

The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us No Fear Shall Awe"
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On Art and Propaganda

The annual awarding of Oscars to the best works and artists of America's best-known art form—the motion picture—indicates the emphasis in Hollywood is still on the art of entertainment and not on propaganda.

For this achievement, we would award the motion picture industry a very special Oscar. The industry has stood true to its raison d'etre, and resisted the pressure to become a propaganda factory. If it had not, such purely entertaining pictures as "The Greatest Show on Earth" could have become an argument.

Hollywood has been subjected to a great deal of pressure; there is no doubt of that. Some of it has left its mark. But in the main the decisive influence in Hollywood is boxoffice receipts, pickets.

The motion picture industry is not alone in the fight against pressure groups which confuse art with propaganda. Brooks Atkinson, the New York Times drama critic, cites recent instances when the theater has had similar interference. The Hotel and Club Employees Union, Local 6, for example, picketed the play "Mid-Summer" because a hotel maid was portrayed as an incompetent, garrulous character. And the American Bar Association asked playwright Arthur Miller to change some of the dialogue in "The Crucible," a play about the 17th century Salem witch trials, because some of the lines are "disparaging of lawyers or the legal profession."

Atkinson points out that some lawyers are rogues. Some hotel maids are incompetent. And he compliments the American Jewish Congress for not picketing Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice" at the City Center!

Then Mr. Atkinson points to "Porgy and Bess," the Gershwin opera which has just returned from a triumphant six-months tour of Europe. He says, "Nothing has done us so much good abroad since Teddy Roosevelt took a bird walk with Lord Grey." Yet some-Americans originally objected to sending "Porgy and Bess" overseas on grounds that it would give Europeans the wrong impression of American culture and American negroes.

But, Atkinson points out, "In the realm of art, nothing matters so much as the quality of the art, which in the case of the Gershwin opera is magnificent. People who take a literal attitude toward it are as impervious to culture as the Soviet bigwigs (who) trample down any spontaneity as author may have inadvertently contributed to a work of imagination."

And here is the critic's most telling observation about pressure groups: "The zeal for outward respectability is a sign of inner uncertainty."

Perhaps that is one explanation for the almost fantastic fuss about the Voice of America. Another may be that the Voice was the epitome of confusion about art and propaganda. Some Voice workers may have been artists, but

the Voice was supposed to be a propaganda machine, not an art form. It turned out to be neither good art nor good propaganda. Propaganda must of necessity be pragmatic; it is good only insofar as it produces the desired practical ends. Art, however, is good or bad per se, intrinsically; it is not dependent or relative.

The experience with the Voice and with "Porgy and Bess" seem to show that America gets across American culture and ideas better in our own art forms than in our attempts at propaganda. It is a good lesson to learn, and we hope Hollywood, Broadway and Washington on mark it well.—M.W.

Church Program Well-Done

The program of the ceremony commemorating the dedication of the beautiful new St. Joseph's church in Salem Thursday is a publication indeed worthy of the occasion and the edifice. The art work, much of it the original work of Father John Domin, is exceptionally well-done. The material was assembled by Father Leo Lin-ahen.

This 32-page booklet contains not only the English translation of the rite of blessing but also a history of the parish including a note of a news story in the January 1, 1889 Statesman. The history goes back to 1853, however, when the pioneer Blanchet, archbishop, inquired into the possibility of erecting a church in Salem.

Another interesting feature of the program are quotations pertinent to the architect, to the builders, and to those who fashioned the glass "worked by a very ancient canon of their art . . ."

But the best part are the decorative vignettes used throughout the booklet—apparently linoleum cuts or woodcuts.

As a whole, this program will become a lasting souvenir of the ceremony and one of which St. Joseph's parishioners can be proud. Salem is going to have several more church dedications in the not too far distant future, and the appropriate committees might keep in mind the pamphlet given guests at this recent church event when they consider the form and content of their own programs.

