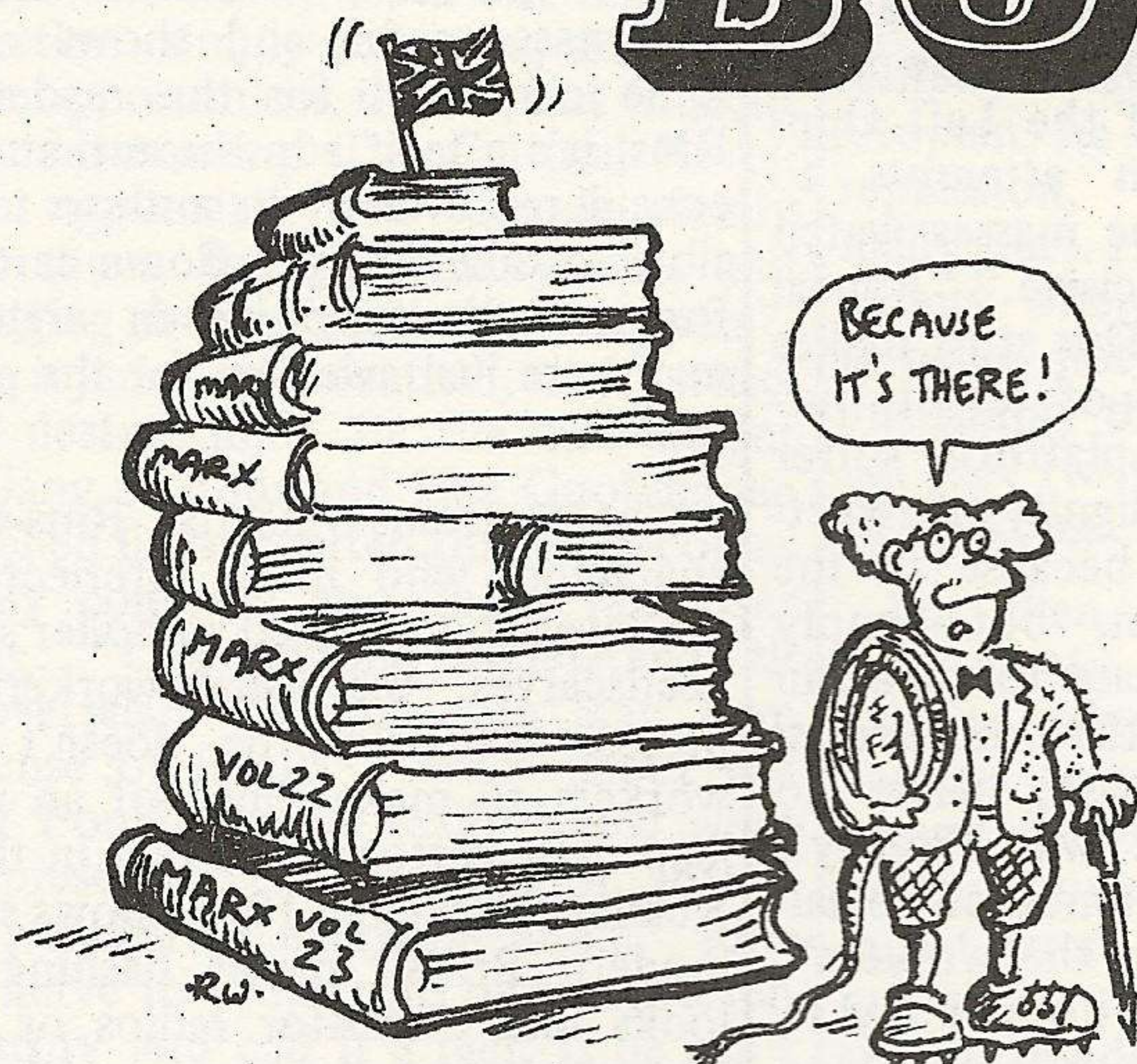


BOOKS



Trotsky for Beginners — Tariq Ali & Phil Evans
Marx for Beginners — Rius & Friends
 (Writers and Readers Publishing Co-operative)

Hands up all those who've read the whole of *Capital* ... Let's face it, only academics have the time, and, more to the point, the motive (i.e. are sufficiently unintelligent to try). So maybe we should be grateful that this handy little series makes accessible the theory and history of Marxism in a compact and popular form. Revolutionary intellectuals have rarely solved the problem of translating their ideas into terms comprehensible to non-intellectuals. The situationists, for instance, assumed that workers would learn to cope with their heavy terminology because it would be historically necessary that they do so. Failing to achieve mass currency (except in debased or spontaneous forms) situationist thought degenerated into a mere intellectual style.

