

# 'CROSSFIRE' DRAMATIC SMASH INDICTING ANTI-SEMITISM

## Fine Direction of Courageous Subject

"CROSSFIRE"  
(RKO-Radio)

Producer.....Adrian Scott  
Director.....Edward Dmytryk  
Screenplay.....John Paxton  
Adapted from novel by Richard Brooks  
Photography.....J. Roy Hunt  
Art direction.....Albert D'Agostino,  
Al Herman  
Music.....Roy Webb  
Edited by.....Harry Gerstad

Cast: Robert Young, Robert Mitchum,  
Robert Ryan, Gloria Grahame, Paul  
Kelly, Sam Levene, Jacqueline White,  
Steve Brodie, George Cooper, Richard  
Benedict, Richard Powers, William  
Phipps, Lex Barker, Marlo Dwyer.

(Running time—85 minutes)

Signs that motion pictures are coming of age can be determined from courageous stories of the calibre of "Crossfire." First on the market with an anti-Semitism theme, the excellent Adrian Scott production names names in indicting racial bigotry. It is his intolerance of Jews that drives an ex-Army combat sergeant to a senseless murder, and the first clue an audience is given of the motive for the crime comes when the police captain says: "This business of hating Jews comes in a lot of different sizes."

The size of the boxoffice reception to the daring attraction can be spelled "smash." An absorbing crime drama has been made from a novel which caused a great deal of attention under the title of "The Brick Foxhole." The adaptation and writing for the screen are powerful, and the direction by Edward Dmytryk has style and praiseworthy authority. "Crossfire" is a feather in the caps of studio-chief Dore Schary, Scott, Dmytryk and all who had hands in its making.

The plot opens with the shadowy killing of one Joseph Samuels in his apartment. The police learn that he has entertained three unidentified soldiers picked up in a Washington, D. C., bar the previous evening. Two of these three men are contacted, but the third is also a murder victim, before the culprit can be trapped into revealing himself.

Developments of the story follow vigorous lines without becoming hysterical as many mysteries do. A note of bitter irony is injected by the discovery that Samuels is an honorably discharged G. I., when the hatred that led to his killing was inspired by a desire to "get even with the profiteering Jews who got rich in the war that cost better men their lives." Good taste in handling a distasteful subject is always apparent in the fine craftsmanship of Dmytryk's direction.

The performances are uniformly splendid. Robert Young quietly excels as the police captain and puts real warmth into his reading of a long climaxing speech of explanation. Robert Mitchum is great as a sergeant who is tracking down the killer, and Robert Ryan has never been better when he is as the intolerant Jew-hater.

To emphasize the importance of the role of Samuels, able Sam Levene was assigned the brief part.

As a result of her showing as a dance-hall girl, Gloria Grahame's contract with MGM was purchased by RKO. Paul Kelly brings to life the bit of a man in love with her. George Cooper, William Phipps and Jacqueline White, all RKO newcomers, draw worthy characterizations. Steve Brodie, Richard Benedict and Marlo Dwyer also deserve mention.

The photography by J. Roy Hunt is filled with interesting lighting effects. There is a class job of art direction by Albert D'Agostino and Al Herman. The music by Roy Webb is unobtrusively good.

—Jack D. Grant.