

Indecent Assault



by

Roger Moody

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I myself would possibly not be enjoying the light of day were it not for the dedication of my solicitor, Bob Winstanley (of Winstanley-Burgess, 378 City Road, London EC1) and my barrister Stephen Leslie.

As for all the friends who supported me they are (just) too numerous to mention. However, I must mention Denise, Jill, Jan, Gerry, Sara and my brother Peter for showing that true friendship is indeed beyond any price.

. . . Last — by no means least!—I thank the boys. One day their identities can appear without disguise and their contribution to my defence, as well as my spirit, be unequivocally recognised.

If this book is for anyone, it is for them: especially Steve, Paul, Mark, Daren and Lee. By the time they are full grown. I trust that most of what this work describes will have become redundant ritual, about which they will make jokes to their own incredulous kids.

Preface

All the events recorded in this book took place. The conversations have been recorded, or remembered, as accurately as possible.

However the names of virtually all "characters" have been changed; so have the names of police stations and other places, except for the Old Bailey.

It should be obvious why families and friends are being protected by anonymity. It will be more difficult to understand why police and public officials have also been afforded such "protection". Certainly it is not in order to protect myself from further harassment, and I have no fear over actions for libel.

Basically, I find it too easy to point a finger at individuals who (so long as they are not corrupt in the usual sense) can legitimately claim they are merely doing their job.

The task of a nonviolent radical devoted to social change is—as Margaret Cole put it years ago—"not merely to rescue people from the swamp, but drain it".

Introduction

This little book is only partially an account of my experiences between arrest and acquittal on a charge of serious sexual assault on a young boy. More particularly, it is an account of my reaction to those experiences, and how they impinged on others. Over a period of 16 months I recorded many of these experiences in the form of a diary: the last entry was written literally a quarter of an hour before my last appearance in the Old Bailey dock. (*These passages are printed in italics throughout*).

Two people suggested I should write this work. The first is a barrister introduced to me as a lawyer specialising in so-called "child sex offence cases". I found in her a remarkably sympathetic friend—conventionally left-wing in her politics, but refreshingly radical in her attitude to paedophilia. (The two are by no means synonymous).

The second person worked (still does) with the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) and knows, at first hand, dozens of people who have been in my predicament. I think that both women felt such an account would contribute to a better understanding of men who have emotional or sexual relationships with young boys.

Whether my writing does in fact achieve this is open to question. For a start, I am not a "typical" paedophile. Indeed, it was for this reason that the police appeared so concerned to "have me"—and possibly for the same reason that they didn't have me, in the end.

Second, I won the case. To some this will imply that I am precisely the "crafty bastard" one of the policemen claimed I was all along. To others it will simply suggest that a dreadful error was committed—atypical, and

exceptional to current police practice.

Those who know police flout the law—and in particular the Judges' Rules—every day of their working lives, may still feel that my experience has little relevance to others. The more idiosyncratic it is, the less propaganda value it has.

Be that as it may—and despite my reputation as a leftist, political journalist—I am sticking to what I wrote at the time I felt compelled to write it. If it seems confused in parts, then that's because I was confused. If, at other times, it seems disjointed, then that's because I sometimes felt laid low, strung out and chopped along my vertebrae, like some carcass on a butcher's slab. But hopefully there are some moments of insight—especially into the unforgiveable waste attendant on the processes of investigation and trial of which I was a victim.

Above all, I hope that what comes across is the way in which the kids I knew and loved were regarded as protagonists to my pretended sexual offences. It's now widely recognised among psychologists and sociologists that children often invite physical and sexual affection from adults. The law in this country does not recognise this fact—indeed, specifically repudiates it: a person below 16 cannot consent to sexuality even if they jump into bed with an adult and start masturbating the older person. (Paradoxically, a boy between 10 and 16 can still be found guilty of an illegal sexual act, even with a partner over 16 years of age).

The police in this country at one and the same time accept and deny the existence of kids' sexual needs. They will appear in court to testify that children as young as eight—usually girls—"lead on" or "provoke" older men. If a twelve or thirteen-year-old boy seems unwilling to testify against an adult friend, they can employ sometimes devastating pressure on the youngster to "confess". What they are doing of course is typical police practice, and does not necessarily indicate any insight into youthful desires: they will exploit guilt and socially-induced shame to the limit. As one of the police who figured in my investigation had the candour to announce (perhaps without any inkling into what he was really saying): "They have a feeling of guilt and sometimes it is extremely difficult to get the truth of the matter from them". Detective Chief Inspector Connor then went on to speak about the "great mental shock" suffered by boys who had apparently been involved in a "pornographic photography" ring. "Until they had been conned" he said, "the youngsters had trusted adults implicitly".* DCI Connor implies that the traumas derived from the nude photography and the sexual play which followed. The evidence is, in fact, to the contrary: these were 14- and 15 year-old boys who willingly got involved with a sympathetic man. If they suffered any shock, it was almost certainly from the police. Yet the moment the young person is induced to make a statement, they cease being

*See *London Evening News* December 16th 1977 and *Enfield Gazette* December 29th 1977. The man at the centre of this investigation was later jailed for 10 years (since reduced to eight), for what Justice Chapman called "an appalling catalogue of sexual perversion and corruption of boys." In a recent similar case in the Netherlands, a youth worker was given two months' probation because the law authorities recognised the man's contribution to the welfare of his young friends. DCI Connor is a real name.

provocateurs, and become victims. Nothing of what they have extended to the adult, by way of affection, curiosity, play or love, enters the record.

It is not that the law makes such revelations inadmissible (it doesn't). But the police believe themselves to be servants of a nebulous "public opinion" which requires solid divisions between aggressors and aggressed. Complicity between an adult and child is unthinkable, precisely because it does occur. To admit that it might happen—so the police logic goes—is to justify its happening. At the point that a child enters into collusion with an adult, becoming defensive, secretive or defiant towards authority, then the child begins to demand some equality with adults in general. As Christiane Rochefort nicely observed in *Printemps au parking*, the point at which an adolescent boy is marked down as a "minor" is exactly the point at which he starts to become a man.

In the long run, this simplistic and bigotted attitude towards children's experience defeats its objective. In my own case, the alleged juvenile "victim" of my assaults was denied any chance to explain, either to the police or his mother or the magistrates at the committal, how he had felt towards me. If I took a photograph of him posing briefly in the semi-nude, it was therefore without his consent. If he had slept next to me in my bedroom, it was because I denied him the chance to sleep in the spare room. If he had got drunk at a party, it was because I plied him with liquor. And if my penis came against his bottom, it was because I deliberately tried to push it into his anus.

In the final event—when cross-examined by my barrister at the Old Bailey—he agreed that the "assault" might have been an accident. Asked why he hadn't reported it at the time, he said he "didn't think it was important". The three years which elapsed between his holiday with me in Summer '76 and the trial in Spring '79 had, thankfully, given him some reassurance. He was finally able to agree that our relationship had been mutual with a lot of hugging, cuddling and playing around. In his summing-up my barrister asked whether the State might not have been spared a tremendous amount of time and money, had the police asked this boy in the first place whether the incident could have been an accident.

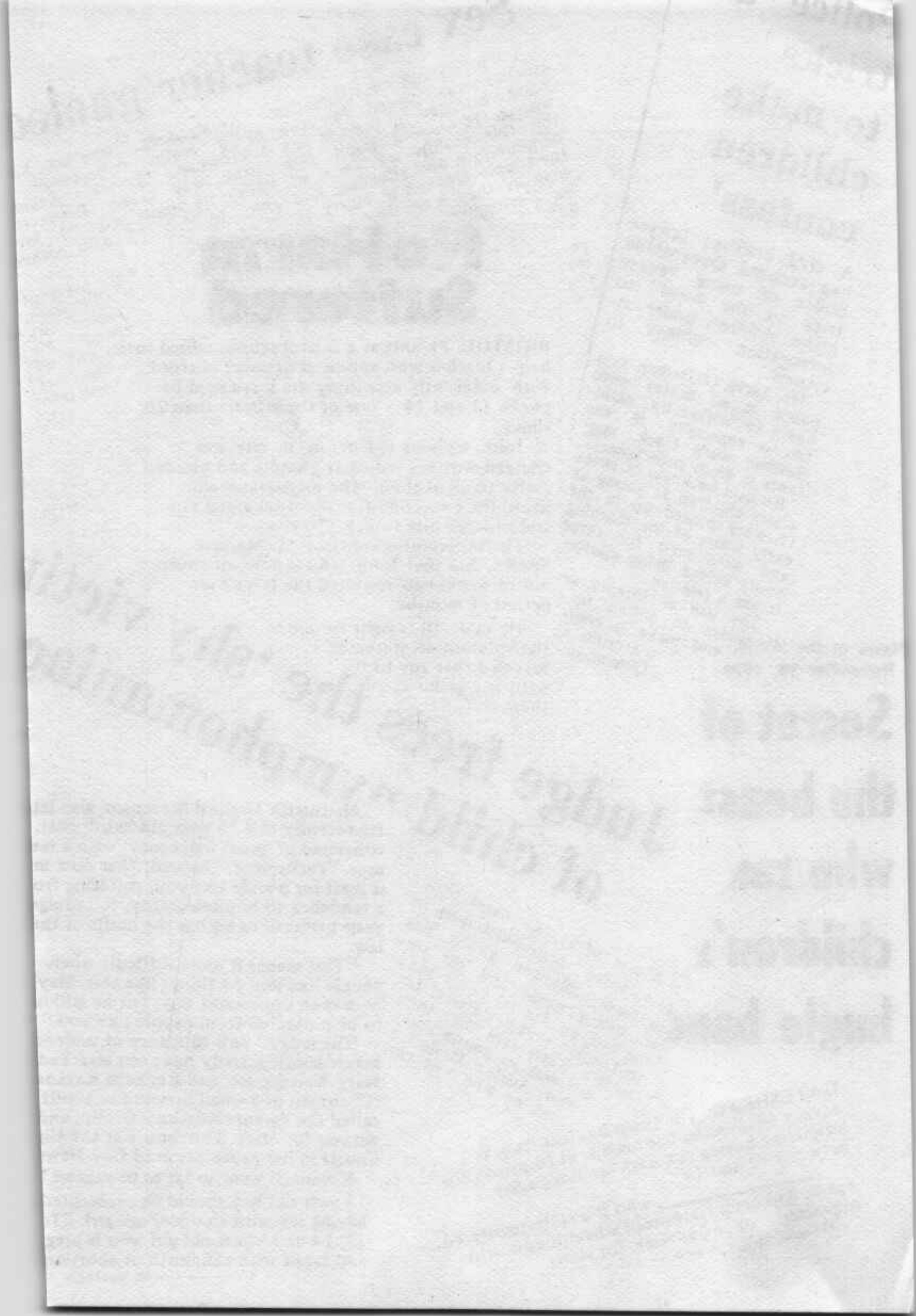
It would be easy to claim that the police distorted my young friend's account, in order simply to embarrass or discomfit me. For, while their methods were utterly questionable, their objective—by their own lights—was not. If some of the boys refused to make allegations, even when bludgeoned and insulted, that merely indicated the degree to which I had "indoctrinated" them. If this one boy had slept next to me, been cuddled and kissed, he had been seduced as surely as if I inveigled him into a car with a packet of cigarettes.

The police were correct in assuming that I would defend completely kids' rights to remain silent about their relationships—with anyone. They were correct in their assumption that I defend the rights of children to make mutual physical relationships with people of any age. Where they were absolutely wrong is in their assumption that silence is bound to mean sexual complicity, and that cuddling is bound to lead on to buggery.

During the past eighteen months—especially the two trials—I received enormous support from a host of friends and acquaintances. Without exception they were appalled at the treatment meted out by the police to myself and young people I know. But I must ask them—if I haven't done so less formally

already—whether they *ought* to be so disturbed by a logic which, after all, carries with it the full sanction of society. “Protection” of young people, without a guarantee of their rights to autonomy, privacy, sexual expression and non-ageist relationships, is not just meaningless. It is bound to lead to assault upon their minds and emotions, if not their bodies. Such assaults will be considered cost-effective, where they deter other youngsters from entering “illicit” relationships, or where they discourage libertarian parents from permitting freedom to their kids, or where they lead to the incarceration of dangerous men (or women).

Seen in such stark terms, this is the logic of General Westmoreland in Vietnam: “We bombed the village in order to save it”.



Police tricks to make children confess'

A civil liberties lawyer has accused Queensland police of using "every trick in the book" to make children under interrogation confess to crimes.

Mr. Terry O'Gorman said police in all States were likely to "soften up" children — especially if the children were black, migrants or from poor homes. He said he knew of cases where children as young as 11 were picked up in the early hours of the morning and questioned for three hours before being allowed to see a relative.

The use of threats and promises to soften up children and make it confessions in a crime v Queensland

News of the World, November 18, 1979

Secret of the beast who ran children's bugle band

GATESHEAD: The town has lost its sex-adviser because he has been sent to prison for admitting having sex with six boys aged between 12 and 14.

... who is a state-registered nurse, had been Gateshead's health education organiser — or sex adviser, for short. He was sent to prison for...

Sex case teacher gaoled

A 30-year-old mathematics teacher was gaoled for two years yesterday for having sex with a 14-year-old pupil. But the relationship was one of genuine love and affection, and the couple planned to marry as soon as they were free.

As Mr. Southwood was taken from the dock, he muttered "I love you," to the girl, who rushed to the court.

No Harm Suffered

BRISTOL: Parents at a Bristol school rallied to help a teacher who appeared in court charged with 'indecently assaulting' six boys aged between 11 and 14 — one of them more than 20 times.

John, a young teacher in the city was charged with six indecent assaults and pleaded guilty to all of them. The magistrates who heard the case conditionally discharged him and ordered him to pay £20 costs.

The prosecuting solicitor, Mr Maurice Sparks, said that John, who is now, of course, out of work, had assaulted the boys over a period of months.

He said: "It is right for me to reveal that any of them suffered with any gravity."

Judge frees the 'shy victim' of child nymphomaniac

A girl of 11, a "child nymphomaniac" who liked men in uniform, followed a shy bus conductor home and got into his bed, an Appeal Court judge in London said yesterday. Lord Justice Shaw said that though the girl was so young and the conductor, Adrian Mellett, was he who had ne...

Mr Justice Melford Stevenson also let rip recently at a 36 year old hairdresser, convicted of 'gross indecency' with a teenager. "Parliament," he said, "has now made it legal for people like you, suffering from a tendency to homosexuality, to indulge your perversions within the limits of the law."

"This makes it more difficult when people like you do things like this. May he was an unpleasant boy, but he still had to be protected from people like you."

The judges' new tolerance of under-18 heterosexual activity has been attacked by Mary Whitehouse, and Kenneth Kavanagh (Chairman of a small pressure committee called the Parents Advisory Group, and witness for Mary Whitehouse at the High Courts in her prosecution of Gay News).

Kavanagh went so far as to suggest that a 13 year old boy should be prosecuted for having sex with an under-age girl. "To have a 13, 14 or 15 year old girl who is pregnant and faced with childbirth or abortion does not matter much."

The Law

The facts can be quickly dealt with. My home was raided in November 1977 by police holding a warrant under the Obscene Publications Act. They took away numerous items they considered obscene, and arrested me for "assault on children". At the time they had received no complaint about me from anyone—child or adult: their raid was designed to find material on which to bring a complaint. Ideally, they needed a child who would make an allegation. Failing that, they would extract names and addresses from my voluminous correspondence and make further raids on other people.

Initially, they contacted a family which I'd known for several years. The four boys were questioned the same evening and said nothing damaging. When the father was at work the following morning—but before the boys had left home for school—the squad picked them up again and held them for ten hours. The boys were pressured into making untrue allegations amounting to "indecent assaults". Within an hour of their statements being taken I was questioned for two hours. I refuted the allegations and was finally allowed to leave Bofors police station. Detective Sergeant Spruce told me at the time: "We don't think we'll be bringing any charges, though what you've done is technically indecent assault". I did not know my solicitor had already threatened proceedings of *habeas corpus* unless I were released, nor that the Inspector in charge of the investigation wanted to release me, to call me back to Bofors and charge me later that week.

Three weeks later, I was re-arrested and charged with attempted buggery of Lee Hopkins, an act allegedly committed 18 months before when Lee was

10 years old and staying with me on holiday in London. I was held for a day and a night, made no statement—except to confirm that the two photos of Lee held to be “indecent” were taken by myself—and brought to court the next morning. My case was adjourned. (Later, “indecent assault” charges were added).

