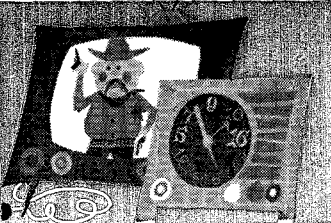


Audio/Video



Some Black Thoughts About Color TV

By ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON

SINCE RCA's color television takeover of the United States is virtually an accomplished fact, the open question is: will it take over the world? The answer will be given by Study Group XI of the International Radio Consultative Committee (CCIR), which, as this is written, is about to meet in Vienna. The group, comprising television technical experts from thirty European nations, will try to work out an agreement on common color-television standards for Western Europe, Britain, and the USSR. Britain and many of the nations will be urging the adoption of the standards of the National Television System Committee (NTSC), developed largely by RCA and used in the United States, Canada, and Japan. France, and presumably Russia and the Soviet bloc, will seek to persuade the conference to adopt the SECAM system (Séquentiel à Mémoire) developed by Compagnie Française de Télévision. PAL (Phase Alternation by Line), a West German Telefunken system, is a third choice, but the real contest is between the American and the French color signal specifications. President Charles de Gaulle, as stubborn and persistent a combatant in a conflict of wills as RCA's own commander, General David Sarnoff, will enjoy a surprise advantage as the conference begins. Six days before the study group was to assemble, France and the Soviet Union announced in Paris that they had signed an agreement to push for the French system as the common European standard. (But the very day of the Paris announcement, nine Soviet television specialists were in New York as guests of RCA studying the NTSC system, and presumably leaning heavily in favor of its adoption in Europe.) The French-Russian color television accord must have been in preparation for some time: the timing of the announcement suggests political considerations that have nothing to do with the technical qualifications of the competing color standards.

An RCA lecture team and mobile unit demonstrated the NTSC color standards in past months in Moscow and nine other cities in eight European countries. General Sarnoff's technicians assert that the

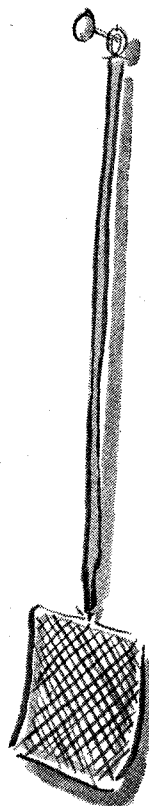
American system was clearly proved superior to the French in comparative tests. SECAM is costly, complex, and neither ready nor practical, according to RCA (Japanese experts seem to agree). Britain is said to be ready to go it alone with the American system if Study Group XI fails to adopt it. The Vienna conference may reach no agreement. Russia is reported to be eager to have color television in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, but no one can tell whether the Soviet Union's current trade rapprochement with de Gaulle will outweigh its desire for the best color television system. Another possibility is that some of the smaller European nations may resent the intrusion of international politics into their color television problem and strengthen their support for the RCA system. It's a crossroad situation: if the nations split, there may be no turning back from disparate systems, with the result that it will not be practical for nations on the continent—as close to each other as our states are here

—to interchange their color television programs.

General Sarnoff may find comfort in one thing: Even if France does cling to the French system, NBC can still send color television crews to Paris to film Gallic art treasures—as Sarnoff's men did so acceptably when they produced the hour-long documentary on *The Louvre*.

This color television special, and others like it in the last twelve months (presented mostly by NBC), helped to push RCA color over the top in the United States. Suddenly people were talking color everywhere. Magazines and newspapers were printing articles on television's "new dimension." "Momentum" and "breakthrough" were words widely used. "Tinting up" has become a key phrase, "color is busting out" another. Like early crocuses under snow, color TV's potential has been there for some time. General Sarnoff said many years ago that he, and he alone, would bring color television to the American people (as he said he, and he alone, did with black and white TV). The general is right, apparently, for the second time. As with the launching of the monochrome system, he received little help from other sectors of the television industry until his sale-of-sets steamroller was in second gear. Since 1954, when RCA began turning out its first color TV sets for sale, the going has been rough and slow. The trade calls it "the chicken and egg problem." To sell sets you must have programs, and to have programs you must have sets in circulation. Consumers waited for the high price of color television receivers to come down; they waited for the RCA engineers to get the bugs out of intricate circuits.

