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Dudley Sutton – interview transcript

Interviewer: Adam Smith

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AS: This is Adam Smith interviewing Mr Dudley Sutton on the 28th January 2010. Before I begin may I thank you on behalf of the University of Sheffield and the Theatre Archive Project for taking part in this interview.

DS: My pleasure.

AS. Thank you. Do you remember your first experience of theatre?

DS: At prep school. I was pretty and I had blond hair and blue eyes and it was a boys only so I had to play the girl, which was very difficult and embarrassing and confusing. And then... amazing. I just absolutely loved it. Yeah, that was the first experience of it.

AS. And did you see many plays when you were a young man?

DS: No. No, I saw one play and that was in a very bad rep in Jersey... but I loved it. I loved the tatty-ness of it. All the things that my father hated most: the theatre was filthy, the actors were appalling... None of it mattered, it was just brilliant. And then I was an amateur actor in the youth club, and then I joined the air force and I was an amateur actor in the air force.

AS. What did that involve? How did they organise that in the RAF?

DS: Well any RAF base of any size is run like an English village in those days. With cricket, 'Jolly good cricket teams', and you had to do sport, which I always hated. I once got punished for reading when I was in the air force when I should have been out kicking some wretched ball around. And they have an amateur drama society mostly

with the officers, but I wasn't, I was a mechanic. I sort of went into the ranks out of spite as much as anything else, and also because I wanted to get away from the background that I'd been at school with. And I joined the amateur drama society and they were very patronising because you're not supposed to if you're a mechanic. But I happened to be rather better at it and they eventually sent me to the RADA.

I mean, what happened - I'm trying not to digress, but what happened in the fifties was that as a result of the 1945 Labour government, the most radical government we ever had, the results of the education acts were beginning to come through. And we had what they sneeringly referred to as the 'Red Brick Universities', which you'll know all about, and there would be young Labour-leaning education officers in the RAF with commissions who would understand. And this bloke said to me... I said, 'I don't know what I'm going to do when I leave,' and he said 'Well everybody else knows! You're going to be an actor you twerp.' - 'Twerp' he didn't use, but 'twerp' will do for this! - And I said 'Well, how can I do that?' and he said 'You can apply to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art,' and I said 'I can't go anywhere royal,' and he said 'You're in the Royal Air Force aren't you, you twerp? So why don't you send them a letter by the Royal Mail?' and that's what happened. And I got in, and from the moment I stepped through the doors I hated every minute of it. We're back in the world of the officers and back in the world of the school prefect and back in the public school world and 'Who's for tennis?' and I couldn't understand it. Very naïve, very confused... I'd learnt a love of English, English vernacular, English in the RAF. Fabulous, you know, and I understood the nature of swearing as not being bad language but being rhythm. But, you know, the middle class always wants to impose its linguistic view on everybody else, the usual stuff... I still fight that fight now. I did a film, you know, still fighting. And, erm, oh, I've gone off the track [laughs]...

Oh yes, I was in the digs, with a bunch of us, and I burst in to tears and said 'I'm a student of something I hate!' - it was all 'Who's for tennis?' and patronising the working class and [puts on stiff upper lip accent] 'Oh don't you worry, we'll sort it out,' [puts on stereotypical working class accent] 'Oh I don't know gov'nor'... [back to own accent] that sort of stuff, and someone said 'Well, why don't you go down the East End to the Theatre Workshop?'. I went down there. The moment I got off the tube and it was full of pollution, with the railway yards and the Yardley's perfume factory and these little half-doored two-up-and-two-down workers' cottages - and I thought, 'This is brilliant,' you know? And I went to this really beat-up theatre, scruffy theatre, which I loved the moment I walked in. I paid nine pence or something, and I saw a production of *The Good Soldier Svejk* and oh jeez! You know, half of the problem with the education in England in my youth was that it was so Anglo-centric. They hadn't even bothered to look across the channel. And when I was in the RAF, on the edge of Soho, I found out that if you sat in a café in Soho everybody has read Sartre, every body has read Albert Camus, everybody had read, you know, all of those exciting European novelists and suddenly it is coming out in translation in England. The world is full of ideas except at that dreadful RADA. And *The Good Soldier Svejk* of course is European, it's full of ideas, it's full of jokes, cartoons, it breaks every theatrical convention without apologising for it, and that was it, you know. So, I worked in a Rock and Roll coffee bar and I hung out with Teddy Boys and hookers and these amazing West Indians that were selling spliff, you know, which was legal in those days, and I just hung out with my people and eventually I got fired from the RADA, thank God!

