



Debate by Satellite

EARLY BIRD, the communications satellite, recently made possible CBS Reports—*Town Meeting of the World*, which presented President Dwight D. Eisenhower, United States Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg, and U.S. Solicitor General Thurgood Marshall in a sort of transatlantic teach-in with students from universities in Yugoslavia, England, France, and Mexico. The American leaders answered questions about the fighting in Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, anti-war demonstrations in the United States, co-existence, Communist imperialism, socialism, and civil rights. The elder statesman and the two lawyers, had they been confronted by students from Harvard, Southern Methodist University, Stanford, and Iowa State University, might have had challenges as intelligent as those that were offered, but undoubtedly the tone would have been muted, the follow-ups less intense. In the bosom of the national family, inhibited by respect for outstanding public figures, our university students would have probably “behaved themselves” and the program would, I suspect, have been considerably less exciting.

Early Bird bound the participants in an audiovisual togetherness, but the class lines, the psychic distances that separated the leaders from the students, were preserved—and the result was a lively hour of debate that sparkled with the refreshing candor of the foreign students. Not all of them, however. Least challenging, oddly enough, were the students of Yugoslavia's Belgrade University. Perhaps they were too close to the tight control of their government. In any case, theirs were propaganda speechlets and mild, rhetorical questions that provided our representatives with excellent opportunities for official platitudes. Slightly sharper, and engagingly Latin American in their fervor, were the questioners from the University of Mexico. How was it, they wanted to know, that we had roundly repudiated Barry Goldwater but now were following the policies the Republican candidate had proposed in his campaign for President? Was U.S. prosperity supported by the war boom? Would we oppose self-determination by a socialist government? Why had the U.S. intervened in Latin American affairs 132 times?

Students from the London School of Economics and the Institute of Political Studies of the University of Paris drew

the brightest sparks of the hour with their questions hammering away at American intervention to contain Communism in Latin America and Asia. Would we intervene “every time there is a revolution in which Communists might . . . play a part?” Did Ambassador Goldberg approve of the recent House of Representatives resolution urging the use of force to prevent Communist take-overs in Latin America? Why did we prevent in the past, and why are we now preventing, free elections in Vietnam? At one point, a woman student in Paris declared herself unsatisfied by an answer of Ambassador Goldberg. She added two more questions, and then, when he had addressed himself to all her challenges, she declared that he had evaded her point. An intense young man in London asked: “Will you have Vietcong at negotiations? *Will you? Will you?*” And when the Ambassador countered, “Do you know where the Vietcong is controlled from?” the student shot back: “This is not the point.” The students and the American spokesmen got entangled again and again in argumentative sallies. Charles Collingwood, the CBS moderator, did his best to direct the traffic fairly, but the thrust and counterthrust

were often unmanageable. The elders felt the force of the unconventional challenges from the youths; they fielded them with patience and good humor. But there was no doubt about it—they were engaged, and the edges of *ad hominem* rebuke showed occasionally.

This was debate of an unusual kind. Professional politicians were not clashing with opposite numbers of their fraternity under the normal rules of the power game. Some newspaper columnists who reviewed *Town Meeting of the World* expressed shock at the “rude manners” of the students. But they were not rude; they had strong convictions. Don Hewitt, CBS executive producer for the program, had told them, through the CBS correspondents in their respective cities, to be “tough.” They had been chosen by university officials and the correspondents as representative (extremists of the right and left had not been included). The questions were not known in advance, Mr. Hewitt explained. The purpose of the program was to give American leaders an opportunity to answer questions often asked by foreign students about our policies. It is impossible, in sixty minutes of international catch-as-catch can via Early Bird, really to illuminate ideological controversy, but a program like this can give viewers a sobering glimpse into our image abroad. The terms are uniquely television; you could get this experience nowhere else, and it was eminently worth having.

—ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON.

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich and David M. Glixon

ANYBODY HOME?

Not all of the following have been “stately homes of England,” but they were for periods of time the residences of British writers. Raymond Butman of Torrance, California, asks you to domicile each of them correctly. The missing persons bureau is on page 78.

