

# CINEMASCOPE: 'Three Days' wastes 48 hours



Photo courtesy of Paramount Productions  
Robert Redford stars as a CIA man in Three Days of the Condor.

Review By Robert Thurber

As one might expect, *Three Days of the Condor*, a recent Paramount release, is only half as stimulating as *Six Days of the Condor*, the not-so-successful book from which it was taken.

This Sydney Pollack (*They Shoot Horses Don't They?*) film turns out to be an almost intriguing spy adventure that offers a fairly intelligible plot, less intelligible dialogue and very little suspense. What the movie offers, however, is Robert Redford, which by today's standards seems to be enough. *Condor* is familiar material—so familiar that it becomes predictable after awhile and loses its novelty.

The idea behind *Condor* is an interesting one, especially in light of recent CIA uncoverings by Phillip Agee, the Rockefeller Commission and other Washington agencies and committees.

#### Low-level CIA

Redford plays Turner, code name Condor, a low-level CIA worker who reads, analyzes and computerizes fiction as part of the agencies' overall intelligence operation. He has discovered, through his readings, what he thinks to be an interesting irregularity in a novel, but his superiors in Washington aren't interested. Or are they?

After lunch one rainy afternoon, Turner returns to the

office (cleverly disguised as the American Literary Historical Society) to find that his coworkers have been savagely and expediently murdered.

Realizing that a similar fate awaits him, Turner lays low to discover who or what is at the bottom of it all. Using his code name he contacts Central Headquarters and finds out they too are out to kill him. Alone against everyone, he goes on the run to avoid annihilation and to unravel the thread of mystery.

#### Basic hero

Only two problems: it is evident from the outset that Turner is your basic hero type and therefore not subject to annihilation, and the thread of mystery he's supposed to unravel is reminiscent of every spy thriller ever written.

Director Pollack has an excellent cast of costars that includes Cliff Robertson, Max Von Sydow and John Houseman. Unfortunately, not even the efforts of these talented actors is enough to enlighten a rather unenlightening script.

Not much good can be said about *Three Days of the Condor* without immediate qualification. It is enjoyable but nothing worth remembering; entertaining but empty.

Perhaps the film would have benefited from extensive editing. It could have been retitled *One Day of the Condor* and saved us all 48 hours of unnecessary time.

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some say he never will be.  
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PG

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**ROOSTER COGBURN**

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