AS. You got fired?

DS: Yeah, yeah.

AS: What for?

DS: They still send me letters saying 'Dear Graduate, can we have some money?'. I got fired, I should think, out of laziness really. Depression - you know you're in the wrong place and you don't know the answer until you see it and you hear your music, so to speak, and I heard my music: Littlewood. And I heard they were auditioning, and I was so certain that I'd heard my inner soul music, so to speak, that I walked on the stage in total confidence, gave the worst audition of my life, and got a job.

AS: Do you just audition for a general position in the company or was it for a specific role?

DS: Yeah, for a general... yeah, I mean, they did things that the RADA didn't do, I mean, you know, they'd do improvisation and stuff, which nobody else did, they had movement classes in theatre, dancing. I loved dancing, I was a very good dancer. And that was heaven. Heaven and hell, because I needed lots of attitude beating out of me.

AS: What was Joan Littlewood like?

DS: A University really, a University, with all that that entails. The bad sides as well. She was very sentimental about the working class [laughs] as all the left are! I couldn't believe the language of Communists, I could not fucking - excuse me! - I couldn't believe it! That they could be so bigoted, so prejudiced, so narrow minded - you're back at square one!

AS: Just from the other side.

DS: Just from the - exactly. Exactly the other side. I mean, we know that Communism and Fascism are identical, you know, or at least Communism, Labour... And I was in despair, to be honest. And she kept attacking me for being - with some justification - 'middle class, arty and public school' - as if you could help any of these. As if these decisions were yours. You understand this. You know, and it was a very, very happy but also very unhappy time.

AS: Do any of the plays that you were in at this time stand out in your memory?

DS: Oh, all of them. I mean, we did what we call "The Scottish Play" - I can say it because we're not in a theatre, we did Macbeth - my first job was in Moscow, in Russia, after being booted out of the RADA a few months before. I thought, 'Fuck them'.

AS. Did you play Malcolm in that?

DS: Every young actor has to suffer Malcolm - you can't do it can you? Have you done it?

AS. I've not done it.

DS: Oh, you can't do it, it's impossible, because you have to make lists. 'The King-becoming graces.' And the worst thing to give a young actor is lists. Because you think you have to differentiate every different word on that list and explain to the audience what it means, because in bourgeois theatre you have to tell the audience what everything means because the audience is too stupid.

AS. And you actually performed this in Russia.

DS: Yeah, the Moscow Arts Theatre.

AS. How did you come to be performing in the Moscow Arts Theatre?

DS: Well, Littlewood. It was a huge festival of youth and... a festival for - what's it called? The Youth Festival for International Peace and Friendship. It was a big political - it was great because all the lefties from America... we were all given special passports so we wouldn't have any stamps in our passport. And we went by train. I mean, I met astonishing people on that train. Folk singers especially. Because Littlewood at that time was full of folk because of Ewan MacColl, you know, it was also full of sentimentalists [laughs]. They all were! You know, Ewan MacColl's real name is Jimmy Miller and he comes from Manchester and he was married to Joan Littlewood at one time. But they were all sentimentalists and this appalled me. The crux of the work though was not sentimental, it was really exciting, it was just amazing, you know? And although I failed miserably whilst I was there - in my view - we did a play immediately when we got back called *You Won't Always Be in Top* which was in the English vernacular, which was, you know, thrilling. What else did we do? *The Hostage*, with Brendan Behan, which was quite staggering because I knew nothing of Anglo-Irish History, and I read Cecil Woodham-Smith and "The Reason Why" on the famine and that set off on a whole new...

AS. What's that play about, *The Hostage*?

DS: *The Hostage*? It's about... It's a huge satire on the Irish Republican Movement and the British, and they take an English soldier hostage, and the trouble is they like him. And Brendan Behan is the most humane tolerant man. You know, he always used to say 'When I got to England with a bomb in my suitcase the police beat the hell out of me, and I could understand that, and they sent me to prison which I could understand, but what I couldn't understand was the bloke from the same background in the next bed to

me in Borstal. Although he's from England we liked each other, we loved each other! That's what he couldn't, you know...

AS: Did you not take that play to Paris in 1960?

DS: We did! We took it to Paris, was it 1960?

AS: I thought it was 1960 but I could be mistaken.