Then, quite dramatically for volume-calculators, color TV turned its corner. A few figures suggest the leap. In 1963 there was no reliable count of color TV sets in use, but the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 747,000 color sets had been sold that year, and the national total in use was estimated at fewer than 1,000,000. In 1964, the first year the industry kept official figures, 1,367,000 sets were sold, for a total retail volume of \$785,000,000. NBC estimated that at the end of 1964 there were 2,860,000 sets in use. RCA predicts that in 1965 2,200,000 color TV sets will be sold, at a dollar retail value of \$1.2 billion (average retail price: \$525). Compare this figure with total black-and-white sets expected to be sold and you get a clearer idea of color TV's velocity. RCA expects the sale of 7,250,000 black-and-white sets during 1965, for a total retail value of \$1.1 billion (average price: \$150). Thus, this year for the first time, the American consumer will spend more money for color TV sets than for black-and-white. One out of every four sets



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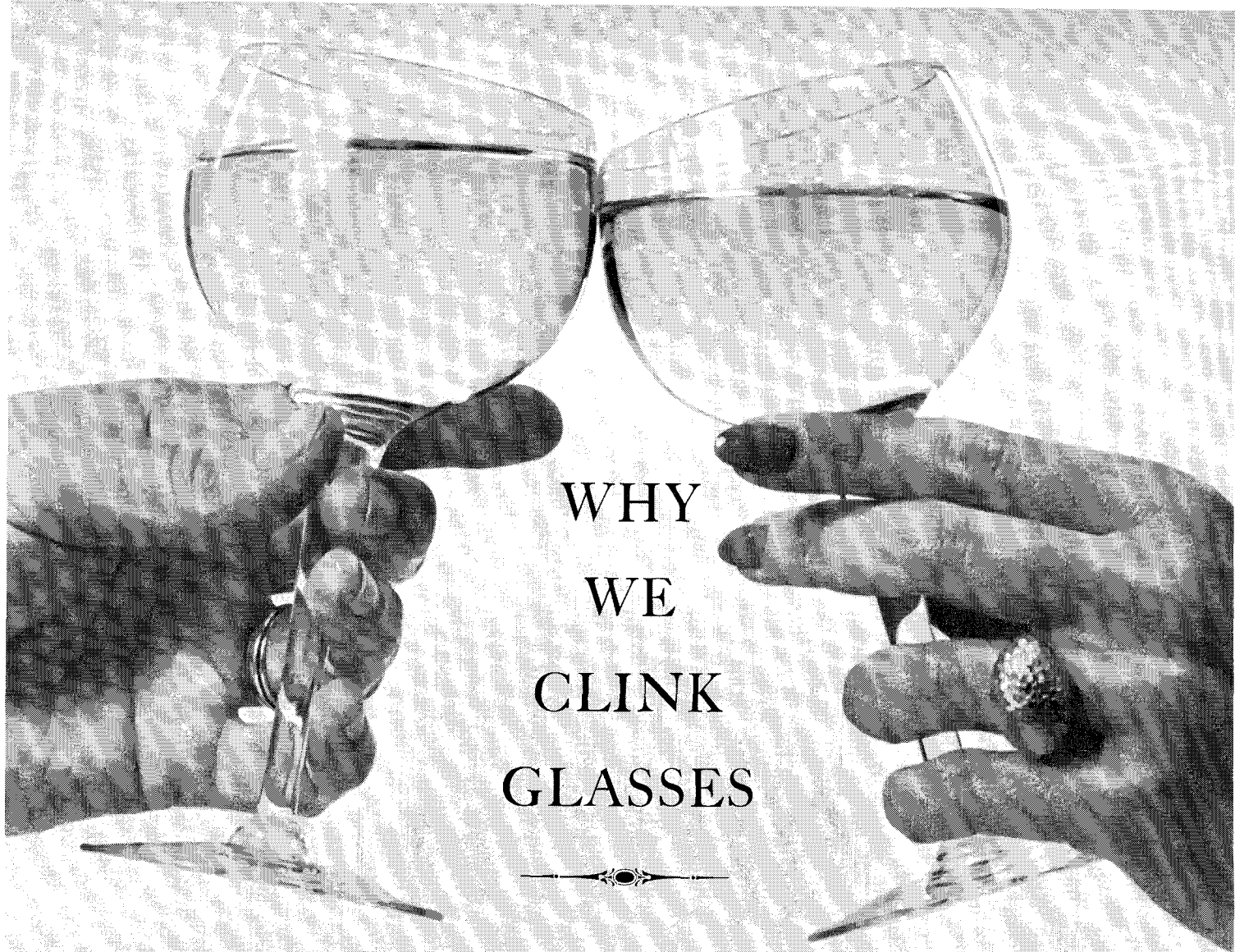


