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Warm Smile, Cold War: My paper the other night carried two stories on France, one on the front page and one on the editorial page, both of which are going to affect travelers who invade Gaul and its possessions. The editorial page carried a long piece about France's new campaign to smile at the tourist. It said a high-powered program had been launched by Pierre Dumas, secretary of state in charge of tourism, who had organized a formidable committee composed of Parliament members, railway and airline presidents, members of the press, and personalities from the sports and entertainment world, including Maurice Chevalier. The object of all these good Gallic citizens was to restore the fair name of France in the eye of the traveler, who, it has suddenly been realized, contributes an enormous chunk of currency to the French economy.

But the front page carried a story with a far different flavor. "France-U.S. 'Cold War' is Kindled by New Move," it read. A dispatch from Paris noted that the U.S. had been told to close its consulate in Tahiti. In Washington the State Department said that it would comply. The development was called a new move in a "little cold war" between France and the United States in the South Pacific. Only a few days before, more than 100 American teachers on a charter flight from California to Tahiti had been beached in Hawaii when Paris refused to permit the plane to land in Tahiti. Paris had superseded the authority of its own governor in Tahiti, who had hitherto granted landing rights. The charter carrier was hesitant to make an issue of the matter since it had half a dozen other flights scheduled into Paris during the summer. In the end, like the Russians and the East Germans who harry the byways to Berlin, the French relented and the plane flew on several days and several thousand dollars in overseas phone calls later.

The UPI release called the closing of our consulate in Papeete the latest in a series of measures restricting the free movement of Americans in Tahiti. Papeete, the capital of Tahiti, is also the main base for France's upcoming H-bomb test on Mururoa, which is 1,250 miles southeast of Tahiti. While the French foreign office gave no reason for the cancelation of its previous agreement permitting a United States consulate in Tahiti, unnamed Americans thought the true reason lay in the forthcoming tests. The move reflected French reluctance in having too many Americans in the area for the tests, which are expected sometime in 1967 or 1968.

Once again the able French tourist administrator in Tahiti, not to mention the French Government Tourist Office itself, has been embarrassed by his own government. When the first Legionnaires and equipment began arriving in Tahiti last year both offices, with irrefutable and clever logic, were quick to point out that the distance from Tahiti to Mururoa was greater than the distance between Hawaii, a prime American vacationland, and Johnston Island, where the United States had exploded a bomb. France's bomb tests would not impair tourism to Tahiti and Bora-Bora, and some great plans were being bandied about for the Tuamotus and other islands in French Polynesia.

ONE can only wonder whether de Gaulle will somehow shoot down the ingenious smile program that Secretary Dumas has launched for Metropolitan France. It calls for giving travelers who arrive at Nice a carnation and those arriving in Paris a rose. In summer, ladies will be given bottles of perfume. Every ten thousandth arrival will get a sweater and every hundred thousandth a gown from the haute couture. Men will be given sweaters and suits. Customs booths will be brightened with new paint and, heaven forfend, planted with flowers. Customs agents will be taught to smile. So will hostesses, clerks, and cops. The Paris edition of the New York *Herald Tribune* has reported groups of employees dealing with visitors are being reminded that a smile and a kind word are not alien to the national character. This blanket supposition is not, of course, intended to stretch as far as French drivers.

Arriving tourists will be stuffed with maps and booklets of helpful hints. The police will be asked to refrain from writing out tickets for small infractions. The government plans to keep the tourist offices open every day in the week until eight at night. And anybody who gets in trouble can pick up a phone and dial 17 in order to raise a bilingual policeman. Presumably explicit bilingual instructions, giving advice on the care and feeding of French public telephones, will be posted at booths.

