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ANARCHY 48 IS ABOUT

PETER BROOK'S film of

# LORD of the FLIES

from the novel by WILLIAM GOLDING

[inside front cover]

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33

ANARCHY 48 (Vol 5 No 2) FEBRUARY 1965

**MUST THE GOOD GUYS ALWAYS LOSE?**

[graphic]

**John Ellerby**

FEW MODERN NOVELS HAVE BEEN SO RAPIDLY AND COMPLETELY ABSORBED into the general consciousness as William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* has been since its first publication less than eleven years ago. It is available in a variety of editions-hardback, paperback, a "book of the film" edition, a school edition, and it has also reached the status of a Penguin Modern Classic. Educators have fallen on it with avidity because of its eminent suitability as a school text: a story so absorbing that no-one is bored by it, a moral fable, a provoker of heated discussion, a perfect piece of examination-fodder. It has the curious distinction of being a set-book of more examinations in English than any other recent novel, and, with the possible exception of *Animal Farm*, we may guess that more school-children and students are introduced at school to it than to any other work of fiction. (If we forget of course, the extracurricular circulation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*). Fortunately it is a good book too.

Apparently the same thing is true in America. When originally published there, it sold 2,383 copies; since it was reprinted it has sold over a million copies. "Today it tops all American paperbacks" reported *Books and Bookmen* last April, "and has become a standard text on the campus".

I did not realise how widely Golding's fable had circulated, even before the belated release of Peter Brook's film version, until, talking about anarchism in schools and colleges during the last few years, I noticed how frequently reference was made to it as an allegory which demonstrated the "impossibility" of anarchism. I believe Arthur Uloth mentioned a similar experience in FREEDOM. Norman Page, writing in the current issue of *The Use of English* says, "My own experience of discussing the book with women students has indicated a sharp division between admiration (the majority) and distaste. Some have found it original, credible and completely gripping: others unnatural, far-fetched and unconvincing, even sickening or revolting ... The information that the author is a schoolmaster can cause some amusement, and leads conveniently into a discussion of the view of human nature that the book reveals".

The general tone of comment was established when the book first

34

appeared. The critic of *The Listener*, for instance, wrote, "The whole structure of a savage society is built up before our eyes; but it is also a horrible parody of a civilised society in a period of danger and anarchy." Similarly the editors of the school edition declare that "Complete moral anarchy is unleashed ..." Similar comments were plentiful when the film was reviewed, though perhaps the most interesting remark of the story's propositions about human nature was that of an American critic, Jackson Burgess, writing in *Film Quarterly*:

"While Brook has altered the emphasis, I think he shares Golding's much-discussed views on 'natural depravity', and the film conveys them with disturbing effectiveness. I find two dubious assumptions, however, underpinning both the novel and the film: that the essential nature of man is peculiarly visible in the behaviour of children, and that brutality (that is, brutishness) equals sin. If children are naturally brutal (and the film shows us that they are, and shows us convincingly) then man is naturally sinful. But what makes man most human is precisely his experience of having grown up, and mindless brutality is less a sin than a failure to have grown up into the realm of good and evil".

Golding himself has several times made explicit his own view of "human nature". In a *New York Herald Tribune* interview he said that his book was "based on the discovery that World War Two brought to my generation. Before the war, we were politically naive; most Europeans believed that man could be perfected by perfecting his society. The war taught us that if there is to be a perfecting of man, it will depend on the individual rather than on social machinery. We all saw a hell of a lot in the war that can't be accounted for except on the basis of original evil. Man is born to sin. Set him free, and he will be a sinner, not Rousseau's noble savage".

This view is widely regarded as contradicting the social theories alleged to be held by the anarchists. Mr. Cyril Connolly, writing in the *Sunday Times* (3 January 1965) about the anarchists

“whose ideas on the perfectibility of human nature satisfy an ethical indolence”, goes on: “Evidently the anarchist philosophers had not studied the behaviour of children: the aggression, the greed, the lying and tale-bearing which is in evidence long before ‘the State’ has borne down on them and conscripted them to the fields and the factories”.

Precisely because of the monotonous regularity with which this kind of argument is used to refute anarchist ideas, we thought it valuable to ask several writers to consider the implications of *Lord of the Flies*, and in this issue of ANARCHY Harold Drasdo examines the story against the background of Golding’s literary achievement as a whole, Martin Small discusses the theological background, (and finds, to his own satisfaction at least, that original sin is a potentially revolutionary idea), and Catherine Gibson draws some anarchist conclusions from the book and the film.

The other articles in this issue are relevant in different ways to the theme—especially the account of Michael Duane’s experience at Risinghill School.

35

### **WILLIAM GOLDING: FROM DARKNESS TO BLACKOUT Harold Drasdo**

[graphic]

NO ENGLISH NOVELS OF THE LAST DECADE have been more eagerly awaited by the critics than those of William Golding. He is, incidentally, also the author of a certain amount of poetry and of a long story which has appeared as a play, *The Brass Butterfly*. But no-one has paid much attention to these and perhaps they do not warrant it. It is the five novels that have arrested and divided the critics and reviewers by their extreme originality. by the obvious authority of Golding’s writing, and in spite of the sense in which, to some extent, they run counter to rationalist thinking and offend the humanist tradition.

Without doubt, the first thing to strike anyone about Golding’s work is the texture of the writing itself, the sheer muscular force of the prose. The immediacy of the description, the power and control, especially in dealing with the natural world and with hard physical experience, is most remarkable. He seems to achieve without effort the sort of economy and precision that, in comparable situations, Hemingway struggled for; and yet he can slide in a sentence into passages with the balance, elevation and calm of great poetry.

The next thing about the novels is that they have a compulsive detective-story sort of fascination, though the element which produces this effect in the first book is steadily abandoned or supplanted with each successive book. In the beginning it was the shock of the unfolding events and the drive and simplicity of the narrative that held the reader. Indeed, *Lord of the Flies*, which introduced Golding’s name in 1954, is one of those rare books like *Animal Farm* which present no surface difficulties and which have an equal impact for the Secondary Modern schoolchild and the Third Programme critic. The later books continue this obsessive urgency by a deviousness of manner which conceals some of the clues vital to the understanding until the end and even then leaves the reader with a good deal to consider; so that reviewers lacking the time, wit or patience to put together these jigsaws felt that there was a gratuitous element of mystification. Hence Philip Toynbee, speaking for himself—“The book is dull, and dull in the most disturbing way ... That is to say that the machinery of language, presentation

36

and form is large and noisy out of all proportion to the work it is doing ...” And Mr. Duval Smith, or behalf of all perplexed readers “Some of the congregation are staring curiously at the preacher. Why does the perspiration stand out so? they wonder. Why is he shouting? What does it signify, that wild look in his eye?”

All of Golding's books have strange endings which have occasioned a good deal of comment. *Lord of the Flies* tells of the regression to savagery of a party of schoolboys airwrecked without adults on a coral island. In the pace of the narrative, and in his premonitory horror, the reader sees their figures assume demoniac proportions: then, in the last three pages of the final chapter, Golding cuts them down to child-size. *The Inheritors*, which appeared a year later focusses on the sad remnants of a once numerous Neanderthal group who try desperately to comprehend the nature and motives of a party of our more direct ancestors—who demonstrate efficiently, as they expunge the primitives, that the meek *don't* inherit the earth. And then, in the last chapter, we sail away from the carnage with the new men, recognising ourselves and the way in which our violence stems partly from fear.

In *Pincher Martin* we find a man struggling in the sea as a warship goes down; he is cast ashore, in extremis, on Rockall and he fights for survival with all the intelligence, will-power and strength at his command; he is overcome steadily, it seems, by hallucinations or perhaps by madness: and then, in the last chapter, we are taken to a Hebridean island for the identification of a cast-up body and we learn that our hero perished on page two. The rest of the book could be the flashbacks and the snatch of hope of the drowning man, if reason will permit you to swallow so much. But no: Mr. Golding has elsewhere explained that Pincher Martin is in Purgatory—not a Christian purgatory since he is not a Christian but a particular purgatory of his own construction where his selfish nature tears itself to pieces before some power or other.

In *Free Fall*, an artist's search through his past for the point at which he lost some sort of freedom, the ending has become not so much a dramatic shift in the point of view as the presentation of a final clue towards interpretation. Only in *The Spire*, the impossible structure which the obsessed Dean of a medieval cathedral is driven to have raised against all reason and advice does the gimmick ending seem to have almost disappeared.

I have said that, on the surface, the stories are easy to read. But scope for excavation has been found in them and in some quarters this is a proof of value. It was immediately obvious that the island of *Lord of the Flies* was to be Ballantyne's *Coral Island* with a difference: Ralph and Jack were in attendance and instead of Peterkin—how ingenious!—Simon. The man who was christened Christopher ("bearing Christ") Martin has become Pincher before he meets his doom. In a brilliant analysis of *Free Fall* in the *Twentieth Century* Ian Gregor and Mark Kinkead-Weekes point out that the hero—Samuel ("heard by God") Mountjoy (Mons Veneris!) pursues a Beatrice who is surnamed

37

Ifor; they have even learnt that the German interrogator, Dr. Halde, is Dr. Slope. These discoveries hold the interest for a few seconds and give a guide to Golding's intentions, and the concepts which he is exploring; it is when we isolate these concepts from the fabric of the books that we experience discomfort. For Golding is a Christian of a pretty hard school and he is trying to say something about—innocence, guilt, sin, evil, grace, transfiguration, and so on: treating all these ideas quite purposefully in their antique religious senses. It is absorbing to watch him so occupied but most of us will be unable to feel much sympathy for his struggles.