On the other hand, we have the patronising workerism of Rius's *Marx for Beginners*, forerunner of these two titles. Here Feuerbach is written "Foy-er-back", so that the thickies can cope with it, see. Marx is called "Charlie", or worse, "our Charlie", throughout. He winks at us from the cover like a jolly Santa. "Yes, even Charlie had feelings", concedes Rius, introducing Jenny Marx; the tone of half-joke apology is typical — it's hard work humanising the brilliant old bore, and

harder still to render his ideas intelligible and interesting. Little cartoon men pop up here and there, protesting at all the long words — Rius gives his readers precious little credit. (But then, it's precisely those workerists who make the most noise about an abstract proletariat who really have the least faith in the real abilities of real workers — that's the qualification for "representing" their "interests" in the post-revolutionary bureaucracy).

These defensive little anticipations of reader resistance betray the author's doubts about the whole exercise; these little grumbling cartoon men are Rius himself! "I promise not to yawn if you keep it simple", says a funny character and — wallops! — off we go again into the chapter on Surplus Value, or Aristotle, or Empiricism... Bakunin was spot on when he criticised the philosophical basis of Marxism — not any particular philosophy, but philosophy itself. The book may be informative in some respects, but basically you just *can't* simplify Marx the way Rius wants. But he's so enslaved by his ideology that when he fails, far from blaming Marx, he flagellates himself for not being up to the task, grovelling on about not having fulfilled his ambition to understand Marx, about his own limited education, about his book not being up to scratch. "But that", he says, "just goes to prove in the end that Marx is Marx, and Rius is... well, just a poor guy!" And he signs his name with a picture of an ass...

If such doubts lend *Marx* a certain small honesty, *Lenin for Beginners*, by Richard Appignanesi and Oscar Zarate, is good no-nonsense stuff. First page: "What is the 'Great Fact' of the 20th Century? The Victory of the Proletarian Revolution in Russia, October 1917." And the man personally responsible winks from the cover... It can't be denied that Lenin was right every time, *in his own terms*, and since those terms are assumed to be beyond reproach, there's not a whisper of criticism. Makhno and Kronstadt are dealt

with cursorily; the former was wrong because he refused to merge with the Red Army (serves him right), the latter because they had "peasant origins" (serves them right). If you disapprove of Lenin's introduction of assembly-line Taylorism you're just a lily-livered "intellectual", afraid of "factory discipline". In fact, if you disapprove of any of it, you're obviously "prejudiced" by a "false image" built up by "Cold War hostility". Serves you right...

Compared with this, *Trotsky for Beginners* (text by Tariq Ali, cartoons by Phil Evans, the well-known Bill Tidy of Trotskyism) adopts a more flexible (menshevik?) strategy of falsehood. Mind you, we start on the right note; on page one, above an imposing portrait, we read that "Trotsky was the revolutionary closest to Lenin. Lenin called him 'The ablest man in the party'. Pedigree established, we can afford some small concessions: "quick-tempered, arrogant and a stubborn believer in intellectual solutions"... "On the central question of party discipline he had been wrong"... "The Kronstadt tragedy will haunt Trotsky for the rest of his life" (poor man)... But all this is personality, issues, tactics. Basically, our man is sound. That's not demonstrated, just assumed.

If this is so, omissions and exaggerations don't matter. So, for instance, the organisation of the Red Army is dealt with in a couple of sentences. Military men are needed, so Tsarist officers are used, their loyalty ensured by commissars. Many desert to the Whites, but more "are won over to the Revolution". Nothing on the significance of this move for the behaviour of the Army towards the peasants; nothing on the betrayal and elimination of the independents and guerrillas who originally fought the Whites; nothing on the desertions to the Green movement; nothing on the execution of officers who incurred Trotsky's displeasure, of the complaints of the "Military Opposition" within the Party, of the machine-gunning



of retreating soldiers; nothing, in short, on the general Terror within the Red Army. (However, we do learn that sometimes Trotsky actually goes to the front in his armoured train and "participates in the battles". (Gasp!) "Irresponsible? No. Leaders should be seen as capable of defending the Revolution when the occasion demands it." Good grief... They don't *really* have to share the hardships of all the poor sods who are getting shot up, you notice. Just be "capable" of it, or at least give that impression. But not all the time — just when the occasion (incipient mutiny?) demands it...)

