

# News Letter

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## WAYS AND MEANS OF NAZI FILM SCHEMES

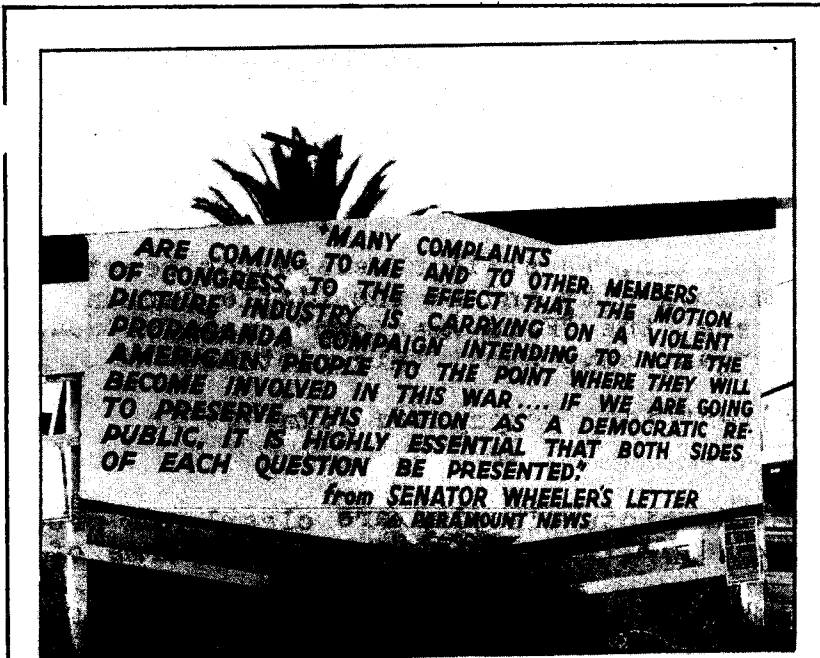
In perfect unison, isolationists and Nazi fellow-travelers in America steadily and persistently beat their drums in protest against what they term "anti-Nazi propaganda" in motion pictures and news reels produced by American firms. Yet the flow into America of German-made films exuding Nazi ideologies continues unabated. The showing of American pictures in the Reich has been *verboten* by the German Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Doctor Paul Joseph Goebbels. In marked contrast, the United States Government has one nothing to curtail the showing of propaganda pictures, produced specifically for the purpose of undermining America's democratic form of government.

Although the Hollywood motion picture industry has released a few forceful anti-Nazi productions, it is common knowledge in the film capital that producers hesitate to dip their fingers more often into the anti-Nazi soup for fear of being labeled "propagandists". This reticence is a natural outgrowth of the strenuous campaign waged by men like Senator Burton K. Wheeler and other confusion mongers. Hollywood visitors are greeted by a large billboard at Sunset Boulevard and Vermont Avenue, giving public airing to Senator Wheeler's charge that American motion picture producers are propagandists (illustration on this page). These spectators, however, may not know that the property on which the sign is erected belongs to Mrs. Aline Barnsdall who has for years donated the use of the sign to local Communist organizations.

On February 27, 1941, President Roosevelt addressed the Annual Awards Dinner of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Said the President:

In these days of anxiety and world peril, our hearts and minds and all of our energies are directed toward one objective. That objective is the strengthening of our national defense. Every day we realize that more and more things in our life must be evaluated in just such proportion as they contribute to the national defense.

The American motion picture as a national and international force is a phenomenon of our own generation. Within living memory we have seen it



Billboard on Mrs. Aline Barnsdall's Hollywood property, drawing the public's attention to Senator Wheeler's charge that the Motion Picture Industry is spreading propaganda.

born and grow up into full maturity. We have seen the American motion picture become foremost in the world. We have seen it reflect our civilization throughout the rest of the world -- the aims and aspirations and ideals of a free people and of freedom.

That is the real reason that some governments do not want our American films exhibited in their countries. Dictators -- those who enforce the totalitarian form of government -- think it a dangerous thing for their unfortunate peoples to know that in our democracy, officers of the government are the servants, never the masters, of the people.

