

PAT COSTA
As I
See It



The physical appearance that President Richard Milhouse Nixon presents at a live, televised news conference is an impeccable one.

Whatever his makeup problems once were, they are no more. Under the scrutiny of the intense lights, he looks like a tanned, healthy, middle-aged, affluent American. Gray suit, white shirt, blue and gray striped tie he wore at a recent conference all go along with the self-contained, reserved image.

There are few if any slips of tongue at Mr. Nixon's press conferences. He handles questions as deftly as if each had been expected, studied and the answer rehearsed.

From discussion of a proposed trip to Europe, through the drug problem in this country to moral justification of Vietnam, he remained very much in control.

Humor is next to non-existent. Small attempts on his part to lighten the mood seldom accomplish much more than a kind of awkwardness.

Cliches at the last news conference appeared to be held to a minimum. I heard one, "This government is going to go forward," but such standard Nixon phrases as "Let Me Make One Thing Very Clear" were conspicuous by their absence.

I saw Mr. Nixon start to flap at only one point, and this regarded four or five follow-up questions on how the peace demonstrations were handled in Washington by police.

This follow-up questioning has never happened before in a Nixon conference, according to TV news commentators who follow the presidential performances a great deal more closely than most of us. Quite apparently, the president did not relish the idea of the press corps as a united front, even for so brief a time.

On the whole, Mr. Nixon comes off as competent, with little or no flair. Some observers would defend him, saying a president needs no flair, no showmanship. Maybe not, but the rest of us mortals sure do enjoy it.

Once Over Briefly

Ratings from the Catholic Office for Motion Pictures on the moral suitability of current movies: A-1: morally unobjectionable for general patronage; A-2: Unobjectionable for adults and adolescents; A-3: Unobjectionable for adults; A-4: For adults only with reservations; Class B: Morally objectionable for everyone; C: Condemned.

AIRPORT—Adults—Good story about a bomb-threatened 707 and a snow-bound airport.

ANDROMEDA STRAIN—Adults and adolescents—Chilling science thriller from a best-seller about a killer microbe.

BANANAS—Condemned—Woody Allen comedy, "tasteless insult and irreverence," offensive because it deals with lowest moral and artistic ideas.

BARFOOT EXECUTIVE—Family—A TV executive discovers a chimp who's a champ at promoting video shows.

BED AND BOARD—Adults—Warm and witty French film about marriage and parenthood, by talented Francois Truffaut.

BEGUILLED—Adults, with reservations—Lust and violence in Civil War setting; called a comedy, if you consider nymphomania and murder funny.

BUTCH CASSIDY AND SUNDANCE KID—Adults—Action story about outlaws on-the-lam with many laughs.

CLAIRE'S KNEE—Adults—A Frenchman romances mentally with a girl's knee; amusing but not sexual theme. Highly praised by Catholic film office and critics for "wit and intellectual stimulation."

CROMWELL—Family—History and derring-do about old England's political wars. Alec Guinness and Richard Harris.

DERBY—Adults—A story of roller-derbies and the people who share them; their moralities, aspirations and thrills.

FIVE EASY PIECES—Adults, with reservations—Excellent acting and pace in haunting story of a man running away from his roots and responsibilities.

GINGER—Condemned.

HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD—Adults and adolescents—Four British horror tales, non-gorey, excellently acted.

LAWRENCE OF ARABIA—Adults and adolescents—Return of David Lean classic of exciting desert warfare. Drastic cutting of original version makes plot somewhat disjointed. Great acting and photography.

LITTLE BIG MAN—Adults—Dustin Hoffman in autobiography of white boy raised by Indians, who becomes sole survivor of Custer's massacre.

LITTLE MURDERS—Adults, with reservations—Angry and funny commentary on human relationships and the bruises ("murders") which hit us everyday.

LOVE STORY—Adults—Many Kleenex story of a Harvard-Radcliffe romance which never wins.



A Scene from Claire's Knee

LOVERS AND OTHER STRANGERS—Adults, with reservations—Funniest movie of year, showing complex other side of married love in several families sharing a new marriage.

MASH—Adults—Funny but harsh story of medical outfit in Korea where war has made all jokes mean.

MRS. POLLIFAX—Adults and adolescents—Rosalind Russell fans will like her as a suburban widow who takes a spy job with the CIA.

NEW LEAF—Adults—Walter Mathau loves living beyond his means, goes broke, pursues a wealthy botanist, decides not to drown her for her money.

OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT—Objectionable in part for all—Vulgar and funny romance between a book-store clerk and a lady of easy virtue. B. Streisand without a song.

PATTON—Adults and adolescent—Oscar-winning biography of tough general whose professional dedication to excellence is his downfall.

RAID ON ROMMEL—Adults—Desert warfare with R. Burton.

RELATIONS—Condemned—Skin-flick from Denmark.

ROAD TO SALINA—Condemned—Twisted morals in a family setting.

RYAN'S DAUGHTER—Adults—Beautiful to the eye, long and moving story of adultery in an Irish town.

SPACE ODYSSEY—2001—Adults and Adolescents—Space-travel thriller with a mysterious message you may partially get.

STEWARDESSES—Condemned—Those fly-girls are not as sweet as they look.

SWEET SWEETBACK—Condemned.