Nevertheless, however meaningless Golding's basic preoccupations may seem to the libertarian reader, some of the novels raise interesting points. The last two, it is true, do not repay prolonged attention in spite of their ingenuity of construction; in them Golding is completely engrossed in his metaphysics—the narrator of *Free Fall* admits that "the external events [of his story] are common enough"—and we know that the humanist would quarrel with his doctrinal adhesions and the linguistic philosopher would demolish them. In *Pincher Martin* we do feel that we are nearer to real problems—a definition of the edges of personal freedom and of the meanings of guilt and conscience; but we are unlikely to share the author's viewpoint.

*The Inheritors* challenges us with a demonstration of a situation (a single episode from all history but offered, as Golding's fables are, as an archetypal truth) in which a life-orientated, matriarchal group goes down before its authoritarian successors because it has no science and no

experience of the pressures in other types of society or of the effects of these pressures on fear and violence. It would be absurd to reject this moral which is pertinent to our own world of concentration camps and nationalism—and civil disobedience too.

But the first novel, *Lord of the Flies*, is the most interesting. It suggests that there is an inherent evil in the children—in man, too. At the end of the book Ralph weeps for “the darkness of man’s heart”. And the triumph of the forces of evil is averted only by pure chance—the intervention of adults. Despite the fact that the action takes place during a cataclysmic world war, which, we are told, has left civilisation in ruins, there is little evidence that Golding intends the happenings on the island as a metaphor of the struggle for power in the outside world. Indeed, he seems to give tacit approval to the general structure of modern society, which, presumably, keeps in check at a personal level the innate evil in his creatures: before the rot sets in Roger does not throw stones at Henry because he is not yet free of the standards of civilised life—“Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law. Roger’s arm was conditioned by a civilisation that knew nothing of him ...”

But if Golding’s fable in some way typifies the nature of man then does he believe this civilisation to have been achieved? In some ways

38

progress has surely been made even if only on the evidence of our sceptical and enquiring minds. Civilised values rest on education, Golding would presumably say. Who, then, educated the educators? How did mankind escape its bleak beginnings in Jack’s kingdom? A possible answer is that lost causes are found again if they embody humanistic ideals—though Golding would perhaps ascribe this escape to some sort of psycho/religious enlightenment or intuition. The knowledge of Piggy and Simon is to some extent passed on to Ralph; and the seeds of Ralph’s fairmindedness might have germinated posthumously in Jack’s new society. Just as the inheritors sailed away carrying the Neanderthal infant with them.

It is odd that, in each of the first two novels, Golding has a good deal to say about communication and language. There is evidence of this interest again as Pincher Martin names the parts of his rock. I have said that there is often a splendid precision in Golding’s use of language but I must qualify this. When he gets down to the behaviour of individuals, parallel to his premature theological ultimates he has certain images or psychological ultimates which spare him the need to grapple with prosaic actuality: men’s minds contain “a darkness”, they are directed by “the centre”; and at the centre of “the centre” there is just “the thing” or “it”. Sometimes it is hard to guess whether the words have overpowered the ideas or whether the ideas are simply not clear enough for any other words. Either way, the power is there but there seems a want of accuracy.

A character in a story by John Menlove Edwards says: “I sought for reality intensely, always as if it was not there”. William Golding is a bit like that.

## HUNTERS AND BUILDERS

Catherine Gibson

[graphic]

IS IT THE ARTIST’S BUSINESS TO MAKE SOCIAL CRITICISM, or just to show us life, intensified perhaps by special circumstances or the telescoping of events? William Golding knows boys and he recreates them for us in a special set of circumstances. This inevitably draws from us some sort of conclusion. Is it possible to judge the author’s conclusions? I don’t think it could be because so many people take the “children are little animals until they are trained” line and back it up by quoting *Lord of the Flies*.

39

Ralph asks Piggy “What has gone wrong? why isn’t it working?” He is referring to his system of a commonly accepted leader working by fair rules for the good of all. And Piggy doesn’t know. Is it because the boys have forgotten their twelve odd years of civilization? Let us consider some of the things they do remember. They do certainly seem to be grasping at elements of what they have found to be most useful and most suitable to their temperaments in their lost world. Piggy remembers postboxes and tea. Ralph remembers codes of behaviour, which include taking turns at speaking and looking after the little ’uns, Jack remembers rules too, but mostly that punishments are dealt out for breaking them and we get the impression that he has been in a position already to savour the satisfactions of dealing them out.

Could it be that their experience of civilization has not been an adequate preparation for the development of a free life?

At the beginning they have a meeting; they put up their hands to speak—“like in school”; they give their names. Then they choose a leader by voting. All this is a very useful framework, but they lack concentration and a view of their main objectives. This is because they are children of course, easily distracted by more interesting things than sitting around talking. The film allowed us to see plenty of their essential *joie de vivre*. But they are making good use of their democratic background, and without too much fuss. Much less than adults would have made, probably. They settle the essentials and get on with enjoying their freedom. Jack’s tendency to bulldoze his way to what he wants is kept in check and Piggy’s tendency to worry is assuaged; both by Ralph, who has a pleasant easy-going way with everybody. So far so good. Then gradually fear creeps in. Fear at first of the “beastie” They laugh but uncertainly, at the little boy who talks vaguely of this danger. One can see that they are torn between fear of being thought sissy and fear of all the bogeymen with which they have ever been threatened by adults who should have known better. Soon Jack who cannot bear not to be leader, learns to exploit these fears. Those who, for one reason or another have not joined in the hunt, are despised at his suggestion, and there is enough glorification of one particular sort of courage in the civilization they have left to give credit to this view. So it is that the hunt becomes their central activity; more important than the need to be rescued, or the individuality of each one of them. But the ceremony of the hunt does not allay fear, although it temporarily channels it. Now they are afraid of the act of killing and they are afraid of themselves because they have been caught up in a mass hysteria which they don’t understand. They are also afraid of each other, because they know it is a rule of the strongest into which they have drifted. No one of them is strong enough alone so they must act together, but they must watch each other and yet not be seen to be afraid. And they are afraid of Jack, who has half deceived himself by his head-long rush to power. He feels that power is essential to him now. He must not be thwarted. Where did they learn to accept so easily the power-hungry man and where did Jack learn the tricks of the tyrant?

Ralph becomes insecure and over-anxious because he does not

40

understand the turn of events. And who can blame him. But he does not change his attitudes to people. He never treats the others as anything but equals from whom he expects a fair response. Right at the end, when the bullies steal Piggy’s glasses for the last time, they are an armed camp, no longer amenable to reason, yet Ralph faces them with angry schoolboy words—“You are not fair, you should have asked for the fire. We would have given it to you”. One theory about this story suggests that it shows goodness, embodied in Ralph, to be by its nature not strong enough or clever enough to overcome evil. Perhaps it is not strong because it does not get enough nourishment from the world, or enough exercise from enough people. In a recent book describing his experiments in liberal education, R. F. Mackenzie says that he is sometimes accused of not preparing his pupils for the real world, by reducing corporal punishment and giving them more freedom and fewer regulations. “I sometimes wonder”, he comments “if this advice to prepare pupils for the real world, implies instruction in the strategy and tactics of the jungle”. Perhaps it would have been better if Ralph too had reverted to savagery, what ever that means. And what ever it does mean it appears to

be as much part of civilized society as of primitive society. A comparison between the primitive society of the Nuer, described by Kenneth Maddock in ANARCHY 24 and for instance, the society of Europe struggling in the throes of war, which the boys had just left, would hardly leave this in much doubt. However, I think Mr. Mackenzie actually replied to his critics, that in his opinion forcing children to live by any one set of rules is not more conducive to making them adaptable intelligent people than disciplining soldiers in the army makes them more intelligently self disciplined in their private lives. Perhaps if Ralph had been allowed to develop more freely, he would have been more wary of the dangerous tendencies in his fellows. As it is we can only admire his forthright courage and regret that it deserted him at the very end, when to run away was the worse possible thing he could have done, because it brought the howling hob after him, all commonsense and kindness swallowed up in frenzied fear and irrational hate. I find this story, both as a film, and in the original novel, to be very apt in its characterisation and quite logical in the working out of the plot; but I do not think that the failure of these boys to understand themselves and cope with their circumstances is because they are so young and therefore have not received a strong enough injection of civilisation. I think it is because they have come from a world in which neither civilisation, nor its spearhead education, does enough to help them use their own talents fully, to think for themselves, or to work with their fellows in mutual respect.

41

## BEELZEBUB\* RIDES AGAIN [graphic]

Martin Small

*“Southey is no believer in original sin: he thinks that which appears to be a taint of our nature is in effect the result of unnatural political institutions: there we agree. He thinks the prejudices of education, and sinister influences of political institutions, adequate to account for all the specimens of vice which have fallen within his observation.”* (Shelley to Elizabeth Hitchener, 2 January, 1812).

*“Created free, able to sin, man sinned by his power of sinning; but his power was no part of his true liberty which is a liberty of not sinning, of not serving sin. In other words, man’s liberty was the liberty of a will created free from servitude to sin; his free-will, therefore, was not only free, but was, at the same time, an efficacious power. This free-will abdicated its power in sinning; but are we then to say that this abdication was constitutive of its liberty? A liberty that enslaves itself, even freely, is unfaithful to its own essence; the free act by which it makes itself less free betrays its own freedom. For this reason, precisely because every will is a power, all diminution of the power of the will diminishes the liberty of free-will. The real power is the power of efficaciously willing the good; having done evil, the will remains free to will the good, but not to do it; it is therefore but a wounded liberty; in restoring the lost power grace restores to free-will something of its first efficacy; far from diminishing it, it liberates it.”* (Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, tr. A. H. C. Downes, Sheed & Ward 1936, pp317-8: paraphrasing the teaching of St Anselm.)