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Now, as to why people clink glasses before they drink wine. We have recently learned that it was the Greeks who started it, which came as somewhat of a surprise since we had never thought of there even *being* glasses that long ago. Perhaps it was goblets?

In any event, they started the custom for an appealing, attractive, and symmetrical reason: so that the

drinking of wine would satisfy *all* the senses.

The flavor of wine satisfies the taste, the bouquet of wine pleases the nose, the limpid color of wine entrances the eye, and the feel of wine on the tongue fulfills the touch. Only the ear is left unappeased.

And that is why we clink glasses; to make a glad sound.*

Isn't that a nice piece of information? If you'd like some others (such as further details on the thirteen wines we allude to at the left)

we'll be happy to send you edifying information along with the actual labels from each of the thirteen so you'll know what to look for next time you go to the wine store or your favorite restaurant.



*The more perceptive will note that the glasses above are too full for either good wine tasting or good clinking; two-thirds is optimum. About his wedding ring, honi soit qui mal y pense. Please write: PAUL MASSON VINEYARDS, DEPT. C, SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA (and please visit—it's an hour south of San Francisco) © 1964

bought in 1965 will be a color receiver.

A major factor in this sales phenomenon, of course, is the saturation of the market with black-and-white sets. Two and even three monochrome receivers clutter many homes. One reason is that profits on color sales were, for a long time, low for retailers, and prospective color customer would be persuaded to buy two cheaper black-and-white sets. Color maintenance, too, was a headache that dealers wished to avoid. Then other tube manufacturers entered the market—Zenith, Admiral, Philco, and Sylvania. Prices became competitive; smaller sets, without decorative cabinets, could be purchased at \$300 or \$400. RCA is currently saying that color prices can never be as low as black-and-white. One network executive I talked with said this was not true. RCA, he asserted, is naturally interested in recovering its massive research and development costs before it breaks the price barrier.

ENGINEERING improvements in color TV have also contributed to consumer acceptance. Swivel and roll-around models are being marketed, where formerly sets could not be moved without causing magnetic disturbances that upset the delicate balance among the basic red, green, and blue components, thus deteriorating the colors. Following such a set breakdown, a television repairman would come to a home and wave a magnet in front of the tube, demagnetizing it. Now RCA sets include an Automatic Color Purifier that demagnetizes the picture tube each time the set is turned on. Buyers are placing orders for a new 25-inch rectangular tube that allows for smaller cabinets. The present 21-inch round shadow-mask tube, the industry standard for ten years, bulks its tail between cabinet and wall. Smaller tubes, 23-inch and 19-inch, will soon be coming off assembly lines. Improvements at the transmitting end also promise to make color TV more satisfactory. Set owners have found black-and-white programs fuzzy when received on color equipment. To overcome this, RCA has demonstrated a new TK-42 live color camera, which adds a monochrome channel to the red, green, and blue channels found in conventional cameras. Designers anticipate that it will provide a crisper black-and-white picture while improving color detail "in the same way that the black plate enriches the three-color image in color process printing."