The “Section Seven” committal hearing took place in July 1978. Section Seven proceedings fall midway between a formal acknowledgement by the defence that there is a case to answer, and a dress rehearsal of the trial. Lee came to court and repeated the key allegation: “Roger tried to put his penis up my backside”. Other allegations made to the police were, however, not repeated—so a second charge of attempted buggery and the second indecent assault charge were dropped.

On March 26th 1979, the Old Bailey trial began.

* * *

There were two curious events in November and December 1977. I simply record them here and leave others to judge their relevance.

The day that I appeared in the magistrates’ court, accused of attempted buggery on Lee, two reporters from the *London Evening News* called at my house. I asked them how they knew my address: they were not at liberty to say. They purported to be doing a report on “child pornography”—and claimed my name had appeared on a list of potential photographers, supplied to them by a source they could not divulge. Interestingly, in one of my interviews at Bofors, Detective Sergeant Bean also mentioned that my name had appeared on a list. I asked the *Evening News*-hounds whether their list and the police list were one and the same. “Oh no” came the answer. “In fact the police aren’t very happy with the way we’re going about this”.

The second event was certainly the most disturbing. In the weeks leading up to my arrest I had talked with one of the organisers of a gay information service about providing information on paedophilia to the service’s members or enquirers. One of my articles seized by the police—which they intended bringing as evidence at the trial—had been written for this information service. Just after my re-arrest, I’d telephoned this friend to discuss the circumstances of my case, and the relevance of the article I’d written. I knew my phone was being regularly tapped—but I also knew there was nothing to be conveyed by phone which would bring my friend or myself into further disrepute.

Some days later, this friend’s flat was turned over by person or persons unknown. The intruder(s) entered by skeleton key, went through a host of documents, but took nothing. My friend is convinced that the police were responsible for this illegal action. He can find no other explanation for it.

* * *

That my mind was disoriented during this period seems clear from what I wrote at the time. Looking back on these writings—sometimes too terse, often too long—I realise a very simple fact: although the police are only part of the judicial machine (which is a mangle rather than a grinder, since it stretches you out, rather than crushes you down), it is *their* action which comes to feel

the most important and the least forgivable. Perhaps it is significant that, in the hierarchy of the legal process, judges are let off lightly by their victims. They are the actual villains—the passers-out of months and years, the cause of so much social crippling—yet they sit so far away. Respect for hierarchy which is rooted in all but the most political defendant protects them, in the same way that it protects the most violent people in jail.

Prison officers, for the same reason, don't get off so easily. They are screws, they do screw, and in many cases their charges do get screwed. But screwing is a sexual activity as well: surely prisoners don't just hate them, but also envy their virility? The prison officer typifies not just control and oppressiveness, but also release—again, a term with strong sexual connotation.

Do prisoners ever get out of jail, burning with the desire to get even with a prison officer? Probably—but I have never heard of it. In contrast, many who are arrested and hassled by police conceive enormous hatred for these men: "pigs" is offensive enough, but can we coin a more hate-filled expletive than "filth"? I suppose the plain truth is that, whoever violates you first, violates you the worst—a point not lost on Steve and Paul when they were pulled in for questioning themselves.

November 1977: first conversions into opposites. Scene one: the raid

7.30 am. 2 cars and 1 van, 8 policemen. 16 pairs of feet clambering 34 stairs, bursting into a bedroom 12 x 10.

"We have reason to believe . . ."

They have little reason and less belief, but no matter.

"There is a matter of assault on children". This is the first inversion. There has been no assault, no complaint and they know no children. It is I who am being assaulted, who wish to complain and who—from this moment—will be indefinitely separated from "my" children.

They do not allow me to undress, without scrutinising my every move. I pull my trousers on top of my pyjamas and, holding my water, refuse to pee since one of them wants to watch me do it. Are they afraid I will release the evidence (or my person) down the WC?

Scene two: the arrest

9 am till 11 pm. The police cell. "Mary loves Jock" "VK is innocent". Every meal I get sausages though I state at the beginning that I am a vegetarian. "All policemen are pigs, but not all pigs are policemen". They affirm "we know who you are and what you have been up to". But they don't—and that's precisely why I am being held.

"Being held"—yet no one holds me. I cannot even hold myself, and lie spreadeagled on my bushy woollen jumper, continually slipping to the foot of the wooden bench, which has been marvellously polished by six million affronted and embittered limbs. This is the second inversion. I have been arrested yet there is no charge. I am free, yet cannot move. Suddenly I have all the rights in the world, yet they could do anything with me that they wished. Not quite true—I have the right to say nothing. And nothing is what I say. Nothing . . . no thing . . .

December 20th 1977

The mind does indeed "race" when the body is forced to a abrupt halt. Over four different days I had lain in as many different cells. Yet not once did I want to range physically beyond them. The upper branches of an elm waved through the tiny, gross, glass blocks set high in the wall of one of these rooms, and I wondered how far the trunk reached down. With a little ingenuity I might have climbed up the bricks, swung my legs onto the narrow shelf and got a closer look. But the sounds around me were sufficient: the banging of files into a drawer, the thrum of a Hoover gobbling along carpetless floors, the occasional sharp crash of a car door. I got to prefer being where I was, because it is easier to live at the centre of oppression than contend with its apparatus and trimmings; becoming anxious whether the comings and goings of strange men affect an irrelevant world, or only me.

In its racing, the mind bends back upon itself, like a surfer's wave. At the centre of your body lies the charge. Once you have been given the charge sheet, you place it in a pocket next to your heart, as if it were the one thing they cannot take away. Some prisoners apparently even hide it—as if they want to rob it from you, once they have spent weeks or months trying to slap it on you. I can believe it. This charge rattles around inside like one of those huge tubes, designed to give kids motor-stability. The charge has no more substance than water in a marasmic child. Yet you feed on it, and when you're finally released, you believe that everyone can read it on your forehead and in the way you walk.

The cell is always at the heart of the police station, just as capture lies at the heart of the police, the charge lies at the heart of the prisoner and trial lies at the heart of the law. In Bofors, corridors and investigation rooms ranged out from this centre, along several blocks and up several flights. When I was released at the end of my second day, Detective Sergeant Spruce and Detective Sergeant Bean conducted me on a tour through the building. At first they failed to find a spare room, so my sandwiches were put in my hand and I had to eat them while walking round. Finally I was offered a chair behind a desk on the top floor, in a room furthest from my cell.

"All this is ours" said Spruce. "All for me?" I asked.

"It's what we call a gorkha station", he replied. "We take no prisoners".

The first morning the two men had entered my cell and sat down on my bed, leaving the door ajar. They began to chat. I was asked what I was reading. It was a book about the destruction of the Ache, the native people of Paraguay. Bean was derisory, "they're doomed". But Spruce admitted we all shared some responsibility for the Ache's fate. He liked to sit in my cell, just as an anthropologist likes sitting in a Dayak long house, sharing their tea with the spices wrinkling up his nose. Another time, another place, Detective Sergeant Spruce and I could come to some understanding about the world outside. But not until he had chosen to work inside it, differently.*

*Two weeks after my acquittal I was drinking with friends in a local "real ale" pub. On getting up for a second round, I overheard two men avidly discussing opera: they were DS Spruce and a detective friend.

Undated: 1978

It is important that your jailers give you things to think about—the illusion that you can beat the rap. Sometimes, as a consequence, you will be encouraged to make errors, talk unwisely. More especially you will want to deal with them. For a while that great clunking duodecahedron inside you diminishes to a soft, even warm, small ball. That is the great illusion they need to create, and once achieved, they have some control. I remember long ago sitting in the consulting room of a mad psychiatrist. A crazed lady entered, demanding to be released from the machine he'd put inside her. Laughing, the psychiatrist told her not was true—at the same time, it was a stinking lie. He had put the machine in and kept it there and to an extent he controlled it. Yet it was also hers. He couldn't extract it at will, nor replace it with another machine. And when she died it would be lost with her.*So it is with the charge. It is theirs, they make it "stick", they "lay it on you", they "bring it against you". You come up from the cells into the court and it hangs over you. That is their language and it aptly illustrates the ambivalence of their actions. For, once it is inside you it is beyond their power. You are literally charged. Until they choose, you will never be rid of it. But by the same token, they cannot manipulate it entirely from outside. When they make the attempt to do so, they have to be very subtle, so devious—that you don't see that they have lost total control. Even then—and alas—many will play the game of "reducing the charge". The jailers enter their cell, they leave the door open, they pull out the cigarettes, and the game has begun.

January 1978

The police have only visited kids whose photos were in my possession . . . yet they are aware of other boys and girls I have known for many years. Their assumption is that, if I exploit kids in one way I'm bound to exploit them in another. Only plausible if my photography were in any way "obscene". It isn't and so the equation collapses.

In one of my interviews, as they paraded various photos in front of me, DS Bean pointed at one set of pictures and murmured something in his companion's ear. I was meant to see the gesture but not hear the words. No doubt something like "he's got a big one". For the shots were of a boy I'd met briefly on a beach in Devon last year, whose vivacious personality captivated me, as he shored up a sandcastle against the incoming tide. His body wasn't much to ogle over, but here were these full grown men, avowed anti-pederasts, dedicated to stamping out the evil which grows with the eye . . . here they were gloating over the boy's unusually large cock, snug between his legs in his bathing trunks. I never undress anyone I see—not, at any rate, by eyes alone. Now I realised that the porn police undress everyone they lay their eyes on. Their eyes have tiny fingers which creep upon resisting drawers . . .

The Greeks called anything introduced to a drama which should have been left off (like battle wounds, atrocity, indignity) *ob scena*—literally "off the stage".

*See my chapter "We haven't met like this before" in *Sans Everything* published by Nelson, 1967.

By showing the young my pieces of so-called "obscenity", by stripping me and their own bodies in front of them, the police are guilty of the crime they're pledged to eradicate. Which is only surprising, if we're naive enough to believe the police really want to stamp out "crime". Truth is, the opposite. By bringing out that which should remain hidden, by transforming innocence into complicity and a moment's play into several years futility, they are stoking the fires of revolution. The more intelligent know this, but there is nothing they can do about it: some may even want it. How else are they to overcome the manifest contradictions of their job? A job in which they act like criminals at every remove: holding their victims, offering ransoms, taking bribes, planning raids, developing more and more sophisticated anti-personnel technology, and ultimately holing up in their little fortresses and thrusting two fingers at the world.

January 1978

Everything we do has hidden consequences. Every positive action carries with it a negative counterpart.

"So, you approve of damaging the innocence of children?" asks Detective Sergeant Spruce, when he has me in the interviewing room at the end of the long arm of his law.

Unwisely perhaps, I say, "What innocence?"

"You don't believe that kids of four or five are innocent?"

They are, in fact, the guiltiest in some sense. But I omit to tell him this, conscious now that everything I say may be taken down and used in evidence. Guilty because—separated from their parents just for a moment—little children will huddle into groups, cook up conspiracies, explore every hidden avenue of their own and others' bodies, and the body of the surrounding world. They find more corners in a cardboard box than you or I can dream of. New words carry that exquisite value born of first discovery; they are clasped to the breast, rolled around the tongue, then immediately made secret. Indeed, under-fives are the guiltiest creatures on earth. Yet that is also their "innocence". It is the way they greet every new understanding covetously, and yet with an enthusiasm fit to free the world.

Everything turns into its opposite: the immutable law of Hegel and Marx. It's also Beethoven in his last quartets. And it's what happened with the early socialism of Harold Wilson and the christianity of the early church of Jesus of Nazareth.

The police are not impervious to the process, nor do they lack comprehension of it. They become corrupt in fighting corruption, violent in preserving the peace. Among the first to strangle revolution, they are nonetheless among the first to privately ridicule the idea of stability. What unnerves them—and throws them back upon redundant ritual—is that they have to sit at the very crown of this dialectical wheel. Contrary to common belief, the police are among the first to see a new morality. That is why they usually react against it. Not that they implicitly reject change, but that they cannot countenance a change of which they are not yet a part.

"In a different country . . . perhaps in ten years time" they say, "we might

be on your side". But not yet: you violate our sense of order in the present, the order in which things have to change.

January 1978

Among the conditions for bail is one that I do not contact in any way eleven "young boys" whose names are thoughtfully typed out on a plain sheet of white paper. I am intrigued by the designation "young". One of them will be 18 by the time my case comes to trial, another is just about to leave school. There is a huge area between infancy and acknowledged youth, which is filled with every adult's misconceptions of what constitutes a boy. (There are few problems defining girls—they are either "little" girls or simply "girls". There are fewer problems and any way with girls: patriarchy has made it so).

Little boys start at six months and end at sixteen. Small boys start at around ten, yet end around thirteen: they are usually middle class and go to public schools, where they are created small by "bigger" boys in the pecking order.

"Young" is a catchall. I must not interfere with these boys because they are young and—because I must not interfere with them—they are young. Mixed up here is the jealousy, and yet the naivety, of age feeling itself, the heavy shrug of shoulders which have taken responsibility too soon. It was the policeman's term and in a curious way, it serves to regularise the very relationships I have been denied. That isn't its intention. But it is my word rather than theirs; on my side rather than theirs; on the side of hope and vitality, and ultimately of resistance. The "small" can be thrown around at will, the "little" lie scattered idly at our feet. But the "young"—now, they are too be reckoned with!

February 5th

Under pain of excommunication, I am not to speak to eleven kids. It might as well be a thousand. Carl, my adult friend, makes his customary weekly journey to the lair of four of my young pups. "Roger cannot say anything to you as you know. He therefore sends absolutely no message—with all his love". I am an attempted bugger. Who in this world isn't? Everyone tries to get inside the other. Priests do it, beasts do it, even debutantes at their coming-out feasts do it.

The lobotomist probes inside a recalcitrant brain. The doctor with his enema attacks two and three-year-olds. While the police surgeon buggers little children all the time. Ah yes, the instrument they play with makes all the deference. A tool in the hand is worth any in the bush. The first kind destroys connections, makes distances. The second—however maladroit or ill-conceived—attempts to make connections. For the child, confused that seductive play by adults desiring his mind or his future, is never directed at his body, many things are suddenly made comprehensible. "So that's what he wants". Then the choice whether to give or not is the child's. If he is compelled beyond his desires, at least the force is understood as power, naked power. But those who inveigle their way into his mind cover their intent at every turn, create double-language, double standards, gobbledegook. The adult who, in a shed after school, a

bedroom during the holidays, produces his cock and his desires—he literally comes straight to the point.

As devious a person as I—how could I do that? I sit here and wonder.

February 1978

The Inspector suspects that a man and a boy are having a relationship of which he would not approve. He doesn't approve because it doesn't fit. The man is not a parent and the boy is not his child. However, there is nothing to show cause why the relationship should be interfered with. There's no overt suffering (indeed, the boy is happier that he has ever been—this is partly why it's disturbing, for the boy could never be so happy if he were with his father). There's no apparent corruption, no bizarre behaviour (this is also disturbing). In fact, since the relationship is so commonplace, it justifies investigation.

In the course of the investigation, the impression of normality is confirmed except in one respect: the boy looks on the man not as a father but an equal. Experience tells the Inspector that this must conceal an irregularity.

That irregularity must be sexual—or, rather, the presence of sexual desire. If the sexual component cannot be construed, it will have to be created. It is the nodal point of the Inspector's comprehension. Up to that point, everything in the relationship may perplex or disturb. But once the sexuality has been imputed, everything that seemed normal can now be made abnormal and perverse.

The man is therefore brought to court for touching his young friend's cock. The boy is subjected to pressure, lies, constructions on his feelings for the man which previously he couldn't have dreamed of. (Or only dreamed of). The relationship has to be reframed, re-presented: the conversion from normality to perversity must be made complete.

The man is convicted of indecent assault. He cannot see the boy again. He had better not see any boy for a long time.

As for the boy, he is now convinced that his relationship with the man was—if not wrong—at the very least, abnormal. The boy then behaves abnormally, he shuns his friends, is suspicious of other men, ambivalent towards his mother. He lies awake in the night wondering whether he didn't really want the kind of relationship the police state he had, and if so, whether he isn't more perverted than anyone can yet imagine.