*“Man’s nature may be looked at in two ways: first, in its integrity, as it was in our first parent before sin; secondly, as it is corrupted in us after the sin of our first parent. Now in both states human nature needs the help of God as First Mover, to do or wish any good whatsoever. But in the state of integrity, as regards the sufficiency of the operative power, man by his natural endowments could wish and do the good proportionate to his nature, such as the good of acquired virtue; but not surpassing good, as the good of infused virtue. But in the state of corrupt nature, man falls short of what he could do by his nature, so that he is unable to fulfil it by his own natural powers. Yet because human nature is not altogether corrupted by sin, so as to be shorn by every natural good, even in the state of corrupted nature it can, by virtue of its natural endowments, work some particular good, as to build dwellings, plant vineyards and the like; yet it cannot do all the good natural to it, so as to fall short in nothing; just as a sick man can of himself make some movements, yet he cannot be perfectly moved with the movements of one in health, unless by the help of medicine he be cured.”* (St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*. II: i, question 109: of the necessity of grace.)

NEWMAN SAYS SOMEWHERE, of a (theological) mystery, that a man may know *that* it is, but not *why* it is. Original sin is a fact about ourselves and about others with which we have to deal at all times; it is at the same time a mystery which we can never fully comprehend. The theologians cannot tell us exactly why man rejected the friendship of his

\* Beelzebub: one of the manifestations of the Devil (Arabic: *Baal-Zebub*, the Lord of the Flies.)

Creator: they cannot describe the whole aetiology of man's original dissatisfaction, distrust and disbelief, nor can they explain how it is that man is in fact responsible—and they cannot deny that in one sense it is God who is responsible, since God created man and created likewise his sinfulness and (under His providence) his sin. All they can say is that such a thing has happened, and that also man's original sin is intimately related, as a perversion or an abuse, to his unique power, his freedom. In Christian doctrine, original sin is a condition of existence which has to be accepted with sorrow; but it is a circumstance—the most important circumstance, even the context—of a man's existence, rather than its sole, determining constituent: his life is not what his original sin makes of it, but what he makes of his original sin. The practical point of Christianity is to make known to man his enemy, his weakness, and both to assure him that the enemy may be defeated and to show him how this may be done: by prayer. All truly Christian action has the form of prayer, the Christian does not presume to be totally successful, he is aware in his inadequacy that he cannot do all that is necessary, but he hopes and indeed is sure that in confessing his inadequacy he will find the strength to overcome it: he will find grace.

To the religious man, all understanding and all awareness is a religious act. Understanding is the instrument, the device, the skill, which is peculiar to man: the operation of his understanding is his life's work, it not only discovers but even more it creates his being, and thus—that which is the whole and centre of his being—his relationship with God. The artistic vision is an aspect of a man's awareness: its antinomy of the universal and the particular is perhaps a means of intensifying this awareness, of making it more real, of which all men are more or less capable. "I am very serious", said William Golding in 1957. "I believe that man suffers from an appalling ignorance of his own nature. I produce my own views, in the belief that it may be something like the truth". (Quoted in the *Times Literary Supplement*, April 16, 1964). His novels are, he himself claims, "myths" or "fables", and the *Times Literary Supplement* reviewer agrees that "they are carefully constructed analogical expressions of moral ideas". What Golding is trying to do and is trying to help his readers to do is to understand the truth of certain propositions of Christian dogma concerning the eternal and universal nature of man by showing how a man—or men, or boys—will behave in a certain situation. To quote the same reviewer again, he chooses "situations that isolate what is basic and avoid the merely contemporary, the social, the subjective; all but one of his novels employ a situation that is remote in time or space, characters who are radically unlike the author, and a narrative tone that is removed, analytical, and judicial".

The novel *Lord of the Flies* asks us to see in the behaviour of some "typical" twentieth-century English children some of the fruits of man's original sin: and also, by contrast, the abrupt ending hints at some of that "appalling ignorance" which is both cause and effect of man's attempt to cover—what is his real self—his inmost confusion and darkness with a figleaf of civilised "law and order".—It is perhaps because

such sudden contrasts lend themselves more readily to the operatic rather than to the lyrical mode that this part of the message of *Lord of the Flies* is presented more effectively in Peter Brook's film than in Golding's novel. Having read the novel only once, four years ago, and not then having much sympathy with the idea, I am not able to compare the effectiveness with which the novel and the film bring home the reality of the idea—or the fact—of original sin. In one way Peter Brook has the advantage in that the behaviour of the shipwrecked boys is simulated by real boys who moreover (Peter Brook emphasised this in his Observer article) neither are professional actors nor attempt to act like them; but on the other hand he loses the storyteller's advantage of being able to distinguish between the individual human beings and the idea, the dogma, the truth which they are supposed to represent and illustrate: the tension between the immediacy which intensifies the reality and makes

self-identification easier, and the distance which objectifies and universalises is present not only in the artistic vision as a whole but also as a contrast between two different forms of that vision. Thus the spectator of the film *Lord of the Flies* may accept the megalomania and the crowd-hysteria as real and possible, and not fantastic (again, as ironic contrast, there is a heroism and a comradeship which is an affectation and yet at the same time a real achievement—another of civilisation's compensating pretences?); and yet refuse to see in this anything more than a picture of how certain people might behave. But if it is more difficult to adopt this twofold attitude towards the novel, is this because it is a novel or because Golding's commitment is much more clearly to the idea than is Brook's?

If *Lord of the Flies* is above all, first and last, a didactic work of art which seeks to reveal something about himself to a man—or rather, perhaps, to make a man look into himself more deeply and discover something of which he had previously been ignorant—then the criterion by which it must be pronounced either successful or unsuccessful—both as a film and as a novel—must be its success or otherwise in persuading the reader or the viewer not so much to identify with the individual people, characters and actions which make up the story, but rather to recognise his own sharing in the attitudes and confusions of mind in which these other, fictional characters so obviously have a part. “Satire”, said Swift, “is a glass in which a man sees every face but his own”. The artist is a man who has some appreciation of the truth, some approach to the truth, which he wishes to communicate. “To communicate”, says Golding through the mouth of his narrator in *Free Fall*, “is our passion and our despair”. Our passion because we must communicate, and our despair because with those who do not know it is impossible to communicate and with those who do know it is not necessary: this distinction is not in fact as absolute as it sounds, because all men may know, have the power to learn, and no man knows everything so that he needs to learn no more. The religious man believes that there is an absolute truth, but also that complete knowledge of this truth by any man is not possible (at least in this life): the religious artist communicates his apprehensions of the truth that he feels in the

44

hope that it will awaken, provoke, enlighten the perceptions of others. In the face of the message of *Lord of the Flies* we may invoke “the prejudices of education, and the sinister influences of political institutions” to account for the behaviour of the choir-boys; but to do so is to evade the real question which Golding at least is asking—what explanation is there of the child's susceptibility to these influences and prejudices, and if good is so natural and evil so artificial how does evil manage to prevail over good on so many occasions, at least in the short run? It could be argued that Golding does not present a situation which illustrates his idea as perfectly as it might be illustrated. And yet this apparent failure could arise deliberately from an honesty of purpose and a faith which is aware that there is no way in which the fact of original sin can be proved: only ways in which the idea of original sin may be presented forcefully enough for the reader or the spectator to be compelled to ask himself. Is this or is it not what I feel to be true about myself?

In conclusion, I find it difficult to assess the effectiveness of *Lord of the Flies*, either as a novel or as a film. But if I compare Peter Brook's film with two French films I have seen recently, *Jessica's Life Upside Down* and Truffaut's *Silken Skin*, it seems to be lacking in a certain precision and economy which seem to be essential if a film is to realise all the exciting possibilities of its medium. Whereas both French directors seem to be able to be experimental and to make a point without feeling troubled by any conflict between these aims, Peter Brook seems not to be sure whether he wants to be experimental, to make a point, or both. But when one considers the subtle gradations of attitude and feeling described so beautifully in *Life Upside Down* and *Silken Skin*, it might seem arguable that the film is not the medium for the presentation of the heavily symbolic characters of *Lord of the Flies*. I remember just over a year ago seeing Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* and Bunuel's *Nazarin* within a few days of each other: despite, or perhaps because of, its artistry and brilliance I found the symbolism and allegory of the former eventually merely tedious and quite

meaningless—whereas *Nazarin*, though in a way no less and no more a religious film than *The Seventh Seal*, in its concentration upon the development and fluctuation of feeling in one man, a Christ-like figure who is eventually persuaded by his persecutions that he is Christ, I thought achieved a far more convincing and real effect.

Having said all this, it still remains difficult to say what medium exactly is fitted to convey so offensive and potentially revolutionary an idea as that of original sin. The idea of original sin is the foundation of the whole Christian picture of man—of man as not only fallen, but redeemed and saved. Redemption and salvation do not figure—or only in the obscurest suggestions, visible to those who are prepared to look for them—in *Lord of the Flies*: only the unhappy material of redemption and salvation. In its fullest expression the doctrine of original sin is not pessimistic: and similarly William Golding's object is not to denounce and to deplore, but to warn and to exhort. As John Wain has pointed out, Golding's negative aim is the destruction of the humanist

45

idea of man “self-sufficient, self-centred, self-secure”, which received its most detailed and triumphant philosophical expression in Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity*, where the concept of God is treated as an instrument of the development of the self-consciousness of the human spirit which has now been outgrown, and which remains today, somewhat etiolated and abashed philosophically, but as a subconscious presumption very firmly standing. (Cf. the very interesting introduction and preface by Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr respectively, to the Harper Torchbooks edition of George Eliot's translation of *The Essence of Christianity*.) The essential preparation for redemption and salvation is the awareness that, “Without Thee, we can do nothing”. In seeking to clear this ground, *Lord of the Flies* does not ask us to recognise ourselves in the children who without awareness sing the old Greek chant *Kyrie Eleison* (Christ have mercy)—the ironical use of this as a refrain, even as a hunting cry, is one of the most effective things in the film (I do not remember whether it is in the novel): rather we are asked to recognise that we share with them those tendencies which circumstance turns for them to disastrous effect—that these tendencies are indeed predilections which are “second nature” to us, overlying our first nature which was (as St. Anselm and all orthodox Christian theologians have taught) an efficacious willing of the good.