DS: No it could be. Littlewood theatre translates because it's full of music and dance and the imagery is so clear. It's European. It comes from a European tradition.

AS: Does it feel different when you're on stage doing a play you've done somewhere else in a new place?

DS: Yes, totally different, especially since we were doing it on the wrong set, but it doesn't matter!

AS: How did you come to be doing it on the wrong set?

DS: Well of course we'd already built a set for Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be which was a great play. Again, we're back to vernacular again. You know, the richness of language, of cockney slang. Well, a mixture of Jewish Cockney, of Mockney, rhyming slang... just words words words words.

AS: You Won't Always Be in Top, is that the one that you performed in a building site?

DS: Yes. I was lucky because I had a sequence to do where the young boy - the tea boy - conducts with a piece of wood. He's alone, and he loves The Messiah. And when he's alone he conducts the Hallelujah Chorus, and I used to love mime. I loved mime. I fell in love with French mime, and I did it, and the Marceau Mime Company were in and they gave me a huge round of applause. So, I played the idea where the conductor had lost the page of something and they were very exciting times. And we had a cement mixer on the stage. In those days we had this lovely designer called John Bury who was known as Camel because he could go on for days without water, and he'd just come onto the set half way through rehearsal with a bucket of cement and just sort of make the thing as you went along. So we had a lot of mess on the stage. We're talking about 1957, 58... Fairly unusual: the first theatre in England that didn't play the National Anthem. [laughs] Oh God, before every performance, you'd just be getting settled into your seat and then you'd hear the old drum roll and you'd have to get up, stand up, and give it to the Windsors! You know, it's insane.

AS: A different world.

DS: Oh, totally. It's the world I was brought up in. And fought.

AS: And, was you in The Rainmaker in Manchester Library Theatre?

DS: Oh yes, that's right. I was farmed out for a season. And that is... Because when you're with Littlewood, she was a teacher to me more than anything else. You know, I was a student - I wasn't an actor, and I could never do it because I was just frustrated, but the moment I was set free I was flying and I could do everything that I'd been picking up, it was easy it was delight. You know, once the language was fun, and the movement and dance was fun, and you could fly about the stage having a great time. I loved it in Manchester. My grandmother came from Manchester.

AS: Was performing in Manchester very different from performing in London?

DS: No. Not really. Not in that sense. No. It was still a middle class audience, you know.

AS: And at some point you became involved in films?

DS: Yeah.

AS: The Boys, was that the first film?

DS: Yeah. Again it was great because... this was later, we're jumping ahead.

AS: Are we jumping ahead?

DS: Way ahead.

AS: I missed a page out, that's what happened there.

DS: Littlewood, 1957, 1958, The Hostage, I think... Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be with Lionel Bart and Frank Norman with that language, it was fabulous. And an extraordinary thing, the best audiences are Jews for some reason. For some bizarre reason they just are.

AS: Why is this?

DS: I don't know. They just are. They are wonderful audiences. So we used to come on stage and say something with a bit of Yiddish in it just to test the water to see how many Jews were in that night. And then if there were a lot in, and they laughed, you knew you were onto a roll. It was a silly idea but it sort of has some truth in it. And so we did that. The language in *Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be*, and the lyrics, because Lionel Bart was new, he'd come in with a song and you'd learn it in five minutes.

AS: So this was a musical?

DS: Yes. Well, it was a play with songs.

AS: Was this before or after *One More River*?

DS: Before. I think. So, yes, because I used to not like to go to the West End with Littlewood's shows because they tarted them up a bit. And I promised to go for a week in *The Hostage* just to help it get in. And then I left and did *One More River* with Dudley Foster, who was another Theatre Workshop actor, and that was freedom, on the stage again: physical freedom. You know, years of hard work, or doing something a lot of other actors weren't doing, which was running away and doing movement and dance and mime classes.

AS: Is it very different being in a musical?

DS: Oh it's wonderful, because the moment the band starts all the pressure's off. It's great. Littlewood always had music in her shows, which nobody else did.

AS: Really?

DS: No, no, you'd sit through plays... you know, it's more fun to be in a Pinter than it is sit in front of it, to be in it. To be honest with you. The theatre is not literature, it's something alive. I don't publish poems, partly because I haven't been asked, but also it's a nice idea not to publish because if you publish then you start getting annotated and it's sort of solid. But if you don't publish, like last week I was spouting one of my oldest poems and a new word slipped in and made it better, so you don't know.

