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## MEXICAN PRISONS ALLOW CONJUGAL VISITS IN JAIL TO KEEP FAMILY TIES STRONG



SEÑOR AND SEÑORA JUAN REDONDA ALVARADO ARE AN AFFECTIONATE COUPLE

Last summer, an American sociologist, Dr. Norman S. Hayner of the University of Washington, paid a scholarly visit to Mexico's prisons. In a report written for the American Prison Association, Dr. Hayner recently described one very interesting facet of Mexican prison procedure. This is the *visita conyugal*, or conjugal visit.

Under the conjugal visit, wives of prisoners who have good behavior records are allowed to visit their husbands in their cells. In some prisons, wives can stay a couple of hours. In others, the visit may last all night. In still others, the wife may bring the whole family along with her. The prison shown here—the Federal Penitentiary at Mexico City—permits two-hour visits once a week.

Dr. Hayner found two main reasons for the conjugal visit. One was that conjugal visits—whose physical purpose is frankly recognized—keep prisoners better balanced emotionally, tend to prevent homosexuality. The other reason is broader. "Mexico," says Dr. Hayner, "has a very strong family tradition. Anything that tends to destroy the family meets with opposition; anything that strengthens it is supported. It is believed that conjugal visits keep couples together."

In some Mexican prisons, women inmates can receive conjugal visits from their husbands. In all cases the tolerant prison rules recognize family relations that may not be legally approved but are nonetheless real and binding.





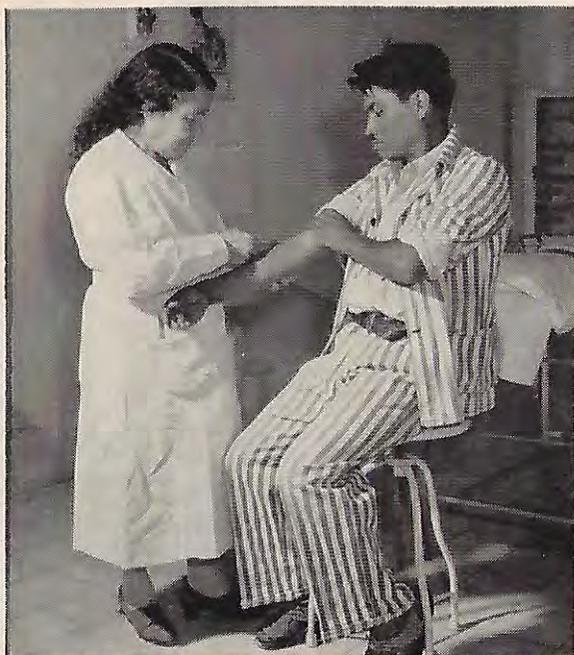
**Juan Redonda's prison**, the Federal Penitentiary at Mexico City, gives inmates freedom to loll along sunny cell blocks.



**Redonda's cell** has many conveniences. Redonda is a bricklayer. He killed a fellow bricklayer, claimed self-defense.



**Redonda gets a shave** in the prison barbershop on the morning of his wife's conjugal visit. He has to pay for the shave.



**Medical examination** is required before each visit. Here prison nurse gives Redonda a Wassermann test. Wife gets one too.



**Redonda's wife** presents her pass at prison gate. Pass entitles her to visit every Saturday morning from 10:30 to 12:30.



**The Redondas meet** at an inside gate. She is neatly dressed in her best clothes and carries a large basket of food and goodies.



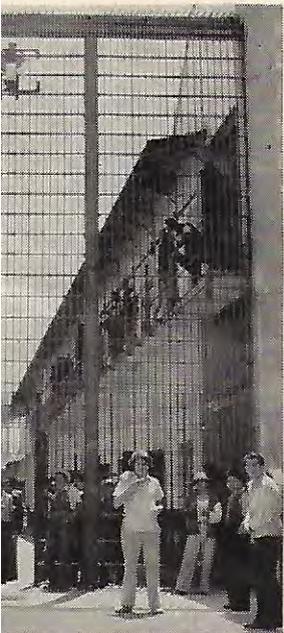
REDONDA ALVARADO ARE AN AFFECTIONATE COUPLE

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Federal Penitentiary at Mexico City. Prisoners loll along sunny cell blocks.



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Redonda gets a shave in the prison barbershop on the morning of his wife's conjugal visit. He has to pay for the shave.



Prisoner is tested before each visit. Here prisoner is given the Rorschach test. Wife gets one too.



Redonda's wife presents her pass at prison gate. Pass entitles her to visit every Saturday morning from 10:30 to 12:30.



The Redondas meet at an inside gate. She is neatly dressed in her best clothes and carries a large basket of food and goodies.

