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WHAT TO SHOW THE WORLD:
THE OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION AND HOLLYWOOD,
1942 - 1945

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Forthcoming in Journal of American History

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Social Science Working Paper

Number 114

March 1976

The uneasy relationship between propaganda and democracy proved especially troublesome during World War II. Attempting to promote the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration's liberal war goals, the Office of War Information won unprecedented control over the content of motion pictures. The interaction between OWI and Hollywood is indispensable for understanding both the objectives and methods of the United States' propaganda campaign and the content of wartime entertainment films. This episode, all but ignored by historians of both OWI and Hollywood, offers insights into the United States' war ideology and the intersection of politics and mass culture in wartime. Moreover, it raises the question whether the Roosevelt administration's propaganda strategy helped undermine some of its avowed war aims.

The chief government propaganda agency during World War II was the Office of War Information, formed by an executive order on June 13, 1942, that consolidated several prewar information agencies. OWI's domestic branch handled the politically ticklish home front; its overseas arm supervised all United States foreign propaganda activities, except in Latin America, which remained the preserve of Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs Nelson Rockefeller. President Franklin D.

Roosevelt instructed OWI (1) to implement a program through the press, radio, and motion pictures to enhance public understanding of the war, (2) to coordinate the war-information activities of all federal agencies, and (3) to act as the contact medium between federal agencies and the radio and motion picture industries. OWI director Elmer Davis, the popular liberal radio commentator, insisted that OWI's policy was to tell the truth. But information could not be separated from interpretation, and OWI told the truth by degrees and with particular slants. In all important respects OWI met the criterion of a propaganda agency -- an organization designed not merely to disseminate objective information or to clarify issues, but to arouse support for particular symbols and ideas. "The easiest way to inject a propaganda idea into most people's minds," said Davis, "is to let it go in through the medium of an entertainment picture when they do not realize that they are being propagandized."¹

Around Davis clustered a heavily liberal staff that gave OWI one of the highest percentages of interventionist New Dealers of any wartime agency. Two assistant directors, Pulitzer-prize writers Archibald MacLeish and Robert Sherwood, were enthusiastic New Dealers; another assistant director, Milton S. Eisenhower, though fiscally more cautious, was a New Deal veteran. The only assistant director who held the New Deal at some distance was Gardner Cowles Jr., the moderate Republican publisher of Look and newspapers in

Minneapolis and Des Moines, who had been recruited against his will to give OWI an air of bipartisanship. Liberals permeated the second and third levels of the agency and included such figures as historians Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and Henry Pringle, former Henry Wallace speech writer Jack Fleming, novelist Leo Rosten, journalist Joseph Barnes, financier James Warburg, future senator Alan Cranston, and "China hand" Owen Lattimore.²

The Bureau of Motion Pictures in OWI was a liberal stronghold. Its chief, Lowell Mellett, a former Scripps-Howard newspaper editor who had been a Roosevelt aide since 1939, had headed the first prewar information agency, the Office of Government Reports. "OGRE" and "Mellett's Madhouse" to conservative critics, OGR had as one of its duties coordination of the government film program. In response to the movie industry's offer of support in mid-December 1941, Roosevelt also told Mellett to advise Hollywood on how it could further the war effort. In May 1942 Mellett established a liaison office in Hollywood and appointed as its head Nelson Poynter, a Scripps-Howard colleague. Poynter did not follow movies, but he shared his Washington boss's enthusiasm for the New Deal. Poynter had worked briefly for Rockefeller's CIAA but quit when that agency denied newsprint to a communist newspaper in Argentina. Assisting Poynter was a young, staunchly liberal reviewing staff headed by Dorothy Jones, who had been a research assistant for political scientist Harold Lasswell and

had done some of the first content analyses of movies.³

The Hollywood office became part of OWI domestic operations in June 1942 and began one of the agency's most important, and most controversial, activities. The motion picture, said Elmer Davis, could be "the most powerful instrument of propaganda in the world, whether it tries to be or not." Roosevelt believed movies were one of the most effective means of reaching the American public. The motion-picture industry experienced far fewer wartime restrictions on output than most industries. Hollywood turned out nearly 500 pictures annually during the war, almost as many as in prewar years, and it drew 80 million paid admissions per week, well above the pre-1941 peak. Hollywood's international influence far exceeded that of American radio and the press; foreign receipts often determined whether a film made a profit. Every film enhanced or diminished America's reputation abroad and hence affected the nation's world power, the Bureau of Motion Pictures believed.⁴

The movie industry shared OWI's perhaps exaggerated idea of its products' power, but how effectively Hollywood would cooperate remained unclear. From the mid-1930s to the eve of World War II Hollywood was isolated from the intellectual, artistic, and political life of the nation as perhaps never before or since. When Mussolini's army invaded Ethiopia in 1936, an agitated friend asked a producer, "Have you heard any late news?" The excited mogul replied: "Italy

just banned Marie Antoinette!" Conservative businessmen and their bankers ran the studios. Louis B. Mayer of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the single most influential man in Hollywood, decorated his desk with portraits of Herbert Hoover, Francis Cardinal Spellman, and Douglas MacArthur. The artistic, more liberal side of the industry -- the directors and particularly the writers -- felt squelched. Only Warner Brothers, the firm that released the most message films and was the most receptive to Franklin Roosevelt, was known as a writers' studio. At Hollywood banquets, where the seating arrangements telegraphed rank in the movie colony, writers were seated above the hair dressers but below the heads of publicity. The industry avoided message films in favor of stock romances, musicals, murder mysteries, and westerns -- "pure entertainment" in Hollywood parlance. Ethnic stereotypes flourished; factual accuracy was incidental. Since 1934 the self-censorship of the Hays Office had cleaned up sex and profanity and taught that sin was always punished in the end; the movies' ideal world was the middle-class America of Andy Hardy. Social-message films, such as The Grapes of Wrath in 1940 and several films loosely termed interventionist in 1939-1941, were distinguished by their rarity. "Most movies are made in the evident assumption that the audience is passive and wants to remain passive," noted the film critic James Agee. "Every effort is made to do all the work -- the seeing, the explaining, the understanding, even the feeling."⁵

Hollywood preferred avoidance of issues; OWI demanded affirmation of New Deal liberalism for America and the world. When Nelson Poynter arrived in the movie capital he found the industry doing little to promote the larger issues of the war. In the summer of '42 Hollywood had under consideration or in production 213 films that dealt with the war in some manner. Forty percent of those focused on the armed forces, usually in combat. Less than twenty percent dealt with the enemy, and most of those portrayed spies and saboteurs. Other categories -- the war issues, the United Nations, and the home front -- were getting minimal attention. Even more disturbing than the imbalance of subjects was the way in which the subjects were treated. Hollywood had simply grafted the war to conventional mystery and action plots or appropriated it as a backdrop for frothy musicals and flippant comedies. Interpretation of the war remained at a rudimentary level: the United States was fighting because it had been attacked, and it would lick all comers.⁶

To help the industry "raise its sights," Poynter and his staff wrote a "Manual for the Motion-Picture Industry" in June 1942 which they intended to guide the movie makers in future projects. The manual, updated through 1945, ranks as probably the most comprehensive statement of OWI's interpretation of the war. OWI liberals rejected the "American Century" of Time publisher Henry Luce and the "America Unlimited" of United States Chamber of Commerce President Eric

