

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Professor Phillips on the Movies.

The Chicago newspapers have directed our attention to an address made Monday before the convention of the National Council of Catholic Men by Prof. Phillips, of our English Department. From the Tribune we quote the following paragraphs:

"From the inside we must be insistent and continuous in our efforts to get at the producers, and make ourselves known at the headquarters of Gen. Johnson of the NRA. To get permanent results, however, the Catholic public and individual must be educated. There are four essentials of a good movie. These are 1. beauty of conception; 2, sound dramatic construction; 3, good acting; 4, good photography.

"A good picture presents a philosophical interpretation of life and shows the moral unity of the universe. It must be of the live, vital stuff of life. We do not demand religious plays, but we do condemn those presentations which discount morality completely by implication or inference. The sinner doesn't repent. There is a convenient bridal veil and plenty of easy money."

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The Herald Examiner gives the following summary:

The movie problem... "can be solved in two ways: from the inside, by getting at the producers and directors; and from the outside, by box office action. By that I mean not only by abstaining from bad plays, but by supporting good ones.

"The concentrated efforts of the Church, the parents, as well as women's clubs and other organizations, in the direction of the right type of play, will in time affect the masses so that they will involuntarily seek decent plays and pictures."

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"We are glad to see this treatment of the problem and to observe that the newspapers have given prominence to the suggestions offered by Professor Phillips. The N.C.C.M. is in a position to exercise an enormous influence in correcting the false position into which moving picture producers have worked themselves, and we hope that they will not hesitate to register vigorous and continuous protests against indecent films, and to promote individual action to support good productions.

Our experience of last year at Notre Dame should encourage the N.C.C.M. When a picture presenting a travesty on Catholicity was announced for a local theatre, the students were asked by the Bulletin to look the other way when the show came to town, and to lose interest in a theatre that would thus insult their religion. There was an 85% compliance with this reasonable request. Through all the halls petitions were then circulated stating to the producers that the signers were interested only in clean pictures and in clean advertising for pictures. The movement spread to other schools and other organizations, with remarkable results. South Bend show houses have shown a much better understanding of our problem since that time.

The secret of public control of such situations is solidarity. There is no reason why the sons of clean, healthy-minded parents should tolerate unclean amusements; there is no reason why they should not make it a point of honor to oppose them with all the force that solidarity can give. There is no reason why men who come to cultivate their minds under the shadow of Our Lady on the Dome should ever allow themselves to be insulted by so-called "box-office-appeal" movies. If Catholics as a whole will profit by this lesson from our experience, the moving picture "problem" will soon disappear. Catholics constitute between thirty and forty per cent of the urban population of the United States. Producers cannot keep in business without their support.

PRAYERS: I'll - the mother of Bill Murphy, Carroll Hall; a friend of John Britton.