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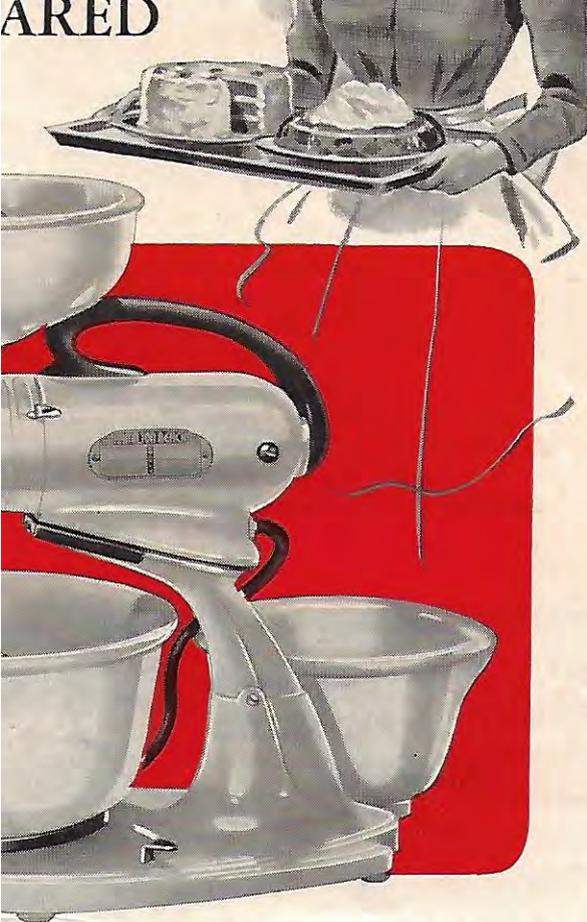
**Mexican prison** (continued)



In the prison cell, one of 23 set aside for conjugal visits, the Redondas sit side by side on the bed while the husband enjoys the food that his wife has brought him.



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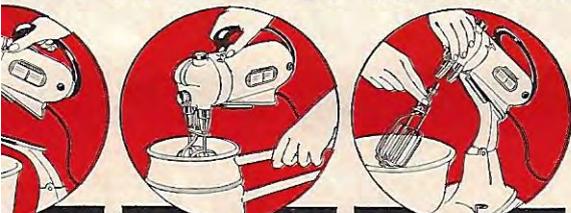
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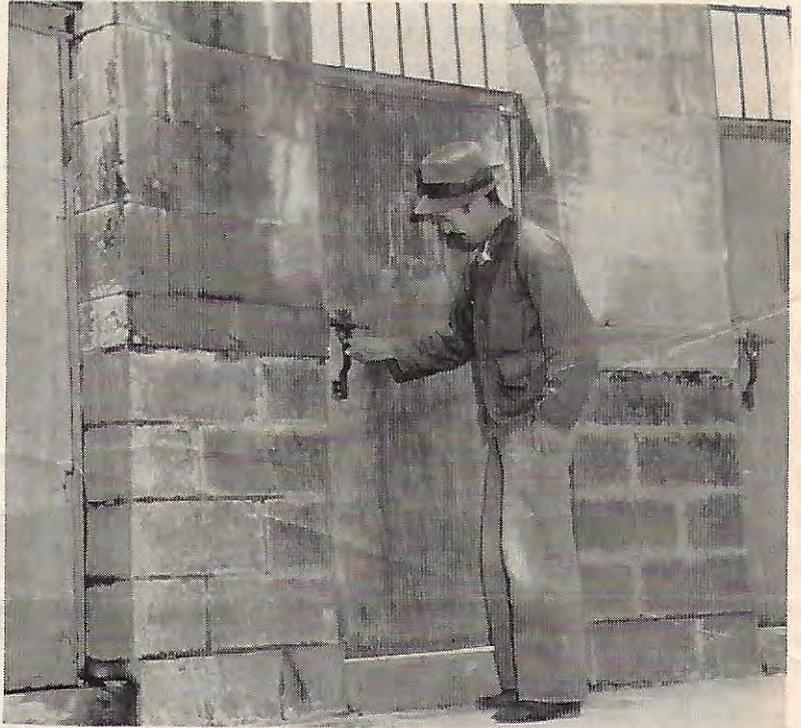
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In the prison cell, one of 23 set aside for conjugal visits, the Redondas sit side by side on the bed while the husband enjoys the food that his wife has brought him.



When the two hours are up, the prison guard rattles the latch politely to inform Señora Redonda that she must go home and her husband go back to his regular cell.



The Redondas stroll out of the conjugal cell. Each cell has a little patio in front and a little room in the back which is furnished with one bed and a couple of chairs.