

# Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

The TV networks have been under bombardment recently regarding the quality of television news. Obviously there are many things that television news is, but it is becoming increasingly evident that it is NOT — and that is a medium of courageous investigative reporting.

There was a time when Edward R. Murrow challenged Senator Joseph McCarthy on CBS's "See It Now" and helped bring about his downfall. NBC's blockbuster on crime in America was a harrowing guide to the subject and a single edition of "CBS Reports" routed bookies in Boston.

But in the past two years TV has abandoned such reporting to seek sanctuary in the generalizations of urban renewal and racial tensions as well as documentaries which are laboriously over-produced on subjects that are 99.9 per cent safe.

**THE CURRENT** edition of Look Magazine has an article on a police state backed by American taxpayers' money titled "Greece: Government By Torture." It is a shocker. The last prime-time program on Greece produced by a network TV news department within my memory was "Melina Mercouri's Greece," a travelogue awash with zither music, grape seeds and photographs of the Parthenon by moonlight.

In the two years since then, Miss Mercouri has been so bravely outspoken against the present military government that she has been exiled. Did any TV news department consider doing a "Greece Revisited" program with Miss Mercouri or a hot look at the New Greece? If so, it has been shelved for the past 24 months.

**THE ALARMING** take-over of our own government by the Pentagon has been the subject of two and three-minute essays by both David Brinkley and Eric Sevareid as well as several interviews on shows like "Issues and Answers" — but the issue of American militarism has never been answered by a prime-time network news documentary. Do the networks which have fed the American public a steady diet of brutality on entertainment shows think the subject of murder by strategy is too shocking for viewers in prime time? There are dozens of other major areas which appear to be taboo.

If the network news departments are lacking in perceptive or courageous reporters they make no such claim when they parade their correspondents like trained seals across the land to make witticisms at televised dinners. Surely the pay is good enough to inspire a good reporter. And

most certainly the industry is not struggling financially when the average profit of the nation's 678 TV stations was \$570,000 last year and some went over \$5 million.

Are they afraid of the power of the nation's politicians to silence them? That is a strong possibility, particularly in a year when Congress is treading heavily on broadcasters and broadcasters, in turn, are walking more gingerly than ever before across Capitol Hill.

**OBVIOUSLY** it is not solely a network news department shortcoming. It has been suggested that local stations are equally reluctant to offend corporations and politicians. Certainly it is fair to report that more caution has been exerted in this area than courage. Judging from both network and local plans for next season it is evident that TV news will continue to lean heavily on its fat-cat anchor men and germ-free documentaries — and postpone adulthood for another year at least.

## Armed Forces

Army 1st Lt. Laurits G. Dixon, 22, son of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Dixon, 840 Ocean-side St., Wilmington, was named platoon leader of the month for the 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Infantry Division's 9th Infantry in Korea.

A member of the battalion's Headquarters Company, Lieutenant Dixon was selected for his soldierly appearance, knowledge, and performance of duties and military courtesy.

The lieutenant entered the Army in May, 1966, and was stationed at Ft. Campbell, Ky., before arriving overseas in May, 1968. His wife, Claire, lives at 1343 N. Island Ave., Wilmington.

Airman 1/C Charles J. Urbano, son of Mr. and Mrs. John V. Urbano, 730 Gulf Ave., Wilmington, has arrived for duty at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

Airman Urbano, an aircraft mechanic, is assigned to a unit of the Alaskan Air Command. He previously served to Eglin AFB, Fla.

The airman, a graduate of Banning High School, attended Harbor College.

Army Pfc. Edward J. Nady, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Nady, 18803 Doty Ave., Carson, has been assigned to the Americal Division in Vietnam.

# 12 Films Added To Library List

A dozen films have been added to the Torrance Public Library's rotating collection, City Librarian Russell J. West has announced.

Individuals or groups desiring to schedule the films should contact the audio-visual librarian at the Post Library, 1345 Post Ave.

Film titles for June are:

**Alpine Airways**, 18 min., color. New Zealand's air supply and transportation service to professional hunters, surveyors, and lumbermen doing work in previously unexplored territory.

**Arctic Goose Hunt**, 14 min., color. Fly-in camps accommodate hunters during the autumn hunting season. Snow geese, Canada geese and blue geese congregate by the tens of thousands.

**Challenge of Urban Renewal**, 28 min., black and white. Portrays the materialistic development of our society and the problems it produces. Tries to motivate the public to take action toward conservation.

**Days of Dylan Thomas**, 21 min., color. Portrait of this poet reveals a man — charming, gifted, beset by disquietude, driven to wild hilarity and clowning, burdened by the cares of living.

**Destination South Pacific**, 26 min., color. A scenic tour of the romantic Fiji Islands, New Zealand and Australia.

**Free From Care**, 14 min., color. Fishing for trout or fighting tuna on the open sea, a duck or pheasant shoot, or a big game hunt — all in Nova Scotia's outdoors.

**The Game**, 28 min., black and white. A realistic presentation about the sexual behavior of teenagers. We see a girl-boy relationship develop very quickly from the first date to sexual involvement. No adult opinions are heard and no sides are taken.

**Land of the Red Goat**, 18 min., color. The wild, untamed territory of British Columbia — mysterious valleys, green plateaus, moose, caribou, grizzly bears and mountain goats.

**Not So Long Ago**, 51 min., black and white. Bob Hope's narration of the events from 1945-1950 supported by newsreel footage, brings to life the short-lived period of peace and optimism of these years.

**Rainshowers**, 15 min., color. The changing moods of a day when a shower comes to plants and animals on a farm and to people at work in a community. Beautiful color and skillful photography.

**White Mane**, 39 min., black and white. A legend of a boy's friendship with a proud white stallion and their resistance against men who try to capture the horse.

# Drama Workshop Slated At Perry Park Center

A summer drama workshop will be held as part of the summer program of the Redondo Beach Recreation and Parks Department.

Classes will meet Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1 to 4 at Perry Park Recreation Center, 2301 Grant Ave. The course, offered for a \$5 fee, will begin June 24 and continue through July 17.

Open to all residents 11-years-old and older, the class

is given to help young people gain poise and self-confidence when performing or speaking in public. Students are also taught some basic dramatic skills by instructor Alice Thames, youth theatre director.

Registration may be completed during office hours at the Recreation and Parks Department office in the City Hall, 415 Diamond St., Redondo Beach, through June 20.

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