PHILCO CORPORATION
INVITES YOU TO LISTEN TO
OUR SECRET WEAPON
Hear Rex Stout
Expose AXIS LIES!
WJAS TONIGHT 6:30 P.M.
RECENT ARRIVALS

Re: Axis Propaganda, Variety Shows and Music That Soothes the Anxious Heart

BY JOHN K. HUTCHENS

NOTHING too solemn today. Listening to the new programs that have been coming along recently — with the exception of “An American in England” and “Britain to America,” noted here last Sunday — you get the notion that the creative minds along Radio Row are marking time, waiting for the Autumn or perhaps only for a good idea. Herein, then, the adventures of a soul among a few lesser masterpieces.

And “lesser” would seem to be the word, because even the best of them is not ambitious but, rather, effective in a quiet kind of way; the best of them, in the opinion of this listening post, being the quarter-hour item which occurs on Sundays at 7 P.M. over WABC-Columbia under the title of “Our Secret Weapon.” It is a ponderously melodramatic title, for the weapon is no secret to anyone who is apt to tune in within the boundaries of the continental United States. The weapon is merely the truth, as opposed to Axis propaganda, and your impression as you hear it is akin to the clinical detachment attending any operation.

The surgeon, or fore-destructor, is Alex Roole, the author turned radio performer, and the procedure could scarcely be simpler. In Germanic or Japanese accent a voice repeats, word for word, some preposterous fabrication that has emanated from Berlin or Tokyo, whereupon Mr. Stout picks it to pieces and steps on it. It is almost too easy — like shooting stationary clay pigeons — but it is not less amusing and informative because of that, for Mr. Stout presents excellently the business of an old hand, with irony, aplomb and occasionally a touch of raucous humor, as when he interrupts a Goebbels pronouncement, say, to point out the arrant nonsense in it. The material supplied by the Axis is plentiful and the morale value of its exposure is high, not only as entertainment but in terms of enlightenment. Renowned for its cleverness, Berlin’s propaganda is not so clever after all. More often, as Mr. Stout makes clear, it is exceedingly clumsy.

Radio Canteen

Of variety shows there is no end, for the plausible reason that the public likes them very much, and even if this were not true WABC’s “Stage Door Canteen” would have found a friendly audience waiting for it on Thursday nights; for it celebrates one of the most original and engaging of home front activities, that haven in West Forty-fourth Street where the stage’s great have entertained — and fed — some thousands of service men.

The radio program whose name it bears is considerably less original and, naturally, has no way of feeding the listeners, who have probably had dinner by 9:30 anyway. You are not apt to quarrel violently with a show whose weekly change of bill has found such talent as Harry Wood, Bert Lytell, Helen Hayes, Helen Menken, Burns and Allen, Maurice Evans, Walter O’Keefe, Bill Baker and Ed Wynn taking part; and the beneficiary (the American Theater Wing) represents a noble cause. What you can regret, in a negative way, is the opportunity it misses to achieve some imaginative form, some idea, as striking in its own terms as the original on which it is based. As it stands, it is a fair vaudeville bill, not bad but certainly not very good. It leaves you with the uneasy feeling that it has failed to capitalize on the head-start with which its name provided it.

On the other hand, expecting nothing much of the Garry Moore program “Show Without a Name,” because it had been said about it in advance, you may have been surprised by that five-week show which arrived on WRAF at 8 A.M. last Monday. To a concern previously expressed in this sector — I.e., how anybody can try to be funny before noon, or on off the air — Mr. Moore and company respond with a reasonably sprightly thirty minutes of songs, droll puns and kindred foolishness, eerie or less reminiscent of “Studio X” and the Blue network’s “Breakfast Club.” In fact, Mr. Moore used to preside over the latter in Chicago, and so is accustomed to getting up in the morning. Six mornings a week is an arduous schedule, though, even when you are used to it, and accordingly decision is reserved on this one.

A Little Soft Music, Professor

Obviously, that comes under the heading of escapism, and so do a couple of other recent items which go further with it. To those who find the world too much with them, they present relief by way of hymns and soft music, a formula which automatically precludes a large five-hour public but has its points for others. Over WJZ, Blue, at 4:30 on Sunday afternoons, Edward MacHugh offers spiritual repose in the form of music like “Street and Low” and “Work for the Night Is Coming,” assisted by a quartet and (perhaps their slight surprise) Paul Lavalle’s orchestra, better known for their profusion in such secular matters as “Lower Basin Street.” Spiritual repose? Mr. MacHugh’s ministerial tones are practically hypnotic. Almost certainly his listeners continue in a state of sweet somnolence throughout the rest of the day. But, then, it is Sunday, and probably they have not a great deal else to do anyhow.

