

# At The Movies

by Mike Plake

"Good is when evil takes a rest."

James Coburn has joined the ranks of the elite. He stars with Lee Remick, Lilli Palmer, Burgess Meredith, Patrick Magee, and Sterling Hayden in "Hard Contract."

Wondering what that first funny quote I opened with means? It's the philosophy of Sterling Hayden, who plays a retired syndicate killer. More about that later.

This is a chilling, real film about the beautiful people, and how they affect/are affected by the Syndicate. The Syndicate has as its suburban branch head Burgess Meredith, an ex-college professor turned consultant. The Organization hires him to keep a current list of threats to security. He takes care of dispensing with the threats, evidently by hiring the right man at the right time to do the knocking off.

But this is no ordinary murder story. In comes sedate, quietly-efficient James Coburn, who is the best murderer the Syndicate has for hire.

He gets a hard contract from Meredith: three men, each in different countries in Europe.

In between the scenes from U. S. to Europe, where our hero (or antihero) has never before been, we get a glimpse of his personal life. It seems that before he leaves for an assignment, after an assignment, and between assignments, he has a thirst for sex.

When he arrives in Europe, quite naturally, with all his teeth flashing that is what he asks for—at the price of fifty American dollars. Lee Remick, with a group of the beautiful people, overhears. Being a beautiful person, and also an attractive, red-blooded young woman, she decides that she must try it. So she hires herself out, with the full post-blessings of group leader Lilli Palmer.

At a price of \$100. And so goes the movie. The beautiful people reverse the philosophy of Mom and apple pie, and are a group of live-in existentialists. Coburn knocks off two of his contract, and becomes involved—yes—to use that over-worked expression, in love—with Lee Remick. But the third man on the contract is harder, and Coburn's hands are beginning to shake.

He tries the old remedy in a native house of prostitution, but it doesn't work any more. He still shakes.

The third man on the contract is Sterling Hayden, bearded, robust, retired from the profession of killing. Coburn is visibly affected by his philosophy, grow out of reading many books since he stopped.

Finally, Coburn wonders if he can stop, and marry the girl next door, and live normally, etc. The rest of the movie he tries.

This is an unusual film. In it, Coburn has no gadgets. He is a highly-paid professional because he happens to be good at his job. The film is tightly edited, well-photographed, with an unusual plot. It is held together by very good character portrayals by Lilli Palmer and Burgess Meredith, who proves he is worth more than his Batman villain roles.

Worst of all, the movie points a fascinating aspect of life on this good green earth: are there really men like him? Is there really a Syndicate which can snuff the lives of people for dollar bills?

My guess is, it happens every-day.

## Local Poverty: A Battalion Interpretive

(Continued From Page 1)

OAA helps people over 65 who are out of work and need money.

AFDC aids families with children up to the age of 18, or 21 if the child is in school. The child's parents must be either dead, gone (desertion), sick, or disabled. No family can receive AFDC if there is a male in the house able to work. About 140,000 Texas children from 38,000 families now receive this aid.

APDC AIDS AIDS this aid. 18 or over who need the help of another person in carrying out the usual activities of living. The program now aids 20,000 Texans.

A potential welfare recipient must apply through the office of O. S. Hervey, Brazos County welfare agent.

It takes about 30 days for an applicant to get a response, Hervey noted. If the welfare people don't respond, the potential recipient may ask for a fair hearing. This means someone in the Department of Public Welfare who was not involved in deciding if they were eligible will review the case, Hervey said.

TEXAS' WELFARE programs are rated 46th among the states, Hervey noted. Welfare funds are limited to \$60 million by the state constitution, but an amendment which would raise this sum to \$80 million will be voted on Aug. 5, he added.

There is a need to "inform the voters on this issue; they must pass the amendment," he emphasized.

The Bryan welfare fund, administered by the county, temporarily helps people who are in jail or going through hard times. It pays grocery, electricity and other bills, County Judge W. R. Vance said.

BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION schools are also helping needy children with the aid of federal programs.

One of these is Head Start, a program which helps prepare pre-school children for the first grade. The service is available

to children of certain low-income families, and welfare recipients regardless of income.

There were 330 children in the Bryan program last summer, Mrs. Auston S. Kerley, director of Head Start for Bryan, said.

HEAD START employs 20 primary grade teachers and aides who are either mothers of the children or persons from the poverty area where Head Start is selecting children.

Registration forms are sent to all families of children who will start in the first grades in all elementary schools except Crockett, Henderson and Ross schools were relatively few families are eligible for the service, Mrs. Kerley said.

The College Station Head Start teaches 45-50 children each summer. The children are selected through health nurses, free lunch programs and welfare roles, Elvis T. Ozment, program director, said.

HEAD START in both cities also provides free medical examinations, dental treatment, lunches, and snacks, along with dis-

cussions with parents on nutrition, advice on the use of surplus foods and how to get the most out of the food dollar, help and counseling by local family agencies for personal problems and help for families seeking welfare, health, housing and educational aid for their children.

Another program that seems to be working is the free lunch program.

"A CHILD'S attitude is 100 per cent improved if he comes to school on a full stomach. He is more responsive to the teacher," Mrs. Mary Ann Franke, school dietician and head of the free lunch program for Bryan, said.

Bryan schools also have an enviable record in preventing drop-outs.

The schools have a drop-out rate of three per cent, which is the lowest in the state and probably in the nation, Mrs. Kerley said.

"These drop-out students aren't the result of being poor or being slow learners or mentally retarded, because such students are well taken care of by specific programs for them in the schools," Mrs. Kerley said.

Brazos county initiated a fund in May 1968 that provides medical help for impoverished persons.

"THIS IS one of the greatest things that Brazos county ever did for the indigent. It helps those in need of hospital care," Bill Elkins, administrator of the Indigent Hospitalization Fund, said.

Doctors refer their patients to Elkins, who reviews the cases to determine eligibility. Eighty per cent of a hospital bill is paid by the fund. Patients who are under intensive care or undergoing extensive examinations are sent to John Sealy Hospital in Galveston where the full amount is paid.

The fund helped 16 patients last year and has helped 65 this year, Elkins said.

### Listen Up

Editor; The Battalion:

Recently it was my pleasure to be on the A&M Campus as a member of a group from the Houston A&M Mothers Club to make presentations to various organizations. Our reception was gratifying and heart-warming.

From the first Orientation Meeting three years ago up to the present, I have been increasingly impressed with the unfailing courtesy and good manners that I have encountered all over the campus. Everywhere I've gone I've been met with helpfulness and good humor, and I'd like to take the opportunity to say, "Thank You, AMU!"

Mrs. Charles W. Frank, President Houston A&M Mothers Club

# The Battalion

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### PEANUTS

By Charles M. Schulz