Hardly were these words uttered by the Chief Executive when Fritz Hippler, head of the Cinema Department of the German Propaganda Ministry, issued the Nazi reply. Percival Knauth, Berlin Correspondent of The New York Times, reported to his paper on March 8th that Hippler felt he had to justify Germany's position. With a contorted, callous sense of reason, Hippler proclaims, among other things:

*Germany's prohibition of American movies is justified as a necessity forced on us by America and demanded by our national honor and political self-defense.... Germans are happy that the American film industry by this prohibition has been deprived of 40 per cent of its income from foreign countries.*

Completely disregarding the excellence of many American productions, Hippler added, with malicious intent:

*Whenever an American movie turns to serious subjects, it does so in a highly critical manner and presents social disproportions, democratic disorders, capitalistic injustices, corrupt courts or the untenable gangster system, in such a light that a spectator can scarcely desire to see such conditions in his own country.*

These mouthings were analyzed, neat as a pin, by Edwin C. Hill, who, on April 10th, said:

*Herr Hippler is a reminder that Germany has mobilized its academic battalions behind its assault on all world culture which doesn't happen to be Germanic.*

#### Sieg im Westen Still Sieging

*Sieg im Westen*, the Nazi "terrifier" film, is still accelerating heartbeats at the 96th Street Theatre in New York City and at the Little German Theatre in Chicago. In its May 15th issue, the "Free American", neé *Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter*, official Bund organ, says about this picture:

*If the German film "Sieg im Westen" is a propaganda film, it is propaganda against war.*

Truer words were ne'er spoken, for the picture's aims are clearly to promote peace -- peace by way of appeasement and via submission to the terms of the over-powering Nazi bully.

While Reichsters in the East and Middle West continue to hail the *Sieg im Westen*, Bundits in Los Angeles are prepared for the release of *Heimat* (Home-land), which will be shown by Hermann Schwinn over the Memorial Day week-end at the German House, headquarters of the Bund (illustration on page 6).

American Nazis have spent tremendous sums of money in their attempt to recruit followers for their cause via the anti-Semitic route. Countless handbills, brochures and books, were widely distributed, gratis, in this campaign. One of the favorite topics in these propaganda missiles is the House of Rothschild. Every crime under the sun is ascribed to the famous banking family. This propaganda has gotten hold to such an extent that spokesmen for the Nazis in the United States Congress have repeated these vicious lies. Recently, Dr. Goebbels' minions have brought up reinforcement by shipping to this country a film depicting the story of the Rothschilds. Of course, context of this film runs parallel to the slanderous statements broadcast in this country by the subversivists. Individuals and organizations, awake to the danger of such propaganda films, have registered their vehement protest and, at present, the German Consulate in New York is weighing the decision whether or not the picture should be released. Meanwhile, the film is held in readiness by UFA Films, Inc., which is the main outlet in America for Nazi propaganda pictures.

#### UFA Film Plots Thicken

On July 8, 1940, UFA filed a registration statement with the Secretary of State as a foreign agent, representing itself as the distributor for the following foreign principals: *Universum Film Aktiengesellschaft*, Tobis Cinema Film, G.m.b.H., and Itala Film, G.m.b.H.

As described in NRS #123, UFA receives, over and above express charges, a daily rental of \$20 for features and \$3.50 for shorts. Its film library offers a variety of subjects, including the familiar *Schrecklichkeit* pictures: *Westwall*, *Feldzug in Polen*, "Baptism of Fire", and *Blitzkrieg im Westen*. In a pep letter to United States customers, George Nitzi, president of UFA, stated that "these films are much in demand"; they are being booked continually for private showings to pro-Nazi groups all over the country. Film-prints are often presented as gifts to the libraries of schools and colleges. The Universities of North and South Carolina, Georgia, and others, list comprehensive collections of Nazi films in their official catalogues. When the German Library of Information receives inquiries concerning such pictures, the writers are frequently referred to UFA Films, Inc., and also to the German Railroads Information Office. The role played by "Facts in Review" (the official publication of the German Library of Information) was described in last week's issue of NRS.

Goebbels' prescription for browbeating United States film exhibitors into subjugation has been codified with Nazi efficiency. Before these exhibitors may show German films, they are confronted with a standard form of contract which includes a stipulation that the scenes exhibited

*will not be edited, arranged, described, published, exploited or advertised in such a manner that will tend to injure or tend to reflect adversely upon the said picture in whole or in part, or upon the country of origin of said picture....or upon any nations friendly towards the country of origin of such a picture in any manner whatsoever, and that the scenes selected shall not affect the dignity and the prestige of the German Reich or any other nation friendly toward such country in any manner whatsoever.*

Many of the Nazi film houses in America are given publicity in the *Deutscher Weckruf*. The cost of advertising in this Bund paper is paid for by UFA Films, Inc. How much UFA pays for these ads is unknown, but there is reason to believe that the amount is much higher than the usual advertising rate. This procedure recalls that, until the war began, German language papers, throughout the United States, received large sums of money from the German

Steamship Lines. These amounts, supposedly for advertising, were in truth nothing but subventions.

