

# Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

MONTREAL—For those of us who grew up thinking that Canadian Northwest Mounties look like Nelson Eddy and all they do is sing in the woods, it was a shock to discover that in most cities they are traffic cops, and when you see them in your rear vision mirror they sure as hell ain't singing "Rosemarie, I Love You."

A trip to this magnificent Expo '67 can tell an American many things. Primarily it's a good show, but it is also a splendid introduction to our neighbor across the border—the ones who live between us and the USSR. We have taken them for granted for too long. This condition of friendship does not exist on this side of the border. They feel they are the poor neigh-

bor of the richest nation on earth. Canada is our best customer and we are theirs but they are currently agonizing over their national identity. Almost half of them are French and eager to ditch the British.

THE CANADIANS speak of their dependence on the United States with good humor and while they puzzle over exactly what the Canadians should become, they know what they do not want to be and that is Americans. Morley Callaghan, respected Canadian novelist, observes: "All that is loud, vulgar, and noisy on our little scene is supposed to be due to the American influence. If the manners of our children are bad; if they don't read,

pray, think, or wash their faces, the Americans are blamed for it. The U.S. has become our moral whipping boy." But none of this is new to Americans and none of it is to be found in the personal relationships on this side of the border. The Canadians are warm and friendly. The first thing that strikes an American in this part of Canada is the extensive use of the French language. All menus, announcements, and most street signs are first in French, then English. You get a "Bonjour" from the phone operator or cab driver before you get a "Good Morning."

trying to get through a side door in a hoopskirt. Canadians are far more polite and reserved than Americans—thank God—or the experience would have been a nightmare. They have not let lost that innocence and trust that Americans once had but which have been replaced with a kind of cynicism in our endless quest for success—a-go-go.

ONE SECTION at Expo '67 is devoted to the American West. It fascinates the Canadians as much as it does everyone else. Robertson strode through the area as if he were right at home. "I love this period of American life," he said. "The whole era fits me just fine. Those who actually lived it had to have guts to leave the comforts of Europe or the East and push their way across a whole continent. They were adventurous and they were tough. It's something we have lost today. That's why I like this 'Iron Horse' show. It's fun—even in make-believe—to re-live

those adventurous days even for eight hours a day. "I never got a chance to see the New York Fair and now here I am flying 3,000 miles to see this one with a wife who doesn't get up until noon. She's from Texas and they don't move too fast down there. They're thinkers at all. They're thinkers," he confided with a smile.

MONTREAL'S Expo '67 is not a naive display. It is, surely, the biggest and most splendid exposition of all. It tops the Brussels Fair in size and scope. By comparison, the recent world's fair in New York seems even more shoddy and commercial than it did at the time. The Seattle fair isn't even in the running. Expo '67 is a magnificent and tasteful burst of architecture and enthusiasm that is worthy of a nation's 100-year-old celebration.

Expo's only problem is success: Yet it is a spacious fair situated in three man-made islands in the St. Lawrence River and is serviced by excellent and fast transporta-

tion by train, bus, taxi, subway and, if you are a president or a king, by helicopter. The government-owned Canadian Broadcasting Corporation controls television here but, as usual, the Hollywood product dominates the TV picture to the point where some Canadian opinion-makers are resentful. A particular case in point was the recent kiddie demand for "Davy Crockett" hats, there-

by sidetracking Pierre Radisson, a courageous Canadian frontiersman of the same century who also wore a coonskin cap but does not have his own TV show. Now, 50 per cent of the CBC shows must have what is called "Canadian content." In one instance they even had to justify a World Series telecast here by claiming that one of the ball players had a

Canadian mother. But if the Canadians are being unduly influenced by Hollywood-American TV culture, there is plenty of evidence that the seduction is being conducted with the complete co-operation of both parties.

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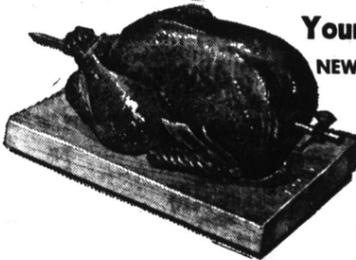
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