

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

No. 15

FOR RELEASE

Monday, February 23.

POWER AMONG MEN, U.N. FILM, AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Power Among Men, the first feature-length film produced by the United Nations, will be given its initial showing to an invited audience at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, on Thursday, March 5 at 8:30 p.m. Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Under-Secretary, United Nations, will introduce the 90-minute Eastmancolor film. It will be shown later throughout the world.

Dealing with the idea and purposes of the U.N., Power Among Men has a score composed and conducted by Virgil Thomson and played by members of the New York Philharmonic. Commentary is spoken by Laurence Harvey. The film is dedicated to its cast: the villagers of Sant' Ambrogio, Italy; the farmers of Fermathe, Haiti; the townsfolk of Kitimat, Canada; and the scientists at Kjeller, Norway. Thorold Dickinson and J.C. Sheers made the film in collaboration with Alexander Hammid, G. L. Polidoro and V.R. Sarma. Previously unedited footage from Eisenstein's Que Viva Mexico is included.

Richard Griffith, Curator of the Museum's Film Library, has this to say about Power Among Men:

"In a world where decisions often seem final, and where all seems in suspense until they are made, this film searches out four spots in the world where, quietly and unknown to most of us, the hopes of mankind are putting down new roots. In Italy, we see a village as it was fifteen years ago, devastated by war, and as it is today, when with the help of UNNRA it is not only re-built but growing. The villagers of Fermathe in Haiti re-enact the history of their past six years when, with the help of a UN agricultural expert, they part the mists of magic and superstition and learn for themselves how to raise their own standard of living. To Kitimat, Canada, the new town in British Columbia, come men and women from all over the world, hoping for a new life but facing the human problems of the melting-pot. And in Kjeller, Norway atomic scientists from many countries are working against time to learn to produce energy with which to combat the new menace of mankind - the menace just over the horizon, exploding population. What links these four separate stories and locations is one circumstance: they share the frontier of civilization."

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Thorold Dickinson, producer and co-author of Power Among Men, is Chief of the United Nations Film Services. A veteran English filmmaker, his first film was made in Spain in the 30's; his most recent feature, Hill 24 Doesn't Answer, was shot in Israel. He also directed the original Gaslight, the British wartime "careless-talk" feature documentary Next of Kin, and Queen of Spades. At the U.N. he produced the Academy Award nominee Overture and the as yet unreleased Pablo Casals Breaks His Journey.

J.C. Sheers has worked extensively in Europe and America as a writer and producer of both documentary and fiction films. The co-author of Power Among Men, his other credits include television shows for "Foreign Intrigue" and "Danger;" and films such as Miracle in Java, for the World Veterans Fund and the U.N., and Martin Luther for de Rochemont.

One of America's best-known composers of serious music, Virgil Thomson, in addition to his many concert works, has written for the theater (Orson Welles' production of Macbeth with a Haitian setting, Gertrude Stein's Four Saints in Three Acts) and for films (The River, Louisiana Story and The Goddess). Mr. Thomson has composed a suite based on his Power Among Men score.

Laurence Harvey, the eminent British actor, appeared most recently as Henry V in the Old Vic production.

For further information and stills, please contact Herbert Bronstein, Assistant Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York. CI 5-8900.

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The United Nations Film Board presents

P O W E R A M O N G M E N

a film in Eastmancolor by Thorold Dickinson and J.C. Sheers
in collaboration with Alexander Hammid, G.L. Polidoro and V.R. Sarma

Commentary spoken by Laurence Harvey (British version)

Music composed and conducted by Virgil Thomson
and played by members of the New York Philharmonic

POWER AMONG MEN is the first feature-length film to deal with the idea and purposes of the United Nations. It is a film about two forces which co-exist in humankind: power to build; power to destroy.

Man prides himself on being the builder of civilizations. But he cannot deny that he is an equally effective destroyer. Not a new thought, but where does it lead in our time? Will there always be new building, new survival?

In a village near Monte Cassino we begin to see how these awesome powers work in our own time.

Sant'Ambrogio, Italy. In 1946, Sant'Ambrogio starts to build again, to raise itself from almost complete destruction. The will and spirit of the people of the community with some material help from the world outside, make the rebuilding possible.

In 1957, the village has been rebuilt. Only a few ruins still bear witness to past violence. What is it that now concerns the people of Sant'Ambrogio? Their young men, leaving to do their military service.

The episode has no ending. Nor, apparently, has the cycle.

Fermeche, Haiti. Destruction is not always sudden, as it was in war-time Italy. Decay and waste are also forms of destruction. In Haiti, we see a scattering of farmers begin to form themselves into a true community with the quiet and practical help of a U.N. farming expert from Belgium and an agronomist of the Haitian Government. But nothing in real life is unalloyed progress or defeat; and we leave Fermeche knowing of the negative forces which threaten there, as in the world at large.

Kitimat, Canada. We watch men move mountains, channel rivers, carve rich life from a northern wasteland. To a bright, prosperous community in the wilderness come men and women from 31 countries. They arrive with the assurance of good jobs, good living even luxuries, rich reward for moderate effort. This is man at his most felicitous. Surely no destructive force can emerge here. But man, materially prosperous, suddenly sees warning of another kind of destruction, one that can threaten even the most secure undertaking - man's inability to get along with his own kind.

