

Director Richard Brooks' new satire fails to hit the target

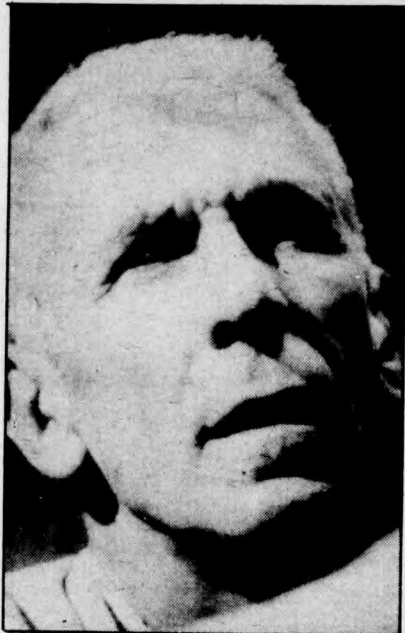
Elliott Lefko

New York—Richard Brooks isn't getting any younger. The once mighty director (*The Blackboard Jungle*, *In Cold Blood*, *Looking For Mr. Goodbar*) is showing his age, 72, with his latest film, *Wrong Is Right*.

A spunky, grey-haired Brooks sat in a short-sleeved shirt, slacks and sneakers in New York's elegant St. Regis Hotel, charming the endless parade of look-and-sound-alike television interviewers. For each personality Brooks has a different face, and a different pace. For one he stares off in space and spins stories of Bogart and Elizabeth Taylor. For another he plays the mystic, broadcasting quotable quotes for the camera's eager eye. Finally, after resting his large, wild eyes at the end of a take, he looks at the line-up of fresh-faced university scrubs, pencils and tape recorders poised and asks his producer if he "could go home now".

Black, hard satire

Brooks' latest satire is what he calls "black, hard satire". The objects of ridicule are world leaders, American and Arab, as well as the television networks which provide the arena for the conflict. In conversation, Brooks alluded to contemporary film



Director Richard Brooks' new film *Wrong Is Right* is not one of his best works.

satires such as *Network* and *Dr. Strangelove*. However *Wrong Is Right* is neither. It's an all-too-typical, bombastic display of silliness.

The script is tired, the jokes fail to hit their targets, the casting is insipid, and the whole affair reeks of being a 'poor man's' version of the real satire that could have been written on the U.S.-Arab oil and arms media circus.

Brooks defends his work with the brevity of an old general. "The best writers have used satire. I feel that I invested myself in the film. I've taken a risk, but time is shorter than we think, and we need to take a look at ourselves."

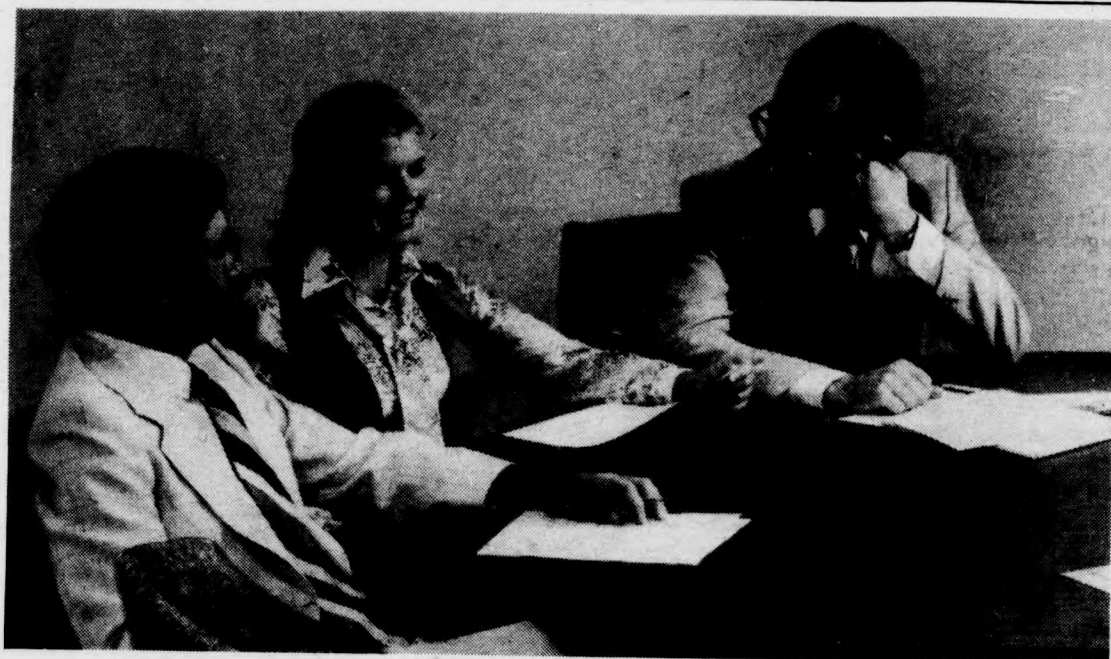
Wrong Is Right is concerned with atomic bombs and the implications of a mushroom-clouded New York City. "Fear makes people do strange things," he mused, rising both in his seat and in the degree of his intensity. "If young people have no hope, it will erupt."

Beautiful image

"We see nuclear explosion as a beautiful image," he continues. "No one understands or asks why. My world is full of realism. I'm not afraid to tell the truth."

The interviews stop again, the instant friendship bonds between Brooks and the faceless mediamatics are exchanged, and the director chortles to his chorus. "You better get interested. Ask. Find out. Be concerned."

With *Wrong Is Right* Brooks examines the theme of love, a word that Brooks feels has been raped in the Eighties. "We use it to grease the way. People forget that caring is part of love."



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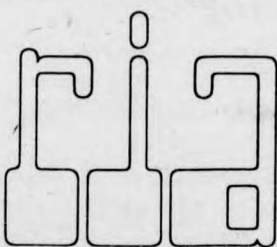
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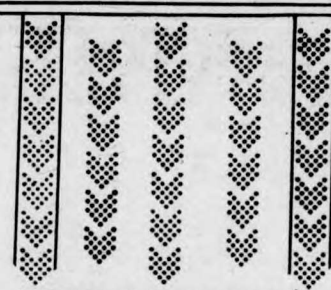


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