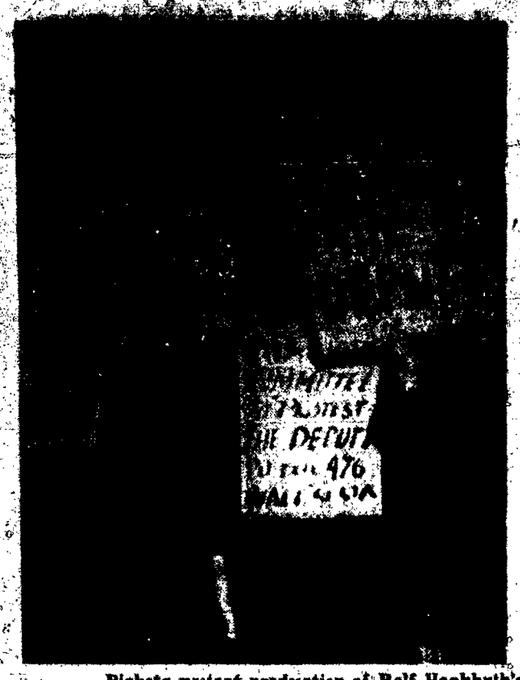

Pickets protest production of Rolf Hochhuth's play "The Deputy" in front of New York's Brooks Atkinson Theatre.

Pope Pius, Nazi Scapegoat

THE DEPUTY, a "controversial" drama accusing Pope Pius XII of silence in the face of Nazi atrocities against the Jews during World War II, opened last week at New York's Brooks Atkinson Theatre.

"Controversial" is the terminology of the ticket-selling agent, the public relations man, and the witch hunter for a play which might not quite make it on Broadway with an unknown playwright's name, on an unpopular context.

THE DEPUTY, as with other "controversial" plays, was readily picketed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Ad Hoc Committee (whoever they are!) and the swastikaed troopers of the American Nazi Party (whyever they are!).

Individual members of these organizations carried placards charging "Anti - Christ" and "Bigots." They carried American flags and colored photos of the late Pope Pius. Scores were interviewed by the daily press. None had read THE DEPUTY. None had seen it—this was opening night.

And so we begin. The theme of THE DEPUTY seems to be that we are our brother's keeper, that we share in a world responsibility, that we share a burden of guilt.

No one can deny it.

Necessarily, our first question about THE DEPUTY must be "Is it good drama?"

Unfortunately it deals with the character of Pius XII, dead only six years, making him a "controversial" figure. We resent this at the outset because we "knew" him.

St. Joan of Arc, Savanarola, Luther, Thomas Becket, famous "controversial" personages of history, have been treated on the stage with both frown and laurels and we have accepted such offerings on their dramatic value because none of us "knew" them personally.

On the whole, THE DEPUTY received "cool" reviews from the New York critics. They did not overlook individually fine performances by individual actors or the strength of certain scenes—but even they were hoodwinked by the appearance of Pius XII, too close in memory to be treated completely in the theater vein.

What puts us "out of joint" is the characterization of Pius as a world leader whose weakness, timidity or policy of convenience allowed the slaughter of millions of Jews.

Playwright Rolf Hochhuth's major premise in THE DEPUTY would seem to be that Pope Pius XII did not use his enormous power to oppose Hitler's "final solution" of the Jews. David Danzig, associate director of the American Jewish Committee, calls it "a loaded premise."

A good case can be made that the Pope had little persuasive or political power, he said. He wasn't able to do much for the 3,000 Catholic priests murdered by Hitler.

If the playwright needed a figure of great power for the protagonist in his play, certainly Churchill, Roosevelt or Stalin would stand head and shoulders over the Pope during World War II.

The Jewish Chronicle, a Pittsburgh weekly, noted that it has become "disgustingly fashionable" to project guilt everywhere and anywhere, even to the victims themselves ("Why didn't they fight back? Why did they go to their deaths so passively?").