Last November the American Research Bureau conducted a color study that reflected color TV's acceleration. Surveying a national sample of 4,546 color TV homes, the ARB found the obvious—namely, that people who have color TV sets prefer watching color programs to black-and-white shows.

NBC, which broadcasts more color than the other networks, enjoyed an 80 per cent audience increase in color TV homes over a matched sample of black-and-white homes. The novelty factor was present, as might be expected. People who had their sets a longer time watched color TV slightly less than the newcomers, but the meaning of the spectrum on the tube was clear for all to read. Color was America's new television kick. The all-important Nielsen figures last November had not reflected the precise percentage of color TV homes in the sample mix; if it had done so, NBC would have added .2 of a point to its 19.4 (which tied with CBS), giving it a small but definite lead. Taking the bit in its teeth, NBC announced that 96 per cent of its next year's television schedule would be in color. ABC, which had been toying with color for three years, promptly followed with the announcement that color would add up to 25 per cent of its schedule next season. CBS announced a figure for next year of 15 per cent color (Danny Kaye, Red Skelton, and the network's Thursday color movies), although the figure may be higher before the new season actually begins.

NBC is trumpeting color loud and clear. ABC and CBS grudgingly admit that color's dominance is inevitable, but point out that it's a long way from the 8,000,000 color TV homes expected by 1968 to the 55,000,000 black-and-white. The fact is that NBC has found a distinct competitive advantage in color, and the other networks will strive to close the gap as fast as they are able. What, of course, makes the job difficult is cost. Color TV programs and transmission are more expensive than mono-

chrome; and RCA-NBC, now interested primarily in set penetration, is absorbing all extra costs instead of passing them on to advertisers. The other networks, on the other hand, are passing their costs along. All rate cards will go higher, it is expected, when color sets saturate the market as black-and-white now does. Advertisers generally seem willing to pay the higher color tariff, expecting to offset it by greater volume of sales.

THE magic key to the sales bonanza is "impact." Everyone is bullish about the power of color in commercials. Certain sponsors (autos, foods, fabrics) are almost ecstatic about color's powers of persuasion. All are worried lest their black-and-white commercials suffer by contrast with color ads that precede and follow. Though color commercials cost 25 per cent more than black-and-white messages, color is undoubtedly the sponsor's wave of the future. Program packagers perforce must also switch to color, thinking, as they must, of the residual rights they hope to be earning five and ten years from now when black-and-white programs may confront an impassable color bar on television. Even local stations are tooling up for color, particularly for sports events—some even for news broadcasts. There is vague talk of color enriching the esthetic consciousness of the nation, affecting our decor and design, but similar things were said when black-and-white television first made its bow. A look at the substance of next season's schedules offers no glint of any non-technological breakthrough. The world may look pleasanter on color television, but from all indications it will hardly be more significant.



"Elephants? In the Alps mountains? Marius, you've been at the wine stores again!"

Iron Curtain

Continued from page 77

ern radio stations, though there are restrictions on disseminating anti-regime information.) And RFE is fond of quoting from its listener mail as evidence of its broadcasts' importance to East Europeans. A Polish listener said, for example: "RFE's influence in Poland is great; even those who do not listen hear about its programs from others. If I am unable to listen on a certain day, I learn about the latest news and commentaries at the office. Wherever people meet, you can hear them discussing what you said." And a Bulgarian listener commented: "Your news from all over the West is for us like a sun which breathes warmth into our dreary lives."

The invariable nucleus of RFE programming is its ten-minute hourly newscast, which is likely to concentrate heavily on internal Eastern European affairs. An effort is made to keep newscasts objective; political commentary is reserved for the period, brief or extended as the occasion requires, following the news. Other programs, many of them totally nonpolitical, bring listeners information about such subjects as medicine and farming, and there is a steady em-

phasis on developments in the West, on religion, and on music (including that of the Beatles).

Some 85 per cent of programming is prepared at RFE's Munich headquarters, the rest in New York. Currently being put together in New York is a series of long interviews with leading Americans that will be translated, taped, and shipped to Europe for broadcast. (John Steinbeck and former President Truman were among the first to agree to participate.) Some disc jockey programs are also taped in this country, but all news broadcasts are written on the spot in Europe.