It is one thing for the government to control its own employees, but a problem of a different sort in trying to oversee the good humor of the thousands of busboys, waiters, maîtres d'hotel, cab

(*Continued on page* 45)

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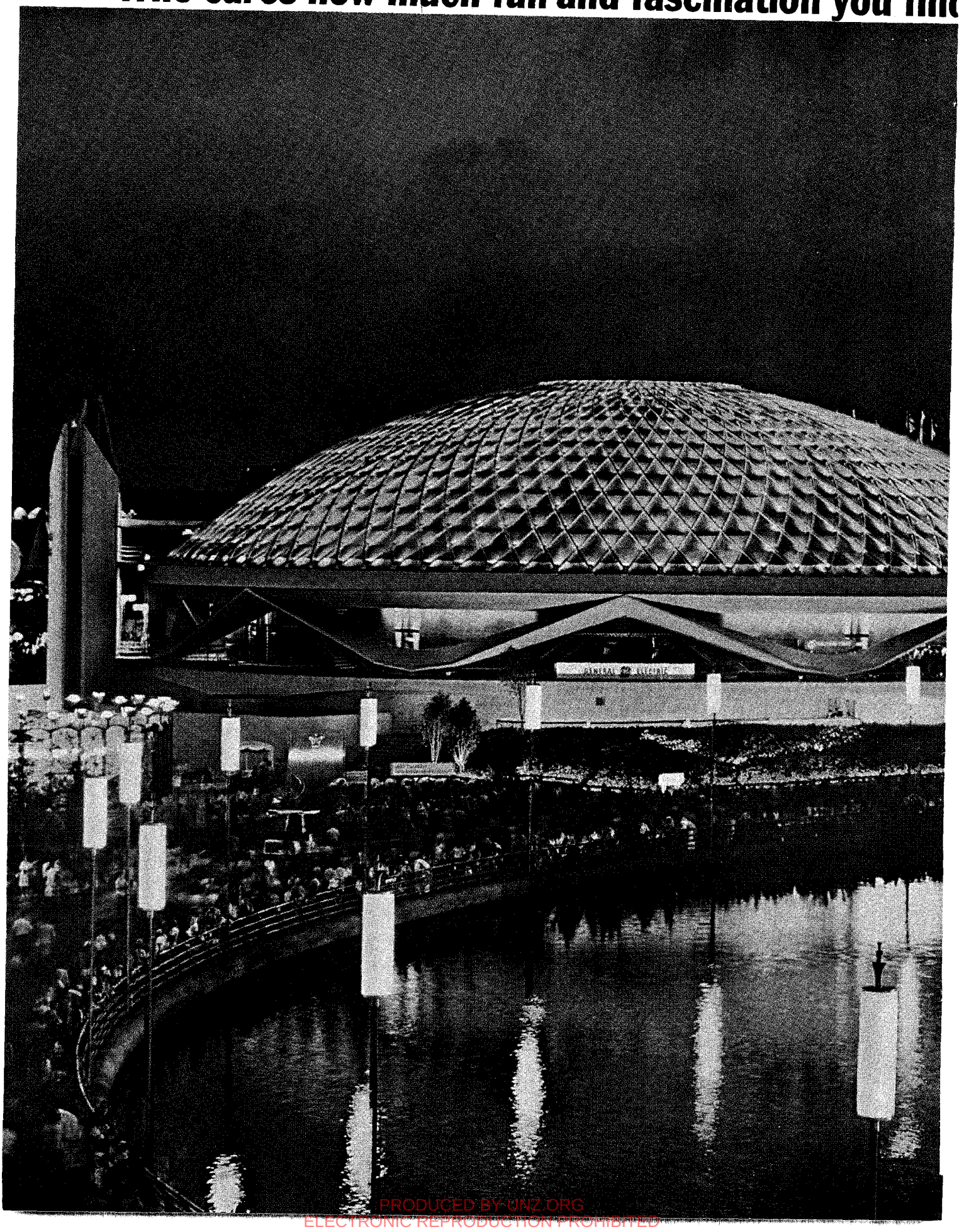