Again, it is difficult to say whether either the film or the novel makes it less possible for us to deny this recognition. Everybody is against complacency nowadays: what is less popular is a precise notion of what we ought not to be complacent about—which precise notion is what the anarchist idea of a revolution yet to be achieved is meant to be. And the anarchist idea of a revolution (this is a tentative explanation of Christian anarchism) is but the positive aspect of the doctrine of original sin. The awareness of original sin is not a negation of the revolution, but an awareness of its difficulties. The anarchist insists upon man's potential: the Christian awareness balances this with a description of the obstacles to the realisation of this potential. The doctrine of original sin is not a negation of, or an obstacle to, the revolution: it is the doctrine of its necessity.

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*It is this grouping, awkward speech that creates the film's most touching moment. All the older boys go off to hunt, leaving the fat, near-sighted “intellectual”, named Piggy, to care for the smallest boys. To entertain them, Piggy tells the story of how his home town got its name of Camberley. Pedantically, self-consciously, blinking and scratching, Piggy talks—the shot juxtaposed with shots of Jack's howling tribe on the trail of a pig. So dignified and poignant is the scene that I couldn't help feeling that any species represented by Piggy telling the story of Camberley cannot finally be brought low by its Jacks.*

—JACKSON BURGESS in *Film Quarterly*

46

# Miss Lang of Kidbrooke

TOM JONES

THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE IDEA of comprehensive secondary education were discussed at length in ANARCHY 18, which also contained articles on comprehensive schools in practice, by teachers, pupils and reasons. More and more education authorities in different parts of the country have been experimenting with the idea, more and more of them have sought to abandon the examination at eleven-plus, and have seen comprehensive secondary schools as the obvious concomitant of this. The Labour victory at the general election last year has accelerated this process. Generally speaking, Labour local authorities have favoured the idea of comprehensive schools and the successive Conservative Ministers of Education in the governments of the last thirteen years have opposed it. Education being a local service in this country, the Ministry has not been able to prevent the development of comprehensive schools—except for certain incidents like the row between Sir David Eccles and the city of Manchester in 1955 and the brush between his predecessor, Miss Horsbrugh and the LCC in the previous year. (Miss Horsbrugh refused to allow the London County Council to close Eltham Hill Girls' Grammar School and transfer its pupils to its first big new comprehensive school, Kidbrooke. She also refused to allow the LCC to expand the Bec Boys' Grammar School into a comprehensive school).

The local authorities complain that the result of the Ministry's policy has been that many comprehensive schools have not been "fully comprehensive" in that they have not had the correct proportion of the "upper ability groups" which the selective grammar schools have still been able to "cream off". This is the issue in the argument at Bristol where the local authority wants to absorb grammar school pupils into its comprehensive system, and with the coming of a government which favours the idea of comprehensive schools it is the background for the current revival of arguments over the merits of comprehensive education. As might be expected the Conservative press has sought to make news out of every incident relating to comprehensive schools as a buildup for the House of Commons debate on education arranged for January 21st.

Kidbrooke, a school in South London for over 2,000 girls, was the first of the LCC's comprehensive schools to be built as such ten years ago. Miss Joyce Lang who has been the school's Director of Music ever since, was one of the speakers at the annual conference of the School Music Section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians. Not a headline-making event to be sure, and the only paper which reported it was *The Times*, which however gave no report of the conference but gave a great deal of prominence—the top of a column on its main news page to

47

a report of Miss Lang's remarks, under the heading "Comprehensive Schools A Failure: Teacher on Lack of Contact".

Miss Lang, according to the *Times Educational Supplement* (January 1st), said Kidbrooke had been rather fulsomely praised by the press for doing good work in a difficult area. "But a lot of it is just my eye". Many of the girls came from uneducated homes and thought they were doing a favour by coming to school at all. There was a lot said about the good pulling up the bad in such a school, but there was very little chance of this happening where the majority came from a bad background. "The pulling up thing just does not happen".

The problem of the 15-year-old school-leaver was magnified when vast numbers of girls at the difficult age were collected together under one roof, Miss Lang said. "We all know the materialism, selfishness and aggressive inferiority of this particular element", she said. "But however unpleasant they may be, one has to remember that they are the sisters and girl friends of some of the unpleasanteest gangs in London.

The chances of getting through to these girls were slighter at Kidbrooke than in a smaller school, as it was impossible to have the same continuous rapport between staff and girls that good small schools were able to establish.

Miss Lang said that publicity given to the school's achievements, such as the musical performances she had been able to put on (last year she put on Dido and Aeneas and the St. Matthew Passion) gave an impression of success

which did not hold good when the whole record was considered. Many of the 15-year-old-school-leavers who went out to take their place in the adult world were not responsible citizens.

The comprehensive system was an advantage to the near-miss at the 11-plus stage and to late developers. But although it was possible to move children from one stream to another in a comprehensive school, in practice: this was seldom done in Kidbrooke. Before moving a girl up or down they had to be sure she would survive the move. In such a big school once a girl settled into the form, the upheaval caused by moving her could outweigh the advantages of the move. This could apply even in moving a girl who had initially been placed in a wrong stream on arrival at the school.

Miss Lang commented: "In the end it is not the system of education I deplore, but the size of the school".

On the day following the original report in *The Times*, it published a letter from her (at the bottom of its second letter column) complaining that the report "mainly through omission" had misrepresented her, that she was reported out of context to make it appear that she was referring to the school as a whole, whereas she had made it clear that she was referring to only one element in it; that of the "early teenage group of low ability"; that she had specifically stated that, as she was one of six speakers in a consortium on "Contrasts in Schools", she would not deal with the successes at Kidbrooke which, though many, were of the same kind as those of other schools, and that at no time did she "condemn either the system or any individual school as a failure".

By this time the rest of the press had rehashed the story from *The Times* and was busy gathering statements from Miss Lang's colleagues. the headmistress, Sir Ronald Gould, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, the LCC, and the Minister himself. Francis Williams remarked of the LCC's handling of the case, (and the *Times* report of it) in the *New Statesman* on 8th January:

The LCC, it must be admitted, is often not at its best at press conferences. The official who remarked of Miss Lang "Perhaps she will want to reconsider her position in view of her strong feelings about the school" needs education

48

in public relations, if nothing else. However, in the course of questioning by reporters, the same official was asked by one of them whether there would be any action taken by the Council. In response to this direct question, he replied that there would be "no victimisation". Presented to *The Times'* readers in a leader comment, this became: "An official of the LCC takes it upon himself to state that there will be no victimisation (it passes belief that such a thing could even be contemplated)". But except, possibly for the reporter who put the question, no one had contemplated it.

The LCC over-reacted in a slightly elephantine way by inviting the press to visit Kidbrooke and twelve other large comprehensive schools to "see for themselves", and the assembled journalists trooped round looking knowledgeable and asking questions. It is hard to know what they expected to find. The question is, as *New Society* reminds us, "not whether Kidbrooke is perfect, but whether ending selection at 11 gives teachers and their pupils a better chance. In short, it is not Kidbrooke and the other schools which are on trial today, but the press. Can they begin to inform the public?"

The only people who came out very creditably from the whole storm in a teacup were, as has been remarked, Miss Lang and her headmistress Miss Green. But the result of the incident is likely to be simply that teachers will become more inhibited than usual from speaking their minds. As Kathleen Gibberd says, "after her experience who will dare talk away from a carefully prepared and possibly censored script". As it is, the organisers of the conference of grammar school music teachers at Leeds University Institute of Education this month at which Miss Lang is to speak have announced that they do not propose to admit the press.

One thing that no-one seems to have noticed is that Miss Lang has said similar things before without even *The Times* taking any notice. In April 1962 a symposium on Music in Education was held at Bristol University, and the proceedings were subsequently published in book form (*Music in Education*, London, Butterworths 1963). In her paper at this symposium on "Music in the Comprehensive School", Miss Lang discussed her problems, her successes and failures, with the greatest candour. She began by explaining that the LCC "in adopting a policy of comprehensive schools, formulated two basic principles: such a school was to serve a particular neighbourhood and was to offer all the courses that boys or girls between the ages of eleven and nineteen would be likely to want. Apart from these basic principles there is great diversity, There must be almost as

many different ways of organising a comprehensive school as there are schools". She went on to mention that "As regards entry, we accept, more or less, all the children living in the area who wish to come, yet are obliged to show some resemblance to what is, I believe, the national average of ability, i.e. 20 per cent in each of the five ability groups". In fact, though Miss Lang did not mention the fact, Kidbrooke has to compete for its "high ability" girls, not only with Eltham Hill, but also with Blackheath High School, Road Girls' School and Haberdashers Aske's School. The greater part of her paper, of course, was about the technique of teaching music, and after describing the school's achievements and activities she said,

This leads to the question of who benefits from all this effort, besides the

49

performers. Here I see one of my main personal failures and, if not actually a failure of the whole system, at any rate a failure to fulfil the ideals of those who believe the comprehensive school is *necessarily* an effective means of levelling up. I would go so far as to say that in my experience there is no musical levelling *down* at all: indeed more has been achieved by the grammar school children (and some others) here than in most grammar schools. As for levelling up, musically it is more apparent in individual girls than in the mass.

