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Peter Ustinov as a comical embezzler attempting to rig a computer in "Hot Millions."

There's Audience For Family Films, NCOMP Claims

(Catholic Press Features)

New York-There would be many more family-type films once Hollywood realizes that television's grip on the family audience is not what filmmakers fear it is, according to the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures.

"As 'Sound of Music' demonstrated, the audience is there for general entertainment films. But most movie-makers are simply not willing to take the chance on investing money and skill in trying to lure the family from the living-room screen," NCOMP complained.

NCOMP made its observation in its "Catholic Film Newsletter," where it has type films - "Hot Millions," "Finian's Rainbow" and "Funny Girl"-and again criticized Hollywood's record in the area of children's films.

The Catholic film office suggested that when Hollywood does set out to make a family film, it wrongly assumes that it has made one that only children will enjoy.

"The American movie tradition has always been that of the 'family film,' which normally means something for everybody regradless of whether the whole film will satisfy any one particular age level," said NCOMP. "From a purely business point of view, it is understandable as simply a question of box-office economics based upon the widest possible audience for the maximum profit. For children. however, such films mean being bored half of the time."

NCOMP also accused the American film industry of not knowing how to promote worthwhile children's films:

"It is unfortunate that the films of Robert Radnitz, for instance, never reached the potential audience that existed for them, primarily because of their unimaginative distribution and promotion." Rad-nitz has made such films as "Dog of Flanders," "Misty," "Island of the Blue Do-Iphins" and "And Now Miguel."

Praising "Hot Millions," which was rated for adolescents and adults by NFCOMP, the film office called it "a film that accomplishes what it sets out to do, which is to amuseits audience.""The film is purely escape entertainment which reminds one of the great comedies that England was justly famous for years ago," NCOMP added.

Ironically, "Hot Millions" is about a professional emabezzler who seeks revenge on the computer system (one was responsible for his serving a prison sentence) by illegally programming one so that it will send him fat checks. The embezzler, played by England's Peter Ustinov, stacceeds, and although the film is a liam Ferris, organist and choir comedy, the film office in another day would certainly have objected that crime is glorifled a a zita una 1 2

"When he succeeds," said NCOMP, "one can't help but enjoy it as a moral victory for the human race."

"Finian's Rainbow" was given an A-1 (for general audiences) rating by NCOMP. which described it as "an enjoyab le entertainment, not quite the light-hearted romantic fantasy that it might have been, but something that is pleasant to watch and, more especially, to listen to.

"One might understandably be apprehensive about how it would fare 20 years later on the glant screen instead of staying in summer stock. Never fear, there is still plenty of magic left in its somgs and romantic dreams," added

The Catholic film office called "Funny Girl" (about the career of Fanny Brice as interpreted by Barbara Streisand), a "handsome film" that "offers essentially the kind of costumed musical-comedy world in which people belt out lyrics anywhere, anytime, without collecting a crowd except at the boxoffice." It was classified by NCOMP for adolescents and adults.

New Office Makes Radio TV Plans

and Television, which has just been handed a major assign lic subjects. been handed a major assignment, will have to study its situation and resources before announcing detailed future plans, NCORT executive director Charles Reilly said here.

A major future production in which it has collaborated is an hour long television special based on Michelangelo's paintings for the ceiling of the Sisting Charles The annual statements and the second statements are second statements.

Reilly's office, a part of the be broadcast by ABC im prime time on Thursday, Dec. 5. ment in the recently reorganized U.S. Catholic Conference, has been given the responsibil-held by the NCCW in programity for regularly scheduled na- ming, the NCORT will need a tional radio-television network through reorganization, large religious programming which staff increases and a substan had for 38 years been assigned tial budget increase. to the National Council of Catholic Men. It will assume this new role on Jan. 1, 1969.

served so far not as a producing laymen's group to the NCORT agency for radio and television meant an effort by the bishops broadcasts but as a consultant.

It has advised Catholic organizations which were seeking Catholic programming.

New York — (RNS) — The Na-radio-television outlets and nettional Catholic Office for Radio works which needed technical

tine Chapel. The program will

Reilly denied the charge o a radio-television producer for the NCCM that the shift of re-The three-year-old NCORT has sponsibility from the mational

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Valenti: New Watchdog of Film Morals?

By BILL RING (NC News Service)

Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, may emerge as the most powerful figure in the nation's movie industry since Will Hays won the sobriquet of "czar" and stemmed a flood of objectionable movies back in the 1930s.

Valenti has prepared the way for the Oct. 7 launching of a nationwide rating system of movies, under which youngsters 16 and under will be barred by the theaters themselves from viewing some movies, even when accompanied by a parent.

Officials of the two religious organizations concerned with moral evaluation of movies — the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (NCOMP) and the National Council of Churches Broadcasting and Film Commission (BFC) — have adopted a watchful waiting policy pending launching of the new rating system, before evaluat-

The new system can be compared to one which hasbeen operating in England for years. It will run parallel to the Production Code, but will not replace it.

Valenti forged the system not only through conferences with the industry's producers,but also through regional conferences with exhibitors who are members of the National Association of Theater Own-

In 'Celebrations'

Three area composers will

present new works at Celebra-

tions, a symphonic program of

Rochester premieres arranged

mision of St. John Fisher Col-

The program is set for 8:15

p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 6, in the

Nazareth College Arts Center.