Most commentators announced as "good news" the fact that the family of mannequins crouched in the basement of the "typical" American home in the Yucca Flats atomic explosion were unharmed, even though the house itself was demolished. Trouble is that house wasn't "typical" of the Northwest, where so many new homes are the rambling "ranch" style with no basement. Could be the atomic test will influence future architecture and cellars will come back in style again.

Drive-in theaters are going in at Hubbard, Woodburn and Silverton. Must be good money in . . . popcorn.

Suspicious Voiced that American People Not Getting Whole Truth on Conduct of Military Effort

By DON WHITEHEAD
(For J. M. ROBERTS Jr.)

WASHINGTON (AP) — Increased grumblings and suspicions are being heard in Washington and elsewhere today that the American people are not being given the whole truth about conduct of the nation's military effort.

It's a problem closely related to the people's trust and confidence in our military and civilian leadership — and one that is urgently demanding a solution.

The corrosive actions of suspicion and distrust can themselves in a measure defeat the defense buildup. And certainly they are packed with political dynamite for the Eisenhower administration.

The undercurrent of doubt boiled into open skepticism when the Senate Armed Services Committee in effect refused to accept the argument by Gen. J. Lawton Collins, Army chief of staff, that there never has been an ammunition shortage in Korea.

An investigation was ordered into Gen. James A. van Fleet's claim that shortages existed during the 22 months he commanded the Eighth Army — and some still exist.

This doubt was reflected, too, in the widespread attention given to the recent Philadelphia speech by Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.), who said if the people knew the truth about our military situation there would be a wholesale reorganization of the Defense Department.

Symington formerly was secretary of the Air Force and thus had access to a great many of the secrets and intelligence of the military works.

His thesis was the defense effort is "suffering from inside competition" among the three services and this nation would not be prepared to cope with an atomic attack if it came. His proposal was more guns and less butter.

President Eisenhower told his news conference Thursday he believed in a reasonable posture of defense. The kernel, of course, is what he meant by a "reasonable posture." He indicated it would be no less than the goals fixed under the Truman administration — although he hoped to get more

defense with the same dollars through economy.

Sen. Taft (R-Ohio), GOP leader in the Senate, has come to believe the time is ripe for a new look at the armed services requirements.

"I think we have got to look at the whole picture and see what needs to be done," Taft said.

Along this line, Julius Ochs Adler, general manager of the New York Times, put a finger squarely on part of the trouble in a speech Friday before the armed forces information school at Fort Slocum, N. Y.

Adler said there has been "an immense barrier of oversecrecy" in the military and civilian gov-

ernment which is damaging national security.

Referring to what he called "a trend toward over-classification and ultra secrecy," Adler said: "They have been self-defeating and instead of helping to preserve our strength, they have far too often cloaked weaknesses of which the public should be aware."

Secretary of Defense Wilson proved he was a great production man as head of General Motors. Now he has another kind of production problem — how to produce confidence in the operation of the military establishment.

The chances are it never can be done under the cloak of secrecy.

Literary Guidepost

By W. G. ROGERS
PRINCE OF PLAYERS: EDWIN BOOTH, by Eleanor Ruggles (Norton; \$4.50)

"Then there are no more actors," Rufus Choste lamented when he heard of the death of Junius Brutus Booth in 1862.

But by that time the actor hailed today as the greatest this country was to produce, Junius' son Edwin, had already been praised by Joe Jefferson as the handsomest lad he'd ever seen, had made his official debut in Boston in "Richard III," and, in the following year, was to offer a San Francisco audience his first Hamlet, one of his finest roles.

Abandoning a wife and son in England, the father had fled to this continent with a mistress who gave him a whole brood of children, among them Edwin, before divorce made it possible for him to legalize the second union.

Edwin wasn't the only young Booth . . . there was also John Wilkes . . . who wanted to act, but he seems to have had the advantage, though maybe it resembled an onerous task, of following his father around to keep

him from getting too drunk. He followed him to the principal theater cities, even to San Francisco; while he himself thus learned to drink, a habit from which he recovered, he also learned to act, a habit which stuck.