Johnston; they chafed under the compromises and "pettifogging legalisms" of the Department of State. The war, to OWI, was not merely a struggle for survival but a "people's war" between fascism and democracy; theirs was the crusade of Vice President Wallace's "Century of the Common Man."⁷

The United States fought for a new democratic world based on the Four Freedoms -- freedom of speech and religion and freedom from want and fear. The war was a people's struggle, BMP emphasized, "not a national, class or race war." Every person in the world had a concrete stake in the outcome; an Allied victory promised all a decent standard of living, including a job, good housing, recreation, and health, unemployment, and old-age insurance -- in short, the world New Deal. The average man would also enjoy the right to participate in government, which suggested OWI's antiimperialist stance. American minorities had not entered Utopia, the bureau conceded; but progress was possible only under democracy, and wartime gains of blacks, women, and other minorities would be preserved. A nation of united average citizens, who believed deeply in the cause of freedom and sacrificed willingly to promote victory, was the hallmark of BMP's democracy.⁸

The enemy was fascism, the antithesis of democracy. The enemy was not the Axis leadership nor all of the Axis-led peoples but fascist supporters anywhere -- at home as well as abroad. "Any form of racial discrimination or religious intolerance, special privileges of

any citizen are manifestations of Fascism, and should be exposed as such," the manual advised. A fascist victory would entail racial discrimination, destruction of political rights, eradication of the rights of labor, and "complete regimentation of the personal life" of the common man. Beware of a negotiated peace, BMP warned, even before Roosevelt's call for unconditional surrender; "there can be no peace until militarism and fascism are completely wiped out." When victory came the United Nations, eschewing national interest and balance-of-power politics, would build a new world "expressive of the collective will." The BMP manual enjoyed wide distribution in Hollywood, with some studios reproducing the entire contents for their personnel.⁹ Before long evidence would accumulate attesting the manual's effect.

The manual reflected the heavily politicized intellectual ferment of the 1930s. Many intellectuals had put a premium on commitment to some large ideal or movement; a predetermined response, not an examination of experience in its many facets, was all-important. The quest for commitment converged in the late 1930s with the search for America; the war seemed to offer that unifying commitment and it reduced intellectual content to an uncritical adulation of America and Allies. Thus BMP reviewers in 1942 objected to the depiction of Spanish Loyalist violence in Paramount's For Whom the Bell Tolls, "particularly at this time when we must believe in the rightness of our cause." The

bureau continued:

Now it is necessary that we see the democratic-fascist battle as a whole and recognize that what the Loyalists were fighting for is essentially the same thing that we are. To focus too much attention on the chinks in our allies' armor is just what our enemies might wish. Perhaps it is realistic, but it is also going to be confusing to American audiences.¹⁰

To OWI the reality of experience threatened response.

Before the manual could have much effect, however, the bureau faced some immediate problems. Metro wanted to re-release the 1939 film The Real Glory, which dealt with the United States Army's suppression of the turn-of-the-century Moro rebellion, but now billed as war between American and Japanese troops. Philippine President Manuel Quezon protested vigorously, and Lowell Mellett convinced producer Sam Goldwyn to withdraw the picture. "Any little thing" that might exacerbate the desperate situation in the Far East should be avoided, the BMP head argued. The bureau also sent a successful patriotic appeal to RKO when it heard of the proposed re-release of Gunga Din, whose portrayal of the Indian people as hopelessly poor, illiterate, and savage had caused riots in India when released in 1939. Metro dropped its proposed Kim when the bureau objected to its glorification of British imperialism. Columbia

sought BMP advice on its proposed "Trans-Sahara," which supposedly would tell why France fell and would name Marshal Pétain and Pierre Laval among the villains. Mellett denounced the script as another Hollywood attempt to drag the war into "a hack fictional theme, with a few 'mon Dieu's' and 'sacre bleu's' thrown in." American policy towards Pétain and Laval was not yet clear and Columbia should not invent its own, Mellett said. Columbia dropped the project. The moral suasion of a government agency during wartime was often powerful.¹¹

But suggestions and moral suasion were of limited use, as OWI discovered when it screened Twentieth Century-Fox's Little Tokio, U. S. A. Virtually everything in the film was "calculated to shiver the well-sensitized spine of the Office of War Information," BMP viewers reported. Set in the Japanese quarter of Los Angeles, the movie grafted a fifth-column theme to a conventional murder mystery. Everyone of Japanese descent -- "this Oriental bund" -- was bent on sabotage; only once did the film suggest, and then indirectly, that some Japanese-Americans might be loyal to the United States. The movie portrayed the issei and nisei as trying to take over California. Such accusations reminded BMP reviewers of the "fascist bias" of West Coast organizations who wanted Japanese-Americans' land. In one scene the hero-detective bulldozed his way into a home without a search warrant; in another the police beat up Japanese "spies" they had arrested and disarmed. These activities were "not even one step removed from Gestapo methods; yet

the . . . audience is expected to be moved to wild cheers," said the reviewers. "Did somebody mention that we are presumably fighting for the preservation of the Bill of Rights?" By the end of the film, the murder has been solved, the sabotage ring broken, and the Japanese-Americans marched off to detention camps. The detective's sweetheart, converted from her belief in isolationism, appeasement, and tolerance for Japanese-Americans, implores patriots to save America. "Invitation to the Witch Hunt," cried BMP.¹²

Poynter appealed to the producer, Colonel Jason Joy, to make enough changes to "take most of the curse off." But Joy accused Poynter of going soft on the Japanese and gave OWI an ultimatum: Little Tokio, U. S. A. would go out as it stood or it could be killed if it contradicted government policy. Poynter capitulated -- the film reflected government policy all too well. Twentieth Century had received Army approval for the film and had rushed camera crews to "Little Tokio" to shoot actual footage of the evacuation. The battle of Little Tokio taught OWI a lesson. To inject its propaganda ideas into feature films, the Hollywood bureau had to influence the studios while films were being produced; moreover, since the army was interested mainly in security not ideology, the bureau had to be the sole point of contact between the government and the industry. Accordingly Poynter asked the studios to submit their scripts to his office for review. While he had no direct power to demand scripts, Poynter did achieve limited cooperation.

