

THE NEWS PAPER OF FILM DOM ALL THE NEWS ALL THE TIME

The Film DAILY

CAVALCADE

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THE MARCH OF TIME

Which Since 1935 Has Been Presenting a New Kind of Pictorial Journalism

By **NELSON MOORE**

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INCE the beginning of the motion picture, the newsreel has been recognized as a vital medium of public information. Moviegoers demand it. But, by the very nature of its technique and the swiftness with which it brings today's events to the screen, the newsreel can give little more than headline news. And so it has created among moviegoers a desire to see more.



de Rochemont

It was this desire "to see more" that led the founders of The March of Time to launch their new kind of pictorial journalism five years ago. Its purpose was by no means to supplant the newsreel, but to supplement it, every month, with a complete film story of some current subject commanding public attention and interest—a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Some years before the birth of The March of Time, Producer Louis de Rochemont had prepared a feature-length story of the world's search for peace, edited from newsreel material and titled "The Cry Of The World." The film found wide public acceptance and demonstrated the possibilities inherent in the newsreel for rendering valu-

able service in the presentation of problems of social importance. In deRochemont's "Cry Of The World" lay the basic idea for what was later to become The March of Time on the screen.

Not long after that, Producer de Rochemont approached Vice-President Roy E. Larsen of Time Inc., publishers of Time and Fortune magazines, and by 1934 both of these men were hard at work together, attempting to evolve the movie March of Time by linking de Rochemont's "Cry Of The World" idea with the formula of Larsen's highly successful March of Time radio program.

The first issue of The March of Time screen presentation appeared in some 400 theaters throughout the United States on February 1, 1935. Although immediately hailed by film critics and the public at large as a great new contribution to the screen; theater managers were skeptical of its box office value and afraid of the idea of presenting "controversial" subjects to their patrons.

With each succeeding monthly edition, during March of Time's first year, Larsen and de Rochemont got closer and closer to achieving what they had set out to do. And with each new issue the exhibitor became more and more "sold" on their idea, because he was discovering that his audiences liked The March of Time and were anxious to pay to see it. So, while the film played in only a scant 400 theaters in the beginning, it was shown regularly in over 4,500 theaters at the end of its first year, in 9,982 at the close of its second, and in more than 11,000 after its third.

Full development of the March of Time technique of pictorial journalism might be said to have been reached with the memorable "Inside Nazi Germany" issue which rocked the U. S. press and became table talk from coast to coast.

Armed with sharp editorial foresight and extensive facilities for world picture coverage, March of Time's Producer de Rochemont and his staff of editor-writers have since managed to keep a step or two ahead of major news developments.