He carried with him his caul. If he credited it with saving him from drowning in the Sacramento River, and from a bullet fired at him in Chicago, it did not spare him from appallingly intimate contact with one of the great tragedies of the age: Lincoln's assassination. The limelight was where the actor had to live, and he never fully escaped the effects of that evil deed. Born in 1833, near Baltimore, he died in 1893 in the Players, the New York club he founded.

This biography does not define as precisely as might be wished the nature of Booth's genius as an actor. On the other hand, it pictures an intense personality, it is crammed with fascinating incident, and it spirits you away zestfully into the wonderful make-believe of the theater.

'PUSH BUTTON' WAR



The boys at the Legislature are predicting tougher sledding in the House for the anti-racial discrimination bill, which got through the Senate 21-9. It was during Senate debate on the bill that the gallery burst forth with the first applause of the session — bringing a reproof from Pres. Marsh and scaring dozing reporters awake . . . To go yet are constitution convention, anti-discrimination and the wet Nip & Tuck Bill (take a nip and tuck out for home.)



A shaky rumor has it that another Portland biggie, Olds & King, may establish a branch store in Salem . . . If this keeps up will Portland's next move be to annex Salem? . . . Wonder if other Portland enterprises will come to Salem—like a municipal auditorium, ice arena, Portland Meadows and stage show theaters? . . .

If you want to arm yourself to the teeth with facts about fluoridation of drinking water bend an ear to KOCO at 9:45 p.m. Sunday. A local committee will outline advantages, latest findings, costs, engineering problems and constitutionality of fluoridation. Speakers will report how children's tooth decay has been drastically reduced in communities which have used fluoride . . . Fluoridation boosters here say nothing is holding back fluoridation from Salem except apathy of citizens . . . The program will ask citizens to write or call councilmen or the mayor if they want fluoridation.

Short story, complete in this issue . . . Wife of a local man went to the hospital for an operation. While she was gone the harassed husband guarded, fed, bedded, bathed and toughed the couple's four siblings. He got up and got 'em off to school. He washed, shopped and houseworked and struggled (more or less) at his own job. He didn't sleep well because one of the kids was always up and around—at all hours. After two days of this the pooped pater visited his mate at the hospital. "Tell me," he asked wearily, "all these years I've been living with you. Do those kids of ours get up EVERY morning at 6:30?"

If anybody had anything to say about Spring Friday we didn't hear it—what with all the wind and rain . . . Oregon Biz & Tax Research news letter this week sez this: "Much legislative time could be saved if major state commissions, tax commission in particular, gave pre-legislative notice as to principal new-policy bills they intend to introduce . . . then there could be early digestion of ideas contained therein . . . For example, among tax commission's bills that were unexpected, hence hit a committee which was cold on the matter, include HB's 230-231-76 and 387. These are high-level policy bills that merit a look before the hurly-burly of a session engulfs them . . ."

GRIN AND BEAR IT by Lichty



When radio broadcasting first started in the 1920s, stations all operated on one 300 meter wave length.

Spelling Contest?

Several days ago The Oregon Statesman wrote to the principals of the 49 schools participating in The Statesman-KLM Spelling Contest asking their attitude toward continuing the program into its fourth year since it was not planned to publish the replies, and because principals were not told that such was a possibility, no signatures are attached to the following. But it was felt the comments were of sufficient interest to record here, and the writer of any one of them will be made known on request.

"By all means we would like to continue the spelling contest . . . Spelling is not one of the easy subjects at—but it has become popular because of the above activity, and our junior high students have become 'word' conscious."

"We enjoyed the spelling contest this year very much. We think it is very helpful and educational and the students seem . . . enthused about it. Let's have it again next year."

"I know the spelling contest is a lot of work but it's worth a lot to students and teachers. Keep it up."

"I am personally enthusiastic about your spelling contest and was glad that our school was able to participate . . . and will be happy to do so again."

"I asked my girls and boys how I should answer your inquiry about next year. You should have volunteered 'My dad thinks these contests are tops. I do too.' . . . Even though we have no final contestant this year, some from every family, I believe, will be there in person or via radio . . . Keep up the good work."

