

# Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

On a recent expedition to quell a native uprising south of the border I had an excellent opportunity to observe the Enchilada television network in progress. It is not a happy story.

I had hardly crossed the Rio Grande before my dietetic rhythm method (that is, no pills until last rites are offered) broke down almost in mid-stream and I spent several unforgettable days in agony that's a suburb of Guadalajara).

Montezuma's revenge was swift and terrible with only hot tea, television, McKesson, and Robbins between me and the great immigration inspector in the sky. I hasten to explain that I got sick BEFORE I watched Mexican television.

IT WASN'T boredom that turned me to television. There was enough live talent around the house. God knows—lake bats, swallows, mariachis and brick-layers, depending on the time of day. The swallows had a nest in a chapel directly adjacent to my room which I am confident was being prepared for my demise. During the day the birds flew happily in and out, checking on my condition.

The bats came in at night. My genial host assured me that they are gentle, loving creatures, as misunderstood as television critics and twice as shy. I wasn't sleeping much anyway so we became good friends, the bats and I, considering we were so much alike. "How's batman today?" my Mexican friend would ask every morning.

For several days the television set stayed off. There was enough activity on the ceiling to keep me interested, what with the bugs and all. The first time I turned the knob there was a kind of popping noise along the baseboard so I turned it right off and hopped back into bed with Montezuma. The next time I tried it, a very large lady named Flora (or was it fauna?) flew in from the other end of the hacienda to announce that I had blown out the electric oven and quite likely all the lights on the north side of Lake Chapala and would I mind if she stayed and watched "Peyton Place."

AFTER INTENSIVE study I have determined that Mexican electricity is based on the five-watt globe. The natives believe that anything stronger is bad on the eyes. Unfortunately this does not apply to neon signs and sodium vapor lights. Television sets seem to be used frequently to light up a room whether anything is on or not.

The reception in the state of Jalisco leaves something to be desired—mostly a recog-

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happy to be sitting down and delighted to be away from her husband who sings in a Mariachi band at night and makes pre-Columbian ceramics in the daytime.

**FLORA WOULD** be a most suitable watcher for the Nielson company in Mexico because she would watch anything. Unfortunately there's no gadget in the Nielson mechanism which records whether or not Flora was asleep during the program. She dozed through the most vicious of the American bilge—like "Highway Patrol" and "Jesse James" but she loved "Romper Room with Pepita Gomez." She couldn't understand "My Three Sons" be-

cause there was no lady in the house. The shows she liked most were ones with Indians in them—OUR Indians, not theirs. Her idea of a big time is to bundle up the kids and go with her husband to an amusement park up the highway where they sit in the shade in plastic Indian tepees and drink beer. She thinks seem to be used frequently to livan Sunday night revival it's being "very American." Just like people in Los An-

can" to go to Olvera Street and watch girls in Spanish shawls dance with roses in their teeth. When I told Flora about that she laughed until big tears ran down her face.

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**Assessor**  
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Not until government recognizes that the property tax burden is out of proportion to what many people can pay—and either voluntarily enacts a property tax ceiling or is forced to accept a ceiling—can we expect any real improvement in the property tax picture.

The property tax protest groups could be the healthiest thing that's happened on the local and state government scene in many years if they concentrate their efforts in this direction.

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