

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTE BOOK
M.P.P.D.A.

Page 276, Quarterly Directors' Meeting of June 29, 1927:

"The Chairman further reported the resolution adopted by the California Association under date of June 8, 1927 relative to the Standardization of Eliminations and the further improvement in production.

"After discussion of the said resolution, upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"WHEREAS, on March 26, 1923 a Resolution was unanimously adopted by the members of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., to intensify their efforts to carry out the purpose of the Association, which Resolution, signed by the members of the Association and others, was as follows:

"The Resolution passed at the Annual Meeting of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. on March 26, 1923, to be signed by the members of this Association and by such others interested in motion pictures as will by so doing signify their willingness to aid in carrying out the purposes of the Association.

"WHEREAS, the undersigned corporations engaged in the production and/or distribution of motion pictures are members of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, incorporated March 11, 1922 under the laws of the State of New York 'to foster the common interest of those engaged in the motion picture industry in the United States by establishing and maintaining the highest possible moral and artistic standards in motion picture production; by developing the educational as well as the entertainment value and the general usefulness of the motion picture;' and

"WHEREAS, the several member companies of this Association have made a sincere and earnest effort to attain to these objectives in the pictures produced during this period, and

"WHEREAS, since last May additional companies have been admitted to membership in this Association and desire thus formally to put themselves on record concerning these objects, and all members desire formally to reaffirm these purposes, and

"WHEREAS, the citizens of twenty-three states, recognizing the efforts which the Association is making in this regard, have defeated, repealed or withheld legislation designed to censor motion pictures by political machinery and have placed the responsibility for the character of pictures squarely upon the industry, and

"WHEREAS, individuals and societies the country over and the national citizen organizations of the Committee on Public Relations have expressed their confidence in the good faith and the ability of the industry to correct at the source such faults as exist, and to accomplish the purposes of the Association, and are cooperating with the industry to this end, and have sent to the Association this day a memorial of appreciation of this Association's efforts and accomplishments, and

"WHEREAS, the future freedom of the industry from both political and unofficial censorship and the success of the Association's efforts and the industry's welfare depend entirely upon the ability of the industry to discharge this responsibility,

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Association and every member of it hereby reaffirms the determination 'to establish and maintain the highest possible moral and artistic standards in motion picture production and to develop the educational as well as the entertainment value and the general usefulness of the motion picture,' and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that every effort be made to induce those companies which are not members of this Association to conform to these standards, and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be signed by the several members of this Association and such other companies, directors, scenario writers and others who will by so doing signify their willingness to aid in this effort, and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this Association be requested to advise those interested of this determination on the part of the Association to merit the faith reposed in it, to thank them for their cooperation, and to request them to continue to cooperate to the end that motion pictures may attain to their greatest usefulness, and

"WHEREAS, on June 19, 1924 the following Resolution was passed by the Board of Directors of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.:

"WHEREAS, the members of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., in their continuing effort 'to establish and maintain the highest possible moral and artistic standards of motion picture production' are engaged in a special effort to prevent the prevalent type of book and play from becoming the prevalent type of picture; to exercise every possible care that only books or plays which are of the right type are used for screen presentation; to avoid the picturization of books or plays which can be produced only after such changes as to leave the producer subject to a charge of deception; to avoid using titles which are indicative of a kind of picture which could not be produced, or by their suggestiveness seek to obtain attendance by deception, a thing equally reprehensible; and to prevent misleading, salacious or dishonest advertising;

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. that said Association does hereby reaffirm its determination to carry out its purposes above set out; and does hereby repledge the best efforts of the members of the Association to that end; and does hereby further declare that they will not produce or promote the production, distribute or promote the distribution, exhibit or promote the exhibition, or aid in any way whatsoever in the production, distribution or exhibition by the members of this Association or by companies subsidiary to said members or by any other person, firm or corporation producing, distributing or exhibiting pictures, of any picture or pictures by whomsoever produced, distributed or exhibited, which because of the unfit character of title, story, exploitation or picture itself, do not meet the requirements of this preamble and resolution or hinder the fulfillment of the purposes of the Association set out herein, and

"WHEREAS on July 21, 1924 the Board of Directors of the Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc. (California) passed a similar Resolution approving the Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. of June 19, 1924, and

"WHEREAS the policy outlined by the foregoing and other similar resolutions by the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. has resulted in the steady improvement in the quality of pictures, both morally and artistically, and