He concludes that his relationship with the man was wrong from the start. And from that point, an internal policeman starts pacing the boy's mind. The Inspector has won completely. The boy is now "not like all the rest", and never will be. As he crouches in bed at night, an invisible baton raps his knuckles when they fall between his legs. Showering after games, he turns his back on his school friends, lest they detect some physical sign of his dis-ease. In all sexual matters, he is embarrassed, belligerent, confused. In a word, he is now normal.

April 2nd 1978

In Christopher and His Kind, Christopher Isherwood asks himself if his guilt at constantly thinking of his imprisoned lover Heinz, (from whom he

was separated when the Nazis stormed in, accusing the German boy of "onanistic activity") was due to relief at finding the relationship irretrievably broken.

I ask myself the same: whether, not having the difficulties of arranging my day around a succession of demanding kids, or not having to consider what to do should I meet the kids I cherish, though their father has forbidden it—whether all this isn't the source of the calm beneath the agitation and sudden jabs of pain produced by what I've been through. For it is true that the peace which allows me to sleep at nights when I choose, and not linger in bed in the mornings, is something I feel at bottom, rather than as a drape pulled across the gaps in my resolution.

All the problems and potential loss associated with continuing my life as it was before November seem light burdens, compared with what I've experienced. Now, with the benefit of hindsight, I can say I'd be willing to submit to them all again—and more and for longer. But am I too conveniently forgetting that, more than once, I resolved to throw in the towel and quit this country for good? That I half-resolved never to do a good turn to anyone again?

But I can't say I feel the guilt that Isherwood talks about. I never felt guilty at my relationships and, just because my resolve to finish them off has always been so weak, I don't feel the State has now done my dirty work for me. Nonetheless, I do feel a certain kind of relief that I don't have to worry through certain things at this time. A known fear is better than an unknown fear, or rather—than fear of the unknown.

September 1978

Children aren't fools. That's why they can be desperately hurt by police enquiries. They know they are not being subjected merely to an attack on "queerness"—nor that the police are simply trying to protect them from growing up "pansies". What they experience is an attack on sexuality itself. For the acts they committed (or did not commit—it matters little if the feelings are present) were, to them, primarily acts of sexuality or play or aroused tenderness. Only second—a long, long way behind—were they associated with homosexuality.

Agents of the law so much do the opposite of what they imply. They make children literally queer on sex, with sex and for sex to the extent that more rational, though helpless, observers of this inexorable process may well ask: "It it all by chance?" Or is it intended that the sins of the fathers should pass on to the sons, so that they are also tainted with the conviction that sex is inseparable from guilt?



The Committal

Two days after the committal hearing, I wrote to a close friend:

I feel calm and accepting and have a clarity about what I must do that I didn't have before. The irrelevance and crudity and human failure (which was vast) of the court on Friday managed to sift the wheat from the tares. Remember you said that I couldn't get up in court and deny that I did love boys? The fear of that, and being misconstrued, had haunted me for months. Yet it was all said, my words were out and you were right. They survived even that mangling of expression and misreading of sentiment.

But most important were two other things. First, the love and understanding I felt from my friends. For the first time in this whole business, I felt that strength which comes from a common purpose. I had doubted it were possible—as you know, it had previously only happened when I struggled for others. Now it had happened with me as the beneficiary. I hoped it reflected what I might have been able to give others in the past.

Second, there was what I felt for Lee in the court. I still cannot digest it. I only knew one thing as I looked at him—that I loved him. That was the only reality on my side of the court. Each time love struck the air, whether as glances or in words, they defied both the dereliction of the prosecution and the legalism of the defence. And that of course is why the case is bound to go on.

How could the police have not been affected? Or the magistrates? It was not pornography and rape and indoctrination which pervaded the air, much as those may have been the only terms in which they could understand or organise the proceedings—but the assertion of love: love for those generally considered incapable of receiving it from those unworthy of giving it. Therefore it was a

court of fools, a hearing for misfits; a public gallery filled with foolish lovers opposite a court filled with lovers of the foolish. No other outcome was possible. Had there been another result, I would have felt cheated. Do you understand that? Can anyone understand it?

Dare I risk one observation which may seem strange. (It may also be self-deception but I throw it out in order to have it tested). It is only the political process, in its broadest sense, that makes any sense of such waste and stupidity. As that court showed, love alone is easily denied by those who cannot understand unconditional love. It is only the analysis of why such pathetic human constructs deny human reality which lets us determine human reality at all. Does that make sense? If I had been set free it would have been on their terms—the terms they choose. No triumph, except a triumph of form and of method. Now that the struggle goes on, however, it is on my terms as well.

This is the only way I can explain the inner calm now I feel. I am free not to tremble, but to fight . . .

I saw Mark and Daren today briefly. It was the only time they could get off. I cannot look at either of them without feeling gladness and—yes, pride—at their understanding and breadth of vision. How they know things people three times their age have no inkling of! (Which again is why I am in court . . .)

* * *

The committal proceedings lasted a day. A brief prosecution statement, outlining my arrest and Lee's interrogation, was followed by the appearance of the Prosecution's first witness, Lee himself.

At that point, my barrister asked for the court to be cleared, both to relieve pressure on Lee, and avoid any possibility of police intimidation—merely by their presence. Since no less than seven Bofors policemen had turned up at court, this was no mean threat.

My friends in the public gallery, together with six of the policemen, dutifully left the court. At that point, D S Wolstenholme ambled from the well of the courtroom, to place himself on a chair right next to where Lee would testify. For two minutes, he sat there implacably while my barrister reiterated his demand that the court be cleared of police. The prosecutor didn't seem to know what to do and the magistrates appeared powerless to act on their own instructions. Only after another two demands, did Mr Wolstenholme finally leave the court.

Detective Sergeant Wolstenholme had taken over the "porn squad" at Bofors, which arrested me in late 1977. He never interviewed me—indeed the first time I saw him was at the committal hearing. However, he was well known to most of the boys. "That fat one, the one I hate most" was how Paul later described him in a statement. Even now Mark winces when the man's name comes up in conversation.

Lee's mother, Jean, had to leave the court as well. The police had assured her that "only the magistrate" would be in court, beside myself—and that the whole affair would be informal.

It is, of course, in the interests of the prosecution to get the co-operation of a young person's parents in a case like mine. Technically she need only testify

that her son is her son, and produce a birth certificate. But in a contested case, she will have to answer questions about the man charged with molesting her child: her relationship with the man will come under scrutiny. Some parents will readily co-operate, if only to save embarrassment: yes, the man deceived the entire family; yes, he took advantage of them mercilessly. The police even appear to be moderators of the primitive punishment the parents would like to mete out to the man.

Paul and Steve's father allowed the cap to fit him. By the time Detective Sergeant Bean had regaled him with stories of my being "at the centre of a paedophile network" and distributing pornographic photos around the world, he was ready to slit my throat. One evening, a few days after my arrest, a friend found him honing a piece of metal in his front room. "This is for Roger," he announced "if he dares come to my front door again!" Yet Steve's father never believed I had interfered with his boys. He took them solemnly up to his bedroom one by one and interrogated them.

"Did Roger touch you?" "He may have done when we were fooling around" they answered. "Even I indecently assault my kids when I'm wrestling with them" he agreed. And after his children had been grilled by the Bofors squad, reducing one of them to shivers and the other to tears, he said: "The police did more harm in a day to my boys than Roger Moody could have done in three years." Nevertheless, Steve's father cut me from that point on—and until now. The police had clearly done part of their job well.

But Lee's mother Jean refused to play this particular game. One of her first acts, following my arrest, was to contact a mutual friend and ask what she could do "to help Roger". Until just before the committal hearing, she seemed determined not to allow Lee to testify against me.* She also agreed that her son's appearance in court would do more damage all round than any indecency I may have committed with him. In June 1978 she wrote in these terms to the Director of Public Prosecutions. In response, two policemen from Bofors visited her at her Midlands home. It was then they re-assured her about the informal nature of the committal. (The copy of the charge sheet which was sent her also never mentioned "attempted buggery" only "indecent assault".) Within a fortnight, Jean had decided to bring her son to court. "I think the family can cope with it," she wrote.

In my letter to a close friend after the committal hearing I continued:

"Jean must now be feeling very much in two minds. On the other hand, relief that Lee has made his statement, and it wasn't "so bad" after all. (That's to say, since everything once it's over "isn't so bad"). If she had expected any hostility from my friends or myself, I think she will have been reassured. On the other hand, she must have felt humiliated and, to an extent, betrayed. The police went all the way up to the Midlands, and effectively hoodwinked her. If they told her she risked going to jail if Lee didn't turn up in court—then certainly she was hoodwinked.

*Technically a parent can be prosecuted if an under-16-year-old does not appear when subpoenaed to testify in court. This, despite the fact that they don't *have* to be present when a child is interrogated. In my case, two barristers and a solicitor were of the opinion that if Jean had refused to let Lee testify, the case would have been dismissed without repercussions on Jean.

Now she must realise that the assurances about court procedure were completely false; it is the court not the police who decide these things. Indeed, if my barrister hadn't insisted, then Lee would have had to testify not only with two magistrates, barristers, solicitor, solicitor's clerk, probation officer, court reporter and myself present, but five or six heavies about whom he must have mixed and painful feelings.

The police lied to Jean and they knew they were lying when they did so. Perhaps she now realises that the police are capable of lying in the same way that I've maintained throughout they lied about me. If they were prepared to flout the order of the court to quit it, and position one of their number right next to where Lee would testify, what better indication is there that they have no scruples in putting enormous pressure on kids, when in private?

I wish she could have been in court when Lee testified, not simply because of the support he needed from her, but because she might then have understood—in a way cold written words couldn't persuade her—the extent to which Lee is confused about the allegation he originally made, the extent to which he in fact withdrew much of what he originally said, and the pain the whole thing caused him. I think she would only have had to look at him, struggling to find words, struggling to remember, struggling to look at me—the only person in that gaunt room who could give him the least sign of recognition. (Cruellest irony—that it was me, the very person against whom he was “complaining”, from whom he sought some human feeling). She might then, at last, have seen an essential truth: that there is no question of Lee lying. But there is a question of his confusion about events in the long gone past (two years now) and about what a succession of adults have wanted out of him.

When he made that clinching statement, I heard it in words out of the mouths of the police. (Would Lee have used the word “penis”? I think not. In his original statement to the police, they inserted it in brackets after “dick”. And would he have said “backside”? Backside is a peculiarly adult term—“I'll hit you on your backside if you're not careful”. Kids will almost always say “bum”, “ass” or “bottom”. And if a boy were trying to be polite in adult company, surely he would say “behind?”)

* * *

As I sat in the dock on July 28th, watching Lee testify, I wrote down all the questions addressed to him, and his replies. I also noted the hesitations and intonations in his voice—something never reflected in the “deposition” which these statements then become.

Woman magistrate: Lee, do you know what the oath means?

Lee: I'm supposed to tell the truth.

Magistrate: It means you *promise* to tell the truth. You are going to make a solemn promise to give the right answer. You must put your hands on the Bible—on the words of Jesus.

Lee delivers the oath

Prosecution: Lee, when did you first meet Roger Moody?

Lee: About five years ago.
Pros: Where did you live?
Lee: I can't remember.
Pros: Close?
Lee: About thirty miles away.
Pros: Did he come to live with you at your house at all?
Lee: Yes.
Pros: For how long?
Lee: About three months.
Pros: Did you see him a lot?
Lee: Yes.
Pros: What sort of things did you do together?
Lee: I can't remember.
Pros: After three months did he leave and come to visit you from time to time.
Lee: Yes.
Pros: Did you go and stay with him in London?
Lee: Yes.
Pros: On the first occasion were you with anyone else?
Lee: No.
Pros: Can you remember how you went to London?
Lee: By coach.
Pros: Which cities did you go through?
Lee: Birmingham.
Pros: Where did you go when in London? Do you remember the address.
Lee: No, I can't remember.
Pros: Do you remember which part of London the house was in?
Lee: No.
Pros: During the day what did you used to do?
Lee: Go swimming.
Pros: What else?
Lee: Sometimes I went with Roger.
Pros: What sort of things did you used to do?
Lee: I went to play with the other lads.
Pros: Where did you used to go?
Lee: Sometimes they came to our place, sometimes we went to where they were living.
Pros: What were their names?
Lee: Jimmy and Steve.
Pros: Was this the first time you went to London?
Lee: No.
Pros: When did you go before?
Lee: Me and my brothers went to stay with Roger.
Pros: When you described your trip on your own, how long ago was this?
Lee: I think three years ago.
Pros: What time of the year?

Lee: Summer holidays.

Pros: How old were you?

Lee: About nine.

Pros: Where did you sleep?

Lee: Same room as Roger.

Pros: Did it have beds in it?

Lee: No.

Pros: On what did you sleep?

Lee: Mattresses.

Pros: Where did Roger sleep?

Lee: Next to me.

Pros: Were the mattresses close?

Lee: Yes.

Pros: What did you used to wear?

Lee: Pants, sometimes a teeshirt.

Pros: What did Roger used to wear?

Lee: Pants.

Pros: On the first night did anything happen?

Lee: He kissed me.

Pros: Anything else?

Lee: I don't think so.

Pros: What did you do about that?

Lee: Can't remember.

Pros: On later nights did anything happen?

Lee (after a long silence): He tried to get close to me.

Pros: In what way?

Lee: I can't understand.

Pros: Tell us what happened.

There is another long silence from Lee

Pros: You explain to the lady up there (he points to the magistrate).

Magistrate: We have some idea of what happened, we want to hear it from you.

Pros: How did you lie in bed? Were the two mattresses alongside each other?

Defence barrister (intervening): Don't lead! Close was the word, not together.

Lee: The mattresses were right next to each other.

Pros: Were you sleeping on one of the mattresses?

Lee: Yes.

Pros: Where was Roger sleeping?

Lee: On the other one.

Pros: Did your respective positions stay like that?

Lee: I stayed there, yes.

Pros: What about Roger?

Lee: He tried to come over to my mattress.

Pros: Did he succeed at all?

Lee: I can't remember.

Pros: Can you remember anything else happening at all?

There is a long silence

Lee: He tried to put his arms around me.

Pros: Anything else?

There is another long silence

Magistrate: Do you know why you're here to give evidence today?

Defence barrister (*in an aside*): The police officers told him to come.

Pros: Did anything else happen you can tell us about?

There is yet another long silence

Lee: He tried to put his penis up my backside.

Pros: Did you see his penis?

Lee: Yes.

Pros: Did he get it in?

Lee: No.

Pros: When he did so, what did you do?

Lee: I moved further away.

Pros: Did anything else happen on another night?

Lee: He kissed me and that.

Pros: What does "and that" mean?

Lee: Nothing.

Pros: I'd like you to look at two photos. Who took these photos?

Lee: Roger.

Pros: When?

Lee: When he came to the Midlands sometime before I came to London.

Pros: Did you read any books when staying with Roger?

Lee: Yes.

Pros: What sort of books?

Lee: Sex books.

Pros: Was there any question of photos being taken?

Lee: He wanted to, yes.

Pros: Did you agree to those two photos being taken?

Lee: No.

Pros: Did you go out in the evening at all?

Lee: We went to a party.

Pros: Who was at the party?

Lee: Roger. I can't remember who else.

Pros: Were there any women there?

Lee: No.

Pros: What did you have to drink?

Lee: I drank Pomagne.

Pros: How much?

Lee: Half a bottle.

My barrister then rose to cross-examine

Defence: Lee, you know you said Roger tried to put his penis up your backside? He never touched it did he?

Lee: I don't know.

Def: You tell us.

Lee: I thought he did.

Def: You're not sure about it are you?

Lee: Yes.

Def: You couldn't see him could you?