Kjeller, Norway. In his quest for the ultimate in destructive force, man has discovered a supreme tool for constructive advance. We enter the Norwegian atomic research establishment with a local bee-keeper, sharing his awe, distrust, fear. We leave with the words of a Norwegian elder scientist making the final comment on all we have seen: "We must not only prevent a war. We must learn to survive in peace. We have learned to control things pretty well. But we must learn to control ourselves."

Is the creative instinct in Man stronger than the destructive? There is no answer in the film. No magic formula. Just the certainty that unless we learn -- fast -- to control our own will to destroy, we shall surely lose the privilege of a choice between the two kinds of power in men.

- From Power Among Men brochure, in
preparation by the United Nations.

First showing, Museum of Modern Art, New York City, Thursday, March 5, at 8:30 p.m.

Henry August Miller

*Director, Museum of Modern Art
January 1957*

On behalf of the Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art, and of its Film Library, I am happy to welcome you to the first showing of the new United Nations film, POWER AMONG MEN.

In the past thirteen years, the United Nations has produced about 70 short films on the work of its various agencies throughout the world. This, its first feature-length production, is also the first to deal with the broad idea and purposes of the international co-operation in which the future of all of us so heavily depends. The Museum is honored to be given the opportunity to present this new forward step in international film-making to you all.

It is now my pleasure to introduce a renowned educator and humanitarian who has been closely identified with the U.N. since its formative beginnings in 1944, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Under-Secretary of the United Nations.

A few words about POWER AMONG MEN

from the February 1959 UNITED NATIONS REVIEW

TODAY ONLY THE DEAD CAN AFFORD NOT TO CARE. These words by a Norwegian nuclear scientist supply an eloquent summation to a new film which has recently been completed by the Film Services of the United Nations Office of Public Information. The scientist, giving his views on the uses and abuses of nuclear energy, is speaking in the climactic sequence of *Power Among Men*, the first feature-length film to be produced under the auspices of the United Nations.

In a world still searching for lasting peace, the film reflects the triumphs of mankind over adversity, its hopes and its fears for the future. In demonstrating man's inherent capacity to build, destroy and build all over again on the ashes of destruction, *Power Among Men* presents a unique study of human achievement and of threats to achievement in our atomic age. Little by little the film's theme is expounded. First, the viewer is taken to an Italian village where men and women have painstakingly rebuilt their homes and resumed their normal lives after the havoc of Monte Cassino. The scene then shifts to Haiti, showing the achievements of an agricultural cooperative in the gaunt hills flanking Port-au-Prince. Next, the film traces the remarkable growth of an international community serving the vast aluminum plant at Kitimat in the mountains of British Columbia.

Finally, the camera turns back to Europe and surveys the work of an atomic research station in Norway. Here, the nuclear scientist poses the challenging question of our times: will it all be destroyed?

Work on the film began in the summer of 1957 when the United Nations Film Services were asked to produce a major film reflecting the ideals and purposes of the United Nations and its family of specialized agencies. Two film directors of international repute were assigned to the project: Gian-Luigi Polidoro, prize-winner at the Cannes Film Festival of 1956, and Alexander Hammid who, with Gian-Carlo Menotti, co-directed the film version of *The Medium*. Research work and production co-ordination was by V. R. Sarma, prize-winning Indian film director.

Each episode in *Power Among Men* is developed in relation to the main theme. Between each sequence in color is a linking "generalization" in black and white, composed of stock film records of the other side of the story: records of war disaster, of the ravages of nature and of disaster caused by man's fear of his fellow man. Reconstructions in the film are factual; the people on the screen are themselves, not professional actors. Virgil Thomson composed the musical score and conducted it with members of the New York Philharmonic. *Power Among Men* was conceived and written by Thorold Dickinson and J. C. Sheers, of the United Nations Film Services.

Screening time: 90 minutes. Free parking for guests is available at the United Nations garage. Entrance at east end of 48th Street at Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive.

In view of limited seating guests are urgently requested to reply to: PLAZA 4-1234 EXT. 2762

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK

POWER AMONG MEN

A NEW UNITED NATIONS FILM

POWER AMONG MEN. Presented by the United Nations Film Board. Produced by the Film Services of the United Nations Office of Public Information. A film by Thorold Dickinson and J. C. Sheers, in collaboration with Alexander Hammid, J. L. Polidoro, and V. R. Sarma. Music composed and conducted by Virgil Thomson, and played by members of the New York Philharmonic. 90 minutes. Eastmancolor.

This is the first feature-length film to deal with the idea and purposes of the United Nations. In the broadest sense it is concerned with the issues of war and peace, the use and abuse of power, with mankind's triumphs and the grave threats to future achievement. It is a film about human survival, and about the growing-points around the world out of which new life and new hope can arise.

The film is affectionately dedicated to its cast: the villagers of Sant' Ambrogio, Italy; the farmers of Fermathe, Haiti; the townsfolk of Kitimat, Canada, and the scientists at Kjeller, Norway.

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The President and Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art request the honor of your presence at the first showing of the new United Nations film **Power Among Men** introduced by Dr. Ralph Bunche, Under-secretary, United Nations on Thursday evening, March 5, at 8:30 p.m.

Tickets are required for admission and will be issued in order of application.

RSVP 11 West 53 Street. Dress optional