Hesitantly the industry began to send its scripts to BMP reviewers. Of the major studios Warner Brothers was the most cooperative; Paramount gave OWI scarcely any. Poynter had taken an unprecedented step. The Committee on Public Information (Creel Committee) of World War I had allowed films to go abroad only if the committee's shorts went with them, but George Creel apparently had not attempted to influence the content of entertainment films directly.¹³

As OWI reviewers began reading scripts they found many problems. Particularly sensitive was the depiction of home front race relations. Metro's Man on America's Conscience refurbished Andrew Johnson as the hero of Reconstruction who carried out Abraham Lincoln's magnanimous peace policy. Vulture-like Thaddeus Stevens fulfilled the need for a heavy, implicated in Lincoln's assassination, plying Johnson with liquor before his inauguration, and advocating a punitive peace. Like Confucian allegories in the People's Republic of China, the debate over the film reflected more presentist concerns. OWI passed the script to Walter White, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who feared the picture would reinforce discrimination and sectionalism and "do enormous injury to morale." The black press, the Daily Worker, and a group of Hollywood luminaries raised a chorus of protest. Louis B. Mayer dismissed the outcry as the work of what he called "the communist cell" at MGM. When Mellett appealed to national unity, the studio at last agreed to delete the sensitive

references to slavery and to change Stevens into a sincere, if still misguided, figure. The film, released in December 1942 under the less emotional title Tennessee Johnson, did not entirely please OWI, but it demonstrated nonetheless the influence the bureau could wield by reading scripts.¹⁴

Poynter seized that advantage with one of the few scripts Paramount submitted, So Proudly We Hail. He felt the picture, a \$2 million attempt to translate the seige of Bataan into a patriotic epic, was excessively gloomy and the treatment of the issues muddled. Poynter suggested that one of the army nurses headed for martyrdom might say: "Why are we dying? Why are we suffering? We thought we . . . could not be affected by all the pestiferous, political spots elsewhere in the world. We have learned a lot about epidemics and disease. . . . when a political plague broke out there [in Manchuria] by invasion, we would not have been willing to do something about it. We had to wait until this plague spread out further and further until it hit Pearl Harbor." He also sent a three-page outline of the chaplain's Christmas sermon in which he traced the cause of democracy from Jesus Christ through the "Century of the Common Man." The studio tried to write in some of Poynter's idea, though not in his exact words. When the film was released in April 1943, OWI ranked it among the best of the war films.¹⁵

Combat films reflected OWI's influence probably as much as

any type. In the bureau's ideal combat movie an ethnically and geographically diverse group of Americans would articulate what they were fighting for; they would pay due regard to the role of the Allies; all branches of the armed forces would have equal importance; and they would face an enemy who was formidable but not a superman. Problems of tactics and issues arose in RKO's Bombardiers, in which a pacifist-influenced bombardier worried about bombing innocent civilians. At OWI's suggestion the revised script had the army chaplain introduce the concept of a just war and explain that the enemy's targets are everywhere while the Americans', although admittedly not surgically precise, are limited to military targets. Occasionally the studios became too bold for the bureau. "War is horrible," BMP acknowledged, but it nevertheless asked PRC to "minimize the more bloody aspects" in Corregidor. OWI liked reality but not too much of it, which reinforced Hollywood's inclination towards avoidance. This, even more than OWI's sermonettes, vitiated many combat pictures. So Proudly We Hail remained chiefly a cheesecake-studded story of love on the troop carriers and in the fox holes. "The most sincere thing Paramount's young women did," said James Agee, "was to alter their make-up to favor exhaustion (and not too much of it) over prettiness (and not too little of that)." Few feature films approached the impact of combat documentaries, such as John Huston's Battle of San Pietro and especially the British Desert Victory.¹⁶

By the fall of 1942 films in all categories were showing OWI's imprint, whether through script review or application of the manual for the industry. The motion picture bureau praised two films released in 1942 for filling in gaps on the home front. MGM's Keeper of the Flame dramatized the career of a wealthy American who wanted to turn the country to fascism; to institute anti-labor, anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, and anti-Catholic campaigns; and to exploit the people and resources of the United States for himself and others of his class. The BMP reviewers found this portrayal of native fascism "superb and exciting." Universal Pictures made Pittsburgh with the specific objective of showing the home front geared for war. Pittsburgh folded a pro-labor message into a tempestuous love triangle composed of John Wayne, Randolph Scott, and Marlene Dietrich, which was ultimately squared when labor and management buried the hatchet in furtherance of something greater than themselves, the war effort. Some of the speeches had been "culled directly" from the OWI manual, the bureau observed, "and might have been improved by translation into terms more directly and simply relating to the characters, situations and backgrounds involved in this particular film." But OWI Hollywood reviewers liked it nonetheless, and Poynter urged Mellett not to miss Pittsburgh or Keeper of the Flame.¹⁷

If the studios chose to ignore OWI, however, they could turn out what Poynter termed "ill-conceived atrocities." Comedies based on the home front were particularly sensitive, as Preston Sturges' Paramount

film, Palm Beach Story, illustrated. By 1942 the five-year marriage of socialites Tom and Gerry Jeffers has worn thin. They owe several hundred thousand dollars back rent on their New York apartment, and Tom needs money to develop a landing net that will revolutionize aviation. Gerry wants to get a divorce in Palm Beach but lacks the train fare. Using her long legs to good advantage, she gets a deaf industrialist to shower her with gifts and money. Enroute she becomes the mascot of the Ale and Quail Club, a group of millionaires heading south. Drinking huge quantities of ale, they practice for the quail by making the wide-eyed, knee-knocking colored porter toss up crackers which they pulverize, along with their private railroad car. Gerry flees the Ale and Quail Club and meets another millionaire, John D. Hackensacker III, who takes her to Palm Beach on his yacht. He falls in love with Gerry, and his sister with Tom. But the giddy chase is resolved happily when Gerry returns to Tom, and the Hackensackers marry Tom's twin brother and Gerry's twin sister. Palm Beach Story carried on a long tradition of satires of the idle rich (for Hackensacker read Rockefeller) and ranked among the better comedies of the war. While the Bureau of Motion Pictures agreed that Americans would take the film in stride, it feared that foreigners would believe this "libel on America at war" was real and that the United States' sacrificing allies would be offended. ¹⁸

Another Hollywood staple that disturbed OWI was the gangster

film, of which Paramount's Lucky Jordan was representative. Lucky Jordan (Alan Ladd) tries to dodge the draft and swindle the army; but when Nazi agents beat up Annie, a gin-swilling pan-handling grandmother who has befriended him, he is converted to the American cause, helps round up the Axis spy ring, and meekly returns to the army. Lucky's turnabout was fairly effective, for it placed in specific, human terms the reality of fascism. Yet his individualistic commitment suggested to OWI reviewers that the United States had nothing ideological against Hitler; as Lucky said, Americans just didn't like the way Nazis pushed people around. OWI wanted Lucky to undergo a more profound intellectual awakening and to announce it explicitly, as had the nurses in So Proudly We Hail. Moreover, OWI feared that the pervasive cynicism and breakdown of law and order in gangster films, while not particularly harmful at home, tended to support Axis propaganda abroad. Increasingly worried about the possible negative image of the United States abroad in late 1942, the Bureau of Motion Pictures wished the Office of Censorship would bar Palm Beach Story, Lucky Jordan, and other films it disliked from export. Unluckily for OWI, however, the censorship code was limited mainly to security information, and since these films hardly contained military secrets, the censor granted them export licenses. The censor, ironically, was more lenient than the apostles of the Four Freedoms. ¹⁹

OWI searched for ways to build up its movie muscle. Hearing

increasingly bad reports on the reception of American films from travelers abroad, such as New York Times columnist James Reston, Elmer Davis looked for a way to keep Hollywood from putting across "day in and day out, the most outrageous caricature of the American character." Lowell Mellett proposed that a representative of OWI's overseas branch join the BMP Hollywood office; this official could more credibly object that certain films harmed foreign relations and could carry OWI's case to the censor. "It would hurt like hell" if a picture were withheld from foreign distribution, Mellett pointed out, and films would improve for both foreign and domestic audiences. Davis agreed and appointed one of Robert Sherwood's chief aides, Ulric Bell, as the overseas arm's Hollywood representative. A former Washington bureau chief for the Louisville Courier-Journal, Bell possessed impeccable New Deal credentials and had been one of the key figures in the prewar interventionist Century Group. He began his duties in Hollywood in November 1942 and shared Poynter's reviewing staff. Soon Bell's influence would exceed what Mellett and Poynter had dreamed of or, indeed, thought proper. ²⁰