This question was taken up in the discussion by Mr. Leslie Orrey who said, "Miss Lang mentioned that the proportion of the academic children to the rest of the school was, I think, one to five, and rather suggested that she thought that was too small a proportion for this levelling-up to work. I wonder if she has any ideas as to what the ideal proportion ought to be?" The subsequent discussion is very interesting:

*Miss Lang:* On the first question of proportions and of levelling up: I have not really any theories on the subject because, although I could make many suggestions which would enable a more rapid levelling up of some people to take place, it still would not take care of the people who would never be able to be levelled up—and I fully recognise, as I see them every day, that someone has got to cope with them somewhere. That is the snag.

... I think it will work less if you make the proportion greater and work successively less the greater it becomes. You have also to consider whether you are trying to level up the general views and general standards, the background of a person's whole life, or whether you are only trying to raise academic standards—people have widely different views on how much they think a combination of these two things is desirable or undesirable. We might even wade into politics if we go too far into that. Could you be more specific about the type of levelling up, Mr. Orrey?

*Mr. Orrey:* Well, those of us who worked in the London area—the area I have experience of—after the war, were so depressed about the secondary modern school that we were not very sorry to see it disappearing and emerging into the comprehensive, especially as the theory was that these children of the lower ability, when they went into the comprehensive school, would be influenced, inoculated if you like, with something from the better quality children. You rather suggested that that was not happening very much.

*Miss Lang:* I would say it is not happening as much as many serious-thinking people had hoped and even thought that it would. I think that hopes were much too high on the part of those who believed in the system and that the more cynical people were nearer the mark really, although there are extraordinary exceptions. Some schools are infinitely better than others; there are so many rather nebulous factors which influence it. It depends very much on the district from which the children are drawn. If it is a district where there is quite a high proportion of "professional" homes, then you have better chances of levelling up for more children. If your most intelligent children come from the poorest home background it does not work. You see, some of our cleverest children come from very, very poor homes indeed and some of our best-brought-up children, if you like to put it that way, are in the middle streams of schools; they are the children whose parents have hoped and prayed for a grammar place for them, would almost rather have paid for them to go to a private school, and yet they missed the mark and were not accepted. So very often the most rewarding children come from the third, fourth, fifth or sixth streams and have a good home background, with everything that that does to help their education. They are the ones who benefit because they have got the backing at home. But you do not get tremendous raising of standards where there is not much help at home.

These are serious doubts, seriously expressed, and in the current tizzy over Miss Lang's more recent remarks it would have been better if her point of view were discussed rather than her right to express it. (On the face of it, and in the current controversies about "going com-

50

prehensive” her opinions could well be used to *support* the arguments in favour of the absorption into comprehensive schools of grammar school pupils, as well as to justify the opponents of streaming within comprehensive schools.)

I think that Miss Lang emerges as a dedicated and successful music teacher who has not found—and is frank enough to say so—the appropriate syllabus for those members of the lower streams who are unmusical and anti-musical. (And are those of her colleagues who disagree with her, confident that they have found a successful approach to these pupils in their own subjects?) Miss Lang said elsewhere in the Bristol symposium, “I am not one of those who say ‘all right, you give me your kind of music, then you have a go at my kind’—I do not believe in that at all. I know it is done and some people may be able to sell it that way, but I cannot”. A different kind of approach to the underprivileged child is that of Mr. Michael Duane of Risinghill school—the other comprehensive teacher in the news—who declares himself firmly opposed to trying “to force middle-class values and attitudes on to a child whose whole background is not of that type”.

## Mr. Duane of Risinghill

**JOHN ELLERBY**

A YEAR AGO, writing in *New Society* on the future of the progressive schools, Professor W. A. C. Stewart, stressing their function as “educational laboratories”, remarked that “Admitting that rare exceptions exist, it is hard for a maintained secondary day school to be noticeably unorthodox because of parental misgivings in the area which it serves and the pull of the norm in the other schools of a local education authority”. It is hard for the rare exceptions too, as a consideration of two remarkable examples, Teddy O’Neill and Alex Bloom, indicates.

Edward O’Neill was appointed headmaster of Prestolee Elementary School near Farnworth in Lancashire at the end of the first world war. When he got there, according to his biographer, “he found the children apathetic and listless in school and apparently impervious to all oral lessons. There was much evil-doing: no background whatever of information, either from books, teaching or experience. Outside school he became conscious and later appalled by the great gulf which lay between the people’s mode of life and that of educated people ... Certainly Teddy had landed himself in a difficult school, in a difficult locality”. He met hostility from the staff, from the local people, and to some extent from the school managers and the local education authority, though “it had always been recognised by the Education Authority that O’Neill had a difficult task and should be given a fair chance, unhampered by inspectors whose duty was to see that a school was conducted on the lines approved by the Board”. Some teachers

51

left and letters appeared in the local papers about “children doing what they damn’ well pleased: no timetable: choosing what they wanted to do and so on”. Gerard Holmes tells us how “Parents read them: were alarmed: and some actually withdrew their children from the school at Prestolee. That precipitated the storm”. O’Neill weathered this, and many another storm, including an official enquiry in which “It was largely due to the loyalty of the ‘parents’ committee’ that O’Neill was ultimately saved”. Holmes queried whether anywhere else O’Neill “could have fought this thirty year war to success; whether, elsewhere, convinced and active opponents could have become convinced and militant supporters; whether in any other county the educational authority would have embraced and maintained the clarity of vision which has been maintained with regard to this experiment, is your guess ... What is beyond question is this: that by maintaining their attitude of non-interference with this man Teddy, when he did outlandish things, so long as these things were progressive, and so long as, from an official and moral point of view, he ‘never let them down’, the

several Directors of Education and their committees who have followed each other in office during this period, have enabled something which is very important indeed to develop”.

Alexander Bloom was appointed headmaster of the derelict St. George-in-the-East Secondary School in Cable Street, Stepney, when it re-opened at the end of the second world war. He was given 260 boys and girls from local primary schools and ten teachers, most of them unknown to each other and to Bloom. But what he did know, said a tribute to him in *The Times* when he died ten years later, “was Stepney, with its bomb ruins and overcrowded medley of tongues and peoples. He saw no point in starting an ordinary school in that particular place and year. Instead, he designed one in great detail to meet the social and emotional needs of his particular adolescents ... the establishment of a community to which each child should contribute from his own growing confidence and competence, and in which his contribution would be spontaneous, not the by-product of regimentation, punishment, reward or competition”. Tony Gibson tells us that when Bloom began to put into practice his libertarian ideas, half his staff declared that he was mad and left. Bloom himself used to say that there were plenty of people in the scholastic world who would like to see him thrown out of the profession. He was also criticised in the local juvenile court. (There is a brief account of Bloom’s approach by a consultant psychiatrist on pp 140-1 of ANARCHY 16—the issue describing the work of David Wills). Bloom’s employers, the LCC appear to have loyally backed him up—even sending him difficult children from outside the locality because of his reputation.

Michael Duane was appointed headmaster of Risinghill School, Finsbury, in 1960. He came from a secondary modern school in Suffolk (and is a friend and disciple of another Suffolk schoolmaster, A. S. Neill). He faced all the environmental difficulties that had faced O’Neill and Bloom and a lot more beside as well as the problems of a

52

large school in dispersed buildings. There is a description of the early days of the school under a fictional name in Kathleen Gibberd’s *No Place Like School* (1962):

There was daily destruction. Older boys of the C and D streams busied themselves with misapplied skill. They took off the lavatory chains and appropriated them as weapons; they extracted screws (that were guaranteed permanent) from chairs and desks; they undid the nozzles of fire hoses, removed plastic numbers from classroom doors and forced open locked pianos. Other children just kicked, hit or threw things. Even when an all-embracing plan of close supervision had halted the general havoc, it could break out again if an opportunity were given. Once a mistress doing a job for another teacher who was ill and having to get promptly to her subject room (which was a journey of three flights of stairs down, across a playground and then six flights up) forgot to lock the door behind her. The incoming class, a particularly dull-witted and unruly set, poured in. Before anyone could arrive to stop them they had slid open the low windows and begun to throw the chairs out—one narrowly missing an inspector who was crossing the playground.

At the end of the year, which was the occasion for necessary replacements and repairs, the list compiled was formidable—chairs destroyed, windows loosened, a wash-basin removed, cupboard doors broken off, hooks and toilet fittings wrenched from their sockets and new paint defaced with lewd graffiti.

To the scandalised official who scrutinised the inventory Mr. ..., the headmaster, pointed out that nothing had been damaged in the woodwork room, the engineering workshop, the housecraft rooms and the laboratories. In these rooms only eighteen children were taught at a time and always by a well-qualified teacher. Even if the proper teacher were absent no ‘supply’ of unknown quality could be asked to take charge where there were lathes, soldering irons, gas-stoves and poisonous chemicals. His contention was that a school opening in an area where respectable people refused to live should be exempt from the local authority staff ratio—which was based on the principle of providing enough specialists to teach enough subjects to the older children, and not on the need to keep all the classes small. A class of 25 unruly children was manageable and could be transformed; a class of 35—which was the usual size at ...—was too large. The school had its share of less able teachers and perhaps more than its share of minor infections which kept staff away.

Miss Gibberd’s account was written when the school was in its second year, by which time : “*there were now no truants*” and “*the children had stopped wrecking the place*”. But of course, tongues had wagged, and the school had acquired a certain notoriety—just as Prestolee or St.

George-in-the-East did. (Or for that matter Summerhill: A. S. Neill did not call one of his books *That Dreadful School* for nothing.)