Abbotsford ()

Casa Magni ()

Dove Cottage ()

Gadshill Place ()

Kelmscott Manor House ()

Kilcolman Castle ()

New Place ()

Newstead Abbey ()

Strawberry Hill ()

Wentworth Place ()

1. Lord Byron

2. Charles Dickens

3. John Keats

4. William Morris

5. Sir Walter Scott

6. William Shakespeare

7. Percy Bysshe Shelley

8. Edmund Spenser

9. Horace Walpole

10. William Wordsworth



The Sporting Spirit

RECENTLY on a transcontinental airline I was disconcerted to learn that the next attraction on the giant, life-size, six-inch Astrovision screen was to be *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines*, one of the more enjoyable of the current crop of movies. Filmed in wide screen and in color, it owed much of its charm to the intricacies of its early planes and to the gorgeous backgrounds that they sailed against. What would happen to these on Astrovision? More important, since the film is still on "hard ticket" in some localities, how many would disembark telling their friends about a new picture they simply had to see? It seemed to me that no matter how many thousands of dollars Inflight Motion Pictures paid Twentieth Century-Fox for the privilege of running *Magnificent Men*, Fox was selling its film down the river.

Since then there have been significant echoes of the same. At the moment, both Otto Preminger and George Stevens are actually suing their releasing companies for having turned *Anatomy of a Murder* and *A Place in the Sun* over to the television networks without protecting those directors' contractual guarantees that they alone controlled the cutting of their films. All too obviously, the studios still think of their movies as product, as commodities to be sold at the highest price to the best bidder, and what happens to them thereafter is no concern of theirs. It is an encouraging sign that some of our leading film makers are beginning to attack this pattern. Unfortunately, however, their fight can do nothing to salvage an almost classic piece of destruction now being distributed to theaters as *Tokyo Olympiad*.

It is, of course, the fate of most foreign-made films to pass into the hands of distributors who, having paid substantially for the rights, feel justified in adapting the picture to their concept of the American market—tightening a scene here, eliminating a scene there, altering a meaning with a subtitle. Sometimes such alterations are genuinely helpful; but one can say quite axiomatically that the better the original film, the less such assistance is required. In the case of *Tokyo Olympiad*, to touch even a frame of its nearly three hours amounts to desecration. True, there are sequences—such as that involving a young runner from Chad—that carry one outside of the arena itself. True, there are shots—such as that of a single runner silhouetted against an enormous lemon sun in a

blood-orange sky—that seem to have been retained solely for their pictorial value. But all of them, shots and sequences alike, as molded by director Kon Ichikawa, form one great paean to the energies, the skill, the control, the will that human beings are capable of. What emerges so clearly from Ichikawa's film is that he could not care less who, or what country, won which event; it was the *how* of their winning. And if he shows us the victors stepping up to receive their medals and the plaudits of the crowds, it is to underscore their all too human pride in their achievement.

Jack Douglas, a television producer, has taken this magnificent footage and slashed it virtually in half; his version runs ninety-four minutes. But more than that, he has changed it from an epic into a newsreel. The United States won some thirty-six of the events, and the footage seems to have been especially selected to emphasize these wins. For the sparse Japanese narration (ably translated into subtitles for English-speaking audiences by Toho, distributors of the Japanese version), Douglas has substituted one of those tense television voices that tells you exactly who is where from moment to moment. Worst of all, he has chosen to omit such bits of insight and perception as when the camera catches unawares a Japanese girl jerking her head, jiggling her arms, and jauntily whistling as she loosens up for a sprint, or as a husky Soviet athlete ritualistically fingers his shot, then his insignia, then his shot repeatedly, ridiculously, before making his throw. And he has truncated one of the virtuoso closeups of all time—the contained, inward-looking profile of the slender Ethiopian runner, Abebe Bikila, as he coolly measures his tread across twenty-six miles to victory.

These are moments calculated to reveal the human side of sports. It is not, after all, the fact that one man can throw further, shoot straighter, or swim faster than another that is important, but that men can so control and coordinate their bodies that year after year new records are created. Ichikawa has given us a film that celebrates these victories as achievements of the entire human race. The world is not so full of masterpieces that we can afford to have one diminished for the sake of commercial distribution. It is to be hoped that Toho's complete version of the *Olympiad* will also be available for those who care about the greatness of the human spirit.

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.



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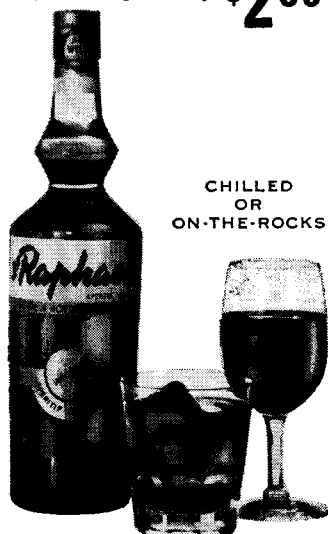
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