RFE attributes much of its apparent success to the presence on its staff of some 400 exiles from Eastern Europe. While it does not, as a matter of policy, urge escapes or defections, it attracts many refugee job-seekers, and some of them prove to be valuable acquisitions. Not only are East Europeans the only people who, because of language, can actually make broadcasts, but they often bring with them important information about attitudes behind the Iron Curtain. For its programming to Czechoslovakia, for example, where efforts are currently being made to appeal to more young intellectuals, RFE recently hired two Czech defectors in their middle twenties. "We're trying to get more young people into the operation, and these two fitted right in with our plans," says Kastner.

But whatever its successes, RFE is not entirely free of problems, and it has on more than one occasion found itself smarting from criticism. One problem, readily admitted by top RFE officials, is that the Communist radio stations within its target countries are themselves becoming more skilled at attracting listeners. "The competition has increased in recent years as the Communist radio has grown more sophisticated," one RFE executive said the other day. "And the interesting thing is that it has often done so by imitating Radio Free Europe." Television has also made some modest beginnings in Eastern Europe, but RFE says there is still no evidence that it has lured away any significant number of listeners.

Another problem, and one that seems to defy any permanent solution, is that of staying aware of the real mood inside Eastern Europe. Although the task has become somewhat easier as a result of the increasing travel of recent years, RFE staff members are endlessly nagged by the fact that what was true of a country yesterday may be totally changed today. "It's a continual imperfection in our type of operation," one official said recently. And a former East European specialist for RFE put it even more strongly: "The new generation couldn't care less what some of these guys are saying. Some of the RFE people haven't



been in their countries in over twenty years; they can't even speak the language the way it's spoken now." He told of one Pole who had been in the United States since 1945 and admitted that he had spoken English for so long that his Polish had become rusty. "But he was still broadcasting," said the former RFE staffer. "In many ways it's a very haphazard operation."

But perhaps the most serious criticism of RFE came in 1956 at the time of the Hungarian uprising, when the belief was widely held that the radio station had encouraged the revolution by letting the Freedom Fighters think they could count on Western support. Investigation later showed no specific evidence to support the belief, but by that time the allegation had long since done its damage.

And there have also been persistent murmurings, most recently in the book *The Invisible Government*, by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross, about a possible link between RFE and the Central Intelligence Agency. RFE denies, of course, that any such link exists.

Despite criticism, however, there is no doubt that RFE can point to some solid accomplishments. In Berlin, when Communists tried to persuade East Europeans that the people of East Berlin welcomed the Berlin Wall, RFE was quick to label it a symbol of Communist failure. In Moscow, when Nikita Khrushchev made his celebrated denunciation of Stalin at the Twentieth Party Congress, RFE repeated the speech—which had been intended for only a handful of the party élite—day after day, broadcasting with such power that anyone with so much as a crude crystal set could hear it. And in Bulgaria, when African students demonstrated against the Communist regime in 1963, RFE quickly went on the air with the news—despite strenuous efforts to suppress it.

As one Czech said, "I listen to Radio Free Europe because I want to be truthfully informed, but mainly because I want to feel encouraged. It is only because of RFE that people in my country still maintain some hope and do not despair." And another East European said simply: "Radio Free Europe is for me a voice of the free world, and I want to be free."

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Public Dialogue

Continued from page 74

its current campaign that attracted the favorable attention of *SR*'s judges was devoted to an exposure of deceptive pricing terminology and practices. The consumer was served and confidence in Sears was enhanced, a case history for wise public-interest advertising.

Again, International Business Machines, in its prize-winning corporate campaign, has told a series of stories about social betterment and scientific advance through the use of the company's celebrated computers. A recent ad reported how a new computer-controlled machine, created by IBM, cut the time for translating books into Braille from a task of months for individual experts to a matter of a few days. As a result, the severely limited supply of books heretofore available for the blind has been enormously and economically expanded. The established technical and corporate leadership of IBM in the increasingly competitive field of computers was also reinforced by an image of enlightened use of science in the aid of man, by the humanizing of an impersonal technology, and by a sense of imaginative, resourceful management.