OWI then tried to cut in on the chummy relationship between Hollywood and the more glamorous armed forces. The war and navy departments furnished men, equipment, and advice to the compliant industry. The military branches scrutinized scripts and films mainly for security and seldom cooperated with OWI. In early December 1942,

as part of an overall effort to get the military to adhere to OWI policy, Davis asked the war and navy departments to channel all their contacts with the movie industry through OWI's Hollywood office. The military flatly declined. ²¹

At the same time Mellett dispatched a hotly controversial letter to the studios. He advised the industry to routinely submit treatments and synopses of projected films, as well as finished scripts, to Poynter's office. The BMP chief also asked the producers to submit all films to his Hollywood outpost in the long cut, the last stage before final prints were made. While little new material could be added then, OWI could still recommend that harmful scenes be snipped out. Moreover, all contacts between the studios and federal agencies, including the military services, should be channeled through the Bureau of Motion Pictures. ²²

CENSORS SHARPEN AXES, bannered Variety. Mellett wanted "complete censorship over the policy and content of our pictures," said Bill Goetz, vice president of Twentieth Century, reflecting the attitude of nearly all studio heads. Goetz was willing to be "enslaved" by a "great mind" like the president's, or by Hedy Lamarr or Greta Garbo, but he considered Mellett and Poynter unfit to interpret government policy. The magnates wanted an in-house censor; among those most often mentioned were Louis B. Mayer and Y. Frank Freeman, the conservative Georgian who ran Paramount. ²³

Mellett and Davis, shocked by the industry's furious reaction, tried to soothe the executives. Studios remained free to make any picture they wanted to without consulting anybody, and, short of violating treason statutes, they could distribute any picture in the United States. The main purpose of the letter had been to clarify the relationship between OWI and the armed forces for the industry, they said. Privately Mellett told Poynter to pull back. Suggesting dialogue for So Proudly We Hail had been a mistake, Mellett said; Poynter now agreed. As for Pittsburgh and Keeper of the Flame, the BMP chief said: "I think your pride can only result from the appearance of your own stuff in those two pictures. The propaganda sticks out disturbingly." Further pressure on the industry might produce a campaign for Poynter's head, Mellett warned. "Great things" had already been accomplished; now BMP should modify its operation in whatever ways necessary until the storm subsided. ²⁴

In fact BMP reviewers acknowledged decided improvement in the treatment of OWI themes in pictures released or in production in late 1942 and early 1943. The depiction of the Allies had changed. Hollywood's condescending attitude towards foreigners in such films as Mickey Rooney's Yank at Eton and the Sonja Henie vehicle Iceland had offended the Allies. Now the movie industry began to compensate by stressing the heroic Resistance. The indomitable Norwegians starred in Commandos Strike at Dawn, a combat picture that Ulric Bell felt

packed "a tremendous wallop," and in Nunnally Johnson's The Moon Is Down. BMP liked the 1942 Academy Award winner Casablanca for its depiction of the valiant underground, the sense of the United States as the haven of the oppressed, and the subordination of personal desires to the greater cause of the war -- although they would have preferred that Rick (Humphrey Bogart) had verbalized the reasons for his conversion. As OWI suggested, Fritz Lang's story of Lidice, Hangmen Also Die, showed a united and heroic Czechoslovakia resisting German barbarism and eventually killing Heydrich the hangman. Jean Renoir and Dudley Nichols' This Land Is Mine seemed to OWI a "superb" picture of Nazi oppression and French resistance, capped by the "vital" oration of the once cowardly schoolmaster defying occupation authorities. Yet, as critics such as Leo Braudy noted, the teacher for all his passion, remained "a man orating in a locked room." Even in such talented hands as Renoir's and Nichols', message overwhelmed the creation of believable characters and real situations. ²⁵

Such problems, among others, counteracted OWI-approved efforts to reverse Hollywood's negative prewar image of the Soviet Union. The idea of filming Ambassador Joseph E. Davies' My Mission to Moscow apparently did not originate with OWI; Jack Warner claimed it was President Roosevelt's. BMP reviewers made some relatively minor suggestions when they read the script, which followed the book all too faithfully. Beneath a giant world map, the president

Davies chatted amiably with an avuncular Stalin, illustrating how Americans and Russians were all brothers under the skin in the global struggle. (Stalin faced the camera but the film included only FDR's voice -- an accolade Hollywood usually reserved for the Deity.) Bell termed the picture "a socko job on the isolationists and appeasers -- the boldest thing yet done by Hollywood." Bold perhaps, but its cosmetic treatment of the occupation of Finland, whitewash of the Moscow purge trials, and abnormally simplistic formulae evidently convinced few viewers. Mission to Moscow was "mishmash," said Manny Farber of New Republic. "A great glad two-million-dollar bowl of canned borscht," sighed Agee.²⁶

When United Artists planned its Soviet spectacular in February 1943, it gave the Bureau of Motion Pictures two scripts. OWI chose the less Americanized version. But in the translation from script to film, Girl From Leningrad succumbed to the usual Americanization. More glaring still was North Star, Sam Goldwyn's tale of the guerrilla warfare a Russian village waged against its Nazi captors in 1941. Lillian Hellman's script had good possibilities, particularly in its semidocumentary approach to ordinary Russians. "We see them as people -- like ourselves," said OWI reviewers. That was the problem. Director Lewis Milestone turned the Bessarabian cooperative into an American prairie town; the peasants became Hollywood handsome and sang and danced "as if they were strays from Oklahoma." The production so angered Miss Hellman

that she bought back her part of the contract for \$30,000. Prewar satires like Ninotchka were turned upside down. "War has put Hollywood's traditional conception of the Muscovites through the wringer," observed Variety, "and they have come out shaved, washed, sober, good to their families, Rotarians, brother Elks, and 33rd Degree Mason."²⁷

If Hollywood did not Americanize foreign subjects, it usually depicted them as hopelessly primitive. China was especially vulnerable. The first script of The Keys of the Kingdom, the story of a Scottish Catholic missionary at the turn of the century, showed Chinese peasants living in filthy straw huts, a Chinese mother about to sell her daughter into prostitution, and a nation rent by marauding war lords. Such a China could never fulfill FDR's plans for it as one of the four policemen of the world. Under OWI influence the straw huts became spotless brick dwellings, the mother gave her daughter to the priest for adoption, and the civil war became an ideological struggle for a modern China. Believers of Keys of the Kingdom might have been excused if they were surprised by China after World War II.²⁸

The motion-picture bureau was also having success in reorienting the portrayal of the home front. Twentieth's One Destiny, a tale of how Pearl Harbor changed the lives and affections of various persons in an Iowa farm community, offered OWI many possibilities. The bureau persuaded the studio to change the original script's emphasis on ill feeling between an enlisted man and a man who stayed on the farm to an

understanding of how the war effort needed various talents in many places. A machine politician was transformed into a conscientious congressman; and a farm grandmother came to the realization that it was not just the Japanese but an entire ideology that threatened democracy. The resulting screenplay met OWI's desire for a movie showing the importance of agriculture in the war effort and afforded "a gratifying example of what can be done with a script in early stages." ²⁹