The fact is that nobody did enough — otherwise the Nazi horror would never have happened. This is a time for blaming.

We wonder if the world will ever get around to blaming the Nazis? We wonder if the world will ever stop looking back in anger and instead make sure for the future that the earth is cleansed of such poisons forever.

In THE DEPUTY, Pope Pius has become a Nazi scapegoat. It is quite easy for the playwright to heap the murders of six million Jews on a man now dead and defenseless.

What about this Rolf Hochhuth? Now in his early thirties, he was a boy when he joined the Nazi Youth Movement at the height of Hitler's power. Besides THE DEPUTY, his only other written work seems to be an introduction to the collected works of Wilhelm Busch. The texts and caricatures of Busch had been the favorites of Anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic nationalists from Bismarck to Hitler's Third Reich.

Busch's works are rife with shocking, outrageous and vulgar ditties about the Jewish people and blasphemous references to Scripture. There is a crude satire on the Catholic veneration of saints and on confession, in which the alleged sexual misuse of the Sacrament is dramatically presented.

He exposes to ridicule the religious custom of pilgrimages and coarsely depicts Catholic priests as seducers of virgins and as womenchasers.

One of Busch's fables tells of the special avarice of the Jesuits. It is interesting that Hochhuth portrays the Jesuits in THE DEPUTY along the lines of this same slanderous idea.

In his introduction to the Busch works, Hochhuth calls the edition "a classic that would lure even children."

This is the man who wrote THE DEPUTY.

—ROBERT SMETT

Academy Sets Theatre Day

Ninth Annual Theatre Day of the Rochester Unit, National Catholic Theatre Conference, will be held at Nazareth Academy on Saturday, March 14.

BISHOP CASEY will preside at the Awards Banquet at 12:15 noon when the the Commander's Award of the Order of St. Gregorius will be conferred on Monsignor John S. Randall. Tribute will be given by Sister Helen Daniel, president of Nazareth College. Individual awards will also be given by the various drama groups.

SISTER ST. GERTRUDE

Registration will be followed by the opening session at 10 a.m. at which greetings will be extended by Sister Jamesetta, principal of Nazareth Academy; Sister M. St. Gertrude, chairman of the Rochester Unit; and Robert Smett, Unit cochairman.

Theme of the day, Medieval Theatre, will be explained by George Sherwood, owner and director of Bristol Hills Playhouse and School of Drama.

Productions to be presented during the day include: "Everyman," "Shakespeare's World of Love" and "Christmas in the Village Square."

Session chairmen will include: Sister M. Claudia, Sister Mary Pius, Sister M. Evelyn, Sister Raymond Joseph and Mr. Tom Avery.

The day will end with a Teen Talent Hour for students and a Directors Meeting and Buffet for adult members.

Admission for Theatre Day is $3.00, or $1.00 for those not attending the banquet.

Ray Fagan Forms Band

Rochester's veteran orchestra leader Ray Fagan, is forming his fourth orchestra. Besides furnishing music for every city industrial company in Rochester, Fagan took his orchestra on the Keith and Loew circuits which included two trips from coast to coast including engagements at both Eastman and Loew theaters in Rochester.

The new orchestra will not have any age limit but will only use musicians with special talent for solo bits. Fagan believes so-called big Band business is coming back and reports already having more than one booking to encourage him in his new venture. He can be reached at HA 6-4596 for further information.

Monthly Musicales Set For Guests At St. Ann's

Through the generosity of the Rochester Musicians Union, St. Ann's Auxiliary has been able to present a musicale each month for the oldsters at St. Ann's Home.

Charles La Cava has arranged for the various performances.

Barney Masiello's dance band played for the guests this month, and Ray Dunlap will play the piano for them on Tuesday, March 3 at 7:30 p.m. Also coming up are Sam Muscate on the trumpet, April 7 at 7:30 p.m. and Arthur Gutlilis on the piano, May 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Response has been most enthusiastic, according to Mrs. Charles Haight, chairman for February.

