



At the movies

'Seeing Red' portrays political ideal, dream

"Seeing Red" is appropriately subtitled "stories of American Communists" because it's as much about the people involved in the movement as it is about the movement itself.

The film chronicles the history of the American Communist Party from its rise during the depression through the Cold War, McCarthyism and the death of Stalin to the present. Filmmakers James Klein and Julia Reichert mix old newsreel footage with recent interviews

of longtime party members who recall their experiences in the party.

Beginning with the rise of the party during the depression years, Klein and Reichert set the film by finding the roots of the movement. Fleshed out by engrossing interviews with party members who remember back to those days, we begin to see a party we really never knew, a party of idealists looking for genuine change at a time when capitalism seemed to be on the skids.

The members were not just students and radicals but laborers as well.

"Seeing Red" is really about the history of a dream and the people caught up in it. The interview subjects are bright, funny, interesting people who shed new light on a subject never really understood that well. And there really is nothing like hearing an aged longshoreman speak in all seriousness about his involvement in an organization traditionally viewed as radical and

subversive.

The film doesn't paint a totally positive picture of the movement. It also lays bare some of the soul searching caused by Kruschev's admission, in the late 1950s, of Stalin's atrocities. There also is a sobering clip in the introduction where an ex-party member refuses to be interviewed for the film because of fears of stigma and personal recriminations.

Starts Friday at Cinema 7.

By Sean Axmaker

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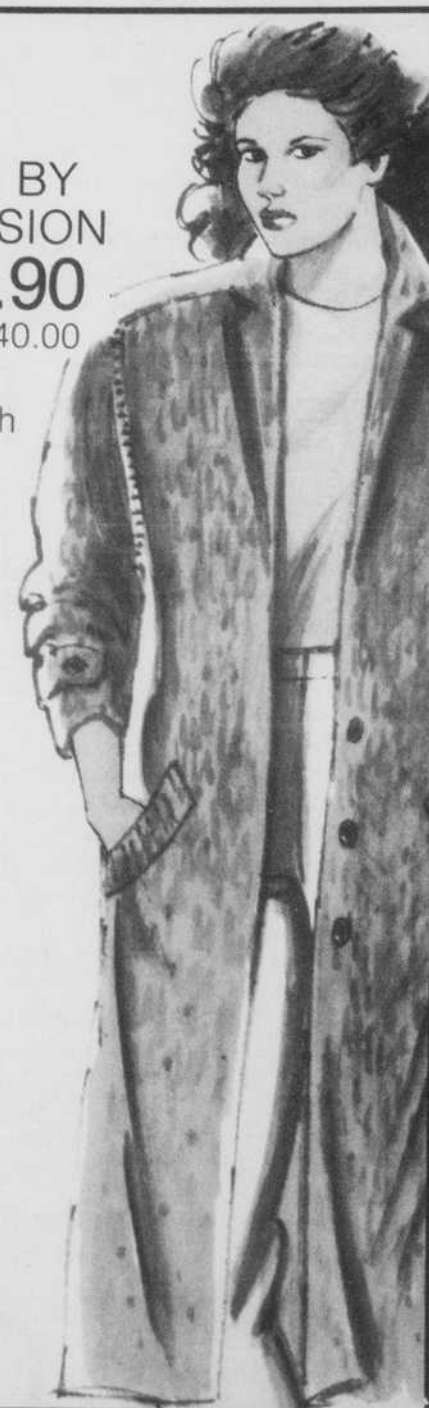
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