Another major success for the bureau was its role in injecting some of the New Deal into King Vidor's An American Romance. Originally titled simply but grandly America, Vidor's picture recounted the rags-to-riches life of a Slavic immigrant who became a great automobile manufacturer, sold out, and then returned to manufacture aircraft for the war effort. "If Henry Ford had written it, it could scarcely express the Ford philosophy more clearly," said the bureau. The individualistic nature of the hero's commitment troubled OWI, but other bureau-induced changes softened the picture sufficiently for OWI approval. Blacks, who in the first script had been nice but definitely to be kept in their place, were eliminated. Labor unions had been shown as radical violent conspiracies -- "a fascist tactic pure and simple, tending to divide one large group of Americans from the other," said OWI. The bureau convinced the producer to tone down this characterization, although he did not affirm the Wagner Act as they had hoped. For OWI and outside reviewers alike, the strong point of An American Romance was the

documentary-style celebration of the United States' physical attributes -- steel mills, iron mines, wheat fields -- that should convey to foreign audiences "the greatness of America." ³⁰

Despite the motion-picture bureau's influence on movie content, Ulric Bell began campaigning for a way to curb pictures he felt were still undesirable. The Office of Censorship issued a new code on December 11, 1942, that helped Bell immensely. The new index banned from export films that showed rationing or other economic preparations for a long war, scenes of lawlessness in which order was not restored and the offenders punished (this aimed primarily at gangster films), and portrayals of labor or class conflict in the United States since 1917. Bell applauded the censor, for he thought Hollywood still emphasized the "sordid side of American life"; he wanted the code tightened even more. Poynter vehemently disagreed, especially with the restrictions on post-1917 America. If OWI's strategy was to tell the truth, he argued, it should "make a sacrifice hit now and then." Films should admit the United States had problems, as foreigners knew, but show how democracy solved them. "Fascist methods need not be used to defeat the common enemy of Fascism," he told Bell. Poynter predicted that the new code would make studios shy away from significant war themes. ³¹

Bell nevertheless pressed hard to bring the censor to his point of view, particularly as a means of trapping "B" movies that were often shot without scripts and of thwarting studios who tried to parlay military

or FBI approval into an export license. Twentieth's They Came to Blow Up America, which dealt with the seven saboteurs who landed on Long Island in 1942, was a case in point. The FBI saw nothing wrong with the script, but Bell thought the sabotage was exaggerated and the FBI was shown as inefficient. "Even the FBI's approval does not make it suitable for overseas presentation," he said. The censor passed it anyway. Bell enlisted Davis's help in February 1943 for a test case, Republic's quickie "B" feature, London Blackout Murders. This picture implied the British government would accept a negotiated peace, took some mild swipes at Lend-Lease, and showed an overworked doctor accidentally cut off a woman's head during a blackout instead of amputate her leg. The movie contained some "ridiculous material," censorship director Byron Price acknowledged; but he could not agree that "suppression should go the lengths Bell has suggested." America's allies could "take it," Price said, "and the enemy would find ways to distort developments anyway." RKO hid its low-budget picture I Walked With a Zombie from Bell until the censor granted an export license. In similar fashion other films, including the Bob Hope-Dorothy Lamour picaresque Road to Morocco, which Milton Eisenhower had said "simply must not reach North Africa," were spirited out of the country.³²

In mid-summer 1943, however, Bell triumphed. Congress' anti-New Deal axe chopped the OWI domestic branch to a fraction of its former size. Mellett and Poynter left the Bureau of Motion Pictures,

Paramount executive Stanton Griffis took charge of what little remained of BMP's own productions, and Bell inherited the Hollywood review staff. Freed of Poynter's restraints Bell now convinced West Coast censor Watterson Rothacker to adopt his approach. In quick succession Rothacker denied foreign audiences Fugitive from a Prison Camp, The Great Swindle, The Batman, Hillbilly Blitzkrieg, Sleepy Lagoon, and Secret Service in Darkest Africa. By fall 1943 Bell and Rothacker were consulting "morning, noon, and night," and the censor now followed OWI's recommendations in almost all cases. When negative reports on Lucky Jordan filtered back from Sweden, Bell reported that the censor almost certainly would not allow such a film to be exported now. The major remaining difference between OWI and the censor concerned westerns, such as Buffalo Bill, which dramatized whites' mistreatment of Indians. The film had a factual basis, Rothacker observed, and since it was set before 1917 he couldn't touch it. OWI had become the censor's advance guard. Hollywood could still make any film it chose, but as the Motion Picture Herald pointed out, "no one has yet advanced an argument in support of producing a picture known in advance to be doomed to domestic exhibition exclusively."³³

The Bureau of Motion Picture's increasing influence over a Hollywood willing to cooperate was apparent in movies about the home front. As juvenile delinquency grew the studios sensed an alluring subject. Monogram's Where Are Your Children? appalled BMP reviewers with its

"sensational portrayal of a young girl's downfall, youthful drunkenness, orgiastic dancing and necking, a seduction resulting in pregnancy, a stolen car, a joy ride, a murder, an attempted suicide and the repentant older generation." While the film promised something for everyone, OWI told Monogram to tone it down if it wanted foreign release. Monogram did but not enough to please OWI. Following OWI recommendations closely, Rothacker ordered 508 feet cut from the film before he approved it for export. RKO's contribution to delinquency was a film whose progression of titles suggested its modification under OWI pressure: Youth Runs Wild was toned down to Are These Our Children? which became The Dangerous Age which was released as Look to Your Children, whose conclusion assembled a series of "stock shots showing how the Boy Scouts, 4-H Clubs, city playgrounds and similar institutions are combatting juvenile problems." Like sin punished in the end, democracy solving its problems was ruled suitable for export. ³⁴

OWI continued to work closely with themes about the enemy. The script of The Strange Death of Adolf Hitler suggested that the assassination of the Fuehrer would end Nazism -- a message contrary to OWI's interpretation. After extensive consultation with BMP, the studio converted the picture into an exposition of fascism that OWI especially recommended for overseas distribution. ³⁵

Almost all the major OWI themes converged in the most expensive picture made up to that time, Republican Darryl Zanuck's

[p. OWI - 28a follows]

hagiographic Wilson, released in August 1944. The Bureau of Motion Pictures worked closely with screenwriter Lamar Trotti to assure its interpretation in this nearly three-hour-long biography of Woodrow Wilson. Machine politicians were balanced by emphasizing the people's power. The studio excised a line to which BMP objected: "With Wilson now firmly in the saddle and riding herd on a docile Congress. . . ." While the

original script had dwelled on the failure of the League of Nations, the revised version held out a vision of hope. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes now said there were too many side issues for the people to render a clear decision on the League. And in the closing scene Wilson's wife read one of her husband's letters: "The League isn't dead just because a few obstructive men now in the saddle say it is. The dream of a world united against the awful wastes of war is too deeply imbedded in the hearts of men everywhere." This addition especially pleased OWI reviewers, who believed that the American people were united in support of the lasting peace that was again attainable. OWI recommended Wilson for special distribution in liberated areas, not merely because its theme was "so vital to the psychological warfare of the United Nations," but because of the picture's "rare entertainment value." Despite good intentions and a \$5.2 million budget, however, Hollywood and OWI reduced a character worthy of Shakespeare to "an astutely played liberal assistant professor of economics" and its ideas to primer simplicity. As history it was a travesty; as entertainment, a bore; as box-office, a bust.³⁶

