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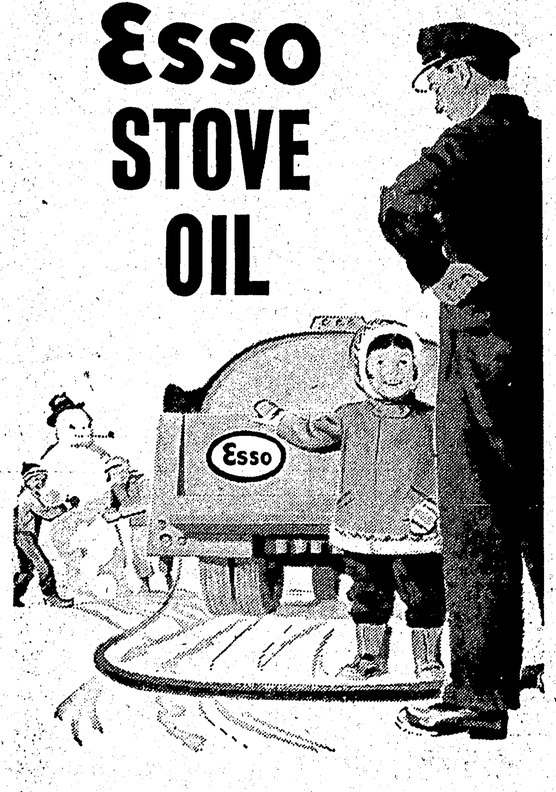

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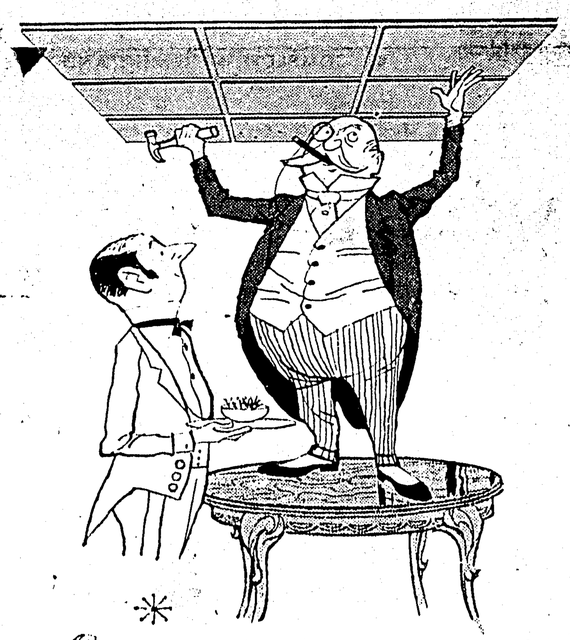

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MOVIE COLUMN

Watch dogs still on job as film trends change

By BOB THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD (AP)—"Where were the censors when that picture got passed?"

You hear that question more and more these days from amazed moviegoers, accustomed to decades of almost simon-pure entertainment on the screen.

The watchdogs of movie morality are still on the job. But films are undergoing a moral revolution due to these factors:

(1) Loss of the movie habit. Millions used to go to the movies regularly with scant regard to what was showing. Television ended that. Moviegoers are shoppers now. They are attracted by what is talked about. So producers are trying to provide what is new and often sensational.

(2) Source of film material. Most film stories now come from books and plays. You need only to consult recent best-sellers—"Lolita," "By Love Possessed," "Lady Chatterley's Lover," "Peyton Place"—to note the erotic nature of popular literature. And Broadway's top playwright, Tennessee Williams, has led the stage into new sexual byways.

(3) Product shortage. Because the major studios are not making enough movies, theatres must rely also on foreign and cheap American products. An unclad Brigitte Bardot showed foreign producers the surest way to the dollar. Overseas films need not meet production code requirements. The same is true of quick-buck Hollywood producers who make and release teen-age and horror films, most of them sleazy.

Churchmen have been alarmed at this revolution in film morality. Roman Catholics have long been a potent force in affecting moral content in movies.

SPELLMAN SPEECH

Francis Cardinal Spellman urged in a New York speech last month that "pictures and books which corrupt and destroy the moral fibre and ideals of youth . . . be eliminated if we are to discharge our sacred duties to our children."

But what alarms Hollywood most is that Protestants, too, are up in arms.

Recently George Heinrich, director of a film and broadcasting commission of the National Council of Churches, issued a blast against movies that exploited "sex for sex's sake and violence for violence's sake." He hinted at strong action by Protestants.

Hollywood was relieved to find opposition to Heinrich on the commission. But the incident showed that at least some Protestants might join the Catholics in pressuring producers on morality in films.

VENICE and its gondoliers inspired this play outfit worn by port Luana Patten, youthful star of MGM's "Home from the Hill." The pants, of grape colored velvet, are worn with a boldly-striped silk blouse.

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Briton lauds Diefenbaker role in Commonwealth

LONDON (CP)—To British author Don Taylor, the election of John Diefenbaker as Canada's prime minister in 1957 provided the Commonwealth with a much-needed man of the hour.

"He was prepared not merely to talk but to act," says Taylor in his new book "The Years of Challenge," a study of the British Empire and Commonwealth between 1945 and 1958.

"It was this which made Diefenbaker a figure of incalculable significance, that he was eager to be actively responsible for the development of the Commonwealth.

"This was precisely what had long been needed—a leader from the Commonwealth who was prepared to make it the cornerstone of his own policies and not relegate it to a subsidiary position."

Taylor, editor of a monthly journal New Commonwealth dealing with Commonwealth affairs, tells of the transformation from Empire to Commonwealth with the verve of an enthusiast.

He describes the death throes of white domination in Asia and Africa, the rising tide of nationalism and the growth of self-government in far-flung parts of the family of nations.

Vast amounts of technical and financial aid are essential to raise standards of living and to provide greater opportunities for the growing populations of the less-developed members of the Commonwealth.

Without minimizing these hurdles, Taylor paints an optimistic future for the association.

"The Commonwealth, despite its weaknesses and imperfections, is what the United Nations should be, but is not—a genuine brotherhood of man."

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