Harriet Van Horne
Affluence breeds destruction

The idle affluent tend to become bored at an early age. Othertage, Lord Snow continued. In England, he said, "it is not the poor who have time to think up sadistic acts."

Tourists, who presumably know better, have stolen virtually everything "reachable and detachable" from the Kennedy Center. They've walked out with statues, posters, paintings, menus and the brass shields from electric outlets. In the appropriation center chairman Roger L. Stevens is phasing out the sum of $20,000 earmarked for "security," meaning guards and policemen. With 2,000 visitors strong in a single day (as they did the day after Thanksgiving), the amount may be sufficient to keep the center open.

According to one account, visitors have even broken windows, snipped draperies and carpets, stripped crystal chandeliers of their prisms, even prised faucets from bathroom basins.

Always, china, glassware and silver have been stolen in quantities from the center's restaurant. This suggests that the vandalism cannot be blamed as is so often is on rowdy black school children or adult delinquents from the ghetto. The thief-hunting habits of the prosperous are a troubling phenomenon of our time. C. P. Snow had some acute comments on the problem when he visited New York last year.

"The more affluent a society becomes," he noted, "the more sadistic violence seems to run loose. That's one of the bitter ironies."

Our times
Butz' fight in perspective

BY SMITH HEMSTOPHNE
Columnist
It is incredible, when one thinks about it, that a four-vote swing in the Senate last week could have blocked the appointment of Dr. Earl L. Butz as secretary of Agriculture. And this has very little to do with the merits or demerits of the 62-year-old Purdue University dean.

The Constitution provides that the President shall appoint cabinet members "with the advice and consent of the Senate." But in practice, even when an unpopular President has faced an opposition-controlled upper house, the Senate has in general acquiesced the chief executive's right to appoint those he wishes as his closest associates for the duration of his term in office.

So strong is this tradition that only few Presidents have had to decline and morals become a matter of jest. But in our society the degeneration verges on self-destruction.

The hideous damage done the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts illustrates my point. Tourists-a word that often seems interchangeable with "vandals"—have wreaked such havoc upon its halls and memorials that the trustees have had to ask Congress for a $1.5 million emergency appropriation to keep the center open.

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Lord Snow blames the boredom of the affluent. Othertage, he says, the sealing is done mostly by hostile blacks, resentful that the rich white folks have "no much while they are starving on welfare. Drug addiction is also blamed along with permissiveness, corrupt police, too little love at home and the worsening of relations between angry blacks and police.

Overpopulation might be cited as a cause of vandalism. The abrations of a crowded life can unsettle men. Or even on many people who cannot be absorbed into the economy. We’ve a million Jews saw there were no opportunities for Jews, and refused to be educated, refused to accept the old ethic of hard work and honesty. They are seen as a threat by a smug Establishment and they want in, even if "in" means only a step up from a glittering chandelier.

It is often said that we live in a society of rich and poor. The rich have all the advantages. There are hordes of Americans who, if left to follow their own inclination, will live well. We’ve a million Jews saw there were no opportunities for Jews, and refused to be educated, refused to accept the old ethic of hard work and honesty. They are seen as a threat by a smug Establishment and they want in, even if "in" means only a step up from a glittering chandelier.

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