AS: And was one of your co-stars in *One More River* Michael Caine?

DS: Yes, but that's gossip, that's boring. I mean, he's a nice bloke and I see him around some times but that's silly, that's gossip.

AS: And did you go straight from there to *The Hostage*?

DS: I don't remember which way round it was. No, The Hostage came before Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be. Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be, that went to the West End, so I left. We did The Dutch Courtesan. Ah, heaven.

AS: What was this one about?

DS: I don't know, you know better than I do what it was about. I know there was a hooker involved because there was a courtesan. It was Richard Harris and Rachel Roberts and a few others. And Utha Joyce and me. And I ended up doing a rude gesture that got a laugh, which was very brave of me at the time, because I was so frightened. I just went 'Phwooor' [makes gesture] and that got a laugh. But it was unusual for people in the theatre to understand that kind of vernacular really. I mean at Littlewood's they did, but you visit the Royal Court, the Royal Court was like a University... with teachers, it is almost like school: the Royal Court. The Theatre Workshop was like play time.

AS: And in the West End you did an Irish play, A Whistle in the Dark?

DS: Oh yes, A Whistle in the Dark. I forget how that came about. I was living in a flat with a bunch of Irish actors, and again we're talking language. We'd get around the piano, we'd get pissed on Guinness and then we'd have terrible rows about literature. I mean, I was in heaven. They were more interested in literature than cleaning up. And even if you had a giant fist coming at you in the middle of whether 'O'Casey had said that' or 'Shaw had written that' – I mean, my University at how was Shaw and Wilde. You know, which was forbidden if you had Wilde in the house. Oh god yes, because it was post Victorian and Wilde had done something and we didn't know what it was - well we did, but the grown ups would never say. But you know, you read Shaw's Prefaces and you get a political education. You know, you read Oscar Wilde and you get a political education. You know, when Mrs Bracknell says that 'The whole theory of modern education is radically unsound. Fortunately in England, at any rate, education produces no effect whatsoever,' you just exalt in it because someone is talking something that you recognise but couldn't express, really.

AS: When, roughly, do you think this Irish play was?

DS: 1961. We'd already been to New York with The Hostage and that was a mind-blower: going on Broadway with Littlewood.

AS: How was she received?

DS: Oh, with rapture, because half the people are Irish anyway. And I just got pissed every night with Behan of course, and Behan became a great friend of mine. Brendan. I mean, you know, it was always this love of language and the Irish love language. That's a bit of a generalisation, but you know, people in the sixties in Dublin, like in Russia, people knew their poets. They loved their poets. And they knew their writers and they loved their writers. And they honoured their writers. It was extraordinary. Not in an

academic way but in a kind of a street way, quoting poets in a bar, you know. I mean, that's splendid.

AS: How long were you on Broadway?

DS: I don't remember. Six months? A few months anyway. And then it went on tour. I came back. It was very exciting. I met Tennessee Williams, I got to know him quite well. Through Victor Spinetti, who was a great mate of mine, a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun together. And he made some extremely inaccurate comments to Tennessee Williams about my sexual behaviour so I got invited to these parties [laughs]. It didn't matter because I met him.

AS: And then in 1963 you was in Entertaining Mr Sloane.

DS: 1964 I think. No, I came back to England and then I went into A Whistle in the Dark. A Whistle in the Dark, again we're talking about language, we're talking about the kitchen sink, we're talking about kicking the bourgeois out, or off the West End. We thought once and for all. And I remember Gladys Cooper, the old Dame, once said to me 'Why do you always do those violent plays?' and I said 'Because you always do those "who's for tennis" plays.' And it was very exciting and I met the glorious Patrick Magee whose one of the best actors ever. To see him playing in Faith Healer for the only three days - he did it in the Royal Court - was one of the great experiences. It was fantastic. I loved it. There was a sort of glory about it. I loved Irish actors who came to London at that time. They'd come to work as if they were a plumber on the job. They'd just come to work and we'd do what ever we had to do. There was none of that posing going on at all. I loved that. I got on very well with them. I mean, they had their own poses and attitudes that I didn't recognise perhaps, but I like the ease with which they dealt with the theatre. It was much more physical in a friendly way. So that's how I managed, and how I got into A Whistle in the Dark. Because I loved the language so much I could speak quite a lot of it. And I could speak in reasonable Dublin, and certainly in reasonable West Cork, so it was a sort of music. I always loved language. And I read those lovely writers, those glorious writers. So when you've given a list of plays to read to the RADA by British writers 90% of them are Irish. You know, Shaw, Sheridan, O'Casey [laughs] Wilde: they're all Irish.