UFA imposes its own "block"-booking system. The exhibitor must show, in addition to feature pictures, news reels and Nazi propoganda films, usually presented under the camouflaged description of *Kultur* films. Otherwise, he receives no films at all. Should he fail to show a propoganda release, in spite of this arrangement, word is sent by UFA to the Ministry of Propaganda. Forthwith, an "official" warning is dispatched to the Reich-residing relatives, if there are any, of the "guilty" exhibitor.

Intensive research by NRS revealed the amazing fact that the "block"-booking method, enforced by UFA here, is in line with a decree issued on April 30, 1940, by the President of the *Reichsfilmkammer*, published in *Der Deutsche Film*, trade paper of the German Motion Picture Industry. The dictum (illustration on this page) provides that a *Kultur* film and a news reel must be shown with every entertainment picture.

### The South American Way

NRS correspondence from South America reveals that Nazi picture ventures have been even more successful in the Latin countries than in the United States.

### **Amtliche Mitteilungen**

#### **Bekanntmachung des Präsidenten der Reichsfilmkammer zur Ersten Durchführungbestimmung zur Anordnung über die Verwertung von urheberrechtlichen Werknutzungs- und Verlagsrechten vom 13. Mai 1939**

„Als maßgebenden Stichtag im Sinne des § 3 der Ersten Durchführungbestimmung zur Anordnung über die Verwertung von urheberrechtlichen Werknutzungs- und Verlagsrechten vom 13. Mai 1939 bestimme ich für das am 1. Juli 1940 beginnende Kontingenzjahr den 31. März 1939.

Berlin, den 30. April 1940.

Der Präsident der Reichsfilmkammer  
I. V. gez. Melzer.“

#### **Richtlinien über die Veranstaltung von Wochenschau-Sondervorführungen**

Die Reichsfilmkammer, Fachgruppe Filmtheater gibt bekannt:

Auf Veranlassung des Herrn Reichsministers für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda fordert die Fachgruppe Filmtheater der Reichsfilmkammer im Einvernehmen mit dem Herrn Präsidenten der Reichsfilmkammer hierdurch ihre Mitglieder auf, mit Wirkung von Sonnabend, dem 18. Mai 1940 in weitestmöglichem Umfange in den Filmtheatern Wochenschau-Sondervorführungen zu veranstalten. Um möglichst allen Volksgenossen Gelegenheit zu geben, durch die aktuellen Wochenschauberichte an den Ereignissen der Gegenwart teilzunehmen, ist es notwendig, sich für die Durchführung von Wochenschau-Sondervorführungen außerhalb der normalen Spielzeit be-

sonders einzusetzen und hierfür entsprechend zu werben. Im einzelnen sind die Wochenschau-Sondervorführungen nach folgenden Richtlinien abzuwickeln:

1. Die Wochenschau-Sondervorführungen sind in jedem Falle nur außerhalb der regelmäßigen Spielzeit durchzuführen.

2. Als Programm ist die jeweilige in dem Filmtheater laufende Wochenschau sowie der jeweils in dem Filmtheater laufende Kulturfilm einzusetzen, soweit er staatspolitisch wertvoll bzw. staatspolitisch besonders wertvoll ist. Es können auch zwei staatspolitisch wertvolle bzw. staatspolitisch besonders wertvolle Kulturfilme neben der laufenden Wochenschau eingesetzt werden. Soweit die Filmtheater zu der Wochenschau nicht den laufenden staatspolitisch wertvollen bzw. staatspolitisch besonders wertvollen Kulturfilm vorführen, haben sie sich geeignete Kulturfilme von den Verleihfirmen selbst zu beschaffen. An Stelle eines oder zweier Kulturfilme können auch zwei weitere Wochenschauen gezeigt werden. Bei einer solchen Programmgestaltung dürfen aber die zusätzlichen Wochenschauen, die außer der laufenden eingesetzt werden, frühestens ab 5. Folge ausgewählt werden, damit nicht der Ablauf der Kopien bei dem normalen Wochenschau-Einsatz gestört wird. Es ist anheimgestellt, in derartigen Sonderveranstaltungen auch den jeweiligen Vorspannfilm des in dem Filmtheater laufenden Spielfilms vorzuführen.

3. Über diese Sondervorführungen hinaus können auch weitere, und zwar geschlossene Sonderveranstaltungen in der gleichen vorerwähnten Programmgestaltung für Schulen, Organisationen, Verbände und Gliederungen, Wehrmacht usw. eingesetzt werden.