As for WABC’s “Mother and Dad,” this department has heard only two sessions, but enough to acquire the general idea. The Columbia Broadcasting System invites you to believe that one of its studios is the parlor of a small town house inhabited by an elderly and amiable couple upon whom the neighbors call five times a week at precisely 5:15 P.M. for song and sage maxims. “We stop a few minutes in the middle of the afternoon and talk about things,” says Parker Penelly (“Dad”) in a rustic accent not equaled since “The Old Homestead” and “Way Down East,” after which mother and dad and the neighbors proceed to “The Bell in the Heather,” etc. The maxims, of which there are half a dozen on each program, are likewise substantial: such as “Business and life are too much fun to have anything dishonest connected with them.” How are you going to get into an argument about that?

"Big kicker" title role player (WABC-Columbia, 11:45 P.M., five-a-week) is Nancy Marshall.

Dean of WOR’s producers, Roger Bower adds another to his list of shows on that station when his latest, “Vaudeville,” opens next Saturday at 9:30 P.M. The title means just what it says.

Without the blackface, here are Amos ‘n’ Andy (Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll), who headline WABC’s “Victory Theatre” at 9 P.M. tomorrow. They don’t often stray from their own programs.
Mystery Story Writer Turns Detective, Finding Axis Lies

Rex Stout, creator of Nero Wolfe, Using Our Secret Weapon—Truth

By TRUTH MCCULLOUGH

New York, N. Y.— is an eighth floor Manhattan office a haphazard, bearded mystery writer sets up a paper cluttered desk.

The particulars that abound his attention are typewritten yellow sheets, and they are headed with a date, a time and stippled "Rome in French," "Tokyo in English." "Germany in..."

The man goes over them with the patient curiosity of a detective looking for clues. He might well be a detective. His manner suggests the mind of the German fiction author, Rex Stout. His gray beard matches Nero Wolfe's author persona. Many people have noted that Stout shows he is an unusually reluctant writer.

It's the detective writer's technique; a man is a mystery story writer; he is a mystery story writer. He is a man.

Exposing Axis Lies

To his desk each day comes the "monitoring" service's yellow sheets of translated Axis broadcasts. From them the mind of Nero Wolfe sets to work in the practice of his "secret weapon"—truth.

"Tokyo—out to the United States—let it to India and southeast Asia. "The Japanese people who have just returned from the United States abroad the exchange stop tell us innumerable cruelty their fellow Japanese and long escorted by the people of America."

"Our weapons are more powerful."

Tokyo's aim is apparent, When the war comes to United States land to march through southeast Asia, our weapons will be the less one move, the more dangerous. Those words of propaganda may name some real American soldiers' lives.

How to Call a Man a Lie" "Life is a Lie" Stout has several methods of rebuttal. "There are various ways," he says, "to call a man a liar. One way is just to accost him, which doesn't prove anything. Another to establish facts by long and patient investigation, still another way is to call him a liar all—let him do it himself."

This last method was effectively employed by Stout when a broadcast from Berlin declared, "There is complete religious freedom in Germany for all who wish to worship God."

"From a speech by Dr. Engel, a high German official, on July 15, 1938, Stout quoted, "God has manifested himself not in Jesus Christ, but in Adolf Hitler."

From another top flight Nazi, Theodore Frisch, Stout took this statement: "The teaching of mercy and love of one's neighbor is foreign to the German race and the Sermons on the Mount in, according to Nordic sentiment, an ethic for cowards and idiots."

From Julius Streicher at Munich on July 22, 1935: "It is only on one or two exceptional points that Christ and Hitler stood comparison, for Hitler is far too big a man to be compared with one so petty and contemptible as Christ."

"Is that enough?" asks Stout, pointing out the quixote came not from crackpots on the fringe of German culture, but from authoritative statements of the German Reich.

Against Christianity

Then, let it not be enough, he finishes a quotation from Hitler, himself, in 1935: "We are not out against the hundred and one kinds of Christianity, but against Christianity itself. You can't make an Aryan of Jesus, that's nonsense."