Lee: No.
Def: You can't really be sure can you? Isn't that right?
Lee: That's right. I can't be sure.
Def: It could have been a hand against you couldn't it?
Lee: Yes.
Def: It could just as easily have been a hand as a penis couldn't it?
Lee: Yes.
Def: You remember the party to which you went. Do you remember it was for two people going out to Bangladesh?
Lee: No.
Def: You went with Roger other evenings didn't you? To the cinema for example.
Lee: Yes.
Def: When you say "on other occasions" he tried to kiss you he was doing that rather like a father wasn't he?
Lee: Yes.
Def: Not in any other way?
Lee: No.
Def: And when he cuddled you he did so like a father?
Lee: Yes.
Def: Not in any other way?
Lee: No.
Def: He asked to take photos of you and you said no. Let me show you these other photos [clothed]. There's nothing wrong with those is there?
Lee: No.
Def: The room you slept in with Roger. When your brothers came to stay, you all slept in the same room didn't you?
Lee: Yes.
Def: And there was only one room for you to sleep in when you were with Roger?
Lee: No, there was a room beside it.
Def: Did it have any furniture in it? Wasn't it bare?
Lee: Yes.
Def: Have you ever stayed away from home on your own before without your brothers or mother?
Lee: No.
Def: Roger used to treat you very much like a son didn't he?
Lee: Yes.
Def: Your mum and dad don't live together do they?
Lee: No.
Def: They haven't done so since you were a baby is that right?
Lee: No, they haven't.
Def: Do you see your dad very much?
Lee: No.
Def: Roger was really like a father to all of you?
Lee: Yes.
Def: So when you came to stay in London with Roger it was natural for

you to sleep in the same room and not in a room—a bare room—on your own?

Lee: Yes.

Def.: And when Roger was touching you, he was being affectionate like a father wasn't he? He wasn't doing anything wrong?

Lee: I don't know whether he was touching me like a father.

Def: It was really like a father wasn't it?

Lee: I don't know.

The prosecutor rises to re-examine

Pros: Lee, why did you say it was a penis?

Lee: It didn't feel like a hand or anything.

Pros: Were you lying down at the time?

Lee: Yes.

Pros: Were you facing towards Roger or away?

Lee: Away.

Pros: Could you see how he was facing?

Lee: No.

Pros: You say Roger kissed you. Where?

Lee: On the cheek.

Pros: You said you didn't want him to take pictures—were they like this?
(He holds up the semi-nude shots?)

Pros: Not like this? (He holds up the clothed shots)

Lee: No.

Magistrate: We want to ask you only one question Lee. You said you saw his penis. But later on you said you couldn't see it. Was it dark or light?

Lee: Dark, I think.

Mag: When did you see his penis then?

Lee: In the morning.

And so, the deposition was taken: clipped and shorn of original pauses and nuances, rendered aseptic—almost like a body for the operating table. If Jean continued to shield Lee from the police for the succeeding nine months, he would next see his deposition just before the Old Bailey trial. Then, he would be thirteen not twelve. He would be living in a different part of the country. Very reasonably, he might imagine the whole affair had been buried at the Committal. Suddenly his statement would be put in front of him, with the announcement that he would have to answer questions on it before a judge and jury. Whatever purpose this may have in maintaining the dignity of the law, it would have no bearing on the truth.

Many people were to ask me in the next three-quarters of a year if I thought Lee would alter his statement at the Trial. Before the committal hearing, Jean said quite bluntly: "If Lee knows Roger might go to prison, he will lie". For she believed her son was telling the truth—despite Lee's denial of several allegations he made to the police.

My own feeling was clear: Lee had been set a test. More adult power than he could previously have dreamed of had been vested in ensuring he didn't flunk that test. There was a "right" answer and a "wrong" one—and choosing between them had very little to do with the truth. I could not imagine that as vulnerable a boy as Lee would dare retract his accusations in open court.

There was a possibility he might do so, if Jean confided in him, but I knew she couldn't.

I concluded the letter to my friend:

"Here there is a terrible irony. I've little doubt that what Lee feels I did wrong to him was to kiss him. His confusions about what these kisses meant came over poignantly in the cross-examination at committal. At one point he said he didn't know whether they were "fatherly" kisses. At another point, that, not having known what it was to have a real father, then yes—they were fatherly kisses. Lee lives in a world where pressing oneself against another person in mock sexuality or just physical antics is a slight naughtiness—if that. After all, what does it signify? What harm comes out of it? Kissing however has different implications and they are much more confusing. Kids learn from films that it signifies the start of serious love-making. Boys do not kiss boys, and though men kiss boys (and boys men) it is only within the family. That Lee wanted me to kiss him, I know. Perhaps he also fantasised my penis coming into contact with his bottom: I know of one occasion when he certainly did so. Was it that specific fantasy which the police latched on to? Did he feel guilty about it—so that the only way of alleviating the guilt was to say I did it to him, rather than that he wanted "to know what it's like"? Or was it simply that the whole thing was so incidental in the first place that until the police pounced on it and made it the key thing he didn't know it had any significance? In which case, he would have been taken unawares and, despite himself, elaborated on it. I can imagine the process:

Police: When you were sleeping next to each other, did he try to come over to your side of the bed?

Lee: Yes once or twice.

Police: What did he do?

Lee: Kissed me and that.

Police: And that?

Lee: Cuddled me sort of.

Police: How did he cuddle you?

Lee: He put his arms around me.

Police: Was he naked at the time?

Lee: I can't remember.

Police: Did you feel him against you?

Lee: Yes.

Police: Did you feel his penis?

Lee: I don't know.

Police: He had his legs against you didn't he?

Lee: I think so.

Police: Was he facing you?

Lee: I don't know.

Police: He would face you to kiss you wouldn't he?

Lee: Yes.

Police: But perhaps he didn't kiss you some of the time?

Lee: No.

Police: So he held you in a different way?

Lee: Yes.
Police: How? Perhaps he was behind you because you didn't want him to kiss you?
Lee: Yes.
Police: And when he was behind you, you felt him against you I expect?
Lee: Yes.
Police: Did you feel anything against you?
Lee: His dick I suppose.
Police: Penis.
Lee: Yes.
Police: You felt his penis against you? Where against you?
Lee: I don't know.
Police: Well, if he was holding you in his arms I expect you were in his lap weren't you?
Lee: Yes.
Police: So where would his penis have been?
Lee: Against my bottom.
Police: So are you saying Lee that Roger put his penis against your bottom?
Lee: Yes.
Police: Did he get it in?
Lee: No.
Police: Sure?
Lee: Yes.
Police: Okay. That's all for now.

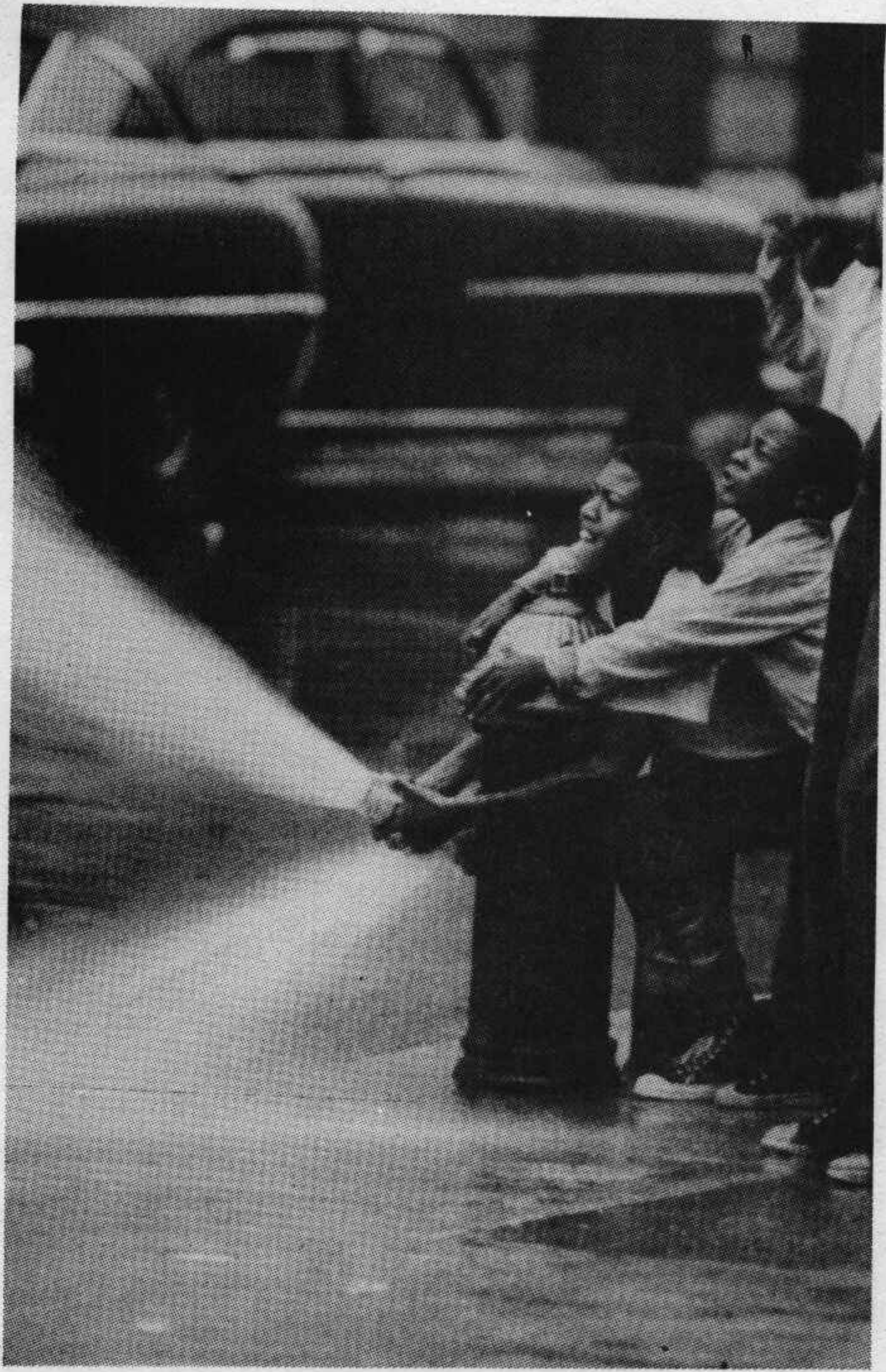
And so, the gesture becomes an act, a confirmation, an accusation. Lee cannot see the wicked and essentially false logic in the process, because he is a victim of the process. (As Freire showed in Brazil, victims always remain victims until they realise the true meaning of the words; that words are not neutral but tools to be used for or against other human beings.) It is true that, until I actually saw Lee over the courtroom on Friday, I didn't see that this was probably how the whole thing had been.

Finally I wrote the following, trying to convey something of what I felt when I was forced to sit opposite Lee in court, while he was compelled to stand against me:

I now often see Lee in my inner eye as he was on Friday. I feel the tenderness I felt then and recall (perhaps surprisingly, but maybe this is where the human triumphs over the manufactured) that the looks we shared were the most important thing. Like Paul he had been shaken, but wasn't defeated. And I realised that, like Paul, he had strength which I had partially helped him to acquire. The core of his truth was that I had been with him like a father: it was how I had been and what he wanted. Yet I am not his father—beyond that, he did not know. While he had been with me, ignorance about what lay beyond had begun to give way to his own knowledge; lack of definition had begun to give way to his self discovery. He wasn't sure how it would work out, and his illness when he arrived home after the '76 holiday was the best indication that he desperately feared the tensions that had been created. For a period he could not see how to resolve between the "is" and

the "could be". But he recovered. After all, I had seen him twice since then; the growing awareness could have gone on . . .

Now he had been penalised for attempting to grow beyond the confusion; has been told in the most devastating fashion that the areas into which he was moving were absolute taboo; that an adult who encourages him in his journey towards self-knowledge will be penalised by opprobrium at best and incarceration at worst. He knows that this is not the truth—hence he searches my face in court to discover that I really am who I was when we last met. But it is the only "truth" he can express, because everyone around him fears—or cannot see—another truth.



Spiking the Guns!

Those who protest their innocence of an indictable offence will probably go through several stages before reaching the dock; a few adjournments, a long or short committal hearing, and perhaps another adjournment to the final hearing of the case. Seen from one point of view, this process is a necessary winnowing of grain from chaff. Charges may be dropped, unexpected witnesses may come forward, an alleged victim may even recant. But from the defendant's point of view, it is all a mere tightening of the noose.

It is true that conditions were initially imposed on my own freedom which were eventually lifted. After two months I no longer had to report daily to the local police, and after another two months I was able to see some of the kids—though not Lee. But whenever I was in danger of forgetting I was "on charge," something would rudely awaken me. My solicitor—always solicitous in the true sense of the word—would ring up and fix a two-day session to go through the papers. Now, intelligent men don't waste two days on ephemera . . . Or I would read in the local paper that a man, charged with a similar offence, had just been sent down for three years.

I experienced irrational hopes, and irrational fears, during this waiting-period—though maybe not so irrational in the long run. For instance, the gap between my arrest and expected date of trial seemed to grow wider and wider: perhaps the Old Bailey would collapse under the weight of its own backlog? On the other hand, the police still had huge amounts of my correspondence: would they discover some long-lost acquaintance prepared to quote some "confession" I made ages ago?

However easy it was to discount these extreme possibilities, two things were

incontrovertible. First, the police *were* out "to get me." They said so more than once, and their apparent quietism after my first court appearance was probably a ruse. Second, I could not let my anxiety become tinged with paranoia. A fixation on the police, or the trial, was precisely the kind of semi-paralysis they wanted to induce.

For perhaps five weeks, I ate police, slept police and woke police each morning. Each time I reported to the local police station, during my two-month "probationary" period, I dreaded I would be taken behind the counter and told further charges had been slapped upon me. (Nor was this an unreasonable fear. The police did want to prefer charges against me regarding four other boys, and dropped the idea after the papers had gone to the Director of Public Prosecutions. My solicitor thought this was because there was no corroboration of the allegations.)

But then, I muscled up my mind, as it were, and decided to get on with my life in the ordinary way. For years I had written about the internalisation of oppression in the minds of others. I was rapidly becoming a prime victim of the process myself.

In the early weeks I had mulled—and talked—over various strategies that might be employed to undermine the particular beast of which I was a victim. Appropriately, I'd read E L Doctorow's *Book of Daniel* just prior to my arrest. The following extracts struck me as very powerful, so I wrote them out, vaguely expecting they might be useful sometime. (*Book of Daniel* is based on the trial and judicial murder of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, for allegedly pirating the secret of the US atomic bomb to the Russians in the 1950s.)

"You folks don't know it [says a radical in the book]. The way they handled themselves at their trial was pathetic. I mean they played it by *their* rules. The government's rules. You know what I mean? Instead of standing up and say fuck you, what do you want, I can't get an honest trial with you fuckers—they made motions, pleaded innocent, they spoke only when spoken to, they played the game.

"Socrates was tried; he was found guilty. He was forced to drink hemlock. By this act his persecutors raised him to eternal life and consigned themselves to the real death and total obscurity of persecutors everywhere.

Jesus was tried. He was found guilty. He was tortured and executed. If Jesus had not been tried, if he had not been put to death, how would his teaching have endured? The Christians themselves celebrate this fact in their idea of resurrection: He returns and lives with men, in the imagination of men hundreds of generations later. Of course this doesn't touch the question of those of his ideas, which were completely Jewish, which were perverted by institutions which spoke in his name.

"The difference between Socrates and Jesus is that no-one has ever been put to death in Socrates' name. And that is because Socrates' ideas were never made law.

"Law, in what ever name, protects privilege. I speak of the law of any state that has not achieved socialism. The sole authority of the law is in its capacity to enforce itself. That capacity expresses itself in Trial. There could be no law without trial. Trial is the point of the law: and punishment is the

point of the trial—you can't try someone unless you assume the power to punish him. All the corruption and hypocritical self-service of the law is brought to the point of the point of the verdict of the court. It is a sharp point, an unbelievably sharp point. But there is fascination for the race in the agony of the condemned. That is a law, a real law, that rulers can never overcome—it is fixed and immutable as a law of physics. Therefore a radical wastes his opportunity if he seriously considers the issues of his trial.

"If he is found guilty, it is the ruling powers' decision that he cannot be tolerated. If he is found innocent, it is the ruling powers' decision that he need not be feared. The radical must not argue his innocence, for the trial is not of his making. He must *argue his ideas*.

"When he's brought in, he knows he's vulnerable. He'll take pains to establish his innocence, or to distinguish himself from who is guilty. But say he is apprehended when no crime is known to have been committed, well, the distinctions he makes reveal to the police the sense he has of his own vulnerability. And they go to work on that. They go to work on it with the sense of being justified in their original decision to question him."

I couldn't deny the power, or the relevance, of these lines. Nevertheless—apart from the last passage—Doctorow's radical was essentially addressing himself to political prisoners. To claim that I was a political victim was strictly true—a political decision had been made to arrest me, it was a matter of policy to put me on trial. If my alleged "victim" had had any free say in the matter he would clearly have done neither.) But it is glib, and sloppy thinking, to put me on a par with an Amnesty "prisoner of conscience". For I was not accused of any political act—such as publishing "obscenity" or conspiracy to corrupt young people's morals (like Socrates or Gide).* I was instead accused of inflicting damage, causing specific hurt.