A year ago an article in a weekly magazine described Raisinghill as a nightmare school where the children “shout, yell, fight and make life impossible. You have to stand there and let them call you all the four-letter words and every obscenity in the language”. As a result Mr. H. Sebag-Montefiore raised the question of Raisinghill at the meeting of the LCC Education Committee on February 26th last year. Quoting the article he said that “even Narkover, Beachcomber’s academy for young criminals, can’t have beaten this school’s record for delinquency

51

—243 appearances by its pupils in the juvenile courts in three years. Yet the headmaster has one inflexible rule—no corporal punishment”.

On that occasion, the late Mrs. Marjorie McIntosh, chairman of the Education Committee indicated that she agreed with the view on corporal punishment and said that she was satisfied with discipline and education at the school. The extract from the magazine, she pointed out terminated at the point where the headmaster gave his justification for his method with these “tough, unruly independent boys”. Many of the 243 court cases were “care and protection” appearances and were not caused by delinquency. Members cheered when she added, “It is significant that when the school opened there were 100 pupils on probation. Now there are nine”.

The Raisinghill story “broke” again after months of rumour among teachers in London, with a front page article in the *Sunday Times* (10.1.65) by Michael Hamlyn, with the title “London may close its tough comprehensive”, explaining that the LCC Education Committee would meet at the end of the month to discuss a proposal for the reorganisation of secondary education in the Islington area involving the disappearance of Raisinghill school, and that if the proposal is accepted, the school will close in July and the buildings will be taken over by a girls’ school. He outlined the history and background of the school in these words:

“The school started life with enormous disadvantages. It is surrounded by some of the worst slums, brothels and clubs in North London, opposite a market where a constant stream of rubbish is blown into the school grounds ... The school was formed from four other schools, and inter-school rivalry and gang warfare made for constant trouble. One of the biggest difficulties was that although the school is supposed to be comprehensive, with 20 per cent of its pupils in each of the five grades of ability and intelligence (and staff was engaged on this basis), more than 90 per cent of the pupils are in the middle grade or below and only 0.8 per cent in the top grade ...

“The chairman of the governors of the school, Mrs. Joan Evans, said: “There is no doubt that great progress has been made. The staff have certainly accomplished quite a number of things, particularly in the social sphere. My impression is that the children as they leave are responsible and integrated young people.

“Even on an academic plane, results show Mr. Duane’s success. In the first year only 16 pupils entered for GCE examinations. Only five passed in any subjects. Last year 57 entered and 30 passed. In addition, for the first time sixth form pupils passed ‘A’ level examinations and for the first time two won places at university.

“But perhaps one of the school’s greatest achievements is in race relations. Islington has a large population of immigrants, mainly Cypriot and West Indian, and this is reflected in the composition of the school. By employing teachers of different nationalities, including Greek and Turkish speaking men and women, Mr. Duane has shown

54

the children how to live in a multi-racial society. He has been successful to such an extent that the prefects of the school this year elected as head boy and head girl a West Indian and a Greek Cypriot.”

Mr. Hamlyn reported that "In spite of these successes Mr. Duane has been constantly criticised by the authorities. Two years ago after an inspection of the school he was criticised principally for failing in leadership. Since then he has antagonised officials again for drawing public attention to the problems of his school. "Because you have failed to build up the image of the school in the eyes of the parents we are having to think about drastic action", an official told him. And he earned further opprobrium for declaring himself a humanist. The religious assembly each morning is devoted to pointing out the poetic aspects of the Bible". He says that Mr. Duane's original announcement that corporal punishment was abolished "met the wholehearted opposition of an official, who told him that his action was unwise. A more senior official told Mr. Duane that he must either reintroduce the use of the cane, or institute public expulsion as a final deterrent to the young tearaways in the school. He declined to do either".

On the following day the *Evening Standard* came out with a headline "LCC Asks Head to Quit Teaching" and both evening papers reported that "An LCC official in an interview with 49-year-old Mr. Duane suggested that he take up teacher-training. I was not ordered to do so—the decision was left to me", Mr. Duane said, "It would suitably get round the LCC's predicament. But I don't want to give up teaching". Interviewed on television that evening the Chairman of the Education Committee, Mr. James Young said that the reason why the school's future was under review was that the number of pupils had dropped from 1,300 when it was opened four years ago to about 800. Space, he said, was being wasted. This was amplified by a statement by the LCC next day:

The LCC is seeking to solve the acute accommodation difficulties of Kingsway College of Further Education. The new building for further education had been constructed at Prospect Terrace, St Pancras, but during the bulge period of secondary education this has had to be used temporarily by Starcross Secondary Girls' School. A careful review has therefore been made by the Council of all secondary schools in the area, including Starcross and Risinghill Schools, with a view to releasing the Prospect Terrace building for the college. Confidential discussions have taken place with the heads, staffs and governors of the schools and college concerned, but no decision has yet been made.

One of the possibilities which the Council will be obliged to consider is whether Risinghill School should be closed and its premises used for another secondary school.

The newly-built Risinghill School opened in 1960 with the transfer of pupils from four secondary schools: Bloomsbury Secondary Girls, Gifford Secondary Mixed, Northampton Secondary Boys and Ritchie Secondary Girls. A promising start was made: there were 403 first and 51 second choice applications for admission to the school at eleven-plus (286 pupils being admitted) and the roll then totalled 1,423. Since that time however, the intake of the school steadily declined and this year (with 240 places available for first-year pupils) only 152 could be recruited, of whom only 76 made the school their

55

first choice and 29 their second choice; the roll of the school fell to 854 in September 1964.

There is substantial evidence of increasing parental preference for single-sex schools in the area.

The Council must take these considerations into account if its arrangements for secondary education are to be based on the best interests of the pupils and parental wishes, as they must be. If the proposals eventually decided on should involve the displacement of head teachers, the Council's long-established practice of safeguarding such head teachers' salaries, and so far as possible, their status, will apply.

The LCC statement ends by saying that in view of certain statements which have appeared in the press, "it should be made clear that it is a firm principle of the Council that all head teachers are responsible for the internal organisation and discipline of their school". But the same day *The Sun* in an editorial under the heading "Rebel With a Cause" remarked "The LCC will have to provide a lot more facts and arguments if the public are to be convinced that their only object is reorganisation" and like a lot of other people we were suspicious too. But the LCC statement is true, and Kingsway Day College's problems are real enough. Mr. Duane himself is confident that the decision about Risinghill will not be determined by the dislike of LCC officials for his methods. "This is absurd" he said, "Surely no enlightened education authority could be influenced by the prejudices of one or two officials?" And to another reporter he remarked that "The Council is far too big an authority to close a school because it does not like a man's personality".

The Council's case then, if we accept its statement, rests solely on the fact that the roll of the school has fallen from 1,423 to 854 (the architects say that it was built for 1,350 pupils). But the Council knows perfectly well why parents have preferred other schools. It knows the effect that rumour and gossip can have. Mr. Duane has tried to scotch the malicious tales by pointing out that there have only been two cases of girls becoming pregnant (one was already pregnant when the school opened, another was seduced by the lodger at home) and by pointing out that the boy who attacked members of the staff was a psychiatric case with an appalling background. He believes that the turning point has been reached and that "The local primary schools are starting to realise we are not just wild boys. Then they will recommend their children to come here". He thinks that soon the parents of the top 40 per cent of the ability range will actually want to send their children to Risinghill.

If the Council is as "big" as Mr. Duane hopes, shouldn't it be prepared to wait for that day, and regard the "waste" of space in the school as a small price to pay for his achievements? His experience closely parallels that of Teddy O'Neill and Alex Bloom as well as that of other rare teachers of the same outlook. David Ayerst notes in *New Society* that there are "already some schools in the slums which

56

have developed on "progressive" rather than traditional lines, and some of them certainly have done this without the ill effects which may be predicted. On the contrary. One such school found that within five years the number of boys on probation fell from 17 to two or three in spite of the fact that the total number of pupils in the school increased. No doubt it takes a better than average staff to be successfully adventurous in changing the general temper of school life in a slum community from an authoritarian to a co-operative basis".

There is certainly no doubt that Michael Duane is a better than average head. Doesn't he deserve a better than average support from his Council? Or at least that degree of support which O'Neill and Bloom were given. Our contributor Leila Berg put it this way in an admirable article in *The Guardian* 22.1.65: "Comprehensive schools need comprehensive human beings to teach in them. They also need comprehensive inspectors. For if an authoritarian inspector reports to authoritarian members of a committee about a non-authoritarian school they are likely to understand and approve of each other, but not of the school". Should a council which last month suggested that one comprehensive teacher who had dared to admit publicly her failure with the bottom stream children "might wish to reconsider her position", not support and be thankful for another who has demonstrated his success with them? If the LCC wants justification for doing so, there is plenty in the new report Education Under Social Handicap and in the Newsom Report Half Our Future, which recommends for example that an experimental school be started. Let it be Risinghill!

If the LCC doesn't appreciate Risinghill there are plenty of people who do. It has received petitions from the staff, from the Islington probation officers, from the parents and from several groups of children. As FREEDOM put it last week: "When kids march through the streets demanding that their headmaster should not be sacked that headmaster has made a breakthrough in education".

## **A weekend case**

### **LEILA BERG**

ONE BLUE JERSEY, RAGGED, UNRAVELLING, full of large holes. One dirty shirt, faded to grey, full of tiny holes. Two separate halves of pyjamas. the top half filthy, the bottom half clean, both the size for a child half this age, both so washed out they might almost be the same pattern, but they aren't.

One filthy shirt, faded to two completely different colours. Dirty, disintegrating clothes, several sizes too small, packed into a broken

57

case by two children, unhelped by any adult, who have for nearly all their lives “belonged” as they would say to the local authority. No underwear, no toilet things.

