

the force which takes freedom away from the individual, but no mention is made of the varying kinds of Communism or the fact that in East Germany it exists in an extreme form, the work in many cases of fanatical politicians which recently has placed the country's agricultural economy in a precarious position.

All the incidents in the film are claimed to be based on fact, but their presentation at times is a little suspect, particularly a sequence in which a worker, denied a church ceremony, has a state funeral during which one of the officials delivers a speech about "There is no other place but here, no other time but now". The Church becomes the champion of freedom, not so long ago it believed in oppression. It finds in the bible a perfect weapon to attack the principles of Communism, but a lot of its criticisms could also be levelled against so-called "civilised" countries.

This is Stuart Rosenberg's first sole credit as a film director, last year he co-directed "**MURDER INC.**" after an impressive record on television. His is an entirely documentary approach to the subject and, apart from Michael Gwynn as the pastor, his leading actors lack conviction. This may partly be due to the fact that they had to use actors who could speak both German and English fluently.

Christian de Bresson, a French youth from the New York stage, as the son doesn't succeed in conveying the impression of a boy torn between ideals and ambition and his acting at times is quite lifeless. Rosenberg does however achieve impressive performances from actors playing minor East German parts; the farmer who refuses to join the collective farming scheme, in

spite of a loudspeaker van issuing ominous warnings outside his home twenty-four hours of the day; or the man who has come to a compromise: "Be a radish – red only on the outside".

"**QUESTION SEVEN**" is undeniably a work of considerable merit, and shows that consideration can be given to subjects of this type without resorting to violence. But its moral philosophy is unsound. The West German government has awarded it a "Besonders wertvoll" predicate (of high artistic value) which grants it a high tax relief... moral blackmail? I wonder if a film giving the opposite point of view would!"

Still caption:

"Reluctant pupil: Erik Schumann as an East German teacher tries to win over the pastor's son (Christian de Bresson) for socialism in Stuart Rosenberg's "**QUESTION SEVEN**"."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Fairly patently a piece of Western cold war propaganda, exploiting the 15-year old just as brazenly as it makes the communists seem to do. Interestingly, the same edition of *Films & Filming* points out that the British film censors had refused a certificate to an East German documentary – "**AKTION J**" – which used World War 2 newsreel footage to allege that Dr Hans Glebke (then West German Secretary of State) had been a prominent Nazi party member, on the grounds that "it appears to have been made to damage the reputation of an individual". However, this did not prevent the censors granting a certificate to "**OPERATION EICHMANN**" – even though the film was largely fictitious, and the real Eichmann was presently on trial for his life in Israel. Nothing else is known of Christian de Bresson. He's not listed in *The Moving Picture Boy*.

See subject index under **THE CHILD AS POLITICAL SYMBOL, EASTERN EUROPE / SOVIET BLOC, MUSIC / YOUNG MUSICIANS, RELIGION, RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS and SCHOOL.**