Among the most frequent Auxiliary volunteers on these evenings have been Mrs. Samuel Tomaselli, Mrs. Anthony Letta, Mrs. Fred Slick, Mrs. Ralph Vigna, and Mrs. Thomas Fischer.

Chairman for the March program is Mrs. Herman Resch. They and other volunteers escort the guests from their floors to the auditorium for the hour long performances, mix and even dance with them, then return them to their floors.

'Suicidal' To Oppose Nazi Pogrom

Vatican City—(RNS)—Public condemnation of the Nazis by Pope Pius XII would have been a "suicidal provocation" resulting in the extermination of many more Jews and Roman Catholics than were killed during World War II, Osservatore Romano, the Vatican City newspaper, said here.

The comment was made in the first of a series of articles by the paper's editor, Raimondo Manzini, in protest to Rolf Hochhuth's controversial drama, "The Deputy," which criticizes the late pontiff for not speaking out against the atrocities.

The article noted the current Broadway production of the play, commenting: "It seems that that the New York critics confirm our judgment of the improbable character who is the Pius XII of Hochhuth. Whatever may be the intention or the illusion or the pretension of the author, he has attributed to his character a psychology that is weak, calculating and squalidly worldly."

Theatre Guide

(Catholics are reminded of a recent Legion of Decency advisory to avoid "not listed" films. Such films are usually the products of firms which fail to submit their films for Legion of Decency reviews. All major U.S. producers do cooperate with the Legion so it is a mark of loyalty to them as well as to one's pledge to see only those films rated acceptable by the Legion of Decency. Such action would also be an effective remedy for much of the current turmoil in the Rochester area about how best to curtail objectionable shows at drive-in theaters. — Editor's Note.)

MONROE
Misadventures of Merlin Jones A-1

RIVIERA
Tom Jones A-4

LITTLE
Irma LaDouce B

PARAMOUNT
Dark Purpose A-2
He Rides Tall B

REGENT
Love with the Proper Stranger A-3

FINE ARTS
The Cardinal A-3

LOEW'S
The Victors A-3

WARING-LYELL
Strait-Jacket A-3

PALACE
Soldier in the Rain B
War is Hell A-2

Legion Of Decency

Class A, Section 1
F.B.I., Code 98
Swingin' Maiden, The

Class A, Section 2
Fiances, The

Class A, Section 3
Killers, The
Naked Kiss
Paris When It Sizzles
Observation: This classification is applicable only to prints shown in the U.S.)
Tamahine
Observation: This classification is applicable only to prints shown in the U.S.

Theater New.

Who Listened to The Pope During First World War?

By EUPHEMIA WYATT

The Deputy—As the curtain rises and as it falls, they are shuffling by—the agonizing lie of Nazi victims; old women, old men, young girls, little children clinging to their mothers. "We never separate the children from their mothers," says the SS Doctor). No, not even on the way to the gas chambers!

This prologue and epilogue staged by Herman Shumlin, director and co-producer, makes it difficult to review the play objectively when one realizes that we are watching what was actually the extermination of six million Jewish people. All sympathy is at once centered on Father Fontana, the young Jesuit, who is convinced that a personal protest from the Pope could halt the massacre.

It is the fatal weakness of the play that Rolf Hochhuth, the German playwright, presents a caricature instead of a rounded portrait of Pius XII. Emlyn Williams, made up as a counterpart of the waxen image in St. Patrick's Cathedral, playing him, not as a strong man torn between conflicting dangers to humanity, but as an opportunist and hypocrite.

Having lived through World War I when Benedict XV's efforts for peace were continuously snubbed, I now realize that it never occurred to me during World War II that anyone, least of all Hitler, would have paid any attention to a protest from the Vatican.

It was the charity of Pope John which found a world audience and must have led Hochhuth to believe that papal intervention might have saved millions of Jews.

He discounts the thousands, mentioned in the play, who were ransomed or given sanctuary by the Church in Italy. What would have happened as a result of Rome's challenge of Nazism must remain a fascinating problem but hardly Hochhuth's forgone conclusion.

