

The Role of the USO

"I ran across Bob Hope and his crew. In fact for a couple of days he did the highlights and shadows of one bombed Sicilian city in such hilarious conjunction that it looked as though I were becoming a member of the troupe. There were certain dissenters to the policy of sending American entertainers overseas to help brighten the lives of our soldiers. Now and then I heard some officer say, "After all, we're over here to fight, not to be entertained. Don't they know there's a war on?" But it was my experience that the most confirmed users of such phrases were usually a good many miles behind the lines. I was all for giving the troops a little touch of America through those movie stars, and I can testify that the boys enjoyed and appreciated it."

Ernie Pyle, *Brave Men*, 1943

Should the United States government have sent famous entertainers overseas to perform for soldiers?

After reading about Bob Hope's narrow escape, was raising morale enough justification to send performers near the front line?