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'Dr. Strangelove' Packs Megatons of Fissionable Fun

They'll have to open up—and I mean, wide,—the 1964 Academy Award categories to accommodate all of the nominations I have



By
**PAUL
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in mind for a particular picture.

I'm talking about "Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb," the frighteningly hilarious film which opens today, simultaneously, at the Stage Door, the Clay and the El Rancho Drive-in.

In the first place, Peter Sellers will have to be nominated as "Best Actor" for his brilliant performances as the President of the U. S., Group Captain Lionel Mandrake and the German scientist, Dr. Strangelove.

HE'LL HAVE to share the "Best Supporting Actor" nomination for his performances as the President, the Captain and the Doctor, with supporting actors George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Slim Pickens and Keenan Wynn.

Stanley Kubrick will be competing with himself



GEORGE C. SCOTT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
General Turgidson overacts with cunning discipline

as "Best Director" and "Best Writer" and they even have to acknowledge the ingenuity of a girl named Laurie Johnson, who is credited with "music." In the opening shots of a bomber being refueled by a tanker plane, the musical background theme is "Try A Little Tenderness."

Mr. Kubrick calls his brain child a "nightmare comedy." It is every bit of that, plus being the most devastating satire the movies yet produced on such universal subjects as military arrogance and hindsightedness and sci-

entific coldbloodedness masquerading as survival.

The action is unleashed when a psychotic U. S. general (Hayden), obsessed with the idea that water fluoridation is a Red plot to adulterate our "precious bodily fluids," orders the nuclear bombers under his command to drop their deadly cargoes on strategic targets in Russia.

NO HIGHER authority has told him to do this. There is no indication that the Russians have acted first. This bemedaled, be-Birched bombast has begun things

solely on his own warped initiative.

The security system is such that even the Pentagon is powerless to recall the bombers once they are on their way unless the general's operational code word is known.

Well, as you can imagine, all Hell breaks loose.

The President summons all his responsible officers into emergency session in the War Room, and the hysteria in high places reaches fever-pitch as generals, statesmen (?), politicians and scientists try desperately to avoid a nuclear war.

Kubrick, building the suspense with uncommon directional skill, has purposely overstated the case (or has he?). The bigger the balloon the more memorably impressive when it blows up. His generals are buffoons; his statesmen inept; his scientists dedicated to the principal of "over-kill."

EVEN THE names he gives these august gentlemen are needled with ridicule—General Jack Ripper is the Hayden character. Mr. Wynn's name is Colonel "Bat" Guano; the Russian premier's name is Kissov; the pilot of the nuclear bomber is Major "King" Kong. The Russian ambassador is de Sadesky (de Sade?).

The "hot line" conversations between the U. S. President (his name is Muffley, and he's bald-headed so you can make of that what you will) and the Russian leader are marvelously revealing examples of pointlessness, blame shifting, and unstatesmanship.

But there are many scenes which underscore Mr. Kubrick's merciless opinion of the men who hold the fate of the world in their hands.

If I told you about any more of them I'd only spoil for you what for me

was one of the most rewarding cinematic experiences I've had since I took my first girl to the movies and the balcony was empty.

And the proof of Kubrick's resourcefulness is the fact that even while you're laughing you're thinking to yourself "This is about the atom bomb—I shouldn't be laughing at this!" But you will!

HAVING ALREADY suggested that Mr. Sellers is a shoo-in for an Academy Award nomination—at the very least—just a word about Mr. Scott as General Turgidson, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

If ever a man overacted to a purpose it is Mr. Scott. He is stuffed with conceit, bloated with authority, distended with disdain for anything smacking of civilian concern for mass murder. And paradoxically enough he plays such flamboyance with cunning theatrical discipline.

Just to wrap it all up, the whole film is such a dexterous dissection of our national security I'm surprised the Pentagon hasn't demanded it be banned for public consumption.