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS—Adults—George Scott thinks he's Sherlock Holmes tracking Moriarty in New York City.

VALLEY OF THE DOLLS—Adults—Dope and sex in Hollywood.

At Home with the Movies

FIRST TO FIGHT (1947)
Thursday, June 17 (CBS)
Chad Everett plays a WW II Marine in this adventure film whose theme is fear. A Medal of Honor winner for bravery at Guadalcanal, the hero later has a case of jitters prior to another battle. The film was written off by critics.
The national Catholic film office rated this A-2, unobjectionable for adults and adolescents.

THE PASSWORD IS COURAGE (1962)
Friday, June 18 (CBS)
Charles Coward was a British sergeant-major who spent most of WW II being tossed into—and ingeniously escaping from—Nazi prison camps.
Played for laughs, much in the manner of TV's Hogan's Heroes, the film stars Dirk Bogarde and was made by Virginia and Andrew Stone, who provide a lot of interesting technical effects.
NCOMP rated this A-1, unobjectionable for all.

OPERATION CROSSBOW (1965)
Saturday, June 19 (NBC)
"Operation Crossbow" was the real-life code name for an Allied Intelligence plan to knock out the German V-1 and V-2 rockets at the end of WW II. A cast of big name performers show how it was done.
It was warmly received by the critics as a tautly-made, absorbing adventure.
NCOMP rated it A-1, unobjectionable for all.

SEVEN DAYS IN MAY (1964)
Sunday, June 20 (ABC)
A taut, well-written, superbly-acted suspense drama about a popular U.S. Air Force general (Burt Lancaster) who secretly plots to take over the military—and the government—when he opposes a nuclear disarmament treaty with the Russians.
Rod Sterling wrote the script, based on Fletcher Knebel's novel. John Frankenheimer directed a cast that also includes Frederic March as the President, Kirk Douglas as a general loyal to the President, Ava Gardner, Edmond O'Brien and Martin Balsam.
Lots of political intrigue, with much food for thought. NCOMP rated it A-2, unobjectionable for adults and adolescents.

THE WRONG BOX (1966)
Sunday, June 20 (CBS)
A very deft, often hilarious British-made spoof (based on a story by Robert Louis Stevenson, no less) about greed. Two dotty brothers (John Mills and Ralph Richardson) are the last survivors of an oddball club whose last survivor inherits a bundle of loot.
From there, it's one mad, zany dash for the money. Michael Caine and Peter Sellers aid in the hilarity. A sleeper film that did not get much theater exposure when it was released in this country.
NCOMP rated it A-2, unobjectionable for adults and adolescents.

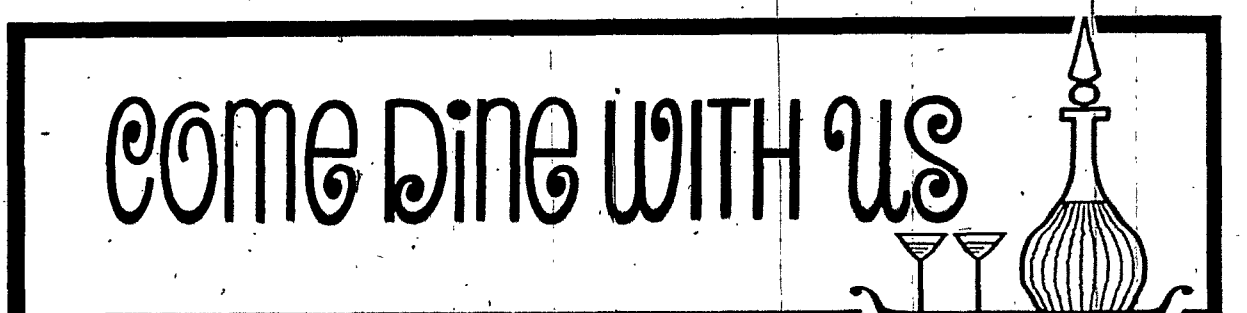
YOU'RE A BIG BOY NOW (1967)
Monday, June 21 (ABC)
A rather confusing, mod-style film

about the sexual awakening of a 17-year-old boy in Manhattan who tries to break away from his caricature-like parents (Rip Torn and Geraldine Page), only to be let down again by a stone-hearted entertainer (Elizabeth Hartman). Peter Kastner plays the boy.
NCOMP rated it A-4, unobjectionable for adults, with reservations, and observed: "Because the comic style of this film does not always succeed, its erotic elements become occasionally exaggerated."

INTERMEZZO (1959)
Tuesday, June 22 (ABC)
"One of a series of four David O. Selznick-produced films to be telecast by ABC, this one marked Ingrid Bergman's debut in American films. She plays a piano teacher who falls in love with a married concert violinist (Leslie Howard)."
NCOMP rated it A-2, unobjectionable for adults and adolescents.

THE NIGHT OF THE FOLLOWING DAY (1969)
Tuesday, June 23 (NBC)
This was an attempt by Marlon Brando to make an arty-crafty, surrealistic kidnap picture, in which four Americans capture a wealthy American girl in Paris and then see their relationship disintegrate as they try to collect the ransom.
This is one film that received quite a bit of editing by the TV network when it was first shown this past season.
NCOMP rated it A-3, unobjectionable for adults.

(Catholic Press Features)



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