"WHEREAS, further to definitize the purpose of the Association in this regard and to promote the further progress and development of pictures, both from the moral and artistic standpoint, the following resolution was unanimously adopted on June 8, 1927 by the Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc. (California):

"WHEREAS the purposes of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, incorporated March 11, 1922 under the laws of the State of New York, 'to foster the common interest of those engaged in the motion picture industry in the United States by establishing and maintaining the highest possible moral and artistic standards in motion picture production, by developing the educational as well as the entertainment value and the general usefulness of the motion picture,' is the high ideal towards which the members of the Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc. have been consistently striving, and

"WHEREAS the standards of production, including theme, treatment, acting, construction, lighting and photography, have constantly improved, and

"WHEREAS in addition to increasing the entertainment value of pictures, the 'educational and general usefulness' of pictures have been given thought, to the end that they are now serving in the religious, civic, educational, medical and scientific fields, and

"WHEREAS municipal, state and federal officials by refusing to further limit and burden the industry have expressed their approval of its development, and

"WHEREAS the large and powerful civic, educational, social, religious and commercial organizations of the country have expressed their confidence in us and are supporting us in our opposition to unjust attacks, and

"WHEREAS the developing foreign market has not only given us a further outlet for our product but has made of us a diplomatic and commercial agent for our Government and for our own nationals and for every government whose history, literature, nationals, and locale we use in pictures, and

"WHEREAS the confidence placed in us and our responsibility to the public which we serve is realized, and

"WHEREAS the experience of these years of cooperative effort has indicated further responsibilities,

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc., cooperating with the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., exercise even greater care in the production of pictures, and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those things which are included in the following list shall not appear in pictures produced by the members of this Association, irrespective of the manner in which they are treated:

1. Pointed Profanity - by either title or lip. This includes the words: God, Lord, Jesus, Christ (unless they be used reverently in connection with the proper religious ceremonies), Hell, S.O.B., Damn, Gawd, and every other profane and vulgar expression however it may be spelled;
2. Any licentious or suggestive nudity - in fact or in silhouette; and any lecherous or licentious notice thereof by other characters in the picture;
3. The illegal traffic in drugs;
4. Any inference of sex perversion;
5. White slavery;
6. Miscegenation (sex relationships between the white and black races);
7. Sex hygiene and venereal diseases;
8. Scenes of actual child birth - in fact or in silhouette;
9. Children's sex organs;
10. Ridicule of the clergy;
11. Willful offense to any nation, race or creed; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that special care be exercised in the manner in which the following subjects are treated, to the end that vulgarity and suggestiveness may be eliminated and that good taste may be emphasized:

1. The use of the Flag;

2. International Relations (avoid picturizing in an unfavorable light another country's religion, history, institutions, prominent people and citizenry);
3. Religion and religious ceremonies;
4. Arson;
5. The use of firearms;
6. Theft, robbery, safe-cracking and dynamiting of trains, mines, buildings, etc. (Having in mind the effect which a too detailed description of these may have upon the moron);
7. Brutality and possible gruesomeness;
8. Technique of committing murder by whatever method;
9. Methods of smuggling;
10. Third Degree methods;
11. Actual hangings or electrocutions as legal punishments for crime;
12. Sympathy for criminals;
13. Attitude toward public characters and institutions;
14. Sedition;
15. Apparent cruelty to children and animals;
16. Branding of people or animals;
17. The sale of women or of a woman selling her virtue;
18. Rape or attempted rape;
19. First night scenes;
20. Man and woman in bed together;
21. Deliberate seduction of girls;
22. The institution of marriage;
23. Surgical operations;
24. The use of drugs;

25. Titles or scenes having to do with law enforcement or law enforcement officers;
26. Excessive or lustful kissing, particularly when one character or the other is a 'heavy'.

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. do hereby approve and confirm the said Resolution so adopted by the said Association of Motion Picture Producers, Inc. (California) on June 8, 1927, above set out, and do hereby re-pledge the best efforts of the members of this Association to carry out the purposes of said Resolution, and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. do hereby approve and reaffirm the Resolution of this Board passed on June 19, 1924 as hereinabove in the preambles to this Resolution set out, and repledge the best efforts of the members of this Association to carry out all of the purposes set out in said Resolution passed on June 19, 1924."