WITH the federal drug investigation closed, a number of leaders in the pharmaceutical industry decided to tell through advertising the positive story of their industry. The result has been a campaign to present the skills, techniques, and resources that the drug companies bring to bear in manufacturing vaccines and all sorts of modern drugs to protect the public's health and reduce the cost of illness. One of these ads cited by *SR* discussed how the mass manufacture of vaccines offers hope that the creative research of doctors Enders, Salk, and Sabin may eventually eliminate polio entirely because the vaccines have now been made available at low cost to millions of people here and abroad. It is now up to all members of the drug industry to make this compassionate image a complete reality through fulfillment of their tremendous responsibility to the public's health and purse. The moral as well as the message is clear.

All the winning campaigns deserve careful consideration by thoughtful readers, for the public should participate in this dialogue, in order to better understand the extraordinary diversity of resources and dedicated individuals that the best of business leadership brings to the service of our common public interest. Both the critics and champions of advertising and business are quick to cry havoc. Perhaps a quickened sense of responsible judgment, based on facts rather than prejudice,

would be valuable on both sides of this recurrent debate.

Philosopher Alfred North Whitehead once said that "a great society is a society in which its men of business think greatly of their functions." President Johnson has committed himself to the Great Society in which public officials will have to think greatly of their functions. Neither society can truly be achieved, however, unless the public, along with our leaders of government and business, is prepared to think greatly about our unique economy.

Many of the award-winning campaigns represent a public dialogue

through which private enterprise responsibly seeks to communicate a commitment to the good society. An enlightened public, responsive to the message, can reward the private interest of those who serve the public interest, even as the public can also punish disservice. Public-interest advertising at its best can stimulate a useful discourse between these private corporate voices and the American public on behalf of fulfilling the ultimate promise of what Vice President Humphrey called the "most humane system in the world . . . [with] the greatest sense of justice of any economic system."



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Chinese Village

Continued from page 26

each other. That winter I opened a winter school. We helped the women to make shoes and clothes and to improve their agricultural tools. We gave them lessons in feeding poultry and in spinning. We had discussions after the lessons.

The first time we women took part as a group in an open discussion at the party meetings Li Ying-teh, who is an old man, said, "We should not listen to women when it is a question of serious business." But my brother, Li Hai-tsai, replied to this, "Why shouldn't we listen to the women? Every other Chinese is a woman. They have a lot of sense."

We won. Gradually the others were voted down and persuaded and got to agree. I was elected a member of the committee of the East Shines Red Higher Agricultural Cooperative. Besides this, I had three children. We wanted to have three children.

I joined the party in 1955. In the winter of 1959-60 I sent a proposal in to the committee of the party association for setting up a special women's committee. My proposal got a majority of votes and went through. Ma Ping and I were elected Liu Ying's representatives in the group.

The party group for women's work has five tasks: 1) To organize women to take an active part in production; 2) to spread literacy among women and get them to study and take an interest in social questions; 3) to help them do their domestic work effectively and economically, to help them when any economic problem arises in their family; 4) to teach them personal and public hygiene; 5) to give help and advice on marriage. We go to see the women who are pregnant and talk with them about what to do in their pregnancy. We tell the women to let themselves be examined regularly and follow the doctor's advice. We instruct them in birth control.

In certain families with lots of children, the women would like birth control, but not their husbands. In those families the husbands say, "There's not going to be any family planning here!" Then we women go to them and try to talk sense into them. We say, "Look how many children you have. Your wife looks after the household and sees to all the children and she makes shoes and clothes for both you and the children, but you don't think of all she has to do or of her health, but just make her with child again and again. Wait now for three or four years. Then you can have more if you want." No husband has yet managed to stand out for any length of time.