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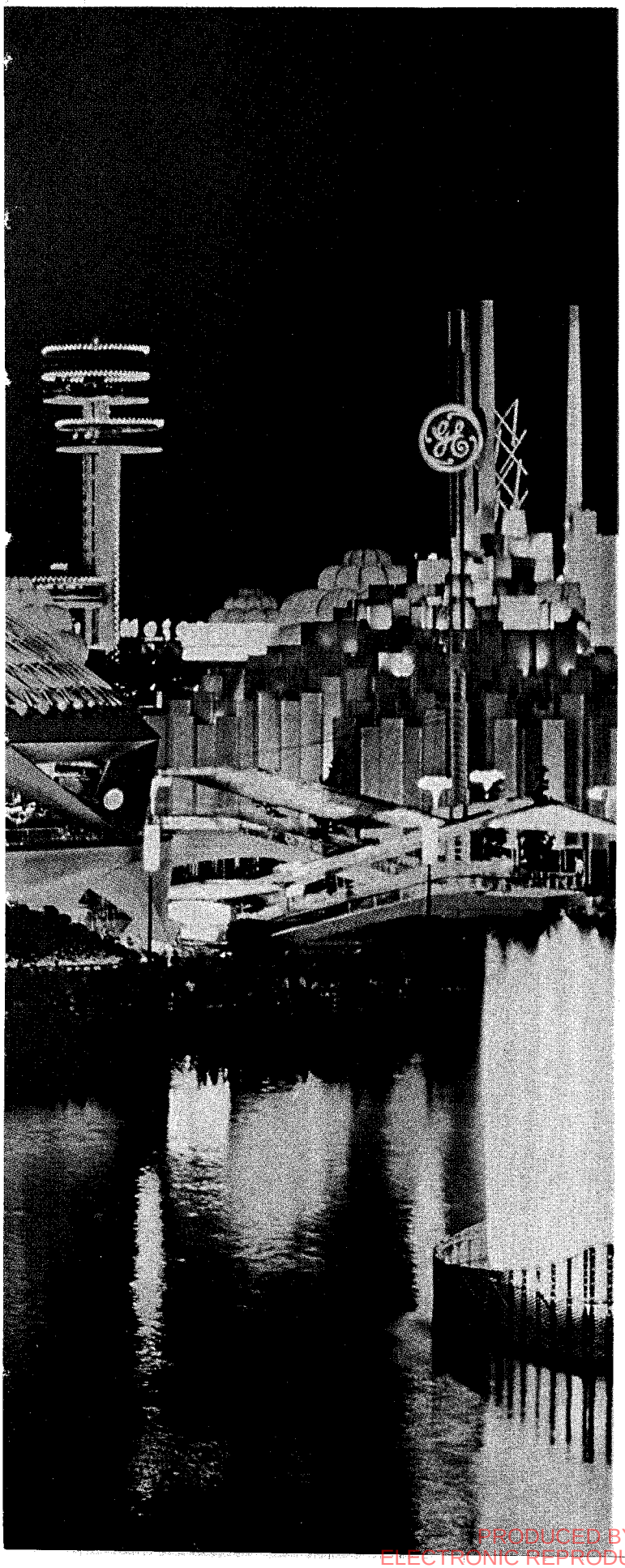

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Continued from page 40
drivers, porters, bus drivers, and Métro ticket-punchers with whom the tourist will come in contact. To encourage a better national disposition the government is passing out smile checks, yet. The checks will be given to visitors, who will in turn pass them out to French people who smile at them. The winners will get cars, trips to the United States, to the West Indies, and to Tahiti, possibly in H-bomb year. How they are going to keep the ladies who promenade along the Champs-Elysées from winning all the smile checks is a puzzle to me.

Now that the French are going to give out all those flowers and perfume and other gifts to arriving passengers, it shouldn't be forgotten they also have something for departing passengers—a bill for five dollars. Departure tax. At this juncture it might be wise to equip the hapless airline clerks who have to administer the dunning with a book of sneer checks. Departing visitors who collect the most sneer checks get a free day in President Johnson's See America program, including a plate of Howard Johnson's fried clams. On the house.