Of course, every political offender tends to be accused of that. Sometimes they will argue that the hurt is necessary—*viz* Fanon and Regis Debray. Sometimes they will argue that the hurt is illusory, the victim is really being helped—*viz* Gandhi, the *satyagrahi*. Unfortunately, in my case, the "victim" was being denied the opportunity of knowing even whether he had been hurt. Or, if he had been—who was responsible.

In the end, this seemed to be to be the only political point that could be made: any other strategy risked using Lee as a pawn in a distasteful adult game, or simply confusing the issues. Had I been arraigned for kissing, cuddling or fondling boys, I might have chosen to argue vehemently that these were neither "indecentcies" nor "assaults". But I was accused of attempting to penetrate a ten-year-old boy, in an act he had resisted. Doctorow's radical would say it was irrelevant whether I, in fact, committed that act: well and good. It was not irrelevant that I *would* not commit that act, and am in fact psychologically incapable of doing so.

How could I establish that Lee was not my victim at all—but theirs? Two strategies emerged, although they were so rudimentary I doubt they should be dignified by the term "strategy". The first was to plead guilty, but protest

*Since this book was written, four members of the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE) have been charged with "conspiracy to corrupt public morals".

my innocence. According to a psychiatrist from the Albany Trust, this tactic had never been used: she was "intrigued" at what the court's reaction might be. The aim would be to keep Lee out of court, while still questioning his supposed evidence. I didn't even discuss this possibility with my solicitor or friends, as I felt sure the judge would merely enter a plea of "not guilty". I also doubted whether any reporters who took the slightest notice of the ploy would register its real intention: not to avoid Lee testifying, but to prevent his being further disturbed by the process of law.

The other alternative was to quit the country, not returning until Lee was old enough to decide for himself whether he wanted to testify against me and say what our relationship had actually involved. This remained a possibility until a month before the trial. In January 1978, I wrote at least three letters to friends overseas asking if they would accommodate a felon on the run. Perhaps surprisingly, they all readily said "yes." In the final event, I didn't run.

There were practical considerations: my passport expired in 1983 and then I would be forced to hide and prevaricate indefinitely; my brother, who is dependent on me to a large extent, would be forced into the same tight corners; a close friend who had put up the bail might feel betrayed. And quite honestly, I was shit-scared of being caught, extradited and forced to spend months in jail awaiting trial not only on the original charge but an additional one of jumping bail.

It could be argued that flight, even in the face of injustice, is a mute confession of guilt. That has never seemed to me a very powerful argument—less so, when I was actually faced with the choice. What did weigh with me was the prospect that my case would get even shorter shrift from potentially sympathetic people than if I remained at home and fought it. Nevertheless I'm not sure I made the right decision.

February 1978

I am neither guilty nor innocent. I am irrelevant. That is the root of their legal process. If I appear, but don't speak, my muteness is regarded as contempt, and the trial proceeds anyway. Indeed, it is a double trial—one for the pretended crime and another for not pretending it.

I could always maim myself in some way—then they couldn't bring me. But it will only bulwark their case, when they finally do manage to drag me into court. I will either have done it "out of fear of facing my prosecutors" or when the balance of my mind was disturbed. When the wounds are healed and the cicatrices neatly concealed, I will be wheeled in to hear that their compassion has already softened the penalty: two years instead of three.

Suicide is merely more of the same, with the important fact, of course, that they can't get their hands on me ever again. Hm . . . !

I could try and disfigure their stereotype. Refuse to keep silent in the dock and protest both my innocence and my "guilt" with equal ferocity, until they have to gag me down. Still, the outcome to that is a foregone conclusion: for their stereotypes cover even mockery like this—perhaps especially this. When I allow them to play such a game, they have already won . . . the Queen's

jongleur standing on his head in church and farting once a year merely tickles the underbelly of the beast. It's the exception which proves the rule.

But, run. Run. I should have run the day they forced me to choose between innocence and guilt, denied me the opportunity to choose both at the same time. Is it too late to run now? They don't expect me to run, I am already typecast as a trustworthy guy whose plea of innocence hangs upon his honesty. The only way to raise the issue above that of a plea is not to plead. Only way not to be "tried" is not to be tried. Only way of not going through it all is, quite simply, not to go through it at all.

March 1978

What is a political crime? It is an act punished because it violates the norms which sanctify power—or rather, the unthinking acceptance of power. In the South Africa of today, crimes of property committed by blacks against white are political crimes. In our society, a crime against the person, which is not perceived as such by the person, but which the law requires to be criminal in order to keep one group under the thumb of another—that is surely a political crime too? Therefore, by keeping children in ignorance of their own capacity to share love, and blocking them when they try to express it, by turning self-discovery into assault and self-expression into indecency, the State creates political crimes in a new area.

But there is more to it than this. The person accused of such a crime feels violated to the root of their existence. His (or her) whole sense of what was the most natural thing to do has been violently affronted. Certainly this is part of the political intent behind describing as "assault" something which is often its antithesis.

The legal process involved is political not only in that it seeks to shut up the person who practises their own sense of the appropriate. It is also political because it is aimed fundamentally at preventing any discussion or action towards changing the definitions of power between old and young, hence shifting it.

March 1978

Is circumcision an indecent assault? If not, why not?

* * *

It was no easy matter to tell my friends exactly what I had been charged with. Some of them were not to know until my defence group formed in February 1979 and they got invited to its first meeting. The charge had indeed become part of me—for sixteenth months I was literally "charged" with it. Apart from half a dozen people with whom I have shared weeks of my life in the past, and who could not make a facile distinction between its "political" and "personal" aspects, my friends seemed to react in two different ways. Those who knew me as a family friend, a worker with kids, would say the whole affair was "political". Those who knew me as an activist primarily, or through my articles, seemed to regard it as "personal": they wanted to "do something", but not get too involved.

In three instances, I recorded their reactions.

March 1978

*Operation Namibia** has already met, and determined that the threat of publicity over my case (with consequent possible slurs against ON) is really part of the problem. Hence to resist those slurs is part of the solution. Any attempt by the South Africans to stir up the shit against ON will be met with the brief statement: "Roger Moody works for Operation Namibia and is above suspicion as an opponent of apartheid. Since the South Africans cannot, or will not, take issue with him on political grounds it demonstrates that there are no political grounds on which to take issue . . .".

July 1978

Mary and Maggie are offered a house by our Housing Association, but my brother and myself are asked to consider taking a flat in another neighbourhood. I don't wonder about this—indeed, the person who argued the radical line on Operation Namibia is a key person in the Housing Association. Eventually we consider the housing options, and Peter (my brother) and I ask to move in with Mary and Maggie and their children. At that point, Colin from the Housing Association confesses that we hadn't been offered accommodation together in a house that would be suitable for all of us, because a local alderman might use my case to generate enmity against the Housing Association. There's already been the usual drugs and prostitution taunts, it seems. However Colin and his colleague had discussed the issue and realised this was cowardice. So now, they were offering us all the same house . . .

August 1978

Today, PG of the Anti-slavery Society tells me that his chairman would prefer that my name isn't on the book I am about to write for them on the Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. They might get flak. They've recently published a book on child labour in Morocco and fear that any advocacy of paedophilia would bring accusations of the pot calling the kettle black. First, there is the irrational (or at least untested) assumption that paedophilia involves child exploitation. But even setting that aside, there is no question whether I have exploited children: since I am neither parent nor employer nor teacher, my opportunities to exploit kid's labour are more limited than many people within the A-S Society itself! No, the question is whether a person of my views can be safely defended by liberals who find themselves in tight corners. Nor is my integrity in doubt—or they wouldn't have asked me to do this work in the first place.

The question is one of politics, or rather political courage. It seems A-S can take on the giants in OPEC and the tigers in the African continent and the hawks at the UN with a shoestring budget and a handful of staff. But they

*A nonviolent direct action project, launched in 1975, which involved the sending of a boat with a transnational crew and several thousand books to Namibia as a challenge to South Africa's wilful oppression of Namibians. The project was formally ended in September 1979.

cannot muscle up enough logic to counteract the muck-raking of a scared opposition. In the process, the illogic will take a grip of them too: they have already decided the case, months before it's heard, and made it negative. They have already decided that the impact of their decision will be enormous (fears of losing their UN status were alluded to) and that they won't be able to control the media's reaction.

I ask my friend PG (we were in Bangladesh together) what the difference is between this self-induced fear and the muzzle imposed on leftists who were hounded by the House Unamerican Activities Committee and McCarthy in the fifties. The answer is that, basically, there is none. PG, being an honest person, eventually recognises that fact. If his chairman won't go ahead and commission me, he says, then he'll do it on his own—publish and be damned.

The response of Dutch friends to my situation contrasted quite strikingly with that of some of my English ones. They set up a "Roger Actie" committee the same week that twenty-five English friends held the first of three meetings of the "Roger Moody Defence Committee" in London. They sent over one person to read exhaustively through all my files on Mary Whitehouse, "child pornography" and police oppression. And they prepared an article which was sent to action groups (mainly anti-nuclear) throughout the world.

Unfortunately, perhaps, they were a little too politically oriented, and in the following news-piece (published by WISE*) omitted to mention that the boy in my case had at least made a charge against me, however pressured he might have been:

"While the law is keeping friendly with the Torness Alliance in Scotland, it is using tactics comparable to the repressive tactics used in Germany to intimidate the anti-nuclear movement in London. On March 26th, Roger Moody faces a charge of indecent assault on a young boy, which is an outright fabrication by the police, but is a way of getting rid of an effective activist.

Roger Moody is one of the most well-known anti-nuclear, peace, and left-wing activists to the central computer in Scotland Yard. He has written many critical articles in a number of publications, including *Peace News* where he was once an editor.

He has worked since 1964 in developing adventure playgrounds for city children and has written articles criticising English laws repressing children's sexuality. This proves to be a sufficiently hysterical area in English law for police to secure the imprisonment of Roger Moody at the same time 'giving a lesson' to left wing activists in Britain".

One of these "left wingers" was an MP from one of Britain's minority political parties. Soon after I learned the date of my trial, I wrote to him asking if he would be a character witness in court. I went into detail about the circumstances of my arrest: of course I did not ask him to deliver any statement on the controversial areas I'd dealt with in articles—some of which he might well have seen.

*World Information Service on Energy—the transnational co-ordinating body for anti-nuclear information and activity.

He telephoned me immediately on receiving the letter, and agreed to appear. As a friend for more than ten years and someone I had been close to in an overseas project where we both stood in some risk of our lives, I'd had little doubt what his reaction would be.

Later the same evening, he rang me again, confessing he didn't know what to say: his party HQ had told him not to appear at the Old Bailey; they feared further "adverse publicity" after a recent bad run.

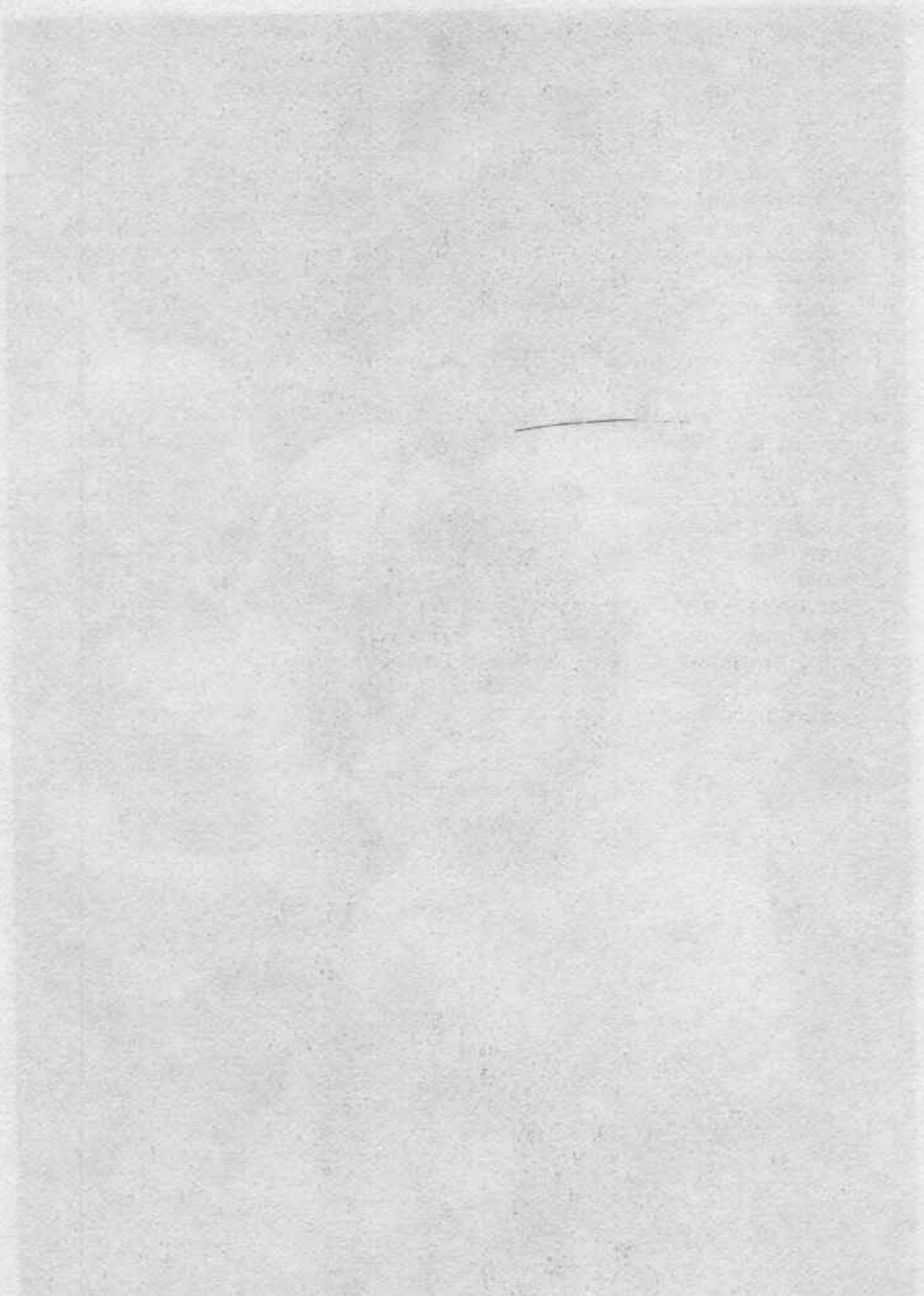
"I was quite stunned"—I wrote to a mutual friend the following week. "I felt Glyn had really said he was putting the party before anything else, regardless of whether the party in fact stood to suffer by his appearing on my behalf. I felt, above all, that a good friendship based on a certain idealism had come to an end."

