



## The Committee ★★

*Music Video Distributors, 58 min., not rated, DVD; \$24.95*

In the hour-shy 1968 *The Committee*, British writer-producer Max Steuer and director Peter Sykes attempt to make some sort of Grand Social Statement (Big Brother vs. the Little Guy, the implacable bureaucracy vs. individual freedom), couched in the context of the psychedelic '60s, replete with soundtrack music by "the Pink Floyd." The story, such as it is, concerns a nameless young man (played by Paul Jones, then singer for Manfred Mann) who, weary of the constant babbling of the motorist who picked him up hitchhiking, decapitates the poor dude, only to later sew the head back on, Frankenstein-style. When Jones' character is called upon to take part in one of the many committees that seems to decide pretty much everything and nothing (including which of five oranges is "the roundest"), he begins to suspect that this committee's task may be to decide his own fate. And that's about it. People talk, and talk, and then talk some more; the conversations, while doubtlessly meant to be provocative, are stilted and elliptical, filled with pointless non-sequiturs ("Have your teeth been bothering you?"), signifying nothing. As for "the Pink Floyd," their contribution is limited mostly to aimless abstractions driven by Rick Wright's organ, and the appearance by the Crazy World of Arthur Brown is laughable (hell, he doesn't even sing "Fire," his one and only hit). Of course, one man's pretentious twaddle is another's food for deep thought, so if *The Committee* (filmed in black-and-white, with extras consisting of about an hour's worth of interviews with the filmmakers) sounds like your cup of karma, then by all means belly up to the cosmic bar. For most, however, this is not a necessary purchase. (S. Graham)