Flicks in Flight: The decision of the international airlines to remove moving pictures from airliners shows just how vulnerable the airline passenger is to the dictates of the industry. Started by TWA in the summer of 1961, they proved a great success. At one point airline observers were tracing five seats a trip to the novelty of moving pictures shown in flight. Other airlines moved to install Inflight Motion Pictures, the system used by TWA, or other types of closed-circuit television that would permit the display of films. When the whistle blew the other week, dimming the screens on international carriers and threatening similar action on domestic lines, Inflight Motion Pictures were being shown on United Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Pakistan International Airlines, as well as the originator, TWA. Domestically, TWA, American, United, and Continental show movies.

In order to meet the competition, the other international carriers would have had to contract for some similar sort of equipment. But there were other avenues of approach. Airlines that had not yet contracted for movies were against the concept, and they had a plan to reach those that were showing films. A summit meeting of airline presidents was called and, according to industry speculation, the carriers made a case on these points: When all lines were outfitted with motion picture equipment, then none would have an advantage. Said the have-nots to the haves: If you will agree to dismantle your projectors and stop showing films we will collectively reimburse you for any cost you may have incurred. The haves finally capitulated. TWA agreed to end its showings by September 1. Pakistan International Airlines may show them until March 1, 1966, but it may not advertise that fact. International carriers flying between California and Hawaii, such as Pan American, may show films as long as domestic carriers flying this route still show them.

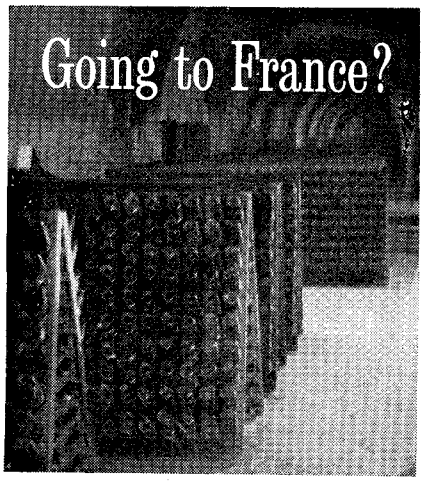
The controversy over the showing of films has been violent among the airlines, but nobody has really bothered to check with the passengers. Airline people who are against visual entertainment point to the $50,000 initial cost per plane, plus another substantial amount in programing for closed-circuit television. But Inflight Motion Pictures requires the airline to pay only a rental charge of $150 for each showing. And some airlines recoup part of this cost by charging tourist-class passengers for the use of the earphones. Inflight Motion Pictures itself spends an estimated $25,000 to install its equipment. According to its contract with TWA, however, the airline must pay a penalty clause if the service is not used for at least one year after installation, and it is apparently this cost that the other airlines have collectively agreed to indemnify.

The opponents of flying cinema also note that even though the sound is controlled by each passenger individually, the audience is captive nonetheless. Many passengers, they say, don't speak English, and before they were scheduled to go dark, the movies in the air hadn't gotten around to foreign subtitles.

Those in favor have been inclined to minimize the cost. One airline executive likened the individual per-passenger cost to the price of a cocktail. The Inflight company issued a statement in which it said, "Systemwide the cost of our largest user would make a difference of 27 cents per ticket sold." The company noted further that the cost to the airlines was less than the cost of a credit card, that nothing is charged to install, operate, or service equipment, and that the airlines have no capital investment.

If the cost of renting one film to a jet is $150 and the plane carries better than 100 passengers, the price per person is obviously more than twenty-seven cents. But the addition of a dollar's cost can hardly affect the price structure in fares that go well into three figures. The idea of charging all participating passengers for going to the movies during a long flight apparently was not seriously examined, either. For the relief from monotony and the feeling of safety that the films somehow impart, the public might well have been willing to pay a dollar, which is, after all, less than the cost of movies on the ground.

Yet when the International Air Transport Association conducted a mail poll,



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some ninety-two carriers from eighty countries voted against movies in flight. Seventeen carriers, including some of the best-known airline names, signed an agreement against further use of moving pictures in flight, agreeing to reimburse the lines that currently show movies when they finally scrap their equipment.