David Fetler, director of the

Rochester Chamber Orchestra

and the Opera Theatre; D. Don-

College at Brockport, and Wil-

director at Sacred Heart Cathe-

dral will conduct first perform-

ances of their own works. The

program features also the Roch-

ester premiere of William Wal-

More than 50 musicians from

will be joined by the St. John

Fisher Glee Club, under the

direction of H. Wendell How-

ard, and the cathedral choir of

Rochester Philharmonic

ton's Partita for Orchestra.

by the Cultural Affairs Com- the movie industry's Produc-

Cervonne of the music Him Go," "Weekend," "and

Tickets are available at the of the Motion Picture Associ-

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Arts Center box office, at \$2.50. ation of America has quite

faculty at the State University "The Killing Game."

The tie-in of the exhibitors to the project is expected to have an outstanding effect where foreign-made movies are concerned. The new rating system will apply to both domestic and foreign-made

The cryptic GMRX rating system goes like this:

G-for general audiences. M-for adults and mature

young people. R-restricted for those over 16, unless those younger are accompanied by an adult.

X-barring those under 16' whether or not accompanied by a parent or adult. An X rating will be given to films not submitted for classifica-In launching the program

Oct. 7, Valenti is expected to announce the names of those who will serve on the rating board and also spell out the appeals machinery available to those dissatisfied with ratings. It has been disclosed that an appeals board of 25 members will be established. It is planned to have the program in operation in Novem-

The careers of Jack Valenti and Will Hays ran on a parallel course before each became involved with the movie industry. Hays was Postmaster General under President Warren G. Harding before he became the movie "czar." Jack Valenti was a top aide to President Johnson before he became head of the MPAA.

New Music Offered Film Industry Violates

New York — (RNS) — The

National Catholic Office for

Motion Pictures has accused

tion Code Administration of

of its own principles in regard

to nudity on the screen.

"quite patently" violating one

The NCOMP made its

charge in announcing "C" or

condemned ratings for five

films: "Barbarella," "Birds in

Peru," "If He Hollers, Let

'Barbarella" which stars Jane

Fonda, the Catholic film of-

fice stated: "This science fic-

tion film is basically struc-

tured around repeated sexual

encounters involving the hero-

ine. It is a sick, heavy-handed

fantasy, it relies for its appeal

on a crass exploitation of nud-

ity and graphic presentations

of sadism rather than on so-

phisticated wit and imagina-

"In granting a seal of ap-

proval to the film, the Pro-

duction Code Administration

When Hays took over in 1930, there was a public outcry against the pictures being produced in Hollywood-violence was rampant in gangster films; law enforcement agents and agencies were ridiculed; sex was accentuated.

There were frequent threats of national legislation to regulate the Hollywood product. State and city censor groups were established and for years controlled in their localities the types of movies allowed to

To help stem the tide of unsavory movies, the Catholic bishops of the nation some 30 years ago formed a committee on movies which established the National Legion of Decency, foregrunner of the NCOMP, to evaluate films from the moral standpoint.

The Legion, from time to time, was ridiculed, criticized, even threatened with court action as an unconstitutional "censorship" organization. But it had a telling effect

in affording, especially for

parents, a guide to the type of

movies available. The crowning achievement of "Czar" Hays was establishment of the production code machinery. Under it there were taboos against glorifying criminals; against themes of drug traffic and addiction.

The code continued in force until about five years ago, when it was modified, giving

Juliet" as A-4, morally un-

two teenagers, the youngest

performers ever to play the

title roles professionally. The

Catholic film office observed:

promoted for school viewing,

parents should be aware that

cent audience."

"Because the film is being

and immorality in costuming,

and other restrictions.

producers a greater leeway. in film making.

Valenti took over as head of the MPAA. When he took office movie makers, taking advantage of the relaxed code provisions, were turning out movies specializing, in violence: nudity and near nudity: themes such as homosexuality, lesbianism and drug addiction; use of profamity and vulgar language.

Religious groups have grown highly critical of the modern-day film fare. National organizations of women. especially mothers, repeatedly have protested. A number of legislators, particularly U.S. Sen. Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, have proposed legislation to regulate the movies.

Recent threats of federal censorship or classification of films is admittedly one factor in the development of the new

However, Valenti reportedly said that a real concern about the effects of films on children was a major factor.

Mr. Valenti pointed out that the new policy of separating pictures into various categories will actually ease the restraints on the film-maker because he will know who his audience is. "The first objective of classification," he explained, "is to free the filmmaker, to loosen the artistic fetters around his creative ankles by segregating pic-

Vary for Priests 'Own Code': NCOMP

Albany - (NC) - There are 1,689 retired priests in the United States receiving varying patently violated one of its types and amounts of retireprinciples which states that ment income, according to a 'undue exposure of the hunationwide survey reported by man body shall not be pre-CRUX of the News, a bulletin published here for priests. In addition, the NCOMP

The report was based on a rated the Franco Zeffirelli 100% response to questionproduction of "Romeo and naires sent to 153 dioceses. Highlights of the report inobjectionable for adults, with reservations. The film stars

> a mandatory retirement age -30 of these at 75 and 11 at 70. Sixty-seven dioceses report formal retirement programs with the matter currently under study in another 34 dioceses.

which is not only in from continuation of salaries to an unnecessary element in motion picture treat- a top pension of \$600 per ment but is also particularly month. Forty-six dioceses have inappropriate for an adoles a retirement stipend of \$300 per month or more.

Retirement Plans

- Forty-one dioceses have



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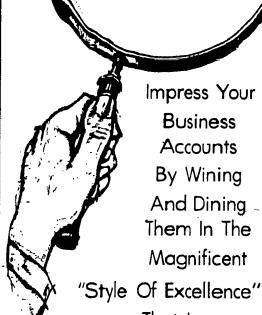
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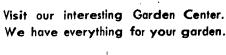
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