

Blondes Find Movie Employment In Yugoslavia

By TOM A. CULLEN

Belgrade (NEA)—Yugoslav film studios have 270,000 registered unemployed. Most of them seemed to have perished their hair and are carrying spears at Belgrade's Central Film Studios.

The relief rolls had been raised to provide extras for "The Long Ships," the \$6 million Viking film which is being made here largely with American (Columbia Pictures) money. Some of the Yugoslav extras, those with the bleached hair, were made up to look like Vikings. Others were dressed as Moorish cavalymen.

Vikings and Moors, in turn, were mixed up with harem girls

from Rome, Nubian slaves, African parrots, 400 cavalry horses and one small monkey. The result, I was assured, would be a breathtaking spectacle shot in Technicolor and Technirama 70 mm.

"The Long Ships," which stars Richard Widmark and Sidney Poitier, is notable for being the first big coproduction in which American and Yugoslav money is invested. Actually, it is a three-way deal. The director, Jack Cardiff, is British, as are many of the cast. If the filming goes smoothly, it may be followed by other joint productions.

In fact, it looks as though the big movie trek to Yugoslavia may already be on. Having plant-

ed its standard alongside the Tiber in Rome and the Thames in London, Hollywood now appears to be extending its far-flung outpost to the Danube in Belgrade. Cheaper production cost is one big Yugoslav attraction for American filmmakers. Whereas Spanish and Italian movie extras have now upped their wage demands, labor is still plentiful in Yugoslavia.

Then, too, Yugoslav offers a wide variety of scenery for filming on location, ranging from the sandy beaches of the Adriatic coast to wild mountain fastnesses where Tito and his partisans held out against the Nazis. (Rumor has it that 20th Century-

Fox may make a Western here.) Alert to the value of United States dollars, the Belgrade studios have invested heavily in new equipment, including noiseless generators. The only piece of equipment I saw which was showing its age was the wind machine, made from pieces of a World War II fighter plane.

Coproduction, however, has brought its headaches. There is the language barrier, for example. All instructions to Yugoslav extras and bit players must be translated from English into Serbo-Croat, and a dozen interpreters are employed constantly to do this job.

Then there is the matter of "set discipline." The Yugoslavs are used to shooting a film, then dubbing the sound track afterwards, which means that they can make as much noise as they like while the cameras are turning.

On "The Long Ships," where the sound is registered simultaneously with the image, they have had to learn to freeze in place and to remain absolutely silent when a scene is being shot.

The Yugoslavs stand to benefit most from coproduction, for they are learning to master the complexities of Technicolor and Technirama 70 mm. by working side by side with the Americans and British.

The Hollywood "star system," however, is utterly alien to them. In Yugoslavia, where films are usually thrown to gather in four or five weeks, no one gets top billing.

Belgrade's Central Film Studios, like most other Yugoslav enterprises, is run by a workers' council which decides how many films will be made each year, what the budget of each film will be, what wages will be paid, and how much of the profits will

be plowed back in new plant and facilities. One of the troubles the Americans have had here is in getting the Yugoslavs to "think big." For instance, the Yugoslavs were asked to slaughter a dozen oxen for a big feasting scene in "The Long Ships," in which hell-raising Vikings chase the serving wenches while brandishing legs of beef and jugs of ale.

The Yugoslavs protested that this was wanton extravagance. The Americans had to patiently explain that at least a dozen oxen would be burnt to charcoal before the director would be satisfied with the "takes" and move on to the next scene. The meat-hungry Yugoslavs gave in with a great show of reluctance.

Military Men Decry JFK

(Continued from Page 2)

honest differences will be argued through and resolved. If these differences continue to lie buried, and Mr. Kennedy and McNamara's civilian aides make military policy decisions on the spur of the moment as emergencies arise, the voice of the experienced military men will not be heard in detail.

"You can work with a policy decision, even if you don't agree with it," says one officer. "But if you don't have a policy decision, what can you do—guess?"

CHAIRMAN LAFAYETTE, La. (UPI)—Lionel Hebert, the last of the National PGA match game champions, was named chairman of the PGA tournament committee last year shortly after he won the Memphis Open.



The blondes are riding high in Yugoslavia.

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PAGE 10

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