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Friday, September 12, 1941

GERMANS WHOOP AT HORRORS

John Walters, in the "Daily Mirror," writes:—

The German horror film, "Sieg im Westen" ("Victory in the West"), starring Adolf Hitler, is being shown at a cinema in Yorkville, the German district of New York, after being smuggled through the blockade.

Last night I sat among 500 German men, women and children and observed their ecstatic reactions to this film, originally made to scare small neutral nations into submission.

After this experience I shall laugh in the face of the next fool who dares tell me, "Britain's war is against Hitler and not the German people." For in this cinema in a civilised country over 3,000 miles from Germany I've heard Germans screaming with delight at the war's greatest horrors.

"Victory in the West" is a pictorial record of Hitler's rape of Belgium and defeat of France. It is accompanied with devilishly clever musical sequence which, in the words of a prominent New York critic "Inflames the savage breast."

Doubtless Hitler thinks murder set to music is a great art. I know this audience here in New York thought so.

There was ample light in the cinema for me to watch the Teuton faces of those around me as they whooped with joy at tanks, dive-bombers, flame-throwers and cannon spreading death and destruction.

Women and children, as well as men, were actually smiling. And their eyes were glistening with joy as though before a heavenly vision. A fat Hun sitting alongside me who had brought his wife and schoolboy son to share his fun, didn't shout with ecstasy—he just grunted.

It was a quiet grunt when bombs were shown raining from aeroplanes. But when Nazi conquerors were shown in the ruins of a French Cathedral town, the grunt grew to crescendo. His wife cried "wonderful." Their small son clapped his hands.

Death-dealing swoops of dive-bombers caused appreciative whoops from every row of seats.

The film had its comic side. Shots of a Hun soldier playing the organ in a French church and of Hitler inspecting the cathedral were not regarded as ludicrous.

What the audience guffawed at were wounded French soldiers and exhausted British prisoners.

In the film, the British retreated from Dunkirk to the tune, "We'll hang out the washing on the Siegfried Line," but this was too subtle to penetrate more than a few thick Teuton skulls.

Touched by pictures of French negro soldier prisoners being compelled by their Nazi tormentors to attempt savage-like war dances, I shouted a protest. Huns all around thereupon started cursing and threatening me.

These five hundred Germans, remember, are residents in civilised United States, where they've had opportunities to develop Christian virtues. Yet one film can, within a few moments, transform them into fiends. This strengthens my belief that Hitler and the German nation are one.

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