Wilson was one of the last major films to deal significantly with OWI themes. Combat pictures, such as Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo, held steady; and pictures about the home front, such as Pride of the Marines, which fulfilled OWI's desire for films about returning veterans, showed a slight increase. But the other OWI categories showed sharp declines. The 1944 Academy Award winner, Bing Crosby's Going My Way,

represented the shift to non-ideological, frequently religious, entertainment pictures in which war and rumors of war seldom intruded. Several reasons contributed to this shift, among them increasing war weariness and a sense that the war would end soon. But another important cause of the decline was what Nelson Poynter had predicted: the alliance between OWI and the censor made the studios shy away from significant themes.³⁷

By fall 1943 Bell had convinced every studio except Paramount to let OWI read all their scripts instead of certain selected ones, and even Paramount agreed to discuss its scripts with OWI in general terms. In 1943 OWI read 466 scripts, in 1944, 744. The 1,210 scripts reviewed in those two years represented almost three-fourths of the 1,652 scripts the Hollywood office read between May 1942 and its demise in August 1945. From September 1943 through August 1944 BMP analyzed 84 scripts with American lawlessness or corruption as a main theme; 47 were corrected to its satisfaction. (Most of the unrevised films were westerns, the sole remaining disagreement between BMP and the censor.) Racial problems were corrected or eliminated in 20 of 24 instances, distortions of military or political facts in 44 of 59 cases. Fifty-nine of the 80 scripts that portrayed Americans oblivious of the war were improved. During this period OWI managed to have 277 of the 390 cases of objectionable material corrected, a success ratio of 71 percent. Yet these statistics understate OWI's influence. Many scripts already showed the influence of the "Manual

for the Motion Picture Industry" when they reached OWI readers, making alterations unnecessary. Nor do these figures indicate the effect of the bureau's moral suasion. Complete statistics are not available, but from January through August 1943 (before Bell's agreement with the censor had much effect), BMP induced the industry to drop 29 scheduled productions and, particularly noteworthy, to reshoot parts of five films already approved by the censor. Bell closed the remaining gaps in the line established by Mellett and Poynter. From mid-1943 until the end of the war OWI exerted an influence over an American mass medium never equaled before or since by a government agency.³⁸ The content of World War II motion pictures is inexplicable without reference to the bureau.

Hollywood had proved to be remarkably compliant. The industry found that its sincere desire to help the war effort need not interfere with business that was better than usual. Freedom of the screen had never been Hollywood's long suit: an industry that had feared being "enslaved" by Lowell Mellett was already in thrall to Will Hays. As the studios learned that OWI wanted "only to be helpful, their attitudes change[d] miraculously," observed Robert Riskin, a Sherwood aide who had been one of Hollywood's highest-paid writers. In "brutal honesty," Riskin continued, the industry's "unprecedented profits" had encouraged cooperation that surprised even the movie moguls. The studios let BMP know what stories they were considering for production -- some of the hottest secrets in movieland -- so that the bureau could steer them into less

crowded areas and thus smooth out the picture cycle. OWI's international role was especially important. "Hollywood films hit the beaches right behind American troops, provided they had OWI approval; the agency charged admission and held the money in trust for the studios. United States film makers were planning a large-scale invasion of the foreign market after the war, and OWI established indispensable beachheads. OWI assured Hollywood that "every effort would be made to protect their interests," said Riskin. Indeed, he lamented in mid-1944, "an unsavory opinion seems to prevail within OWI that the Motion Picture Bureau is unduly concerned with considerations for commercial interests."³⁹

Although OWI and Hollywood first seemed to conflict, they eventually developed excellent rapport, for their aims and approaches were essentially compatible. "The chief function of mass culture," Robert Warshow has observed, "is to relieve one of the necessity of experiencing one's life directly." Hollywood, conceiving of its audience as passive, emphasized entertainment and avoidance of issues. OWI encouraged Hollywood to treat more social issues and to move beyond national and racial stereotypes. However, since OWI was interested mainly in response, it stressed ideology and affirmation; it raised social issues only to have democracy wash them away. Here was where the seemingly divergent paths of Hollywood and OWI joined: avoidance and affirmation both led to evasion of experience. Instead of opening realms of understanding by confronting experience, OWI the propaganda agency

and Hollywood the dream factory joined hands to produce what Agee termed "acts of seduction" and "benign enslavement." However laudable the goals of propaganda, Jacques Ellul has suggested that it creates a person "who is not at ease except when integrated in the mass, who rejects critical judgments, choices, and differentiations because he clings to clear certainties." ⁴⁰ Through their influence over motion pictures, the Office of War Information liberals undermined the liberation for which they said they fought.

NOTES

1. Davis to Byron Price, Jan. 27, 1943, box 3, Records of the Office of War Information, RG 208, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland; Allan M. Winkler, "Politics and Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942-1945" (unpub. Ph. D. diss., Yale Univ., 1974), ch. 1; Gregory D. Black and Clayton R. Koppes, "The Formation of the Office of War Information, 1941-1942," forthcoming; LaMar Seal Mackay, "Domestic Operations of the Office of War Information in World War II," (unpub. Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Wisconsin, 1966), ch. 1-2; see also the special issue of Public Opinion Quarterly on propaganda agencies, VI (Spring 1942). On the nature of propaganda see Harold Lasswell, Propaganda Technique in the World War (New York, 1938), p. 9, and Jacques Ellul, Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes (New York, 1965), pp. x-xiv. On Davis see Alfred H. Jones, "The Making of an Interventionist on the Air: Elmer Davis and CBS News, 1939-1941," Pacific Historical Review, XLII (Feb. 1973), 91.

2. Although some scholars such as Winkler ("Politics and Propaganda," pp. 13-14, 228, 22-28, 37-41) acknowledge the presence of prominent liberals in OWI, liberal ideology has not received the emphasis that its pivotal importance in the agency merits. It seems clear, for instance, that not merely the questions of technique examined

by Sydney Weinberg ("What to Tell America: The Writers Quarrel in OWI," Journal of American History, LV [June 1968], 76, 88) but also ideological differences fueled the "writers' quarrel" of 1943. On New Dealers in OWI see Harold Gosnell to Files, Sept. 14, 1945, in "Preparation of War Histories by Agencies: OWI, 1942-1945," item 127, series 41.3, Bureau of the Budget Records, Record Group 51, National Archives. On liberals and World War II see Norman Markowitz, The Rise and Fall of the People's Century: Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948 (New York, 1973), ch. 2. In this essay the term "ideology" is used not to imply "a rigid, doctrinaire, black-and-white understanding of the world, but, rather, . . . the system of beliefs, values, fears, prejudices, reflexes and commitments -- in sum, the social consciousness" of a group (Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War [New York, 1970], p. 4).