I could cite a hundred such examples. Much is made of the way Trotsky was snipped from the history books under Stalin, but the innocent reader might not notice something similar going on here. Popularisation (since folks are simple-minded) means simplification, which means that only ideologically viable facts are guaranteed inclusion.

Omissions are balanced by exaggerated claims, with basis more in the logic of ideology than in fact. British union leaders capitulate in the General Strike. Why? The inference is clear — they have "collaborated with Stalin". What alone opposes them? Why, Trotsky's book, *Where is Britain Going?*, of course ("widely distributed"). Shanghai, the rise of Nazism, France, Spain — all are portrayed as extensions of a personal Trotsky-Stalin tussle. Once again, absolute good and absolute evil slug it out in the boxing-ring of history...

Yet, somehow, despite the blinding obviousness of his correct analyses, our Lev, after the purges, is a Dead Duck, unfairly outmuscled. Things look pretty bleak for the World Proletariat, now deprived of their only True Leader. But wait! (distant bugles...) Over the horizon comes galloping — you've guessed it — The Fourth International! The innocent reader could be forgiven for confusing this obscure cabal with the entire modern world revolutionary movement...



Ali is vague on the factors underlying Trotsky's decline. It seems he should have stood up to the school bully a bit earlier, that's all. We have to take our clue from his account of the fate of the Left Opposition: "The Opposition attempts to appeal to the masses... The masses watch silently. Their silence is decisive." "Appeal to the masses", indeed! (This stuff makes me so cross...) A bunch of leftist bureaucrats with a populist platform suffer the supreme and ironic indignity of rejection by the people. Not because of the content of the platform, but simply because they find it necessary to *appeal* in the first place — being leftist bureaucrats, they have no popular base, hence no political clout. And what was Trotsky's "one weapon"? The time-honoured socialist method of appealing to the workers". Whose silence, though Ali doesn't say it, was obviously decisive. Indifferent (and who can blame them?) to the outcome of the bureaucratic tussle, the mass of powerless spectators watches silently this game played out by cartoon giants that passes for "history". Not the "Great Fact" of the 20th Century, but the Great Lie.

I wouldn't dream of playing down Stalin, but Ali makes him solely responsible for all that goes wrong, neatly exonerating Lenin and Trotsky. He was, apparently, personally responsible for the bolshevik invasion of independent and socialist Georgia. Lenin, apparently, was going to tick him off for this, but didn't get round to it. Big deal. Evans, taking his cue from Lenin's famous remark that "this cook will only cook peppery dishes", portrays Stalin throughout as a comic but sinister butcher in chef's cap and striped apron, wielding a long carving knife, gross, unsavoury and piggy-eyed. (All the various sub-species of bureaucrat are pictured as cartoon Stalins in funny costumes — where the text shrinks from the audacious absurdity of blaming Stalin for the rise of the entire bureaucracy. The cartoons step in and carry the lie). I'm not exactly saying that cartoons should never dehumanise their victims, but I don't think this approach exactly enlarges our understanding of Stalin's personality, of the historical forces that brought him to power, or of the nature of the struggle against such forces. It's the third-rate old agit-prop: don't worry, brothers, we can leave the analysis to the comrade intellectuals — it's all clear as day: The historical struggle of the proletariat is simply a fight against *Nasty Men*.

Evans' cartoons serve another purpose: They punctuate the heavy stuff, to lighten the load. A few of the jokes are quite funny, but these are invariably off the point. Sometimes he's hard-pushed, and so we get a page weirdly devoted to a cartoon of Trotsky playing chess with the psychoanalyst Adler, or to one of Trotsky's "revolutionary limericks" (the nearest thing to a sense of humour yet unearthed) — unpublished, and if the sample on Rasputin is typical, I'm not surprised.

Maybe it suffers in translation...

