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CHICAGO TRIBUNE
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Siskel, Gene
Soc. 4.01.4 The Looking Glass War
Pe Le Carré, John

The Movies

by Gene Siskel

Spies and Students

O "THE LOOKING Glass War" and "R. P. M." [Revolutions Per Minute] are two Columbia releases which met with little success in their New York and Los Angeles engagements and have ended up as a one-week double bill in neighborhood theaters here.

THE LOOKING GLASS WAR
Yawn
★
"THE LOOKING GLASS WAR"

Produced by John Pier, directed by Frank R. Pierson, screenplay by Pierson based on John Le Carré's novel, a Columbia release of neighborhood theaters. Rated GP.

THE CAST

Leiser .....Christopher Jones
Leclerc .....Sir Ralph Richardson
Haldane .....Paul Rogers

Christopher Jones, who also stars in the forthcoming "Ryan's Daughter," is just another pretty face in "Looking Glass War," a dreary spy story set in East Germany.

Young Jones can get political asylum in England if he will return to East Germany and recover a roll of film which documents Communist rocket sites. Because he is a neophyte in the spy game he is able, thru his arguments with the Intelligence Establishment, to reflect the nastiness of it all. Sound familiar?

And because of his disdain, the regulars in the British espionage corps are forced to reconsider their existence. One officer agrees with his wife about the ugliness of his work and nearly quits the service. Another reminisces about the good old days in World War II when his work had a more clear purpose. Sound familiar?

Jones is an attractive fellow in the physical mold of James Dean and, more recently, Helmut Berger. But the pace of "Looking Glass War" is so absolutely dreary and derivative that his presence and that of Sir Ralph Richardson [as a British intelligence officer] are wasted.

Director Frank R. Pierson, who also adapted John Le Carré's novel for the screenplay, presents his tired material in the dreariest of tones. It's really unnecessary, for we all know that spying is hell.

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