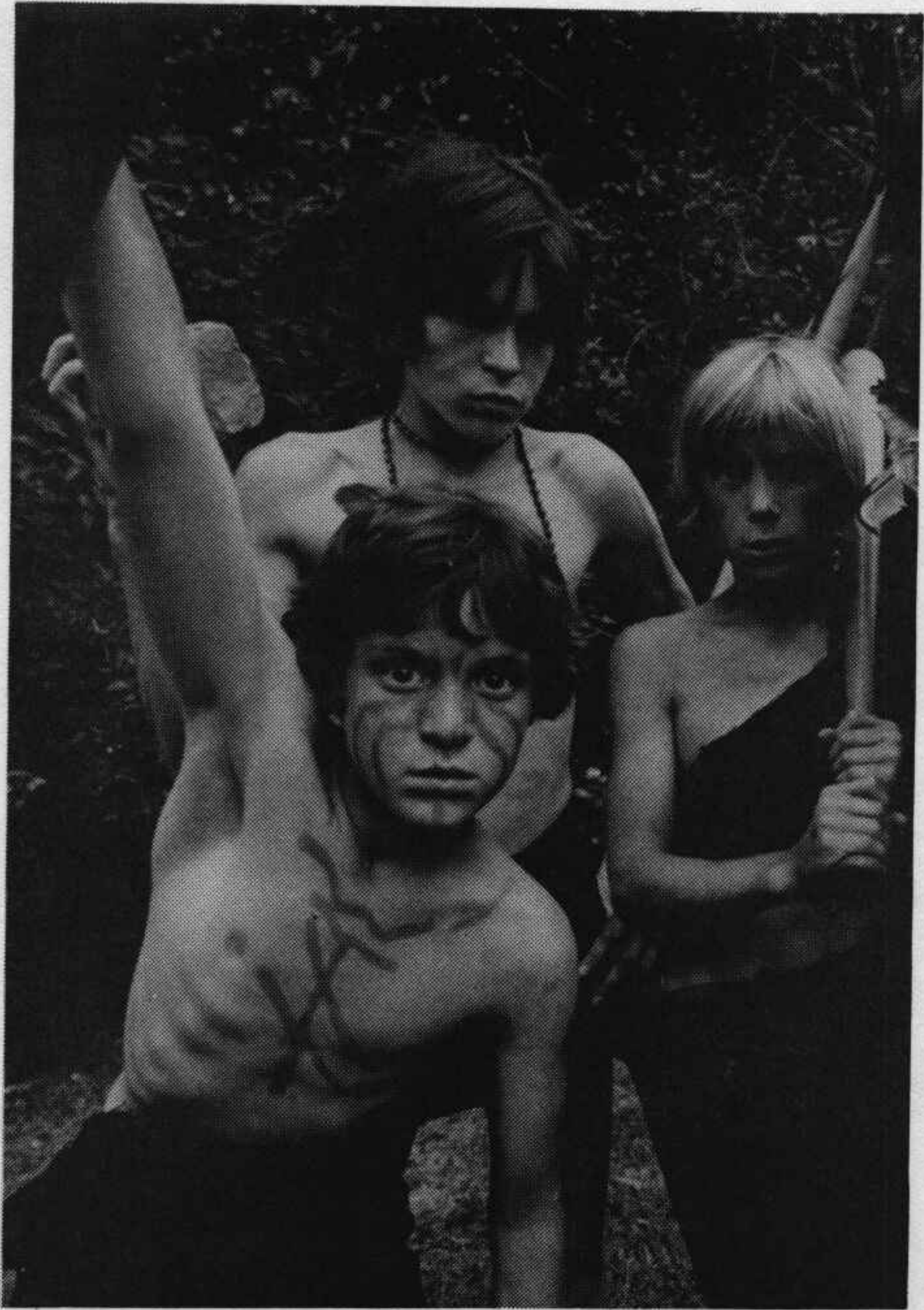
To the MP I wrote that ". . . it is surely when we are under attack that we should rally to each other? I know your party feels considerably threatened—I wish it were otherwise, and am deeply concerned at the moves towards conservatism and reaction in our society. In a different way I know myself to be the victim of similar forces. . ."

I asked him if he would do a second best, and instead of appearing in court, make a written statement which could be read out. This he willingly did, deliver it into my hands literally at the eleventh hour the night before the beginning of the trial.

In the event, only two character statements were delivered to the jury: this MP's and one from a Scandinavian university lecturer, with whom I have cooperated on numerous campaigns for the rights of native people.

The Judge referred to them as "glowing testimonials" and there is little doubt they were quite influential with the twelve good women and men and true.





The Kids

Of all persons in our society, boys from around 10 to 16 years are the most ambivalent. It is an ambivalence they are born with, one they sometimes achieve—and certainly one that is thrust upon them. They are apparently the most free of creatures, and a mass of literature, redolent with symbolism, celebrates the myth of tear-aways, wild boys, young primitives. Yet, the point at which adult control of the image is threatened is the point at which adult control is tightest. In a society where almost all forms of rebelliousness have been contained, or are suppressed by tolerance, it is sexual revolt which is the most threatening. This is why, in the sexual sphere, the damage done by oppressive adults to young boys *can* be worse than that done to young girls.

The paedophile movement in its more radical form comprises largely men attracted to young boys, even though statistics insist most paedophile experiences are between adult males and young girls. Seen from one vantage, paedophile men are the supreme predators, yet seen from another they may be ideal educators of intractable youth. Middle-class, middle-income institutions in their wisdom—but above all, in their ambivalence towards freedom and self-expression—both create paedophiles and deny them. They are required to cope with youngsters everyone else has given up. But the moment paedophiles express their feelings through attachment to particular boys, they are accused of betraying trust, deceiving colleagues and perverting their charges.

Not half as much opprobrium is cast on adults seducing young girls. Girls, after all, grow into women and women act as the receptors of male initiative and desire. From the earliest age girls are induced into an artistry, by which they will perform two conflicting roles as they grow up. They can be both “temptress”

and "cutie" at 11 years. There is no contradiction here—because a girl's ambivalent behaviour is determined by patriarchal society. Such behaviour from a boy is considered shocking and perverse. After all, boys must learn but one role as they grow into men—that of the agent, not the passive. It is quite logical in our society that a boy of 12 is considered incapable of seducing a man, yet incapable of *being* seduced by a girl of his own age. Vis-à-vis the man, the boy must be passive: it is a demand, a self-fulfilling prophecy and a supposed statement of "fact" which inevitably condemns paedophile men to being aggressors. Vis-à-vis the girl, on the other hand, the boy can only be active. In our social mythology, girls tempt ice-cream salesmen and farmers*, but not street-kids, layabouts and high-rise vandals. Not, of course, that these young people conform to the image of budding manhood which most of their elders wish to create. But they threaten it in a conventional fashion. It is dealt with in a conventional fashion, too—by containment in youth clubs, increased policing, vandal-proofing programmes and (when that fails) by reluctant incarceration.

The young gay person poses a quite different threat, and the young gay person who has relationships with adult men is impossible to contain. He is active and passive at one and the same time; highly visible and yet totally secretive. He is autonomous to a degree his peers usually haven't attained. But—and this is important—his autonomy and self-assertion are connected in some way with what he "does" with men.

This last truth is literally inconceivable to the boy's father, teachers and those patriarchal guardians of sexual roles—lawmakers and policemen. So, when such a relationship is apparently discovered, both the boy and the man are subjected to an enormous projection of prejudice and misconception. If the boy refuses to conform to his allotted role as a victim, he can hardly be made an "aggressor", yet he will be treated as one. Or rather, he will be treated as a conspirator in a plot of which he doesn't really know the aim (he's too young) or the consequences.

If the man rejects his allotted part as seducer, betrayer or aggressor, he will—at length—be offered one as victim. His "emotions overcame him," therefore he wasn't really responsible. Or he was "acting childish," therefore he is infantile. Maybe he was just suffering from a male menopause. . . .

Such a disavowal of the meaning of his relationship with a young boy is usually obtained from the man. Given the lengths to which the police and the courts will go to extract it, it is remarkable that anyone resists. Physical brutality, numerous verbal threats and opprobrium, incarceration *incommunicado*, even open harassment of the boy, the man, and their respective families, are

*Just three recent examples from the gutter press: "Lolita, 12, took two men to the woods" (*News of the World* September 17th 1978); "Timid lover lured by girl of 15" (*News of the World* October 7th 1979); and the *Sun's* "Lolita Vice Ring" heading on a story of three "sex-crazed schoolgirl lolitas" aged 11, 12 and 13, who "lured lonely old men into a love-for-sale vice ring" (September 29th 1979). If the girls had been boys, the gutter press would of course have execrated the men as "beasts" and pitied the kids as "victims". In fact it was the adults in the *Sun* story who were dubbed the victims: they received merely suspended sentences for 13 offences ranging from unlawful sex to indecent assault.

typical tactics and can be amply documented.*

Most appalling perhaps is the time-honoured technique of threatening to use the boy against the man. "You don't want him to go to court do you, and suffer the trauma of giving evidence against you? If you really love him, you'll surely spare him that . . ." Inevitably, this technique was tried on me. (I responded, spontaneously and without any forethought: "If you bring Lee to court, I shall do my utmost to show it is *you*, not me, who are responsible for any suffering he goes through".) I have also known the technique to be applied to a clergyman who, in order simply to save a young teenager the pain of a trial, pleaded guilty to an offence he manifestly did not commit.

In a rational community, or atmosphere, these unforgiveable (and often unlawful) assaults would at least make ordinary people wonder what the hell was going on—something atavistic in the enquiry room? Unfortunately, in our society the reaction virtually creates the crime. In other words, the more police exercise themselves and the more courts pontificate, the more serious the offence must be. This technique of creating an offence to justify attack on individuals seems to have come into its own in Britain, since the Paedophile Information Exchange held its stormy public meeting in September 1977. The public reaction to that meeting—even though it was stage-managed by the gutter press and organised by Hoxton National Front supporters—gave the police a pretended legitimacy they hadn't entirely got before.

In this book I have tried to convey some idea of what it is like for a man to have his relationships, his feelings—to an extent his ideas—passed through a distorting lens, thrown against a prison wall (as it were) and told: "This is how you really are." If I hadn't had several years' experience of character assassination and political mind-battering, I probably would have given in early on. Given in, not in the sense of confessing to an offence I didn't commit, but agreeing to play it by their rules.

More important, however, is to demonstrate the process through which my younger friends were put, in particular Steve and Paul.

* * *

January 1978

The boy is always innocent (seduced or corrupted by another). But in the privacy of the interviewing room, the police harass, persuade, threaten and insinuate. The first thing Steve said, when free of his fifteen hours of questioning: "We don't believe the things they said about Roger". And the second thing: "But they have nothing on us. "Now that is revealing. The police have tried to inculcate the kids with a sense of wrong, implying that they are criminals. Having made the analysis that the suspect has corrupted their innocence, the boys' silence must be a product of that corruption. And one corruption leads—as surely as night follows day—to another. Fooling around leads on to making love and the discovery of gayness; drinking cider leads on to puffing hash and sniffing glue. Between the man and the boy there is a conspiracy, and—to the law man—that is a red rag to a bull.

*For example, by the National Council for Civil Liberties and the Gay Activists' Alliance.

When they raid suspect 9202's home they discover many photographs of boys. Few are remotely obscene, but this matters little. It is the possibility of corruption which obsesses the raiders. If they can but show that one child lost his "innocence" through association with the man then debate about the existence of that purity, and the manner in which it might have been lost, becomes irrelevant.

This only becomes clear when we appreciate that actual boy prostitution rings and the real exploitation of children for the sake of gain (a province in our society pre-eminently occupied by advertisers and manufacturers) scarcely worry the police at all. Such rings can be infiltrated, broken up, and the children marched off into care. But actual love between one man and one boy constitutes a real subversion because it is impervious to infiltration, just as it is impervious to the school and youth service, or the family for that matter. Which is hardly surprising since it often derives from the collapse of the family.

Forms of paedophilic relationships can be found in every age. They take on importance for the lawmakers when they take on importance for the majority of people. Even then, the phenomenon can be contained. A characteristic expression of paedophilia in recent years has been through advertising which features charming youngsters selling ridiculous wares, or TV programmes featuring impossible innocence. The real perversion of paedophile feelings has been accompanied by an increase in child abuse and an upsurge in corporal punishment. So it is not paedophilia as such which most people have to fear: the term has little meaning. It is rather the self-assertion, the strength, and the power to say "no", of the young.

Yet, the child-lover is no revolutionary yet. Paedophiles are trying to be acceptable but will soon discover that they are unacceptable to everyone. Out of that will come change. The acceptance of being unacceptable forms the crucible of revolution. And whoever realises and broadcasts that first of all must be done away with—though not too outrageously. Anything too outrageous may encourage a cult.

January '78: Lee—"attempted buggery"

He is a decade. Two arms, two hands, two legs, two thighs, two feet. With his ten years, bunched beneath the covers, arched into the crescent of my belly, sprawled out at the edge of the bed—these are ten years that are his, not mine. I look at his body lying there, and it is as if he has come from a different space, as if his body stretched back a different ten years than the last ten I have seen. Now he has consented to stay for a few hours, a few days. This sense of privilege which he affords—like that of most children who are not our own—takes my breath away; makes it hard even to touch, let alone possess him.

"Attempted buggery?" Of course he asks about it—asks whether men do it with boys, he presses himself back against my frame, holds himself there for a few seconds. Then in a rush he's up, dashing on his clothes, grabbing for breakfast, pocket money, knowledge of how the day will work out. Curiosity sated—and more than just curiosity: the circle is closed. He knows he doesn't want it, and he knows he knows he doesn't want it. A decade—plus one day of learning

February 8th '78

Carl meets Steve and Paul going to the shops. (I am still forbidden by the court to see them or communicate in any way with them.) Carl tells them they probably won't have to go to court after all. Paul says that what he was worried about was having to stand up and be attacked again by the police. "What Roger and I did together wasn't wrong, but the police will make out it was." (I ask Carl what Paul is referring to. Carl says it's the strip poker.)

Steve tells Carl that it's only when you miss someone like Roger over a long time that you realise how much they did for you. The two boys take Carl aside and tell him of their dream. They will buy a boat and sail away together. It is a dream they have had for a year at least. Now they call themselves "slaves" of their father, talk of having to fetch and carry for him. Every time they see Carl, they talk about the case . . .

* * *

I last saw John—Steven and Paul's father—nearly two years ago (November 1977). Although he had told Carl he would "be the first person to shake Roger's hand" were I acquitted, he has recently—apparently—refused to have anything more to do with me. This is a minor tragedy, not because of the misunderstandings allowed to ferment between us (probably fewer than either of us imagine) but because of the further distance it puts between John and his children.

Undated (probably February 1978)

Occasionally I wonder how fathers and mothers see their own children. If what they see corresponds so little with my own vision—how is it we can get on so well together? Does Jill feel a slight glow of recognition, a tiny jarring in the stomach, her eyebrows dance like mine, when twelve-year-old Simon bounces down the street, angular arms like pistons at his side—then a sudden leap as he encounters a bollard? Over he goes, jeans stretched beyond their limit, every curve of his body transformed into a cutting edge. Or languid Mark, unrolling himself like some heavy-lidded python, placing his thighs squarely over my shins, wrapping his elbows behind his head and feigning total ignorance when his father makes remarks about the undone washing-up.

Those fascinating little intrigues which build up between kids and adult friends seem, to the outsider, the thin edge of an erotic, risqué edge. Certainly the excitement is there, but it is enjoyed for its own sake, not because it leads to the bedroom or an oedipal conspiracy. Those winks and sly glances which pass between myself and Paul, he lying on the floor idling over his homework, me sitting next to his father on the settee . . . they don't exist despite his father, but because of him. John pretends not to notice them (except once, when he suddenly ordered his son off to bed). He knows the complicity is required by his child, and not initiated by me. It might give John a small sense of power, be another aspect of the patriarchy he enjoys, for he can control those intrigues with absolute sureness and has nothing to fear from them. When he intervenes, his glance cuts across the invisible link between his son and myself and severs it completely. Paul's father has achieved a certain confidence with me, even a sort of graciousness in his dealings with his son. He

knows that what goes on outside his house isn't significantly different from what goes on inside.

early March 1978

Thinking back, I suppose the most bizzare statement made by the police came half-way through our desultory talk on "paedophilia".

"Well, at least there's been one good thing," said DS Bean, "Mr——— (Steve and Paul's father) has realised that he hasn't given his kids enough attention. Now all this has come to light and he'll be looking after them a bit better from now on."

The only tangible result of Mr———'s realisation has been to fear for his eldest son's sexual health and take him to a pub with topless barmaids.

A charitable interpretation of the police's assumptions behind that statement would be that they regretted the upheavals they'd caused and the best that might be hoped for from a thoroughly bad business was that the family would grow closer together and the kids wouldn't suffer in the end. But a more realistic (and given all the circumstances, the only rational) explanation was that their sole purpose had been to arrogate power to the parent, even if it meant shattering the trust on which the family's relationships had been built, and ruining the reputation of the closest family friend.

March 12th 1978

Since it has always been very difficult for John to accept me, my fall from grace is (however he may rationalise it) most difficult for him to accept now. On the one hand all his worst fears about my politics have been confirmed: I was a threat to his children after all, and he was fully justified in keeping a tight rein on them. On the other hand, the only person my political views obviously challenged was himself (his kids clearly had little difficulty in dealing with them, either shrugging them off or in fact sometimes taking his part). Since part of my politics was the care I showed the whole family, something from which he benefitted in times of difficulty, it becomes problematic for him to discuss them as justifying calculated seduction of his boys or violent overthrow of the status quo.