This boy and girl do not live as ordinary children do. They live in a large “Home”—that is, an estate separated by large gates from the outside world. They do not nip round to the shop on the corner, they do not jump on a bus, do not greet you in the park, do not climb trees for conkers in the gold of autumn and hidden in the leaves hear the conversation of strangers. They live only among their kind. What is their kind? Well, these two are children who, ten years ago, screamed beside their father as he hanged himself; their mother had gone off with another man. They were very small then. Their kind runs in this Home to four or five hundred.

But once every three weeks—and this is how I have just seen their unpacked case—they are invited into the outside world. For there they have one person who, for several years, has been constant in their lives, always reliable, always welcoming, always reappearing, always sharing. She is their voluntary “auntie”, her husband their “uncle”. The children have been moved from place to place, the adults who have dealt with them have changed over and over again; but for seven years she has remained constant.

They still marvel at the things that go on in her house—that “uncle” shaves, that he goes to work every morning, that he and “auntie” sleep in the same bed, that they go to shops, choose what they want to buy and pay with money, that vegetables have names like “cauliflower” and people eat them ... Her home is a strange and remarkable place, almost eccentric they would think if they had gained the vocabulary to think with. It is the only place where they may keep individual possessions—a toy, a jar of paint, a frilly petticoat, white knickers, a hair ribbon, a hamster.

“Friendship given to a child in this way should be steadfast”, says a very pleasant Home Office leaflet on this subject of children in care and “aunts”. Why is it then that my friend, who to my knowledge gives constant friendship, should be treated by some of the authorities concerned with the children as if she were dangerous? Why is she kept by them at arm’s length? Why, when she buys the children clothes and her friends buy them clothes, and she sends them back to the Home with hand-knitted jerseys, new trousers, shirts, frocks, coats, do they come back three weeks later with different dirty ancient clothes that look as if they had been left a whole battering season through on a scarecrow in a field?

What do such authorities truly think of children whom they choose to dress like this? What do they intend the children to think of themselves? What are they doing to the bond between the children and the steadfast friend? And why are they erasing the children’s identity? When these children have so pitifully little beyond fear, when it has been made determinedly clear to them that they will never have more than pitifully little, are the gifts, tangible and intangible, a loved and loving person gives them to be so wantonly, coldly treated?

58

## **Feathers for plucking**

**OWEN WEBSTER**

**THE FEATHER PLUCKERS by John Peter Jones (Eyre and Spottiswoode 15s.)**

A RESPECTABLE SUBURBAN SHOPKEEPER on his way to the bank with the week's takings is savaged by some young thugs and dies in hospital. Within a few hours the assailants are arrested and all the money—only a few hundred pounds—is recovered.

The event makes a paragraph or two on an inside page of the papers. The Home Secretary gives the public the necks they bay for. Soon another squalid little crime is forgotten by all but the bereaved. If there should be anyone to ask why it happened, none can find an answer. None, that is, except someone with the courage to look into his own heart and acknowledge the thug as well as the suburban shopkeeper who inhabit it. There, but for different chance circumstances, go I.

John Peter Jones, a member of the editorial staff of the *Beckenham and Penge Advertiser*, asked why such things happen and wrote a patently honest and courageous book and not, as so many first novels are, an autobiographical novel.

Some will see its antecedents in Camus *L'Étranger* and Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. But it contains more impassioned anger than the former, and is older, and much tougher, than the latter. It is also as English as the complacency it attacks, and its long scream of protest will be as unheeded here as an attempted revolution.

The story of the events preceding and purposelessly following the abortive "accident" is mainly told by a Brixton yob called George Perkins, one of the three assailants and anti-heroes of the eponymous spoonerism.

"Poor old Henry and me and a few of the boys was standing outside Bert's, just gassing, when this pair of rubber-heelers comes goose-stepping round the corner. There was this big fat sergeant and a little skinny constable. Well, as I say, we was just standing there, having a natter, and this big fat copper shouts, 'Git moving, you lot'."

Thus George begins, with an everyday event familiar to any modern youth with more energy than his environment has equipped him to use. And on this occasion it leads to a punch on the nose from the sergeant and an arrest. "I reckon most coppers is a bit potty. They likes shoving blokes around and hurting people".

They are shoved around wherever they are: in their homes, stinking of boredom and governed by the telly, at the local swimming baths, in their jobs. "There's always some jumped-up little pig in

59

charge who makes things lousy for everyone. And they're all dead boring, these jobs".

George's companions and conspirators are a quick-witted Jew and a West Indian. None of them suffers from race prejudice, and they are beaten up by Fascist thugs. They are not bullies themselves: they are tender with small children and animals. To those who give them cause, they are warm-hearted and generous. They would care for their girlfriends, but their sexual encounters are casual and brief because they end in disappointment through having to be conducted in squalid surroundings.

But what, it will be demanded, of their innocent victim? The answer is that in this case the murder was an accident and no more culpable than a road accident; the robbery a desperate means of escape to the space and promise of Australia. And in a society with such products, no one is innocent.

If everyone read and understood *The Feather Pluckers* before going to the polls, they might well vote differently. The trouble is, most might not vote at all. But it is not a nihilistic book, as so much literary anger and protest is today. It has a fine vitality, and a kind of stifled health.

Its triumph is that its explanation of how criminals are the products of society—like politicians or priests or policemen—is never explicit. George does not step out of character to explain himself. Simply and guilelessly, he records what happens, observing with bewilderment the things his education never equipped him to explain (like the sexual undertones to capital punishment), and accepting it all with anger and defiance, but never self-pity.

One learns so much from George's narrative, indeed, that the final chapters that pad out this short book add little to the advancement of the story and provide only a superfluous commentary on the case. Each of the other chapters is told by someone who knew George—his parents, Bert, the coffee bar proprietor, a fellow convict—but none establishes another character or shows George in a different light. Only the convict, a professional crook, adds a little for readers who might still be out of sympathy with George after hearing him out: "He knew nothing, but absolutely nothing. It was almost like a plot to stop him knowing anything. I mean it must be quite a trick to keep kids in school for ten years and not let them find anything out".

Mr. Jones has succeeded in giving a voice to thousands whose condition is much the same as George's, whose point of view is seldom heard, and whose problems are worried ad nauseam by those who manifestly have no contact with them. Call them jobs or teds or mods or rockers, they are the best fed younger generation in history and they suffer from the malnutrition of education on the cheap. Their physical well-being costs millions, and they are sick with frustration. We no longer have rickets and child labour; we stunt our young with hatred and underemployment.

This was the generation born towards the end of and just after the war, unwelcome even to their parents, when the Bulge began, They reached school age and there was no room for them, save in overlarge

60

classes and makeshift classrooms. At eleven-plus, there were too few secondary school places, and by the time they entered the labour market fifteen years of warning had still made no room. And now they enter adulthood with a chip we have placed on their shoulders the size of a placard: the Great Unwanted.

## Disarming sympathy

**CHARLES RADCLIFFE**

**THE DISARMERS by Christopher Driver (Hodder and Stoughton 25s.)**

THE DISARMERS has some glaring and surprising deficiencies but they should not obscure the fact that it is the most honest and intelligent book yet written about the nuclear disarmament movement. It honourably avoids the vagaries of current academic fashion by not becoming an obituary, and it clearly indicates that the movement of young people against authority—the most interesting and fertile product of CND and the Committee of 100—is far from being over. It is written with a disarming sympathy, very lively and far from being uncritical, and has, at times, valuable insights into the nature of the movement.

There are considerable difficulties in writing about a movement which one believes, as Driver does, is still very much alive. It is not so much that events tend to outpace publishing and printing—though they do—but rather because those taking part in the movement are unable to look at it dispassionately. Objective truth is, after all, a rare quality in politics. However Driver has managed to gather a great deal of interesting information about the early years of the movement (though there's a lot more for future historians) and where distortion occurs it seems to result primarily from unreliable informants. Almost everyone with whom it is worth talking is to some extent an unreliable witness and, in the ideologically and socially diverse nuclear disarmament movement it is inevitable that opinions will vary widely. Whereas a Labour Party supporter seeing the September 1961 Trafalgar Square demonstration by the Committee of 100 would have viewed it as a symptomatic *abdication* of political responsibility, an anarchist seeing the same event would have

more probably hailed it as a symptomatic *assumption* of political responsibility. Equally an anarchist would both have looked for, and seen, events within the spectrum of the demonstration, which a democratic socialist would have ignored. The implications of this wide discrepancy in judgement are alarming to a historian and it is to Driver's credit that he has suffered so little from this lack of consistent standpoints.

The other major problem in writing an account of a popular movement is the danger of missing rank-and-file attitudes in the search for the definitive attitudes of the "leadership". This is particularly so in the case of CND. Canon Collins will probably best be remembered

61

as an exceptionally astute self-publicist and while history may provide a rather more dignified perch for Lord Russell, it is clear that both the early impetus and the early public image of the Committee of 100 was provided by Russell and the splendid and unusual spectacle of public personalities as diverse as Arnold Wesker, Robert Bolt and Augustus John, determinedly breaking the law with a serious purpose.

Amongst the colourful personalities of the early Committee of 100, many of them extremely decorative, like John or Vanessa Redgrave, and the somewhat dourer labour-ish figures and figurines of CND, it was very easy to forget that the Aldermaston marchers and the central London sitters were, for the most part, the intent, somewhat moralistic, conscience-stricken middle classes and the students. They were not personalities and they had no wish to be; without any thought of glory they added their voices, their feet and their arses to the small historical protest. One expects rather more than the lip service Driver pays to the rank-and-file in a serious chronicle of the misdeeds of a generation. It is enough, in a newspaper report to know the "whys", "wherefores" and numbers, but in a history one is entitled to rather more. Driver tells us remarkably little, apart from superficialities, about how these people felt about what they were doing.