One is either a German or a Christian. You cannot be both."

Ironically there re-enter in the broadcast the refrain of the same proscribing German voice, "There is complete religious freedom in Germany..."

Stout says, "Tell it to the marines."

Why is respectable against these fantastic claims broadcast to the United States people, rather than to the people of foreign lands? To whom is it originally presumed when enemy broadcasting services picked it up? Surely, they are the ones who ought to be put straight.

"That's short wave's job," says Stout. "The United States people can recognize the Axis statements as lies but it must be brought to their attention that these monstrous lies are being told."

"It must be drawn to their attention so they will know how words are flinging men in this war as effectively as guns and tanks and bullets."

Secondly, he says, the American

"Secret Weapon" was designed to whip up and settle the nation in a greater war effort—in industry in buying war bonds, in every avenue toward victory.
More Football—Rex Storm Sho Retires
—and Other Kilocyte Matters

By Jack Gould

PHIL CARLIN, vice president of the Blue network, came up last week with an idea designed to avoid duplicate broadcasts of the same football game. The shortage of major games in wartime has led most of the net-

works to concentrate on the obvi-

ously outstanding event of Sat-

urday. It is Mr. Carlin's thought that the networks should draw straws on three or four games each week, a procedure which would give the listener more diversified gridiron fare.

The Rex Stout program, "Our Secret Weapon," in its latest addi-

tion will be replaced at 7:35 P. M., Friday, by "Eye Witness." The new program will be a dramatization of

on "Salute to Youth," beginning Oct. 15, over NBC.

The death of former football star and actor John J. Anthony and his advice, the Sun-

day night period from 10 to 10:30 over

different stations will be occupied by Gertrude Lawrence's flashy attack on the kilocytes, beginning Oct. 17.

The revival of the original ap-

pearance with Mias L., it is re-

ported that Robert Remichay will now appear, replacing Walter B. Hamlin.

Something of a record in the way of a drama review was chalked up recently by Edith Colby, who with her husband, Semon, began a new ad-

vertisement for gridiron. "It's a Fire-

bomber," opened tonight at the Na-

tional Theatre. My friends, and I believe you like them, but you folks are lucky enough to have remained at home."

"It is Frank Sarnia that CBS has finally diced to do battle with Charlie McCarthy on Sunday eve-

nings. Beginning today, the sitcom will be heard in "Brooks Bandoxx" from 8 to 8:30 P. M., a period which most program spe-

cialists have carefully skirted be-

cause of the popularity of Edgar Bergen's protégé over NBC... B. Wahlen is to be a new, per-

manent member of the "Broadway Bandoxx" cast.

Speaking before the Radio Execu-

tive Club luncheon last Thursday on free speech and the broadcast-

er's duty to preserve it, James P. Fly, the dean of the FCC, acted as his own censor. Herewith an ex-

cerpt from his talk, the words in brackets being those deleted by Mr. Fly from an advance copy: "L_nonce must become aware that [starting right now] manage-

ment should take stock of itself. Any dodge similar to bygone and inti-

mate clauses employed in a corp-

orate indenture to enable a trustee to duck his responsibility must be wiped out [fast]."

"Take your time, boys."

A nominee for whatever an-

nouncements awards may be made in the future should be Kenneth Brown, who presides at the micro-

phone of the two stations (GNS and ZNS) in Nashville in the Bi-

ttenblatt. The other night he was introducing the complicated and somewhat foolish title of an Ameri-

can swing number and then added this afterthought: "Oh, well, it may not be too bad."

One of the most prolonged "blankouts" of shortwave recep-

tion ended last Monday, at least temporarily. For nearly ten days the European stations were heard only briefly during the daylight hours and after dark even the pow-

erful BBC transmitters were "wiped out."

Department of postponement and change:

"Thanks to the Yanks," with Bob Hope, is now being heard at 10:30 P. M. Saturdays over CBS (WAAB). The return of Gracie Fields has been deferred to Oct. 15 over Mut-

ual (WOR).

The return of Detroit's "American Forum of the Air" shifts this week to a new period: 9:30-10:15 P. M., Tuesdays.

Griff Williams and his orchestra and a chorus next week begin a new program to 9:30 to 10:30 P. M., Sun-

days over Mutual.