

Assignment TV

By TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY

LONDON — "You Americans want to be loved, and it's all wrong!" said Malcolm Muggeridge. "You don't seem to understand that leaders are never loved."

"When we English were on top with the Empire and all, nothing delighted us more than to know that everybody loathed us."

"Every now and then we have one of those dreadful public opinion polls where some idiot walks up with a microphone and asks, 'Do you love America?' It turns out that 32 per cent do, 45 per cent don't, and the rest don't answer. Percentages like that show that you're still on top."

Muggeridge is a charming rascal, the former editor of the British magazine Punch, and well known to American viewers as a frequent guest on the Jack Paar Show. He was speaking to a group of American broadcasters and advertising agency men who specialize in television. They had gathered to study the excellent European News Service maintained here and on the continent by the W stations of America.

MUGGERIDGE is delighted that Americans were recently treated to portions of Britain's royal family tree on tour.

"The whole thing is part of a big Royal Soap Opera we maintain here in England," he told me. "All the elements of a long-running radio or television serial are there, you know — the happy couple in the castle, the problem

sister, the brother-in-law out of a job. It's the same script over and over. And the same commercials, too.

"I understand you are having dinner tonight at Woburn Abbey with the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, a kind of comic opera pair who run the place as a tourist attraction. You will be served what they consider to be a typical English meal, and my advice to you is — don't eat it! And you'll have to bring your own liquor. Oh, I don't envy you one bit."

MUGGERIDGE was not only funny, he was right. Our hosts, the Group W broadcasters, are reported to have paid \$40 a plate for 100 guests. The meal was so bad the local Westinghouse radio correspondents supplied everyone with chocolate bars for the trip back to London.

Inasmuch as they were laying out \$4,000 for the evening, the Group W people thought it would be pleasant to have the Duchess on hand to welcome the American broads to her home. The Duchess replied that she would be delighted to put in an appearance if they would give her a new refrigerator for the abbey's kitchen.

Westinghouse declined, and the Duchess stayed in her room.

But the English weather put on a beautiful show, with a full moon rising across the lake and silhouetting, for a brief, magic moment, the graceful figure of a deer on the lawn. With that sort of atmosphere, who needs a duchess? The sound of hearty American laughter rang in the halls all evening.

NO ONE IN England's upper class ever laughs out loud in public. After many generations of restraint they have managed to stifle such outbursts as you're apt to hear among the lower classes at play. Muggeridge has the answer:

"The only thing the English are serious about is humor." But they do a lot of quiet laughing at themselves. Recently when Parliament was considering legalizing homosexuality between consenting adults over 18, Field Marshal Montgomery recommended they change the age of consent from 18 to 80.

Seaman Rect. Lawrence S. Gill, son of Mr. and Mrs. Myran R. Mayers of 5413 Hailson St., has completed seven weeks of Navy basic training at the Naval Training Center, San Diego.

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Telephone Firm Pays Tax Bills

More than \$23 million in property taxes will be paid by General Telephone Co. of California in 14 counties during the 1965-66 fiscal year, Ira L. Christensen, company treasurer, has announced.

The largest payment, \$15,810,153.74, will be made to Los Angeles County in two installments. The first installment, amounting to more than \$12.2 million, was paid Friday. The remainder is due April 10, 1966.

The firm also pays property taxes in Fresno, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Kern, Riverside, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Solano, Tulare, and Yolo counties.

In addition, the company pays direct city taxes to Long Beach, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, and Isleton.

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