AS: So how did you come to be in Entertaining Mr Sloane in 1963 or 1964?

DS: Well, I did a film, called The Boys which was from Littlewood area. It was written by a guy who was a young socialist writer. I was committed to two things when I was young for two reasons: one was the abolition of capital punishment and the other was homosexual law reform. I saw too many people humiliated, and I also saw the glee with which my Father and his lot... He'd listen to the news about somebody being hanged and it always disgusted me. And The Boys was really anti-capital punishment, and the second film I did, The Leather Boys, was an attempt to play a homosexual in the theatre, in the movies, without it being a camp joke. So I didn't do a single camp gesture throughout the whole film, which pissed the producer off.

AS: Really?

DS: Oh of course. They didn't recognise it otherwise. You might be caught by some queen who doesn't camp. Who knows? Terror. You might even fall in love, God save us! So I was very excited by those two films, politically. As well as everything else. As well as having a fucking great leading role, you know. Which helps. So The Boys came out of You Won't Always Be on Top, by a director called Sid Fury. My agent, who was very posh, said 'You'll be going to see a man, and if you look around the room and there's a Beatnik sitting in the corner don't be nervous, he's the director. You'll probably get on with him.' Well I did, we got on like a house on fire. And his next film was The Leather Boys which suited me as well, so we did that.

AS: That looks quite exciting, I was watching a clip of that the other day: of the motorbikes racing down the motorway.

DS: Oh yes. Yeah, yeah.

AS: In one of those films didn't you get upset about the set?

DS: That's right, The Boys, we were down in Kings - how do you know that? Oh it's on the web is it? We went down to shoot in my supposed mother's flat in a block of flats in King's Cross. And I walked in, and the art department were so busy putting up shit wall paper and tearing down, on this beautiful clean pristine flat. And saying 'this is Russia'... I'd been to Russia in 1957 and they kept saying how squalid - you go into people's flats, and people keep their places clean generally. Unless they've got a massive booze or drug habit. It's just the bourgeois with their maids to do it - I blew my stack. And I went down stairs and I went to Fury and I said 'I'm not fucking going on, you can get someone else, I don't care.' And he said 'No, I'm with you.' So he went upstairs and he tore them to pieces. It was so common of British movies. You look at any British movie about the working class and the mother will be holding the baby with a fag sticking out of her mouth. Or dropping that fag ash into the cornflakes because that's what 'slobs' do. Because this is all written by middle class... It used to make me so angry. I stormed and ranted and raved and they had to change it. Yes. Great.

AS: And both of those characters, with that political aspect, led into Mr Sloane. Is that why you took that role?

DS: No, I imagine... Sloane was about writing, it was about again breaking barriers of censorship. Because this was the other great fight that we had. We had a fight with the law over Fings Ain't Wot They Used T' Be, we had a fight with the law over The Hostage. I was used to it.

AS: Is this the Lord Chamberlain?

DS: Oh yes, the big header on embossed paper with the Lord Chamberlain's crest on it. And then it would say 'One. Delete. Crawling up boss's arse.' [Laughs] These so-called "profanities" listed on this posh paper! It was very funny. We'd pin it on the wall. Yes, so Sloane was clearly forbidden so we had to do it... Originally it was done at the Arts Theatre, which was a private members' club and therefore not subject to censorship. And I understood Sloane, I'd been living in Soho for years with all sorts of unsavoury characters or savoury characters. So I lived in the arse end of Westbourne Grove L in those days before it became chic. And the only place you could drink in the afternoon were gay clubs or lesbian clubs. I was a member of a great lesbian club there so we could get pissed in the afternoon. I was fascinated by all of it. And Sloane was a man with a huge cock. That's what he was. He was neither gay or straight, we wasn't interested. He just had this big prick with which he could negotiate. And he realised he could negotiate and that's what he did. That interested me that idea, so I just stood on the stage imagining I'd got a salami in my trousers. I just stood there rather sulky and every body said 'oh brilliant.'

AS: And it was quite controversial when it came out wasn't it?

DS: Well everything was controversial.

AS: Did you sense that on the stage?

DS: Yes, that's half the joy of it. Oh yes.

AS: Did people in the audience respond?