Since 1958 we have also established

a children's day nursery and a collective dining hall. These are used in the busiest of the harvest season, when it is important that as many as possible work, and so the women have to be relieved of their domestic work for a time. The women who are pregnant and the old ones with small, crippled feet do the work in the day nursery and the collective dining hall. All the others are out in the fields. It works very well. In that way the women earn money. Neither the day nursery nor the collective dining hall is free. But the labor brigade contributes a certain share of the cost. This, too, was discussed and decided at a meeting of the representatives. Every child who spends a month in the day nursery entails a cost of thirty work points, that is to say three days' work. Of this the child's family pays fifteen work points and the labor brigade fifteen. The collective dining hall serves three meals a day. For these, those who eat there pay seven or eight work points a month and the labor brigade pays three.

That's how we women work in Liu Ling Labor Brigade. We are making progress all the time. Every year the labor brigade chooses a few merit workers. They are given various prizes as a token of appreciation. I have had a pair of socks, a fountain pen, a hoe, some notebooks, and some diplomas. In 1960 the women elected me their delegate to a conference of merit workers that was being held down in Sian. They did that because I had taught them to read and write. I was very touched by it.

LI SHANG-WA, AGE 16: Actually, I would have liked to go on studying, but as my mother is dead I had to start working in the household instead. We have a pig and two goats; I look after those. But we have no hens or chickens. I like cooking and I look after my small brothers and sisters. Although, really, I would have liked to go to Yen'an Middle School. Just now I'm laying down turnips and lotus for the winter.

I haven't joined the League of Youth, and I'm too old for the pioneers now that I've left school. I like singing and usually sing to myself all the songs that my teacher, Kou, taught me. I go into Yen'an to shop and to go to the cinema once a week. I like adventure films best and war films and films about heroes. I like reading and I read different children's books. Both where films and books are concerned, I prefer those books and films that improve my morale and enhance my quality.

I don't like opera. I don't understand about the operas. Everything in operas is all so peculiar. I like the song-and-dance shows. I often go to the school in order to be able to sing with my schoolmates.

The New Fall River Line—*Cellini*

THE SAGA of Lizzie Borden, celebrated in song, story, and ballet, reached its predestined place on the operatic stage with the production by the New York City Opera of Jack Beeson's treatment, which properly bears the name of its celebrated protagonist as title. For all the efforts of such predecessors as Edmund Pearson, Alexander Woolcott, and Edward D. Radin, who verbalized it, and Morton Gould and Agnes de Mille, who activated it as a ballet, only the suspension of credibility that goes into opera enables the enterprise of Miss Borden to be placed in a proper perspective.

According to the old, historic Fall River view, there was reasonable doubt of her guilt, and Miss Borden was acquitted. According to the new Fall River line advanced by librettist Kenward Elmslie (working with a scenario by Richard Plaut), there is no doubt that Miss Borden delivered each of the forty whacks required to dispose of her stepmother, and then made it forty and one for her father. They do not presume to say how she could have been acquitted, but they do presume to provide her with a series of motivations. These range from hatred of her stepmother (Abigail) and veneration of her dead mother (Evangeline) to a more than daughterly attachment to her father, Andrew. To serve the needs of their plot, they have inverted Lizzie's relationship to her sister Margaret, making her an older spinster type disturbed by her younger sister's imminent marriage.

In so doing, they have perhaps strained the liberty that goes with poetic license. It is permissible to edge the circumstances toward a contemporary parallel with *Electra* (allowing for a change of sex in the surviving parent). And the Freudian undercurrent may be termed acceptable if not inevitable. The question is, however, whether the alignment of characters that produces three of each sex in the principal parts serves dramatic truth as much as it does theatrical convenience. Neat and tidy as it is, the formulation by which the Brenda Lewis-type Lizzie (played, surprisingly, by Brenda Lewis) is pitted against the flighty former housemaid Abigail (saucily performed by Ellen Faull), with a romantic young sister (Anne Elgar), a testy father (Herbert Beattie), and a properly attractive sea captain (Richard Fredericks) to balance, tends to beg the dramatic question rather than answer it.

