

Miss Chaffin
25
March 21, 1945

A-M: Mr. MacLeish

NEA: Mr. Murray

Letter from Colonel Harold B. Hoskins

I believe that you will be interested in an extract which I am giving below from a letter which we had from Colonel Harold B. Hoskins outlining a conversation which he had with the President on March 3. You will note that this refers to American motion picture propaganda, and it should accordingly be of especial interest to the Division of International Information.

"AMERICAN PROPAGANDA ABROAD"

The President inquired if American moving pictures were being furnished in the Near East, and suggested the possibility of even taking over at least one small theatre in various cities where American films of various kinds might be shown. I told him I had not seen many American movies in the Middle East except, of course, the usual run of Hollywood films, usually a year or two after they had been originally brought out. I told him that I had seen, in Baghdad, where the British had shown documentary and educational films in public against the wall of a building, and that I thought perhaps something along those same lines could be done by us. He agreed that that was better than the idea of taking over small theatres since, in such outdoor shows, women as well as men could see them. Mrs. Roosevelt suggested that, to be effective, such films would have to be specially prepared, having in mind the specific areas where they would be shown. I said that I thought this came under Archie MacLeish's new job in the State Department, and the President asked me to follow this up to see that this suggestion was considered by the section dealing with motion pictures. Since I shall not be able to do so, will you see that this idea is passed on to the proper people in the moving picture division?"

Wallace Murray

NE:EMW:JLW