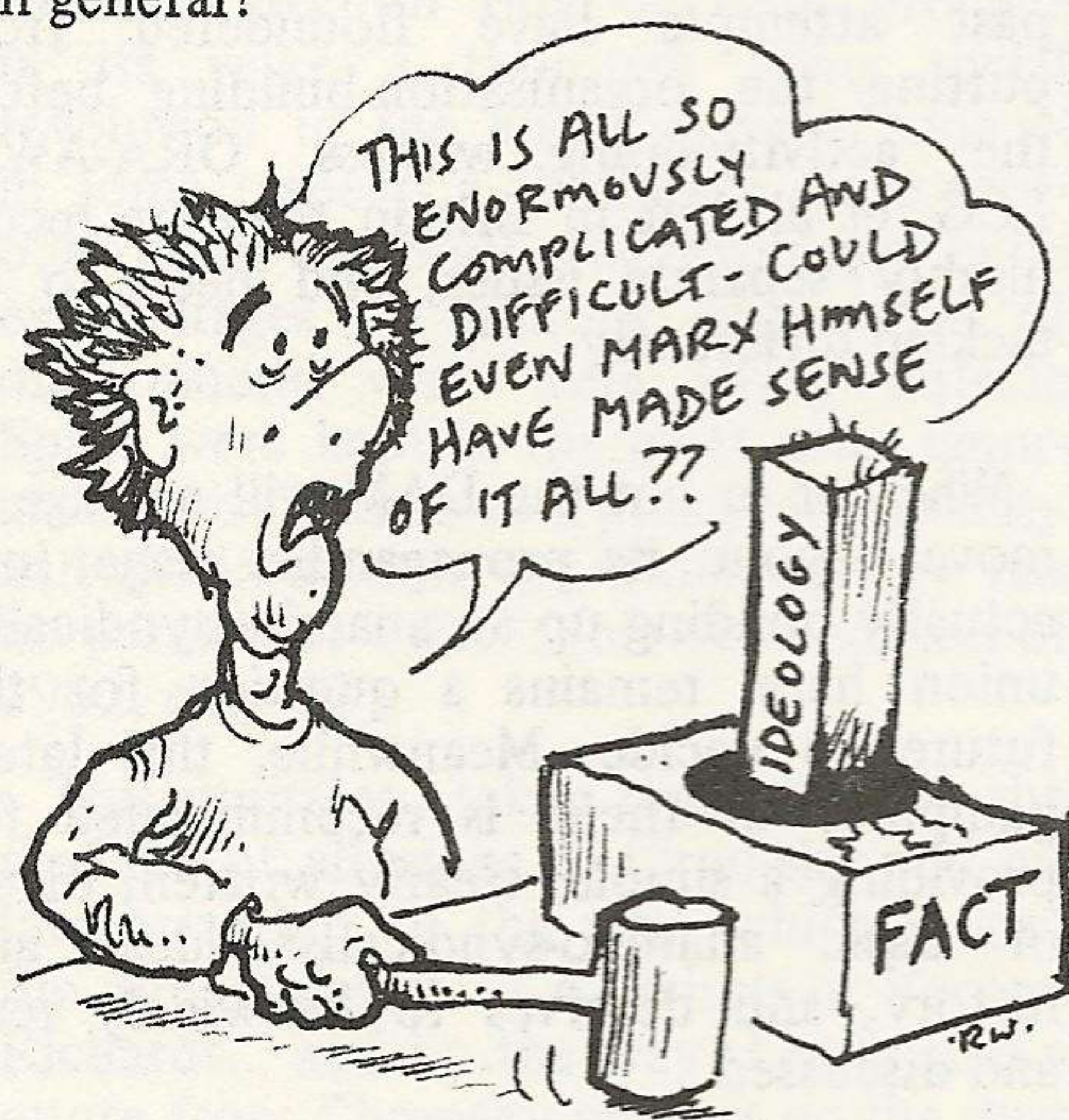
This light-relief technique is lifted from the mass media and shows exactly the same contempt for the reader. As with Rius, it's a tacit admission that this stuff is considered even by its authors to be impossible to take straight. Some cartoons carry forward the narrative or argument, but many are just sweeties for the perservering reader.

Where Evans inserts Rius-style little characters who make interjections, these are invariably dressed in boiler suits and/or headscarves, the usual workerist fantasy proles. Naturally, he doesn't trust real workers to make much of an imaginative leap: The cartoon of a day in the life of a Russian worker c. 1905 shows stereotyped modern British proles bashing out what looks like transistor radios or toasters — something the poor saps can relate to, see...