Thus scaled down, the issue of this

treatment is not so much "Who is Lizzie, what is she?" as how far Beeson has progressed since his treatment of William Saroyan's *Hello Out There* introduced him to prominence through a Columbia University Workshop production in 1953. His treatment of the libretto is far more secure in workmanship, much better balanced in its interweaving of vocal and instrumental values. As suits an explosive story with a predestined blood bath, he sometimes writes explosively for the orchestra. However, if the text cannot always be understood, it is more the fault of the performers than the lines they are given to sing.

Also impressive in Beeson's compact score (two and a half hours, with intermissions) are the ease and naturalness with which he balances ensembles with solos, and leads an aria into a trio and quartet. There is a rising line of interest from a neutral beginning to the second-act curtain on an extended monologue, in which Lizzie's intentions crystalize, to the second scene of Act III, in which the ax (scimitar) falls. If the ending episode is anticlimactic, it serves to share the secret that Lizzie does come back to her house and live on. It also enables Beeson to weave the sound of children chanting the refrain of "Lizzie Borden took an ax" into the final curtain fall.

Intermittently it is evident that Beeson's true gift—as exemplified by a duet of Lizzie and Margaret, an attractive take-off of a French chanson sung by Abigail, and the exchanges of the younger sister and the sea captain she marries against the objections of her father—is more for the lyric quality of *Hello Out There* than for the macabre demands of Lizzie Borden's ax and whacks. In dealing with the former, he is securely on his own; when he needs the thrust for the latter, he inclines to procedures derived from Berg's *Wozzeck* and Britten's *Turn of the Screw*. If he could combine the workmanship of this score (in which the orchestra is often imaginatively employed) with a subject that would relate more closely to his own strong feeling for melodic line, something distinguished might emerge.

As noted, Miss Lewis has a role of the sort she virtually invented at the City Center in Blitzstein's *Regina* and does it with all the pride of proprietorship. The allusion to that work comes almost inevitably because she was associated then (as Birdie) with the same Miss Faull, who has a singular facility for

making an implausible character almost believable. Miss Elgar has the sweetness of sound to support the character attributed to her by the libretto, and Fredericks was well chosen to impersonate her suitor, Captain Jason MacFarlane. Beattie didn't get out all the lines as well as the women did, but he contrived to give the uncertain character of Andrew Borden a recognizable profile. Richard Krause suited well the requirements for Reverend Harrington.

Short of writing a work that would probe deeper into Lizzie Borden's character, director Julius Rudel did everything possible to make this one meaningful. In adding to the able cast the talents of Anton Coppola, who made his City Center debut as conductor, Nikos Psacharopoulos, who staged it persuasively, and Peter Wexler, who provided an atmospheric setting (the costumes were by Patton Campbell), Rudel showed an aptitude for assembling an effective producing group whether he was a performing part of it or not.

THE most astonishing thing about the concert performance of Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* in Philharmonic Hall under the direction of Thomas Scherman was the contention that this was its American premiere. It seems hardly possible that, in a dozen decades, no prior group has presented, with or without staging, a reputable work of so celebrated a master as Berlioz. But there it was, and so it is recorded.

However, one is more inclined to question the curiosity than the judgment of those who have left this stone unturned. The best music in the score turns out to be those parts with which music lovers are already familiar—the swaggering overture that bears the name of the hero, and the concert piece familiar as *Carnival romain*, of which a vocal-ensemble version appears late in Act II. These are brilliant examples of Berlioz's unfettered imagination, and they are good to hear at any time.

As for the vocal solos and ensembles that carry the tale of Cellini on the verge of completing his Perseus against the competition of a love affair, an order of the Pope, a carnival, and sundry subsidiary plots, they tend too often to be true to the measure of Berlioz as a composer who almost always wrote instrumentally, whether for French horn or French tenor. There are a number of exceptions, of course, in *La Damnation*, in *Nuits d'Été*, and especially in *Roméo*, but *Benvenuto Cellini* is full of inventions that would sound better from a clarinet than from a soprano. Young Mary Munroe demonstrated an uncommon capacity for articulation in getting around the first-act scene for Teresa, as

(Continued on page 93)