3. Reduction of Nonessential Expenditures, Hearings before Joint Committee on Reduction of Nonessential Federal Expenditures, 77th Cong., 2nd. Sess (Washington, 1942), pp. 1140-1155, 1208-1225, 1308-1313; Lowell Mellett, "The Office of Government Reports," Public Administration Review, I (1940-41), 126; Margaret H. Williams, "The President's Office of Government Reports," Public Opinion Quarterly, V (Winter 1941), 548-562; Koppes interviews with Poynter, Jan. 8, 1974,

and Jones, Dec. 6, 1974; Dorothy B. Jones, "Quantitative Analysis of Motion Picture Content," Public Opinion Quarterly, VI (1942), 411-427. Mellett also supervised the production of war-related films by the government, which is treated briefly in Richard Dyer MacCann, The People's Films: A Political History of U.S. Government Motion Pictures (New York, 1973), pp. 130-135. This essay, however, considers only OWI's attempt to influence feature films produced by the movie industry. Mellett and Poynter were not on the OWI payroll but drew their salary from the Executive Office of the President.

4. Davis press conference, Dec. 23, 1942, box 1442, OWI Records; Reduction of Nonessential Expenditures, pp. 1213-1214; Movies at War, Reports of War Activities, Motion Picture Industry, 1942-1945, vol. I., no. 1, pp. 1-5.

5. Leo Rosten, Hollywood: The Movie Colony, The Movie Makers (New York, 1941), pp. 30-39, 78-79, 133-162, 174-175, 231-238, 246-247; Robert Sklar, Movie-Made America: A Social History of American Movies (New York, 1975), pp. 173-176, 188, 195-197; Thornton Delehanty, "Czars Fall on Hollywood," North American Review, CCXLII (Winter 1936-37), 268; Dudley Nichols, "The Writer and the Film," Theatre Arts, XXVII (Oct. 1943), 591-602; Paul Rotha, The Film Till Now (New York, 1948), pp. 445-446; Ruth Inglis, Freedom of the Movies

(Chicago, 1947), p. 128; J. B. Priestley, Midnight on the Desert, (New York, 1937), pp. 181-183; Charles Higham, The Art of the American Film (Garden City, N. Y., 1974), pp. 199-201; James Agee, Agee on Film (New York, 1958), p. 329; S. N. Behrman, People in a Diary (New York, 1972), p. 158; Donald Ogden Stewart, By a Stroke of Luck! (New York, 1975), p. xx; Andrew Bergman, We're in the Money: Depression America and Its Films (New York, 1971), p. 169.

6. Jones to Poynter, "War Features Inventory as of Sept. 15, 1942," box 1435, OWI Records.

7. Eric Johnston, America Unlimited (Garden City, N. Y., 1944); Henry Luce, The American Century (New York, 1941); Henry Wallace, "The Price of Free World Victory," Vital Speeches, VIII (June 1, 1942), 482-485; Robert A. Divine, Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II (New York, 1967), pp. 64-66.

8. "Government Information Manual for the Motion Picture Industry," summer 1942, April 29, 1943, January 1944, box 15, OWI Records.

9. Ibid.; Eddie Mannix to Executives, Producers, Writers, and Directors at MGM, Aug. 24, 1942, box 1433E, OWI Records.

10. Script Review, "For Whom the Bell Tolls," Oct. 14, 1942, box 3530, OWI Records; Robert Warshow, The Immediate Experience: Movies, Comics, Theatre & Other Aspects of Popular Culture (Garden City, N. Y., 1962), pp. 33-39; Richard H. Pells, Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years (New York, 1973), pp. 287-290, 328-329; Warren I. Susman, "The Thirties," in Stanley Coben and Lorman Ratner, eds., The Development of an American Culture (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1970), pp. 200-206, 214.

11. Manuel Quezon to Mellett, Aug. 17, 1942, Mellett to Sam Goldwyn, Aug. 20, 1942, Goldwyn to Mellett, Aug. 22, 1942, box 1433B, Script Review, "Kim," Aug. 4, 1942, box 1438, Rosten to Mellett, June 23, 1942, box 888, Mellett to Victor Saville, Sept. 23, 1942, box 3527, Poynter to Mellett, Aug. 25, 1942, Mellett to Poynter, Sept. 1, 1942, box 1438, OWI Records; Harrison's Reports, Sept. 6, 1942. The authors have viewed most of the films discussed in this essay, usually on television.

12. Feature Review, Little Tokio, U.S.A., July 9, 1942, box 3518, OWI Records.

13. Poynter to Mellett, July 23, Sept. 2, 1942, box 3518, Davis to Norman Thomas, Sept. 23, 1942, box 3, OWI Records; Twentieth

Century press release, "Synopsis of Little Tokio, U. S. A.," in Little Tokio, U. S. A. file, Margaret Harrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Hollywood, California; James R. Mock and Cedric Larson, Words That Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919 (Princeton, N. J., 1939), pp. 142-156.

14. Jones to Poynter, Aug. 6, 1942, Walter White to Mellett, Aug. 17, 1942, Mellett to Maurice Revnes, Aug. 18, 1942, Mellett to Poynter, Aug. 27, 1942, box 1433E, Poynter to Mellett, Aug. 25, 1942, Feature Review, Tennessee Johnson, Nov. 30, 1942, Mellett to Mayer, Nov. 25, 1942, box 3510, OWI Records.

15. Script Review, "So Proudly We Hail," Nov. 19, 1942, Poynter to Mark Sandrich, Oct. 28, 1942, June 22, 1943, "Re Chaplain Speech - So Proudly We Hail," Nov. 25, 1942, box 3511, OWI Records; cf. Molly Haskell, From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies (New York, 1973), pp. 192-193.

16. Script Review, "Air Force," Oct. 27, 1942, box 3515, Script Review, "Bombardier," Oct. 19, 1942, box 3522, Script Review, "Corregidor," Nov. 21, 1942, Feature Review, Corregidor, March 3, 1943, box 3515, Feature Review, Guadalcanal Diary, Oct. 26, 1943,

Feature Review, Desert Victory, April 22, 1943, box 3518, OWI Records; Manny Farber, "Love in the Foxholes," New Republic, CIX (Sept. 27, 1943), 426; Agee, Agee on Film, pp. 52-53, 65; Sklar, Movie-Made America, p. 255.

17. Feature Review, Keeper of the Flame, Dec. 7, 1942, box 1435, Feature Review, Pittsburgh, Nov. 30, 1942, Poynter to Mellett, Dec. 2, 1942, box 3520, OWI Records; "Fascist Flame," Newsweek, XXI (March 22, 1943), 80-81; Time, XLI (Jan. 25, 1943), 86, 88.

18. Jones to Poynter, Nov. 6, 1942, box 1433, OWI Records; Higham, The Art of the American Film, pp. 277-279.

19. Feature Review, Lucky Jordan, Nov. 17, 1942, box 1435, Ulric Bell to Robert Riskin, Dec. 10, 1942, box 3, Poynter to Mellett, Oct. 6, 19, 29, 1942, Office of Censorship Circular, Sept. 9, 1942, box 1438, OWI Records; cf. Michael Wood, America in the Movies (New York, 1975), pp. 37-38.

20. Davis to Mellett, Sept. 7, 1942, Mellett to Davis, Sept. 9, 1942, box 890, Davis press release, Sept. 11, 1942, box 3510, OWI Records; William Tuttle, "Aid-to-the-Allies Short of War versus American Intervention, 1940: A Reappraisal of William Allen White's

Leadership," Journal of American History, LVI (March 1970), 840-858, Mark L. Chadwin, The Warhawks: American Interventionists before Pearl Harbor (New York, 1970), pp. 51-52.