Oddly enough, the agreement includes only visual entertainment and does not include audio entertainment. The public may therefore be treated to pleasant sounds piped into earpieces, at least until enough have-not airlines form a quorum and force the rest to abandon that, too. The danger, of course, if the equation is followed, is that the airlines may collectively agree to the removal of almost anything under similar threats. All that is needed in the end is approval by the Civil Aeronautics Board. If the CAB approves such privately made agreements the airlines cannot be held in violation of antitrust action.

SIMILAR action in any other industry would be met with cries of price-fixing, collusion, restraint of trade, and worse. True competition among the airlines has been reduced to a measure of warmth in the smile of stewardess. Ever since the great sandwich war, when the airlines battled each other over just what type of sandwich could be served on low-cost flights, every last butter bean has come under strict control. In food it now depends on which airline can more successfully revitalize a steak that has been cooked hours ago in a ground kitchen and then heated again in the air. Or cover it with the best saucey disguise.

Naturally, there have been shouts of outrage from David Flexer, president of Inflight Motion Pictures, Inc. *Aviation Daily* quotes him as saying, "Foreign airlines are attempting to dictate what the American citizen can or cannot enjoy. Certain of these airlines have even threatened American carriers showing movies with withdrawing landing rights and with a heavy surcharge on tickets for movie flights." Somebody picked up Senator Magnuson saying, "U.S. carriers ought to be entitled to show movies and should not be pushed around by other airlines and pay for their inefficiency."

The CAB will probably approve the action because the inclusion of movies on aircraft is against its general policy of seeking lower air fares. But then a lot of other comforts and pleasures could be removed and that would theoretically support the same general trend. As Marc Connelly once wrote to an airline after he had been charged for an in-flight drink, "Why don't you rent pillows and put in pay toilets?"

—HORACE SUTTON.

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The Royal Ballet's *Romeo*

THERE HAVE been many ballets based on Shakespeare, but in Kenneth MacMillan's treatment of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* score the Royal Ballet is adding something special to the lore of the art in its current American tour: a truly Shakespearian ballet. As a totality of pageantry and poetry, MacMillan's version serves the richly conceived score better than the two productions (Danish and Russian) previously seen at the Metropolitan, and Nicholas Georgiadis's evocation of a Renaissance society completes a series of stage pictures rarely equaled.

What distinguishes MacMillan's treatment from its predecessors is that, despite the fact that it is an Italian legend set to Russian music, there is something basically English about it. Repeatedly one finds an echo for the eye in the recollection by the ear of a line, a phrase, a singing sentence of Shakespeare's original. The big episodes—the ball, the balcony scene, the secret marriage, a stunning realization in movement of Mercutio's death and then Tybalt's—are connected by links of action that carry the story irresistibly forword. Some have complained of too little dance in Act III, but it strikes me as the essence of MacMillan's treatment that he has used all the arts of the theater (save, of course, speech) where they serve most appropriately. If one can liken the conventional classical ballet to an aria opera, one could say that MacMillan has suppressed arias for the sake of arias, and kept his eye firmly on dramatic truth. Meanwhile, the interest of "arias" is substantially accounted for in John Lanchberry's conducting of the score.

For a choreographer who has not previously dealt with the problem of a full-length ballet, *Romeo and Juliet* speaks eloquently for MacMillan's credentials. There was a suspicion of stagnation midway in Act II, where the crowd action threatened to go on repeating itself. At about this time, too, the unit frame of Georgiadis's pillared setting became a little overfamiliar. But, as MacMillan resolved his problem with the encounter of Mercutio and Tybalt, so Georgiadis varied his basic browns and greens and golds with a change of values in Act III, and in a tomb scene whose somber majesty underscored the eternity against which the mortal lovers were contesting.