4. Im Einvernehmen mit dem Reichskommissar für die Preisbildung sind als Eintrittspreise bei denjenigen Filmtheatern, deren Mindesteintrittspreis nicht höher als 60 Pf. ist, einheitlich 30 Pf. bei den übrigen Filmtheatern einheitlich 40 Pf. zu erheben. Für Angehörige der Wehrmacht,

*Reproduction of "Official Decree", issued by the President of the Reich Film Chamber setting forth "Directions for the Showing of News Reels". Theatre owners are ordered to arrange for Special Showings of News Reels "in order to give all racial comrades an opportunity to participate in the happenings of the present". The Decree further provides that each program must include at least one, but preferably two "Kultur"-Films of political value".*

Typical of many similar reports is the story of Nazi film manoeuvres in Buenos Aires. Until 1938, Adolfo Z. Wilson managed the distribution of Nazi pictures, reserving for himself the right of selection. Pictures containing too much propoganda were sold to local Nazi organizations. Since 1937 all UFA productions were shown, each Sunday morning, during a so-called "German Film Hour", in the *Gran Cine Florida* and in the *Cine Teatro Monumental*, supplemented by news reels and shorts about Germany's mighty army and streamlined industry. Leni Riefenstahl distributed her German Olympic picture through the local branch of *Cifesa*, a Spanish producing and distributing firm. When this picture was first shown in the *Gran Cine Ideal*, it was a huge success because the German Embassy bought 500 tickets every day during the two-week showing. Argentine's exhibitors were unaware of this inside story when they later booked this picture. Without the "help" of Hitler's diplomats, this second appearance of the film proved a big failure.

After the war started, the German Embassy and a Mr. Widmann, a special motion picture representative of the Nazis for South

America, arranged the distribution of UFA news reels with Nicolas di Fiori. Fiori and one Pablo Coll own a chain of theatres, which generally show Argentine productions. Rumors have it that the Nazi organization in Buenos Aires buys 200 tickets daily for Fiori's performances, and pays also for the daily ad which appears in the local Nazi paper, *Deutsche La Plata Zeitung*, discussed in earlier issues of NRS.

On Esmeralda Street, in Buenos Aires, di Fiori shows all the pictures he receives from Germany in the *Cine Alvear*, a small old-fashioned theatre. Other smaller theatres have been induced to show old German pictures and, strangely enough, they are doing unusually good business. It is reasonably certain that Nazi organizations are subsidizing these theatres.

At the present time no German or Italian films are being shown publicly in Mexico, principally because the labor unions will not permit it. About two months ago, a theatre in Mexico City attempted to exhibit the Italian propaganda production, "Scipio The African". The labor union kept the house closed for about a week until the program was changed. On the other hand, there are regular private showings of German propaganda films in the German Club in Mexico City, which prominent Mexicans attend. Admittance to these affairs is by invitation only.

To retain and show their productions, and to keep out American films of anti-Nazi flavor, Mexican Germans resort to the use of ruffian methods. According to reports received from NRS' correspondent in Mexico, the headquarters of an organization in Mexico City, believed to be financed by German agents to discourage Mexicans from seeing American films, was discovered and raided. Five persons were arrested, and large quantities of propaganda leaflets and a regular arsenal of stench bombs, itch powder and even bottles of muriatic acid, were seized.

#### Reinforcement by Printed Word

To strengthen the holds gained by the German film industry in North and South America, a special Foreign News Service, titled *Ausland Dienst*, is issued to exhibitors of Nazi pictures (illustration on page 6).

UFA has set up a special "Foreign Press Section" entitled *UFA Feuilleton* (illustration on page 6), which supplements these releases by the German film industry.

Americans have been stirred to alertness by the action of the government in confiscating and burning Nazi propaganda literature at ports of entry. Everywhere the question is raised: Why does the United States Government do nothing about the showing of Nazi propaganda films in America? In the meantime, Nazi strategists are making the most of the Chinese proverb that says "one picture is worth 10,000 words".

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*Index to additional information on names and facts mentioned in NEWS LETTER will be furnished quarterly.*

# FILMVORFUEHRUNG

## IM DEUTSCHEN HAUS

634 West 15th St. - One-half Block West of Figueroa

Freitag den 30., Sonnabend den 31. Mai und Sonntag den

1. Juni 1941 8 Uhr abends

**"HEIMAT"**

und "Ufa-Wochenschau"

Announcement of showing of German film "Heimat" (Homeland) at Los Angeles German House, Bund headquarters.



# Feuilleton

Zuschriften und Belege erbeten an die Auslands-Press-Abteilung der Universum-Film A.-G., Berlin SW 19, Krausenstraße 38-39

Heading of "UFA Feuilleton" sent free to U. S. and South America by "Foreign Press Section" of Universum Film Company.