Pius XII foresaw the Red Peril and knew the doubtful disasters that followed the Dutch Bishops' defiance of Hitler. He must have suffered. Perhaps he envied the young Jesuit who put on the Star of David and went to die with his Jewish brothers in Auschwitz.

Would we feel prouder today were St. Peter's in ruins as witness to the Vatican's refusal to permit deportation of the SS prisoners from Rome?

Cut down from eight hours to three, The Deputy, played on a bare stage with a minimum of "props," offers the most shattering evening I have ever encountered. Jeremy Brett is simple and forceful as Father Fontana; so is Ian Wolfe as the Jesuit General; Don Leibman completely satanic as the SS doctor.

Marco Millions — In Eugene O'Neill's stage directions for Marco, a gentleman in top hat and furlined coat, sits in the front row; yawns when the curtain falls and strolls out to his waiting limousine. This was a barb aimed at the banker, Otto Kahn, generous patron of the theater who, O'Neill rather unjustly felt, personified the materialism of which his play is a table.

It is built up on those extraordinary journeys of the Venetian traders, the Polos, in the 13th century to China, not for love of travel, or beauty or wisdom but for Trade.

Young Marco is the Go-Getter, ready to expect the world for profit. Kublai, the Great Kahn of Cathay, had asked the Pope to send him one hundred Wise Men from the West but only Marco volunteers.

"Marco will drive the Kahn to seek salvation somewhere—" remarks His Holiness.

For 15 years Marco works for Kublai Kahn and meanwhile the Princess Kukachin grows up and falls in love with Marco but neither she nor her father can discover the immortal soul which Marco has always claimed to be his (it is now encased in gold).

The Princess, as Queen of Persia, dies of her love, a love Marco never fathomed. The Kahn has her body brought back to Xanadu where he watches in a crystal the Polos' triumphant return to Venice. "The Word became their flesh, they say. Now all is flesh" says Kublai Kahn, "And can their flesh become the Word again?" Who knows?

Directed by Jose Quintero with lighting and stage effects by David Hays; magical costumes by Beni Montresor and music by Doris Schwerin, a shimmery pageant frames the caustic satire. Kublai Kahn, as played by David Wayne rightfully commands the stage with Joseph Wiseman as the sympathetic old sage, Chu Yin, lovely to look at as the Princess, Zohra Lampert has sadly faulty diction.

In 1928, Alfred Lunt gave Marco a touch of Renaissance grace, Hal Brook's Marco is closer to Broadway than the Rialto. Will the public agree with me that Marco Millions is a very great play?

Foxy — Curiously enough in 1928 when Marco first opened, Foxy was also running but under the name of Volpone, Ben Johnson's farcical satire on avarice. Now with book by Ian Hunter and Ring Lardner Jr., it has been moved from Venice to the Klondike where men fought for gold dust and died, starved and froze, in 1898.

Once again Mosca (the Gadfly) now Dr. Mosk, persuades three friends that Foxy (Volpone) is dying with a fortune in gold nuggets which he will leave to his best pal, to Shortcut (the Crow), Buzzard (the Vulture), Bedrock (the Raven) all vie with each other in bringing gifts to Foxy, even the bride of a few hours.

Larry Blyden plays Dr. Mosk, the Gadfly, with a lightness, reminiscent of old Italian pantomime—a graceful and clever performance. The music and the Klondike girls are both rollicking. Less sardonic than Volpone, Foxy is, at best, an ugly story mitigated by Bert Lahr, his good nature and his comedy. Long life to him!

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Otto Preminger's new film, "The Cardinal," is a stunning picture based upon the novel (1950) by Henry Morton Robinson. Whether the movie is a faithful version of the book is not the point at the moment. Instead, judged on its own merits as a film about Catholic life, "The Cardinal" is superb story-telling, film-making, and drama. It is among the best of the post-war pictures concerned with themes and personalities specifically Catholic.
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