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Film Subjects

few, whose names I won't mention, were rather aggressive after one or two glasses of cognac.

It has been said that you wanted Natalie Wood for Band of Angels. That's true, but she wasn't available for the time of the shooting.

Wasn't she a bit young for the part?

Sure. The features and the expressivity of Yvonne de Carlo's face were in the long run better suited for the part.

Did you have difficulties with Mae West?

We spoke the same language. We started out by having a row but when everything had been said, the shooting went smoothly.

Didn't she try to change her scripts?
Fairly often, but the studio kept her in check.

You have done some remarkable work with Ida Lupino.

I was very happy working with her. She is a very intelligent girl and she can get into the widest range of emotions. She has all the ingredients of a great comedienne. I also love Jane Russell: she is a very healthy girl with a lot of heart.

One is reminded of her when reading your book: the character of Barbara for instance.

She would be too rugged for that character; I see her more as a blonde. Barbara is a person who appears soft and sweet, but inside she is as hard as nails. She's a real bitch. In fact, she's typical of that milieu of nouveau rich I used to frequent when I was a young man. I knew those people well. They had started from nothing and all of a sudden they were snubbing you. The whole middle section of the book is a bit of a satire on that world as well as an attack on politicians. I hate politicians.

In Silver River as well as in They Died with their Boots on, there's a very penetrating analysis of the political background. Towards the end of Battle Cry, James Whitmore expresses a fairly strong dislike of politics and the end of A Distant Trumpet is of course a very severe criticism of the Indian policy