# AUSLANDSDIENST

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON DER DEUTSCHEN VEREINIGUNG FÜR FILMAUSSENHANDEL E.V.  
Abdruck erbeten.

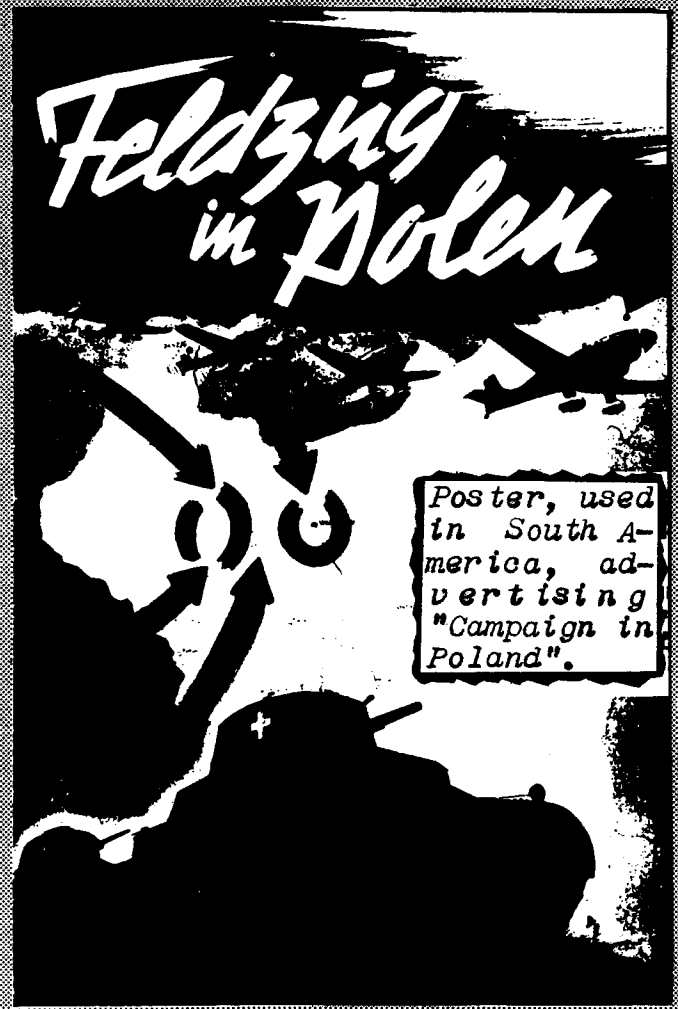
BERLIN W 35  
BENDLERSTR. 33

### Film und Schule in Deutschland.

In klarer Erkenntnis des Unterrichtswertes des Filmes hat man in Deutschland beschlossen, den Film als gleichberechtigtes Lehrmittel überall dort an die Stelle des Buches und sonstiger Lehrmittel treten zu lassen, wo das bewegte Bild eindringlicher als alles andere zum Kinde spricht. Zur Erreichung dieses Zieles sollen innerhalb weniger Jahre alle deutschen Schulen mit Filmgeräten ausgestattet und geschultes Lehrpersonal für den Filmunterricht ausgebildet werden.

### Der Kulturfilm in Deutschland.

Dass der Kultur- und Lehrfilm von je her in Deutschland eine besondere Pflegestätte gehabt hat und dass viele deutsche Kulturfilme in allen Ländern der Welt, besonders aber in den Verv. Staaten, Bekanntheit zu verzeichnen hatten, dürfte allgemein bekannt sein. Es ist daher selbstverständlich, dass seine Pflege seit der Übernahme der Regierung in Deutschland durch den Nationalsozialismus nicht etwa vernachlässigt sondern im Gegenteil zum Gegenstand besonderer Aufmerksamkeit geworden ist. Es ist daher im Rahmen der Reichsfilmkammer als Zentralstelle für alle Kulturfilmbestrebungen die



Poster, used in South America, advertising "Campaign in Poland".

At Left: Reproduction of "Service for Abroad", distributed gratis by the "German Federation for Film Export". The first item: "Film and School in Germany", states that films are being used in German schools "where they have special value as a medium of instruction". -- The second item, captioned "The 'Kultur'-Film in Germany", states: "It should be generally known that the development of the "Kultur" and Educational Film was always given special care in Germany, and that many 'Kultur'-Films have chalked up record successes in all countries of the world, especially in the United States. It is therefore a matter of course that it (the 'Kultur'-Film) was not neglected since the German Government was taken over by National Socialism; on the contrary, it has become the object of special attention."