"I feel that this is a worthwhile project. It creates competition and a desire to become better spellers. I recommend that it be continued."

"Great interest is taken in our school in the spelling contest. The 5th and 6th grades are already looking forward to the time when one of their group may take part."
(To be continued.)

Eye-Witness Tells House Of Atom Blast

The House of Representatives took time out Friday to hear one of its members Lloyd E. Haynes, Grants Pass, give an eye-witness account of the atomic explosion at Yucca Flat, Nev., last Tuesday.

Haynes and Rep. W. W. Braden, Burns, were among 800 military, government, civil defense and other state officials to see the blast.

Haynes said his principal reaction to the explosion was relief from the extreme tension just preceding the nuclear fury. He said many witnesses became ill from the "letdown," but that he and Braden suffered no disturbing effects.

Haynes said he was given a pair of very dark glasses, but the brightness of the explosion easily penetrated the almost-black glass.

"I was blinded by the flash," Haynes said, "and if I had it to do over again, I think I would rather turn my back."

Haynes said he took off the glasses 12 seconds after the blast, and then saw the shock wave rippling across the desert.

"When it struck me, it picked me up and set me back like a jolt," he said.

The fireball turned to a "gruesome purple" and sucked up an extremely dense cloud of dust, which hung over the area for an hour, then seemed to plummet to earth.

Education Fund Wins Approval

A \$21,600 appropriation for educating Oregon specialized college students in other states was passed by the House Friday and sent to the Senate.

This money will be used mostly to pay tuition for Oregon students who will go next year to the Washington State College school of veterinary medicine.

It is Oregon's first attempt to take advantage of the new western higher education compact, under which each western state will open up its graduate schools to students from states which don't have similar schools.

Parole Bill Delayed For Survey Study

Sen. Pat Lonergan, Portland, Senate public welfare committee chairman, said Friday he is delaying action on a full-time parole board bill until he studies the report of the three wardens from Illinois, South Dakota and Idaho who inspected the Oregon penitentiary this week.

He is ready, however, to introduce his bill to let the parole board, rather than the courts, set prison sentences.

Silverton Students Invited to Witness Outdoor-Life Show

SILVERTON — More than 300 junior high and grade school children will be guests of Silverton businessmen and members of Silverton Chapter, Izak Walton League, at a motion picture, "The Land of the Golden Twilight," Monday at 8 p.m. at the Eugene Field auditorium.

Chapter members report the movie is for the entire family and all are welcome to attend. Adults are being charged to help cover expense of bringing the show to town.

The movie features wild life of the Canadian Rockies with Grover Young, big game guide, as commentator.

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The Safety Valve

REPUBLICAN CIRCUS Editor:

When the Babbitt & Brothers circus came to town last November it followed the usual pattern except it failed to pack off its elephants and fold up its tents; instead it was booked for four years. Consequently we are treated to the spectacle of the ringmaster making his practice puts on the White House lawn while the barkers (Wilson, McKay, etc.) sell Republican snake-oil under a new label. And under the big top the star performers (McCarthy, Jenner & Velde, feed live intellectuals to man-eating senators and representatives. But excess breeds its own revision and even circuses don't go on forever.

For those either bored or disgusted with such activities, a glance at the Canadian scene might be refreshing. If nothing else, the Canadian government is a living example that intellectuals, or at least educated men, can run a government effectively and without the "aid" of McCarthys, Jenners or Cadillac salesmen.

In the present Canadian government, Governor-General Massey, the Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Pearson, and the Ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Wong, have all been professors of history at the University of Toronto. In addition, the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, formerly lectured in the Faculty of Law at Laval University, the Minister of Labor, Mr. Gregg, was President of the University of New Brunswick, and the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, was a part-time lecturer at McGill University. Nor is this all, the list of educated men in government might be greatly extended.

In the meantime the Republican circus goes on and substantiates the remark Henry James made some forty years ago: "It becomes every hour a more impossible century."

Walter L. Berg
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