



FEATURES

- ❏ *The Making Of The Committee* documentary
- ❏ Music CD insert

The Committee

By Eric Preston

Disc Details:

Video: **OAR 1.33:1**
 Anamorphic: **No**
 Audio: **• English (Mono)**
 Subtitles: **None**
 Runtime: **55 minutes**
 Rating: **N/R**
 Release Date: **September 13, 2005**
 Production Year: **1968**
 Director: **Peter Sykes**
 Released by : **Eclectic DVD Dist.**
 Region: **0 NTSC**

RATING



[The Committee](#)
 Paul Jones (IV)
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QUOTES

"I imagine the most introverted and intense episode of the original *The Twilight Zone*, one that filled you with intrigue while you tried to figure out just where they could possibly be going with the story."

"The film has gained more notice since they were able to get Pink Floyd (or as they say 'The Pink Floyd') to do the film score, which had never been released before this disc."

"An extremely opaque film that is admitted mental masturbation for writer/producer Max Steuer (author of *The Scientific Study of Society*)."

Before receiving this DVD for review, I had never heard of the film or the "mystery" surrounding the Pink Floyd soundtrack.

Imagine the most introverted and intense episode of the original *The Twilight Zone*, one that filled you with intrigue while you tried to figure out just where they could possibly be going with the story. Take that episode, then set it in an accurate depiction of a Britain-like country in the late 1960s. Now, imagine following along with the main character, seeing multiple levels of meaning in each small line of dialogue, interaction and



setting, becoming more and more engrossed in what was about to be revealed ... then, just when you think a payoff is coming, nothing. Roll credits. That's what *The Committee* is. An extremely opaque film that is admitted mental masturbation for writer/producer Max Steuer (author of *The Scientific Study of Society*). It's almost as if an economics professor, one that you really like and who is very interesting to

speak with, wrote a story specifically for himself and a few of his graduate students, a story revolving around his theories of how bureaucracy works with and against individuality in a slightly parallel society to 1960s Great Britain. A story for which he didn't worry about whether or not anyone without that very specific background would "get" any of it.

Donnie Darko fanboys would love this.

To go into its plot would be giving too much of the experience away. Suffice it to say, the setting reveals itself through small dialogue clues, not usually through direct exposition. The point is there, but so wrapped in one man's way of thinking that it's nearly impossible to decipher. Obtuse and masturbatory, maybe, yet I enjoyed watching the film.



The acting (starring Paul Jones of **Manfred Mann**) was very good, and the director, Peter Sykes (**The Avengers** TV Series, **Venom, To The Devil A Daughter**), does an incredible job in the opening scene to create a connection with the protagonist.

The film has gained more notice since they were able to get Pink Floyd (or as they say 'The Pink Floyd') to do the film score, which had never been released before this disc. If you've ever seen **Beyond the Valley of the Dolls** you have a good idea of the sound they accomplished. It's very un-Floyd like, sounding more like Donovan or Strawberry Alarm Clock. Very psychedelic, and only hinting at the traditional layering of sounds that Pink Floyd is known for. It works well in creating atmosphere, though it's not something this fan would enjoy sitting and listening to on its own merits. There is a very good [write-up of the soundtrack](#) by David King for Brain-Damage magazine.



Watching the one film extra, *The Making Of The Committee*, gave me a larger appreciation for the film, I just wish they hadn't been so ambiguous in its actual presentation. A second viewing made it a more enjoyable experience. The symbolism in the closing sequence was more apparent, and very well filmed and edited.

Video

Presented in its original aspect ratio (of which my player said was 1.47:1) and in black and white, the image is very clean and the contrasts clear; the blacks are solid and I noticed no haloing or digital artifacts. The image is a bit bright in spots, but I'm not sure if that was the original intention or not.

Audio

There is one option, English mono. It's balanced well, with the dialogue very clear, and music crisp.



Extras

There is only one extra on the first disc. No chapter list (although the main film is broken into five chapters), no commentaries, no subtitles.

The Making Of The Committee, a 51-minute retrospective filmed in 2003 with separate interviews of both writer/producer Max Steuer and director Peter Sykes inter-cut with scenes from the film, goes into great detail about what Steuer was trying to say with the film. He makes no apologies for it being elusive, except for one thing: When asked if he were to remake it today what he would do different he said, "I would make it less opaque." This is a very open and revealing set of interviews that adds to the understanding of the film, but I would have loved to have seen footage of the actual filming, which may no longer exist.

The second disc is a music CD of only three tracks, but sorry Floyd fans, nothing from the Roger Waters 1968 era Pink Floyd made it on. The tracks include: 1. The Committee – Paul Jones, written by Paul Jones and Max Steuer and arranged by Tim Whitehead of The Homemade Orchestra; 2. Here Comes the Flood - The Homemade Orchestra, written by Peter Gabriel arranged by Riley from the *Inside Covers*; 3. Bird - Riley, Tim Whitehead, From *The Tides*.

Packaging

The cover was designed by [Jon Goslan](#). It's a basic two-disc case with no inserts,



one disc against the front,
and one against the back.



Final Word

An engrossing film that is much better on the second viewing, **The Committee** does a great job of showing what late 1960s fashion and attitudes were, and acts as a good glimpse into the directing abilities of Peter Sykes, much the same way that **The Evil Dead** was for Sam Raimi. Not for everyone, but those that enjoy having most of a film happen in your head may like **The Committee**.

Also, if you know who Arthur Brown is, he does perform *Fire* in one scene while wearing his traditional headdress.



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