P.S. to the NEWS
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EXPLOITATION OF BLACKS

Every time I drive through a predominantly black neighborhood, I am depressed at the exploitation of blacks by financial interests seeking a fast buck no matter how destructive the effect. What I refer to is the fact that there is a tavern or a package liquor store on nearly every corner. Whiskey is thus made far more conveniently accessible to blacks than grocery stores, churches, or other necessities.

The same thing is true of the way whiskey sales are especially promoted among American Indians and Eskimos. One of my sons worked as a longshoreman unloading barges in Alaska this summer, and he reported that 50 percent of the cargo arriving there is whiskey.

According to Dr. Vincent Pisani, Chicago medical expert on alcoholism, alcohol abuse has rapidly become the Number One drug problem among teenagers, while the use of other drugs has leveled off and even declined. Dr. Pisani added: "I would estimate that about 10 percent of all the teenagers admitted to hospital for other disorders actually have a problem directly related to the abuse of alcohol."

Many states have lowered the drinking age since the ratification of the constitutional amendment giving 18-year-olds the right to vote, succumbing to the cliche, "If he's old enough to vote, he's old enough to drink."

Another way blacks are exploited is by the movies. Since 40 percent of today's movie-going audience is black, many producers

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are deliberately catering to this audience with a steady diet of sex, violence, and blood and gore in living color.

Dr. Rowland S. Jefferson, black staff psychiatrist for the Watts Health Foundation in Los Angeles, recently delivered an important paper at the 79th annual convention of the black doctors' association. He characterized most of the black-oriented movies as degrading, violence-provoking, and a menace to the emotional health of young blacks in disadvantaged communities. He said that these films "deal with criminal behavior, glorify street life, exploit fantasied sexual behavior," and, "most damaging" of all, a "relatively little value is placed on black life."

Dr. Jefferson said there are at least 178 such films in various stages of preparation for release during the next three to five years, but other estimates place the figure at closer to 300. Most of the films deal in story lines that center around the lifestyle of the so-called "street people." In these films, according to Dr. Jefferson, the black hero who operates alone (except for the usual female love object) has replaced the traditional "nuclear family" and even the "extended family" that have helped make black survival possible.

The combination of easily available hard liquor, with violence and sex-provoking movies presented in compelling realism, would be destructive of any class of young people. But most sickening is the way they appear to be geographically located and psychologically designed to exploit the blacks. The pushers of whiskey and films featuring violence are just as reprehensible and responsible for crime as the pushers of other drugs.

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