If he had been firmly in control of the family as he boasted, I would soon be out of his mind. As it is, I undermined his very feelings of control. His reliance on me brought him right up against the knowledge that he depended on others, just as did his kids. When I fell from grace with such a resounding clang he must have felt relieved, not only because the tension between his image of himself and the reality which I brought into focus could be disregarded, but because he could now justify the restraints he had always tried to impose. In fact, he could now see himself as having been more liberal than was justified. He had been "taken in" by me and made a fool of. But then, so was everyone else. He would not be taken in again. So, even the mention of my name has been banned within the house when he is around.

The kids haven't been challenged over their relationship with me. For John, it were better it had never existed. It reminds him of a period in which he began surrendering some of his authority and sharing his responsibilities with

another adult male. A significant point had been reached when all four boys came away with me for a week in 1977. "Can you handle it?" he had asked me beforehand, "even I can't handle them sometimes" Yet they had all come back refreshed, sound in wind and limb. The last time we went away, he had taken me aside on our return. "How have they been?" he asked. "They were better together than ever before," I replied. "I knew they would be" he said. This was perhaps the only time he had recognised a partnership between us, him on the family side and me on the "outside".

The day after my arrest he couldn't help addressing Carl by my name. Even now, some months afterwards, the ambivalence is so great and the feelings so strong that he has to insist my name isn't brought up in any conversation where the kids might be alone with Carl. The more the contradictions are buried of course, the more they eat away at you. By forcing me out of his mind and family, he is keeping a place for me indefinitely.

One day freedom has to win. Granting his kids the freedom they once had with me is the only way he has to be free. One day they will look him in the eyes and either accuse or forgive. Were he really sure about me and them (as he claims) he could represent me to them as characteristic of a danger against which he has warned them. But all he tells them is that he doesn't know how some anomalous "it" has affected them. What he surely means is that he doesn't know how "it" has affected him. So there is hope. I think the sun must become moon and day night before he will accept me back into his home again. But for his kids—there is hope.

Undated

A father is so appalled at learning his child may have been buggered, because that is the only time he has put himself in his son's place.

* * *

Steve, Paul and their older and younger brother were the first boys to be seen by the police. They were picked up the night I was arrested, questioned vaguely for a couple of hours ("Do you know Roger Moody?", "Did you used to go on holiday with him?", "Did he take photos of you?") and then taken home. Their father went along with them on the first occasion and was shown photographs I had supposedly taken (but hadn't). He was also told I published "pornographic photos of boys all over the world" (a downright lie). Apparently some of my articles were also put in front of him, with the implication that I was a supporter of PIE and thus advocated sex with five-year-olds. John didn't read these articles, otherwise he would have realised that this, too, was false.

The next morning the same squad of police returned to the family's flat, managing to intercept the boys just before they left for school but miss John who had just left for work. DS Bean asked to take the boys for another interview. John's wife contacted John by 'phone; he reluctantly agreed. Both parents thought their children would be home within a couple of hours.

At 6pm John returned from work, to discover that his boys were still with the police. He telephoned to demand their return. By that time the boys had been

held in flagrant contravention of Judges Rules for nearly ten hours. Virtually from their arrival at Bofors police station they were separated and interviewed apart. From the start DS Bean identified Steven and Paul as having been closer to me than their brothers. At that point, the third degree began.

Earlier this year, I was asked to write a play on the subject of childhood, for the International Year of the Child. My draft was greeted by my friend Carl as "uncharacteristically bitter": the play was to be a dramatisation of Steve and Paul's experiences with the police. I recognise that a great deal of bitterness still attaches to anything I write about this aspect of the affair, though, in honesty, I can say I no longer feel hatred or even antagonism towards the police on my own account. In view of this, I've decided to reproduce a statement made by Paul, rather than interpret his or Steve's feelings in my own words.

Paul's statement: February 1979

"I remember the police coming to our home in Kentish Town one evening some time ago. It was about 7pm and the two officers took me and my three brothers in one Hillman Hunter car to Bofors Police station. They asked me generally how long I had known Roger and the places we had been. They acted as if Roger was definitely guilty of something. I did not know what they were investigating until we got to the police station. They said Roger has been caught for doing bad things with little boys. They asked me whether I wanted men like him to be put away, whether we should allow men like him to walk the streets. I said 'Yes, if he is guilty.' They took us home about 9.15 pm to 9.20 pm. They spoke behind our back to my father. I did not know that evening that they would come back.

"The next day two or three officers came to our home at about 8.45 am and took us all in the same car to Bofors Police station. We all waited downstairs for 5 to 10 minutes or so and then, one by one starting with my oldest brother and going downwards in age, they took us into separate rooms and started questioning us. I was interviewed by successive officers one at a time but I was frequently visited by the fat man. At one time they showed me a photo of a kid. They only showed his face but they said he was in the nude. They kept insisting it was me. I told them it was Lee because I knew Lee from when he visited Roger in London. I was asked about the holidays, the dates and what we did. I was left alone in the room from time to time. They asked if Roger had done anything to me ever. I said, 'No'. By then I knew what Roger was charged with but he had never done anything to me.

"Coming up to lunchtime they started to pressure me, saying, he has made a full confession, he is downstairs right now and you will be helping him if you tell us. It will be quicker and easier. I thought, if Roger has admitted it himself, what is the use of my saying anything different. They went back into the holidays saying, 'would you like to go through it in more detail now?' I did not say anything and they left me for half an hour and came in and asked if I wanted something to eat and drink.

"I had a pasty in the room where I was being questioned. I refused a drink. A little after lunch they allowed us back into the snooker room which was by now occupied by other officers. I compared notes with my brothers and then

they came back in for us.

"I changed interview rooms at one stage, it may have been after lunch. They brought in a load of photograph albums belonging to Roger and asked me to name the people in the photos. Most of them I could name. They asked if I had seen the albums before. I said I had seen one or two of them. They asked if I thought that there was anything wrong with them. I said 'No.' I did not see any photos of boys naked below the waist. By now it was early evening. The fat one, the one I hate most, started by saying I had left bits out and I was not telling the truth; he would not let me go home until I told him 'the other bit.' I did not know what he was on about. He insisted that I did. This lasted some time. I was getting frustrated and upset. He kept saying, if I told them that one thing, he would let me back in the snooker room with my brothers. He said he and his colleague would go out of the room and leave me a pen and paper to write it down. They left the room. I wrote nothing much. They came in two or three times. Finally, they said they would try and boost my memory. They said, 'You wouldn't be like this if you weren't hiding something.' By then I was nearly crying.

"The long tall officer who looked like a lamp post had one more try to get me to say whatever I was supposed to say and then they let me back in the snooker room.

"Before I was crying, they kept asking me if Roger touched my dick or willie. I kept saying 'no', which was the truth, but it was getting me nowhere and they had told me Roger and Steve had told them about these things so in the end I just agreed.

"Once they asked me if he had ever put his willie up my bum. I said 'No'. They said, could he have ever done it when he was sleeping with you in the caravan and such places? I said no, definitely not. After going back into the pool room, the tall officer came and drove us home.

"They said, if I was lying about this, a doctor could do a medical on us and find out the truth. They said he was already on his way, but 'we can put it off if you like and if you tell the truth.' I said 'you can examine me if you like.'

"A few days later the police came to our home one night. There were two or three of them. We went over it again. I said a few damaging things in front of my father but even they were not true. I thought, if I took it all back they would think I was lying again and I would have to go over it all again.

"One morning we walked to Winchester Road police station with our mother. We were put in two rooms cut up into sections. We went over our statements again. A police officer wrote out my statement while my mother was in the waiting room. She was present when I signed the statement."

What does an attack—like the one suffered by Paul, Steve and other kids—actually do to them? For a start, it frightens the hell out of them. Second, it creates a tremendous feeling a guilt. Third, it *can* stiffen their resistance, not just to the police, but to all forms of what is essentially aggression masquerading as protection. That several of the boys were prepared to come to court "to tell what the police did to us"—and also testify to how wrong it was—shows they'd got through to the third stage. In the past two years, therefore, they have grown wiser, bolder and more expressive. But, consciousness of betrayal by some adults, and the consequent "subversive" alliance to other adults, is a high price to pay

for the assaults they suffered. It should be of little comfort to radicals like myself that these boys have experienced gross misuse of power — and are therefore more radical themselves. For a start, they may not have had the intelligence to make such an analysis. (Or, for that matter, previous experience of the police in which to put the whole affair in context.) Second, they might have lacked a sympathetic adult with whom to talk over the experience—one able to tell them how I was feeling too.

Four months after my arrest I had a very vivid dream in which Steve and Paul featured:

Dream, April 4th 1978

Long and integrated dream—very much in colour. I am getting on to a train (somewhere in Europe?) being given a long and tearful farewell by Robert (Elizabeth's mate) for the joy of the past few days. Robert is one of those older men with whom I have had warm bonds. It seems we have been in his large house—several rooms and a spiralling passageway; long, slow, with mosaic floor (a tao pattern?). The passageway starts from the left of my vision and winds up to the right. I don't know what we have done for the past few days in this house, but there has been an enormous sense of community. Above all, four of the invited guests are the four ——— boys. Steve arrives ahead of the rest to say that—extraordinarily—the rest have been allowed to come. And they do. I see them in the throng, only now and again, but Paul comes over to me and I place my hand on his left side—the vital, all-important moment of contact, not at all sexual, but breaking the taboo against contacting him, at last. Extraordinary—when I look at him, slightly distanced, his face is older and changed, with a slight down on his lips. The face is that of Andrew, a blond-haired school friend I knew when I was nine years old.

What we do in the house I can't tell. Steve is around me a lot, but I only see the other boys at distance. I know however that they are there. Colin, the oldest brother (to the left, on the one occasion I see him), Barry I don't see at all; strange, but I know he is there. There is no threat of an outsider, their father or the police, breaking in on our time together. The kids are free to do as they will, and they do so. My strongest bond is with Robert, who sees me off so emotionally; but I have to go and he knows it.

I awake feeling very refreshed, the vividness still with me. The colours of the mosaic passageway are still with me especially.

* * *

In April the prohibition against seeing the boys was lifted. On August 31st I saw one of them—Mark.

August 31st 1978

Yesterday was spent either getting ready to go to the Netherlands or with Mark and his brother. Strange how, after all this time (several years) I have suddenly come to appreciate Mark immensely and be able to express it. We are both well aware of the recent blockade imposed by the police (thanks to my

arrest). He will now and again chuckle, if I hold him closely, and say "Good job the police can't see!" Or when I held and hugged him last week at the door to the office: "Good job the police aren't around." If he's in danger of getting home late, through his own fault, he'll announce: "I'll tell them you tried to rape me!"

His brother Daren is quite different. Coquettish almost, sometimes demanding contact, sometimes rejecting it. Everything he says is either question or bald statement—nothing for the mere sake of making conversation. He is 12 years old.

"How long will you go to prison for if you're guilty?" he asks.

"Two years, perhaps more."

"And the other prisoners will make life hell for you?"

"They could."

"Think—if you were a murderer, you'd have a softer time than if you're supposed to have done something with a kid. That's not right. After all, lots of men who do things with kids don't harm them, do they? There's no real harm in it."

February 1979

Mark and his brother Daren are fooling around in the front room. They are at a loose end, and Mark looks peeved about something—perhaps Daren's claim on my attention. "I want to go to bed with someone", says Mark.

"With a woman or a man?" quips Daren.

"I'm not like you!" answers Mark.

"Oh!" says Daren immediately, "I thought everyone wanted to go to bed with men!"

February 1979

It has struck me that not only so-called paedophiles, but also most men who'd be horrified at the thought, have a strange (albeit unconscious) need for boys. Here is a category of persons who are more outré, perhaps more outrageous, more culpable and yet more winsome, than the rest of us. The need hardly exists in a "primitive" society where, consisting of marginal people, the whole community live at the edge of existence, one person alongside the other. But in an age-stratified, class-stratified society, boys are needed by the very people who deny them their own space and who have often denied the boy within themselves. They need boys in the same way that medieval society needed the Queen's juggler—to typify an unattainable, "levellist" state. God forbid that such egalitarianism should actually happen—but god forbid it should be wholly denied. So, the Queen's juggler, while denied the right to really turn the world upside down (he used to stand on his head in church once a year) did so by a kind of pastiche. And contemporary boys turn the house upside down, destroy the school, take over the streets and fill up the empty spaces. We turn blind eyes to much of this. But our jealousy, and our ignorance about our own childhood, denies them final success. For our final end is to turn them into creatures exactly like ourselves.



The Trial

March 28th, Old Bailey

I sit in the cell beneath the courtroom, waiting for the jury to return its verdict. The young, inexperienced jailer (he forgets to open the door to the dock, so I have to open it myself) tells me his colleague from yesterday feels "you have a very good chance". No doubt he tells that to most prisoners—he was very pleasant. An open-minded person, twelve years in the prison service including Borstal, "helping boys."

What do I feel now? Part of me listens out for the steps of the jailer, announcing my recall. It could be the next moment (which never comes) or an hour's time—which does. It's now too late to do anything more than wait, so I do. My stomach is tight and hollow, my breathing shallow. I wish I had kept up my deep breathing and meditation . . . "This is not the worst, so long as we can say 'this is the worst'"—one of Shakespeare's profoundest observations. For we never plumb bottom so long as we are still swimming.

How many people have come this way before me? Down those steps through those clanging bars, to sit at this aseptic table writing messages on walls instead of notepads . . .

"Don't feed the screws. Spit at 'em!" "Viva the slug." "Armed robbery 13 years Mick Crowley." "10 trials/25 charges, 8/2/79 Dave Derry." "33 months in custody. 5 months to do." "Allan Cox. 6 years robbery. 6 September '78 So Long!" So long indeed.

Almost all the messages are set around the door jamb, as if their authors were trying to get as close as possible to the outside—or else, framing the way out. More logical reason: the fact that the only wood in this place is

the door and its surrounds. Now, in this subterranean passage outside, there is silence except for the thrum of the boilers pumping steam. Not a warder in sight or sound. Upstairs, years are being handed out—or will be. Or else they are being hoarded for the next time round. Time means nothing here. The time the judge imparts to the prisoner exists on a level completely in itself. It is the time of a court rising and sitting down, or dinner in the Club and the occasional game of golf or a quick screw. The judge cannot perceive years—to him “a long stretch” is what he takes on a Sunday with his wife and dog. His way of life is a defence against time. He sets it at the door, by pushing men through it and down the long steps to the cells.

* * *

So, on March 26th I appeared at the Old Bailey. It was the last stop. I hadn't run.

Nor, like E. L. Doctorow's radical activist, did I remain, refusing to plead, trying to set the whole process on its head. In the event, I was neither completely silent nor completely upfront.

On March 27th I made a 300-word speech from the dock, denying the charge and referring briefly to my relationship with Lee. The following day I was acquitted.

Once I had decided to fight the case, only two major questions had to be resolved. Would I defend “paedophile sexuality” and my views on adult/child relationships in open court (in other words, from the witness box)? Or would I seek to have this evidence omitted from the brief?

And would I call Steve, Paul, Mark—or any of the boys—to describe their experiences at the hands of the Bofors squad?

From the moment I sat down with my solicitor to prepare the defence, we agreed that the brief had to stand up on two quite different levels. If the Prosecution brought in some, or all, of my writings to demonstrate my propensity to commit sexual offences on young boys, every sentence must be explained or rebutted. On the other hand, if the Prosecution agreed to exclude this material—simply because it was evidence as to propensity and not material to the particular offence—I must avoid dropping a clanger in court, which would allow the State to bring all the material back in.

“Plan A”—as my solicitor dubbed it—therefore involved a painstaking analysis of thousands of my own words, written over a period of nearly four years and inevitably somewhat contradictory. My solicitor didn't fully understand some of what I'd written. Nor (I confess) did I. I was tempted to quote Walt Whitman: “I am large, I contain contradictions.” Except that I wasn't very large, and to a British jury contradictions would immediately seem like a cover-up.

“Plan B”, as it turned out, was almost as intricate. If I—or any of my witnesses—introduced either an assertion that “I liked little boys” or a denial of the same fact, the Prosecution could re-introduce the excluded evidence. For this reason, no doubt, my barrister called this case the “narrowest razor-edge on which I've walked”—“more full of hidden pitfalls than any other I can

remember”.

A fortnight before the trial opened, I learned that the Prosecution had agreed to follow “plan B”. Unless I chose to reintroduce them myself, some thirty-five pages out of the forty pages comprising the police evidence would be excluded—including any reference to the circumstances of my arrest, even the search warrant used on the raid. All photographs and other printed matter would go by the board—except for two photographs of Lee (deemed “indecent”) and the letter written to Jean after Lee’s 1976 holiday in London.

