

Films

It's been a good couple of weeks for celluloid murder; *The Boston Strangler* (wow!), *Bullitt* (yecch!), and now, at the Strand, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (er, um, ah...).

It's hard to know quite whether to recommend *IHLLHG* or not; it's a bad movie, but suggestive (in both senses), and gives that sort of occasional moment of insight into the darker reaches of American cultural pathology which *Bullitt* so oddly didn't.

To begin with, it's this movie about these nice Blacks surrounded by nauseating Whites.

Our hero, splendidly played by Raymond St. Jacques, who makes Sydney Poitier look like the liberal Democrat he is, has escaped from prison after serving five years of a life term for a murder he didn't commit.

He gets picked up by totally ough Kevin McCarthy, who wants to use him to murder McCarthy's wife.

This seems a pretty good idea, once we meet wife, aseptically played by Dana Wynter, who is a porcelain-pure Southern heiress and general objective enemy of the Black nation.

However, St. Jacques does the decent thing, contrives not to murder wife, and is on the lam again in no time at all, with just about enough leisure to dissolve into misty flashbacks about his own girl (sexily played by Barbara McNair, who gets to sing a song too) and about the events leading up to his framing.

These events are pretty horrific; they take place in the sort of small Southern town so nicely handled by Norman Jewison in *In the Heat of the Night*. But whereas Jewison made his town about as exotic as Wetaskiwin, *IHLLHG* takes us back to the splendid Northern tradition of the Gothic South.

I suppose I shouldn't give away the plot, but we're even back in incest-country; not to speak of all sorts of mindless brutality.

But here one stops short; because, after all, there is that brutality around. And the film keeps suddenly, in the midst of all its hamminess, turning authentic; even noble, when St. Jacques faces his White enemies with just the right casual dignity, or totters to his feet after a beating with just the right doggedness.

But to continue. There is a fascinating moment when the movie threatens to open up into something huge.

St. Jacques takes as temporary hostage a po'-white-trash girl (played by Ann Prentiss, who I presume is Paula's sister), a friend of the girl he is thought to have killed.

Before he turns the tables on her, she has him at gunpoint, and there is a smouldering sexual excitement in her malice which changes to an equally sexual cringe once the gun is in his hands.

I hoped, I really hoped, something would be done with that. She could slowly turn his ally

as they lived through his flight together; and their combined energies could assault the deadness around them on a mythic scale.

But that ain't the way it is, man. That ain't the coalition, man. Eldridge Cleaver cat and George Wallace chick, they don't get together yet.

Instead, St. Jacques gets to coalesce with Dana Wynter, whom he rather cleverly convinces of the danger she's in from hubby; the film ends with her promising unlimited financial aid to St. Jacques in his battle to clear himself in the courts.

Which is, I suppose, realistic. (Cf. McGeorge Bundy's role in promoting school decentralization in New York City.)

And yet I regretted it. I regretted the waste of a lot of vibrant energy in the impossibly melodramatic plot, I regretted the film's not having quite the courage of its melodrama, it not playing the thing as straight wish-fulfillment, as a myth of the union of the energies of America's underdogs against the cancerous Rich Whites who are their common enemy.

Just enough flashes of what might have been do come through to make me suggest you see it if you're prepared to suffer through some excruciating bad dialogue (my favorite part is St. Jacques' having to show he's Cultured, he knows all about Bach) and a lot of old-fashioned corn.

—JOHN THOMPSON

Regina — talk of strike and legal action

REGINA (CUP)—The Regina campus student council has begun legal action to get \$4,000 in student union dues which it says the University of Saskatchewan administration is holding.

Council had set a deadline of noon Wednesday for the administration to turn over the funds, collected before the board of governors announced Dec. 31 it would not collect student union fees this term.

The only response from the administration came from principal W. C. Riddell, who said only the board, which meets today in

Saskatoon, can deal with the situation.

Council was also seeking an injunction Thursday to stop the administration from turning the fees directly back to individual students instead of handing them to the student union.

Meanwhile a section of the student body began attempts to reverse a student decision to restrict the voting franchise in upcoming council elections to those who had paid their fees on the voluntary basis set up as an interim measure.

The move led three councillors, including president Dave Sheard,

to resign on grounds that the union had chosen to represent only itself.

Councillors resign

REGINA (CUP)—The president and two other members of the student council at this University of Saskatchewan campus resigned Wednesday during a noisy meeting in which their constituents made plans for a boycott of classes next week.

Council president Dave Sheard, first five-president Ken Sunquist and councillor Gerald Pout-Macdonald resigned when the 500 students at the general meeting voted that only students who had paid their students union fees be allowed to vote in upcoming elections.

All three maintained that the franchise-restricting move makes the student union no longer representative of the campus student body.

Sheard, who has been part of the student-administration team negotiating over the board of governors' announcement that it

would not collect student union fees this term, said he could not "morally agree" with the ruling.

He said that it has "completely cut the union off from the student body." The student union was now a club "that only represents its membership."

The general meeting also voted to boycott classes Monday as a protest against administration unwillingness to respond in the ongoing negotiations over fees collection. A teach-in is planned for the same day to discuss problems of the university in the community at large.



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