In the case of the Committee the majority of people who were jailed, fined, victimised at work and beaten up by the police have not been actresses, bishops or sages but deraciné young people and it was this same, predominately middle-class or student element, who felt so deeply their social and political disenfranchisement during the late 'fifties and early 'sixties, who provided the hard working core of the Committee both in the office and at demonstrations. Because it is impossible to write a history of a body in which the rank-and-file *are* the leadership and *vice versa*, without mentioning their role, Driver's approach to the Committee of 100 is clearer, more intelligent and, in several instances, more sympathetic than it is to CND. Even so his book misses some of the most important and interesting features of the Committee. The pledge system, the convenor system and the chain of philosophical or activist working groups receive little or no attention. These are crucial to an understanding of the Committee's successes and failures and are certainly worth critical attention and analysis, if only because they are the clearest and most decisive points of difference with CND organisation. The very fast turnover of Committee of 100 staff and the complete lack of turnover of CND staff are both a cause and effect of the difference in the structure of the two organisations. Driver's division, basically one of sitters and striders, tends to be rather simplistic. Neither does his book make much of the various ideological groupings which operated within the Committee almost from the start. It is, after all, interesting to know just why the Committee evolved as it did and just why it showed different faces at different times. Driver either skips these points completely or just skates over them superficially. Again it is not good enough to omit mention of Committee of 100 demonstrations at Marham—where the much vaunted solidarist myth became a working and effective reality for almost the only time in the Committee's

62

history—or Porton—where, despite Special Branch raids and the *Daily Sketch's* four-day warning, a very successful and convincing demonstration was held against germ war preparations. These two

demonstrations are important both internally and historically yet, like the imaginative demonstration at Hanington, they receive no attention. Neither is it adequate, for example, to describe the highly influential *Solidarity*, itself one of the most interesting magazines to rise on the wave of the nuclear disarmament movement, as a trotskyist magazine.

I do not wish to imply that Driver's account of the Committee of 100 is riddled with inaccuracy and ineptitude. (Poor Herb Greer achieved a far more distinctive confusion in *Mud Pie*\*) but the omissions particularly are rather distressing. Driver has made it clear that this is not a comprehensive history but this does not excuse omission of vital events. His whole approach leads one to expect something better and more thorough and it is disappointing to find his sympathetic approach leading to comparatively sad results. His failings seem suspiciously close to the failings of *The Guardian* at the time and probably result from over-reliance on that newspaper's press cuttings department. This is a pity because he has valuable things to say and his account contains the basic framework, and a lot more as well, for the deeper and wider study which should follow, with reprints, to everyone's advantage.

My own experience of CND began in the North East in 1959. Then there was a sense of excitement in local groups and, apparently, at Headquarters. The Carthusian Street caucus was then embryonic and my earliest memories are of a sense of identification and contact with other groups all over the country, through headquarters. I think this was largely true and there was certainly more reasoned interchange of ideas, more enthusiasm, less bitterness and less restriction to induce heresy. The atmosphere gradually hardened and by 1961 I was suffering expulsion from groups for supporting the Direct Action Committee and, soon afterwards, the Committee of 100. The reasons for this increasing narrowness are obvious. More people joined the movement, it became comparatively respectable, the Aldermaston March was twisted, and began biting its own tail, in its evolution from a "direct action" demonstration into a four day mobile beanfeast for progressives. Amongst the older and more dedicated Gandhians, the more thorough-going rebels and the young, "instinctive" libertarians there was new sympathy growing for more desperate action. Much of this came from people who had already mulled over the "problems" of law and obedience in a democracy but there was a large body of less certain people, usually young, who felt a desperate urge to do something, which involved a sacrifice other than listening to dreary speeches in Labour Party Committee Rooms and Friends' Meeting Houses all over the country, and who had realised, by instinct, that CND was marching into history without much effect. CND felt its carefully nurtured respectability threatened and there was a clear attempt to separate CND, with its respectable entourage of scientists, professors, MPs and litterati from any form of public identification with "direct action" or disobedience. It was difficult enough to stop identification at the top although CND sponsors who

63

broke the law were usually at pains to state that they did so privately and not as CND supporters. But at the level of local groups many young people felt that membership of CND implied at least tacit approval of the Committee of 100.

I remember a meeting in County Durham where the secretary of the local CND group was driven into a corner by "his" supporters and direct actionists, and eventually declared himself against all illegal action, everywhere and for whatever purpose. "What? Even in South Africa?" "Yes, even in South Africa. Constitutional and legal action must ...". The rest was drowned in jeers. It is this atmosphere of controversy, infighting and immutable attitudes that *The Disarmers* largely fails to capture or convey. It is not entirely Driver's fault. Everyone who has been active in CND will have some story to tell about how they took over a group for this or that party, fought a group for this or that cause or were expelled because of their ideological purity or the group's. Much of it was petty, some irrelevant, yet it was part of the vicious circle of cause and effect which has left CND in its present state—numerically depleted, ideologically stale, politically irrelevant with its kow-towing to

the Labour Party, and financially broken. It also led to a new generation of young idealists seeking outlets for their dissatisfaction. The intransigence and blind inflexibility of Carthusian Street led almost directly to the birth of the Committee of 100 and it created the huge support that that organisation was initially able to mobilise. Driver only bows in this direction; some of his anecdotes are instructive of this atmosphere but we are, on the whole, left to guess.

As far as the internal squabbles of Carthusian Street are concerned I am, mercifully, in no position to comment on the accuracy of details, though most of it *sounds* true. I only hope that some of Driver's revelations have hurt the nicely humanitarian instincts of some of the Campaign's seat-warmers. The internal, and, in some cases, the external affairs of Carthusian Street were only rarely of concern to the local groups of my experience. They either accepted the "line" or they didn't, they either voted for it at conference or didn't, and, regardless of decisions or other groups, they usually went their own way. Driver seems to ignore the basic irrelevance of Carthusian Street to the rank-and-file. It may be that my experience was unique, but I doubt it. I am not suggesting that headquarters had no sway over any groups, but simply that when it did so it was as a result of the inclination and composition of the particular group, not through any far-reaching obedience to the Canon Collins-Peggy Duff *dictat*.

Driver's discussion of the broader, social role of the movement against nuclear war, is interesting and well-balanced. It accepts the relevance of a movement which involves a wide variety of ostensibly disinterested people in a campaign of social and political protest. This is the most interesting part of the story. It is not so much a question of what CND has achieved, or what the Committee of 100 has achieved, politically, (though politicians can now scarcely afford the casual and glib dismissal of the dangers of nuclear weapons that was a feature of their attitude, pre-CND), but rather what has been achieved socially. The

64

involvement of respectable, well-bred middle-class people, as well as an earlier generation of unrespectable, well-bred, middle-class people, in social action has deeply affected contemporary life and contemporary attitudes. The sit-down and the march have assumed almost mythological status as a part of the citizen's weaponry against encroaching authority, and the techniques of the disarmers are used for daily problems by people who have had no direct involvement with the organised opposition to nuclear war—schoolboys march against fagging or corporal punishment, housewives sit down for pedestrian crossings. The movement has also left a deep mark on those who took part in it, either voluntarily as demonstrators or, more or less involuntarily, as agents of authority. A few servicemen have undergone the same sort of cataclysmic conversion that affected Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and so have a few policemen. But the people within the movement have learned, either directly or indirectly through friends, about police corruption and methods, about the inside of prison, about judicial prejudice, about the deceit, the lies and the chicanery of the authorities. Occasionally, as in the "bricks" case, they have been able to air their discoveries, so that even the initially prejudiced press has had to crawl down its own throat, and admit that English policemen, though usually knights in shining armour, can be perjurers, twisters and rogues. Even if some people had known it all along it was news to many more and the authorities probably do not feel quite as easy as they once did, about the gullibility of the man-in-the-street. There has been a lot of this sort of education over the last six years and, even if the prices have often been too high, it has been done a lot more effectively than it ever could have been without CND and the Committee of 100. There have been marked political effects as well. The Committee of 100 contributed mightily to the downfall of a Greek government and the release of Greek political prisoners, and CND has, if nothing else, raised the standard of public debate on vital issues. It certainly has not been enough but, when, and if, a *really* strong movement against militarism arises in this country, it will have been the protest movement of the late 'fifties and early 'sixties which laid the foundations.

In a short review I have inevitably sold *The Disarmers* short and I have certainly concentrated on its faults to the exclusion of its virtues. It is, in very many ways, an admirable book. Driver's attitude to the nuclear disarmament movement is neither patronising nor supercilious, and his summary of the movement's impact and impetus is, on its own, amongst the best critical "outside" statements on the broad campaign against nuclear war. He has a nicely ironic sense of humour and a lucid insight into many of the complexities of the campaign. He never wholly follows the Establishment-authoritarian line that a movement entirely reflects its leaders or that its strength lies entirely in either numbers or leadership. He has, in short, written a book that is a great deal better and less orthodox than we might have expected and *The Disarmers* immediately becomes a standard work, however inadequate. It can and, I hope, will be improved later. In the meantime it is vital reading for anyone interested in anti-militarism and post-war radical politics.

[inside back cover]

## Contents of No. 48 February 1965

Must the good guys always lose?	<i>Joe Garnett</i>	33
William Golding: from darkness to blackout	<i>Harold Drasdo</i>	35
Hunters and builders	<i>Catherine Gibson</i>	38
Beelzebub rides again	<i>Martin Small</i>	41
Miss Lang of Kidbrooke	<i>Tom Jones</i>	46
Mr. Duane of Risinghill	<i>John Ellerby</i>	51
Feathers for plucking	<i>Owen Webster</i>	58
Disarming sympathy	<i>Charles Radcliffe</i>	60
Cover by	<i>Rufus Segar</i>	

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Printed by Express Printers, London, E. 1.

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