DS: Well you get the tutting going. The only time I've seen an audience outraged - and I wished I'd been in it, but I'd left by then - was the opening night of Littlewood's Oh What A Lovely War. Anybody of forty or fifty was walking out. They were really raging. I'd never seen it before.

AS: And although it was controversial at the time it's quite respected now.

DS: Every play that I was in that was controversial at the time is now taught in schools. You know, what does that tell you? It tells you that morality is fashion.

AS: Did you know Joe Orton?

DS: Oh yes, very well.

AS: He is a very respected writer now, what was he like at the time?

DS: He was lovely. He was mercurial. He was naughty. Very, very naughty but full of fun. I didn't understand his need to go into public lavatories and have dangerous sex. I sort of understood it, when you're young, in order to have sex it was always dangerous. You could always be found out or something. And there was nowhere to do it, you had to snatch it where you could. I understood the illegality of it, and the danger, but I didn't understand the rest. I like to be able to imagine my way into everybody's appetites but it's quite difficult. I'll get there in the end.

AS: And Sloane went to the West End and then Broadway?

DS: Yes, it died a death in Broadway. We had the pink tickets, previews: packed. Glorious. And lots of famous people came to see it. And the critics closed it. Very fast. The notice went up the next morning.

AS: Why?

DS: 'Filth. Homosexual British depravity.' [Laughs] And it was ridiculous! The theatre was right in the middle of 42nd street and Broadway which is full of porn shops and full of real filth. Depravity and really horrible jokes. And Joe Orton was very distressed and unhappy. I was sort of like 'It's a play, you know, what do you expect?'. You expect people to object, but you've got to go out and stand up and fight, and if they throw things at you all the better. The first time I walked out onto a stage, before Russia, we played the Scottish Play in Zurich and I got slow hand-clapped, and I thought 'Great, they're not ready for me yet.' I didn't think I might have been really bad and really boring, but you don't when you're young. It's exciting.

AS: So what did you do after Sloane? Where did you go from there?

DS: After Sloane? I had a sort of a mid life... Oh no, I did The Devils.

AS: The film?

DS: Oh it was brilliant, yes. It was very theatrical and all the things I love the most. It was condemned as being blasphemous when it's actually the opposite. Whenever you get condemned for blasphemy you're usually saying something pretty good about religion.

AS: Do the skills that you learnt on stage translate into film acting?

DS: The skills are still there, but film acting... well all acting really is reacting and you learn that the hard way. And I love film because... I mean, I'm going out today to audition for a part in The Hobbit. What's the time?

AS: It's a quarter to eleven.

DS: How long have we got it at?

AS: We're onto thirty five minutes, so we can leave it there if you like? If you need to go?

DS: Have you got enough?

AS: I think so. The only other thing was that at the end of our period you went to the RSC?

DS: Yes, well I was beginning to do the usual crash that we all read so boringly about: drug addiction and alcoholism and all that, and it's given me some good material. And I blew it I suppose. Yes, I blew it. I couldn't bear the RSC. But I might have expressed my disapproval more subtly.

AS: I see. One other thing that I've spoken about in all my interviews is that a lot of history describes 1950's and 1960's theatre as an angry period, did you think it was angry at the time?

DS: Angry is a silly word that the critics used to describe those tedious things at the Royal Court. No, it was confrontational. It was saying 'I've had enough. Stop it. I don't want to know who's playing tennis any more. I don't want someone walking in with their gladiolas and saying "Good Morning".' We were just attacking those silly attitudes and it was all fed by these extraordinary writers at the time.

AS: Mr [Braham] Murray said that it didn't feel angry to be angry but that it felt great to be angry.

DS: Well, yes, angry is a journalist's word. Energised. Committed. Furious. But you know when 'garlic' was a dirty word [laughs] you couldn't believe how inward England was. In 1955, London, England was waking up from the post-depression after the war. Young people were waking up and thinking 'Why the hell this, why not that? Why not? Why not? Why not? Let's change it. Let's do something.' And we did. And they were very exciting times. You could sit in a café in Soho all day talking about philosophy. It was thrilling, you know. Go to the RADA- Jesus!

AS: And my final question, which is your fondest memory from the period?

DS: That's a ludicrous question.

AS: In theatre.

DS: Oh, the opening night of Oh What a Lovely War.

AS: That's what I was after.

DS: Oh What a Lovely War. Without a doubt. Thrilling.

AS: That's wonderful then.

DS: All right, mate.

AS: Thank you very much.

DS: My pleasure.