

# Thriller lacks luster; 'Cry-Baby' satirizes '50s rebels

By Judith Trojan  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — A lackluster Cold War thriller, "The Fourth War" (Cannon) illustrates how two off-kilter colonels — one American and one Soviet — do personal battle on the Czechoslovak-West German border circa 1988.

This pointless effort, based on a novel by Stephen Peters, who co-wrote the screenplay, was directed by John Frankenheimer ("The Manchurian Candidate") as if the protagonists deserve our attention and concern. They don't.

Basically, Col. Jack Knowles (Roy Scheider) and Col. Valachev (Jurgen Prochnow) are has-been officers in search of a battlefield. With no more wars to fight, they attempt to start one on their own. Vietnam vet Knowles causes problems wherever he's stationed, to the consternation of his mentor and protector, Gen. Hackworth (Harry Dean Stanton as an off-beat choice for this role).

After he witnesses the merciless murder of a Czech defector, Knowles instantly begins to harass the Soviet guards by slipping over the border half-soused, tinkering with their radar equipment and finally burning down their watchtower. This malicious mischief is so senseless and infantile that Knowles loses all credibility as a character and movie hero at this point.

When his incendiary actions are addressed by his Soviet counterpart, Knowles is so oblivious to the insanity of his actions that he agrees to help an exiled Czech woman (Lara Harris in a bad Ingrid Bergman imitation) slip over the border to retrieve her small daughter. This bit of intrigue is ludicrously suspenseless.

In the end, Knowles and Valachev battle it out one-on-one knee-deep in the snow- and ice-covered strip of land separating

West Germany and Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile, their respective troops zero in with loaded tanks, helicopters and sophisticated weaponry. When the blood-soaked, frosty duo find their fists useless, they face off with snowballs at final fade.

The title of the film apparently reflects Albert Einstein's prophecy that although the third world war may be fought with nuclear weapons, the fourth will be fought with stones. This is a jolting prognostication. Stanley Kubrick ("2001: A Space Odyssey"), where are you when we need you?

Due to some profanity and pointless, grisly climactic violence, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.

## 'Cry-Baby'

Fresh from the success of his 1988 hit "Hairspray," writer-director John Waters has concocted another offbeat musical bonbon with "Cry-Baby" (Universal), a film for those leather-coated, pompadoured juvenile delinquents who held court on U.S. soil circa 1954.

Again partial to his home turf, the onetime king of camp satirically zeroes in on the two teenage factions, the "drapes" and the "squares," at large in Baltimore during those heady pre-rock rockabilly days.

Sparks fly when Wade "Cry-Baby" Walker (Johnny Depp), a "drape" gang leader from the wrong side of the tracks, falls hard for Allison Vernon-Williams (Amy Locane), a beautiful, rich "square" who is tired of being a good girl. Handsome, sensitive Wade is nicknamed Cry-Baby because his father died in "the Chair."

Wade drops one single tear every time he's hurt or sad. He hot rods around town



Cannon Pictures

A conflict between opposing border patrol commanders becomes a deadly struggle in John Frankenheimer's "The Fourth War."

with his leather-clad drapes and drapettes and lives with his sleazy grandmother, Ramona Rickettes (Susan Tyrrell, who looks like a "Li'l Abner" reject), and her musical beau, Belvedere (Iggy Pop).

Allison is just about suffocated by her crinolines, very proper grandmother (Polly Bergen) and smug, buttoned down, crew-cut beau, Baldwin (Stephen Mailer, son of Norman). During class polio vaccination day, she and Cry-Baby catch each other's eye and the rest is history.

Waters does a great job of satirizing the innocence of mid-'50s, teenage rebellion and the problems of conformity, especially as depicted in movies of the period. Several of the 11 musical production numbers choreographed by Lori Eastside

are show-stoppers, especially those set in a boys' reform school.

Although Depp and the talented Locane ("Lost Angels") will attract adolescent attention to this film (Depp is already a teen idol for his work on television's "21 Jump Street"); "Cry-Baby" is directed primarily at baby boomers and pre-baby boomers who survived as teen and pre-teen rebels or conformists during this gloriously innocent period.

Due to some Keystone-Cops violence, rude language and some vulgar sexual innuendoes and suggestive action, the U.S.S.C. classification is A-III — adults. The M.P.A.A. rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

## CRANDALL HEARING INSTRUMENTS

"28 Years of Service"

Professional Hearing Aid Services  
"We service all your hearing aid needs"

Over 30 Makes and 300 Models to Choose From

- Canal Aids (As seen on T.V.)
- "Presidential Aid"-As worn by former President Reagan
- Noise Reduction Aids-Reduces background noise up to 75%
- Fully Automatic Aids-No tubes, no wires, no cord, no batteries, no volume control
  - If you HEAR but don't always UNDERSTAND what people are saying ...
  - If people seem to mumble ...
  - If you must ask others to repeat ...
  - If you are embarrassed by MISUNDERSTANDING IN NOISY SURROUNDINGS ...



CALL TODAY FOR A FREE ELECTRONIC HEARING AID TEST  
WE MAKE HOUSE CALLS — NO CHARGE  
CALL TOLL FREE: 1-800-421-1012

GREECE  
1577 Ridge Rd. West  
(716)865-4311

NEWARK  
165 E. Union St.  
(315)331-6161

HORNELL  
40 Federation Bldg.  
(607)324-4171

### MAY SPECIAL

FREE Hearing Aid Evaluation  
& \$50.00 DISCOUNT

Expires 5/31/90  
(Prior Sales Excluded)

\$50.00 OFF on Hearing Aid Purchase with this certificate (\$100 OFF on both ears)

CRANDALL HEARING INSTRUMENTS

Hearing tests are conducted for the express purpose of making the selection and adaptation of hearing instrumentation and not for the medical diagnosis of hearing loss.

# SPRING SALE

Free Estimates  
100% Financing  
No Down Payment  
Senior Citizen Discounts!

## \$2995

Look What Will Buy

**KITCHENS:** Free Consultation & Design Service; Install Classic Oak Cabinets (choice of stains); Includes up to 15' of Cabinetry • 5 Year Manufacturer Warranty

**BATHS:** Install New Bathtub, Commode, Sink & Vanity; Ceramic Tile Available

**WINDOWS:** Install 12 Deluxe Average Size Windows; Insulated Vinyl, Lifetime Warranty; Ask about woodgrain interiors & super-efficient R-20 windows.

**SIDING:** 1600 Square Feet • No Hidden Charges! New Designs, Styles & Colors; Lifetime Warranty (labor & materials)

**PATIO ENCLOSURES:** 150 Square Feet • Free Storm Door • Solid Wood

We offer expert workmanship & complete design service for

**ADDITIONS**  
GARAGES • PORCHES  
DECKS • SUNROOMS  
Free Architectural Plans

**FREE**  
Skylight or  
Patio Door  
with Additions  
HURRY, SALE ENDS SOON!

**WMI CONSTRUCTION CO.**  
Division of Window-Man, Inc.

**328-4100 ANYTIME**

Member BBB & NARI CALL NOW