“I have never known so much evidence to be excluded before a trial,” said one of my lawyers. “Detective Sergeant Wolstenholme will go through the ceiling.”

The Prosecutor was described by my defence counsel as one of “the old school who doesn’t believe in a conviction at any cost—only in establishing the truth”. But, of course, the case comprised two different sets of truth. One was the truth about my relationship with Lee, and whether I had in fact tried to bugger him two and a half years previously. The other was the truth about my views and how I had conducted my life on the basis of those views. If I chose, I could have those views re-inserted in the trial and call witnesses, not only of fact, but as experts on paedophile experiences. I could also invite my character witnesses to testify as to my conduct with kids (their own and others).

My friends and colleagues in the Roger Moody Defence Committee helped me tussle with this issue. They helped provide the experts who might have been called had Plan A trodden the boards—or had I chosen to let it. But the opinion of a friend, who had recently been the subject of a politically-motivated trial himself, met with no opposition:

“If you can really argue the issues, then risk the evidence being called,” he said. “In my opinion you haven’t a hope in hell. It’s true in our case* we eventually swayed the jury. But only because we had several weeks in which to win them round, and anyway many people could see the injustice of Incitement to Disaffection Act. In your case, the issues are so emotive.”

But to my mind, the more compelling argument was this—also his: “On the one hand you’re saying you didn’t do it. On the other hand you’ll be saying ‘Why shouldn’t I have done it?’ Even more confusing—you’ll be saying you couldn’t have done this particular thing, but why should it be automatically regarded as horrendous? The chances of an average jury hearing what you’re really saying are very slim.”

Whether this was the fundamental point to take—whether it was legitimate to take it—this was the view which won in the end. I needed a friend to argue the reverse, a devil’s advocate to call me a coward, but none emerged. Hardly surprising—friends, after all, don’t usually try to put one’s head on the chopping-block.

Was E. L. Doctorow’s verbose radical right, then? By taking the line of least resistance did I legitimise the illegitimate and only questionably save my own skin? Or did something of the truth slip in along the way, without

*In 1975, fourteen British pacifists were acquitted at Old Bailey of “incitement to disaffection”—they were involved in campaign which informed soldiers of non-violent alternatives to their continuing military service.

creating the enormous prejudice that a full exposé of my opinions would have done?

The jury saw two photographs of a ten-year-old boy, delighting in his nakedness. The judge asked them if "a fatherly figure would really take such photos?" He was, of course, informing them that—in his opinion—they could only have been taken by someone with an erotic interest in the boy. My letter to Jean was read out in court as the major piece of the prosecution's corroborating evidence. In it, I wrote of my physical relationship with Lee, of his need for sexual knowledge. I defended the right of adult friends, like myself, to satisfy children's curiosity about sexuality. I suggested that her fear of Lee's "growing up homosexual" was misplaced. I doubted he would grow up homosexual—but so what? "We both of us know of happy homosexual couples, both male and female" I wrote to Jean. "Surely the most important thing is that Lee should be happy in whatever way he chooses."

On the one hand, it could be argued that the jury did get an insight into my feelings about boys and learned of my opinions on the expression of children's sexuality. By acquitting me, they clearly didn't consider that these factors necessarily ensured that I had "indecently assaulted" Lee. Or perhaps, they believed I probably had fondled Lee in an indecent place on his body—with some intent—but this hadn't amounted to an assault. (Unwittingly, the judge might have himself confused the issue, by being scrupulously accurate in his summing up. For an offence to be committed, he said, the act must be "indecent, intentional and an assault". In British law, no boy under 16 can "consent" to be "assaulted", but the jury may not have fully realised the fact. The great ambiguity of Lee's own evidence on the position of his body relative to my hand that fateful morning, would have confused the issue further.) Most likely, they accepted Lee's agreement under cross-examination, that the whole incident "might have been an accident".

On the other hand, these considerations may have played no part at all in the jury's decision-making. After all, the judge did instruct the jury that the two photographs and the letter to Jean "could not constitute corroboration in the legal sense, and it would be very dangerous for you to convict without such corroboration, although the law leaves the final discretion in your hands." In reality, this meant that the jury might convict if particularly ignorant, prejudiced, or convinced on the young person's evidence alone. But I would stand a very good chance of acquittal on appeal, some months later.

It is tantalising—but ultimately fruitless—to speculate on how juries reach their decisions. As they filed out of court, on Wednesday 28th March, I scrutinised the jurors' faces. One woman—bright eyed and attractive—looked straight at me and smiled. A young man who had refused to take the oath (but affirmed instead)—and whose semi-dyed hair caught the attention of most other people in the court—nodded, looked as serious as he had done through the trial and quickly made for the exit. The others just seemed to vanish in the mêlée.

Did they wonder why they had been kept out of court while Defence and Prosecution argued about the exclusion of evidence at the start of the trial? (In fact, this evidence was brought in later, namely the letter and photographs.)

Did they speculate on the box which Detective Sergeant Wolstenholme

hugged to his chest on the police table and almost obsessively opened and closed during the course of the trial—as if to say “this is what the law, in its stupidity, is preventing you from seeing”? (This box contained the articles excluded by agreement, as Prosecution and Defence followed “Plan B”.)

Did they realise why I made merely a statement from the dock, and didn’t enter the witness box? (This is the British subject’s god-given right and should not be taken as an admission of guilt. In my case, I was being protected from possible cross-examination as to my views—something my barrister feared, once the Prosecutor felt the case “slipping away from him”.)

Did they wonder why the Prosecutor’s case was so slim, his summing-up so short? (This was something about which we all marvelled. It was as it, after Lee’s evidence, the Crown threw in a good part of the towel: the cause célèbre, claimed by the police, began to look more and more like a put-up job. Not necessarily falsified, but certainly forced.)

And did they wonder what had been behind it all? Did they ask themselves why they were denied any right to hear why police had swooped on me originally; given instead a few minutes of police evidence, scrupulously cobbled together out of censored notebooks?

In the final event, the jury’s prerogative to hear all the available evidence, and decide for themselves what was relevant, had been judiciously denied. The denial was made in the interests of “justice”, and in the interests of the defence. It was a correct denial, if the jury were incapable of measured, rational and unbigotted thinking. By implication, “Plan B” decided in advance that they probably were incapable—or at least, that the chances were too great to risk.

In this way, the institution of jury trial is challenged and found wanting by the very authorities which claim to regard it as sacrosanct. If jurors’ ability to discriminate between valid and invalid information is questioned by the judicial system itself, the solution can’t be found in palliatives like longer trials, closer vetting of jurors, or scrutiny of jury discussions behind closed doors. The only solution is in the first place not to bring cases which derive from police or social prejudice.

The second major decision in front of me, at the outset of the trial, was whether to call any of the boys (other than Lee) to describe what the police had said and done to them. Despite my barrister’s reluctance to advise me to call boys in any event (arguing that the jury would see fire wherever there was smoke, or sexual inferences where there were young boys), both my solicitor and myself were in favour of calling two of my young friends. The strength of their evidence lay in showing that the Bofors squad were determined to get a conviction, at almost any price—including violation of the judges Rules* on police procedure. There were two dangers, however. At least one father might be prepared to testify for the Prosecution that I had abused my relationship

*Judges Rules are administrative directions, issued by the Home Office, and are the only form of protection in Britain for people undergoing interrogation. They state clearly that children “whether suspected of a crime or not, should only be interviewed in the presence of parent or guardian . . . or some person who is not a police officer” unless this is not “practicable”. Clearly, in all the cases quoted in this book, the presence of a parent was eminently practicable.

with his sons. In addition since the boys would tell the truth, evidence of an innocent (but potentially very distortable) game of strip poker would come out in court.

On the first day of the trial, the dilemma was resolved, by the testimony both of the police, and of Lee and his mother. It turned out that Lee had been initially questioned by Midlands Police, and later by Detective Sergeant Spruce whereas the other boys were grilled by DS Wolstenholme and his colleague DS Bean. Proving a "system" of intimidation was therefore much more difficult than we had earlier envisaged. More important, Jean stated on oath that she had been asked to leave the room on the two occasions her son made allegations against me. On the second occasion, she was reluctant to go "but when the police say 'do something' you do it!" Lee also testified that the police had put him "under pressure", though he seemed unclear what this consisted of. When DS (now Inspector) Spruce uttered the myth that no pressure, or prompting, had been applied against Lee, it sat uneasily alongside the boy's own evidence, and his mother's obvious bitterness at the way the authorities had proceeded. The other boys therefore sat metaphorically in the wings, but weren't called. One of them still feels cheated of his opportunity to set the record straight: second best though this book may be, I hope it helps redress the balance.

There is little more to say. Given a sharp-minded barrister and, above all, a sensitive and hard-working—a *committed*—solicitor, other people in my situation can hope for acquittal. My trial was graced with a benevolent prosecutor, a fair judge and—most probably—a balanced jury, salted with a fair number of members who were no strangers to police manipulation. If any of these had been less scrupulous, the outcome might have been different.

If there is any lesson to convey, it is quite simply that those charged with a sexual offence with a young person should keep silent, refuse to be inveigled by promises of "keeping the child out of it" and remember that corroboration is needed in every instance; though what comprises "corroboration" may be as ephemeral as a chance phrase or an indiscreet photograph.

Kids have no automatic right to silence, either before the police or the court: this is because, ironically, they are "victims" or complainants, not "prisoners" or defendants. Nor are they informed that a parent—or adult standing *in loco parentis*—should be present when they are questioned. Effectively, once they start being protected under the present system of law, that is when they begin to lose the protection theoretically granted their adult "aggressors".

After my success, only a few friends asked about Lee. At the time of writing I have made no contact with him or Jean; and if any mutual friends have done so, I have yet to learn the result. I can only presume he knows I was acquitted and considers that an end to it. All I would really like to know—and discuss with him—is whether he feels I wronged him; whether Jean's exasperation last summer that I didn't plead guilty and save him the stress of "going through with it all" found its way through to him too.

May 1979.

Finally my property has been returned, by a beaming DS Wolstenholme, smoother cut, trimmer about the middle than when we last met; does memory play tricks through rose-coloured spectacles? The police have made a "cock up" he tells me, adding "fuck up if you like". They have apparently left the book, in which they entered the items I'd originally forfeited, at another police station. So off we traipse from Bofors to Billington. After another hour he has returned my property to me. But I notice that all the other papers relating to my appearance are still intact, and put to one side: they are supposed to be destroyed immediately after an acquittal. Are they now going to be filed away?

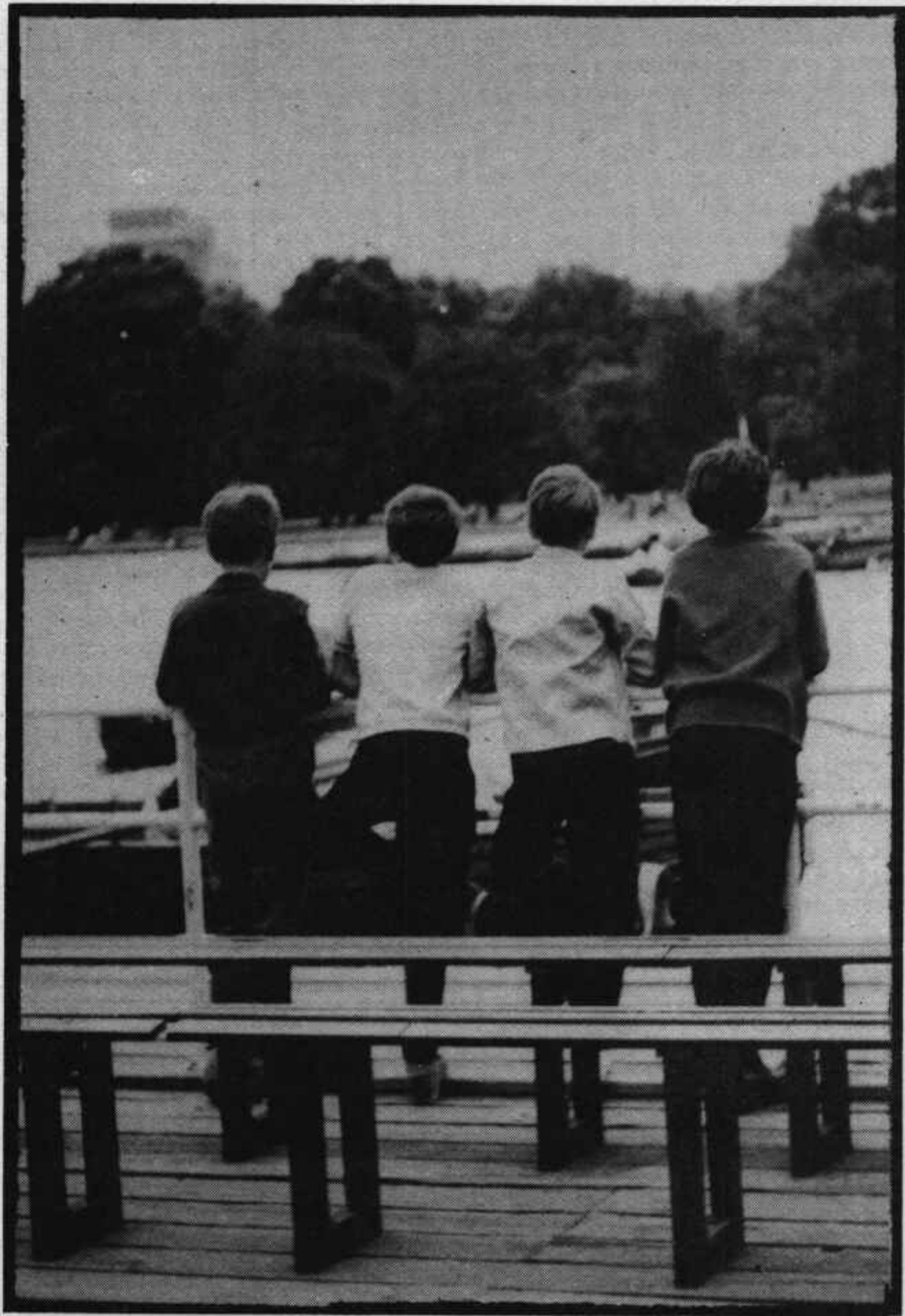
As I am about to leave, DS Wolstenholme tells me he concludes that everything is now as he puts it—"squits". "That's the end of it I hope". I misunderstand him—he really means he hopes that's the end of the business of returning my property, while I think he means an end to the whole affair. "That's not up to me," I tell him. "Well I hope it's the end," he replies. "I have no personal animosity against you" I continue. "What you have done is, in my opinion, wrong, and there will continue to be things about which we will disagree. But no, I have no personal animosity against you." I know as I say those words that they have become true in the aftermath of the trial. They do not mean that I will not oppose what DS Wolstenholme represents, and what he has done to kids, but that, confronted with him as a somewhat bumbling human being, clearly plagued by the inefficiencies of other bumbling humans, I cannot muster bad feelings against him. I will not dream of strangling him at nights, nor let drop a gratuitous "that bastard" if his name comes up in conversation. He has been expunged from my daily consciousness. Suddenly he reaches behind him, pulls out the bag of stuff he previously wanted to destroy (and for which I had signed a disclaimer), and thrusts it into my hand. "That's an added bonus" he says, "we might as well let you have it". So, in the end, it really comes down to human gestures. A hand on the shoulder, a hand on a penis, a hand on the behind, a loving caress along another's thighs, and the brush of a sergeant's finger tips against mine as we part company.

Postscript

Ten days after my acquittal I was arrested again, walking down a local street, holding the hand of a ten-year-old boy. Nothing more.

The boy and myself were held for questioning for an hour, then released after the boy's mother demanded her son's return.

The boy's mother has made a complaint about police behaviour towards her son. And I am suing the police for wrongful imprisonment. *A lotta continua ...*



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For a book of only 60 pages, 'Indecent Assault' is remarkably rich. Mr Moody is

a seasoned activist and writer (a one-time editor of 'Peace News') and has the command of logic and writing style to give his account resonances I have not found before in accounts of the paedophile experience. As well as being an account of a legal process, the book also contains moving first-hand accounts of what it is like to be on the legal conveyor-belt that recall Genet and insights into what a paedophile relationship may be like from the inside.

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Patrick Micel.

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