely Douglas' ex-wife even though we don't have to make anything

of it; it might even make the movie seem like more than it is. Let's let the audience know we know what heavy water is, too, by having Douglas show a piece of paper with D.O. on it. And let's throw in a few old black-and-white war clippings, too.

PRODUCER: But se movie is in color, nicht wahr?

WRITER: So who cares? We'll

tint the film. At least it'll look real.

PRODUCER: Gut. But remember after all sis, se production should end happy. Se good guys got to live. Might as vell save se women and kids to follow up se seme, too.

WRITER: Idealism! And in a war film, too. Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy! I can hardly wait...

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