21. Poynter to Mellett, Oct. 6, 20, 1942, box 1438, Davis to Secretary of War, Dec. 3, 1942, A. D. Surles to Davis, Dec. 11, 1942, box 1, OWI Board Minutes, Oct. 31, 1942, box 41, OWI Records; Winkler, "Politics and Propaganda," pp. 55-62.

22. Mellett to Goldwyn, Dec. 9, 1942, box 1443, OWI Records.

23. Variety, Dec. 23, 1942; Goetz to Mellett, Dec. 21, 1942, Goetz to Cowles, Dec. 22, 1942, Jean Herrick to Cowles, Dec. 19, 1942, box 12A, OWI Records.

24. Davis press conference, Dec. 23, 1942, box 1442, OWI Board Meeting Minutes, Dec. 22, 26, 1942, box 41, Mellett to Goetz, Dec. 26, 1942, box 12A, H. M. Warner to Mellett, Dec. 16, 1942, box 1443, OWI Records; Mellett to Poynter, Dec. 30, 1942, box 16, Mellett Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

25. Bell to Riskin, Dec. 9, 1942, Feb. 23, 1943, box 3, Feature Review, The Moon is Down, Feb. 6, 1943, box 3518, Feature

Review, Casablanca, Oct. 28, 1942, Feature Review, Hangmen Also Die, Feb. 22, 1943, box 3523, Poynter to Nichols, Oct. 9, 1942, box 3515, OWI Records; Leo Braudy, Jean Renoir: The World of His Films (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), p. 139; André Bazin, Jean Renoir (New York, 1973), pp. 264-268; Raymond Durnat, Jean Renoir (Berkeley, Calif., 1974), pp. 236-237; Higham, Art of the American Film, p. 266.

26. Script Review, "Mission to Moscow," Nov. 30, 1942, Poynter to Bob Buckner, Dec. 3, 1942, Feature Review, Mission to Moscow, April 29, 1943, Bell to Riskin, April 29, 1943, box 3523, OWI Records; Manny Farber, "Mishmash," New Republic, CVIII (May 10, 1943), 636; Agee, Agee on Film, pp. 37-39; Jack Warner, My First Hundred Years in Hollywood (New York, 1965), p. 290; cf. Melvin Small, "Buffoons and Brave Hearts: Hollywood Portrays the Russians, 1939-1944," California Historical Quarterly, LII (Winter 1973), 330-333; Charles Higham, Warner Brothers (New York, 1975), pp. 158-171.

27. Feature Review, Girl From Leningrad (Russian Girl), Sept. 21, 1943, box 3524, Script Review, "The North Star," May 12, 1943, box 1434, OWI Records; Lillian Hellman, An Unfinished Woman (Boston, 1969), p. 125; Richard Moody, Lillian Hellman: Playwright (New York, 1972), p. 140; Elliot Paul, "Of Film Propaganda," Atlantic, CLXXVI (September 1945), 123; "The New Pictures," Time, XLII (Nov. 8, 1943), 54; Variety, Oct. 28, 1942. North Star still makes

an occasional television appearance as Armored Train.

28. See Gregory D. Black, "Keys of the Kingdom: Entertainment and Propaganda," forthcoming, South Atlantic Quarterly, for a detailed case study.

29. Script Reviews, "One Destiny," Jan. 4, 1943, March 24, 1943, April 27, 1943, box 1434, OWI Records.

30. Script Review, "America," Nov. 5, 1942, Feature Review, America, William S. Cunningham to Maurice Revnes, Feb. 17, 1944, box 3525, OWI Records; "Films in Review," Theatre Arts, XXVIII (November 1944), 669; Time, XLIV (Oct. 16, 1944), 94.

31. Poynter to Bell, Feb. 13, 1943, box 1438, Bell to Riskin, March 31, 1943, box 3510, Bell to Riskin, April 3, 1943, box 15, OWI Records; Bell to Poynter, May 19, 1943, Poynter to Bell, June 4, 1943, Poynter to Mellett, June 5, 26, 1943, box 16, Mellett Papers.

32. Bell to Davis, Jan. 9, 1943, Davis to Price, Jan. 16, 1943, Price to Davis, Jan. 23, 1943, Eisenhower to Bell, Dec. 31, 1943, box 3, Bell to Davis, March 8, 1943, box 3509, Bell to Phil Hamblet, Feb. 23, 1943, box 3518, OWI Records.

33. Bell to Louis Lober, Dec. 15, 1943, Cunningham to Lober, June 29, 1944, box 3509, Bell to Riskin, Nov. 1, 1943, box 3, Feature Review, Buffalo Bill, box 3518, "Report of Activities of the Overseas Branch, Bureau of Motion Pictures, Hollywood Office, January 1, 1943-August 15, 1943," box 65, OWI Records; Motion Picture Herald, Aug. 14, 1943; Winkler, "Politics and Propaganda," pp. 84-85. The one historical account that discusses the relationship between OWI and the movie industry (Richard R. Lingeman, Don't You Know There's a War On? The American Home Front, 1941-1945 [New York, 1970]) erroneously concludes (p. 188) that the Hollywood liaison efforts ended with the budget cut. Although the revised censorship code was issued about the same time as Mellett's letter to the studios, the two events appear not to be connected.

34. Bell to Rothacker, Nov. 12, 1943, Feature Review, Where Are Your Children, Nov. 8, 1943, "Cuts Required by Rothacker for 'Where Are Your Children,' " n.d., ca. Dec. 1, 1943, box 3530, Feature Reviews, The Dangerous Age, March 30, 1944, Youth Runs Wild, July 25, 1944, box 3515, OWI Records.

35. Feature Review, Strange Death of Adolf Hitler, June 18, 1943, Bell to George Bole, Aug. 18, 1943, box 3520, OWI Records.

36. Script Review, "Wilson," Sept. 20, 1943, Feature Review, Wilson, Aug. 1, 1944, box 3518, OWI Records; Agee, Agee on Film, pp. 110-113; Divine, Second Chance, pp. 169-172; Darryl Zanuck, Don't Say Yes Until I Finish Talking (Garden City, N. Y., 1971).

37. Feature Review, Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo, Sept. 12, 1944, box 3517; Dorothy B. Jones, "The Hollywood War Film: 1942-1944," Hollywood Quarterly, I (1945-46), 1-14.

38. Bell to Lober, Dec. 15, 1943, box 3530, "Report of Activities of the Overseas Branch, Bureau of Motion Pictures, Hollywood Office, January 1, 1943-August 15, 1943," "Report on Activities, 1942-1945," Sept. 18, 1945, box 65, OWI Records.

39. Riskin to Bell, Oct. 22, 1943, box 3510, Riskin to Edward Barrett, Aug. 12, 1944, box 19, OWI Records; Koppes interview with Jones, Dec. 6, 1974; Robert B. Randle, "A Study of the War Time Control Imposed on the Civilian Motion Picture Industry," unpub. M. A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1950, pp. 85-86.

40. Warshow, The Immediate Experience, p. 38; Agee, Agee on Film, p. 330; Ellul, Propaganda, p. 256; Hortense Powdermaker, Hollywood, the Dream Factory (Boston, 1950).