Against all temptation, MacMillan resisted the urge to provide "exciting" action for Rudolf Nureyev, the Romeo of the first performance, to Margot Fonteyn's Juliet. Save for one outburst of leaps and air turns in the staging of the balcony scene, MacMillan pitched technical display in a properly low key. The difficulties were of the subtle kind (as in Romeo's lifts and carries, and Juliet's simulation of lifeless inertness) that assisted dramatic purpose rather than detracting from it. Traditional mime was used sparingly, and predominantly by the elders of the Verona society; moreover, the crowd action was sharply differentiated from the movement given to the principals. The clash of swords made a ringing accompaniment to Prokofiev's music, as suited a lethal element among the delinquents (juvenile and otherwise) of the time.

In terms of dance *per se*, MacMillan developed no single episode that could be described as breathtaking in originality or highly personal in style. It tended to extend the impression of his previous work here as a choreographer of greater facility than personality. But, it should be noted, the most striking single stretch of action was the vividness of Mercutio's needless death, personified with a full sense of its wasteful futility by David Blair. MacMillan's success with this focal point of the drama typified his concern for underlying values rather than surface diversion, his sense of a whole superior to any of its parts.

On those occasions when Fonteyn and Nureyev performed, the impression tended to be more of stars cross'd than star-cross'd lovers. Each embodies an artistic individuality that left them more Fonteyn and Nureyev than Juliet and Romeo. Each also has a share of disability to contend against in weaving a spell of characterization—in her case, the limitations that time has put on her ability to be convincingly adolescent; in his, the drive to physical exuberance rather than emotionalism. There is no question, however, of their audience appeal.

When casting brought other members of the company to the leading roles, there were quite other values, especially when the Juliet was Lynn Seymour. She is, in every petite inch, the picture of what a stage Juliet should be—the face and body of an adolescent, but with a veteran's command of her medium. Supple, fleet, feather-light and yet steel-spring-strong, Miss Seymour has made giant strides since she was first seen here two years ago. In Christopher Gable she had more a talented partner than a convincing Romeo; but what dancer has measured to a pictorial image of the Montague since Hugh Laing was performing in the Tudor version with Markova? Characterization, however, was rampant in Michael Somes's Capulet, Desmond Doyle's Tybalt, Deanne Bergsma, Monica Mason, and Carole Needham as a trio of happy harlots, etc. These and the dozens of others in the ensemble comprise the real texture of the ballet, which means that it is worth seeing, whoever the principals may be. That is the mark of a great company, which Ashton's Royal Ballet, in succession to de Valois's unquestionably is.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

The Other Richter

THREE days after a Richter named Sviatoslav returned to Carnegie Hall, another—this one named Karl—made his debut there. With him he brought the Munich Bach Chorus and Orchestra, and together they gave New York an extraordinary week of oratorical Bach. It embraced both Passions, the B-Minor Mass, and the first half of the *Christmas Oratorio*—all uncut, and all performed most poignantly.

Large-scale Bach is no longer a rarity here, but Richter's variety very definitely is. How long has it been since we have heard so superb a chorus complemented by an orchestra of comparable training and stature? More important, how long has it been since we have heard both ensembles in these works so sensitively attuned to each other?

Richter approaches Bach in a more Romantic spirit today than was the case a few years ago. He has become rather inconsistent in his use of the harpsichord; he now indulges liberally in *rubato* and abrupt changes of both tempo and dynamics; he is anything but a stickler for vocal embellishment; and he tends to exaggerate the sentiment in slow movements. Yet, for the most part, he remains faithful to the spirit if not the letter of Baroque law. And, conducting from memory throughout, he proved that he has few peers when it comes to projecting the meaning of the biblical music dramas.

The most noteworthy feature of the Chorus, aside from its amazing flexibility and balance, is its stamina. Daily rehearsals and an out-of-town engagement were interspersed among the four performances, but the young singers lost precious little in concentration and dedication. They favor a rather "straight," vibrato-less tone that maximizes linear clarity and, in the case of the women, suggests the "authentic" sound of boy sopranos. It is captivating.

Among the well-balanced soloists, Ernst Häfliger's pliant tenor once again made a moving thing of the Evangelist's recitatives. Except in the rare cases

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