Not just the choice of content, not just the employment of the cartoons, but the whole notion of the book is profoundly anti-democratic. Cartoons lie when they show Great Men. (Mind you, we anarchists have our personality cults...) Talking of personality cults, back to Rius again, this time (with "friends") on Mao. It's difficult to draw orientals winking, since their eyes are all narrowed up anyway (complaints about racism on a postcard, please...), so the cover shows a standard Mao beam instead. The first three quarters of this book, up to 1949, isn't too bad, as far as it goes. For those vague on Chinese history, it could be informative. Rius has tightened up his graphics style since *Marx* and a number of well-chosen photos and illustrations make this part more of a pocket picture history. Rius doesn't have to struggle with the material here, as he did with Marx's theories, and so we are spared the grumbling cartoon men, though a couple of characters pop up to ask "Still with me?" after only two pages of the Long March. Though perhaps that's justified, considering the mind-boggling complexities of the accompanying map...

The innocent reader could, of course, be forgiven for thinking that Mao founded the entire Chinese revolutionary movement single-handed, but it's the final quarter of the book, post 1949, that is really pretty abysmal, especially after Mao's death. Great play is made of Russian support for the Kuomintang, and an Evans butcher-Stalin is thrown in to show that we should disapprove at this point, but then excuses are offered for the reconstruction of China on the Russian model. Nevertheless, Mao is apparently "uneasy" about this, and so Rius hails the Great Nose-Dive Forward as "a tumultuous mass movement", and the "spontaneous radicalism of... poor peasants". On the next page, however, we read that "the Maoists began to disregard sound economic and Marxist considerations... and the pent-up demands for radical change from the poor pushed them even further and faster than they had intended to go. Soon the country was wracked by

disasters..." So much for spontaneous radicalism... Rius, having no analysis of his own, hops awkwardly from one line to its contradiction, simply following the course of Mao's opportunism, in fact, but without Mao's understanding. The Cultural Revolution is applauded, but Rius is plainly worried about the personality cult and starts tutting about "idealistic youngsters", "abuses, injuries and deaths", and "criticism and destruction". By the time we get to the Gang of Four and Hua Guofeng, he has switched lines so often that he becomes hopelessly confused and finally falls over twitching: "Can anyone understand all these reversals?" "Could even Mao have made sense of it all?" "What about the Gang of Four? Do we really know what they represented?" "The author admits he's as puzzled as everyone else..." Rius has the nerve to project his own confusion onto history and call it a fact. If he can't make sense of it, he's no business writing tinpot comic books on the subject. So much for Marxism as invincible scientific thought; if Marxists can't even make out what their own lot are up to, how on earth can they hope to make any sense of history in general?



"Only one thing is sure", Rius tells us on the last page, and that is the status of Mao himself. (It's back to the personality cult, after all). Events in China are proving him wrong as I write. And in any case Rius can't even make a judgement on what Mao has done, except that he's done a lot. As the cartoons imply, all that we're really left with is the *image* of Mao.

You don't need to be a professional Sinologist to make perfect sense of all this: all these "reversals" are essentially the manoeuvring of bureaucrats in the struggle for power. Whereas the fall of Trotsky is played out to the silence of the masses, the Red Warlords harness popular clamour to their own ends. In Russia, the working classes were *said* to exercise power; in China, they *appeared* to do so — just a more developed disguise of real absolute powerlessness. Everyone knows all about the ambiguous role of real popular discontent in the Cultural Revolution, except Rius, that is. Rius sees ideologies and policies as pure abstract forces with an impetus of their own, failing utterly to understand that they are merely means employed by

personalities and factions for particular political ends.

Rius admits that the Chinese model of selfless socialist Man was maybe a wee bit Utopian; he says nothing of the real daily repression, where ideology begins to really hurt. How would *you* like to live in a society where a much-vaunted collectivity is really not a positive collectivity at all, but simply the total absence of all individual life? No wonder they're all making for Hong Kong...

But then, what else could we expect from books with such heavy ideological axes to grind? They are a little different because they are simplified, but that just means the axes have cut away bigger and bolder chunks of reality. What in particular (apart from aspects I've already touched on) about the use of cartoons? A cartoon selects, condenses and exaggerates relevant features: a drunk has a red nose, wobbly grin, loose tie and so on — not any particular drunken man, but a stereotype "drunk". For all their apparent simplicity, cartoons are products of an enormously complex, subtle (and largely intuitive) process; a slight alteration to a couple of lines, almost impossible to pin down, can transform the effect of the humour, turning a sympathetic portrait into a vicious one. This makes cartoons dangerous — an important method, for instance, of establishing cruel racial stereotypes.

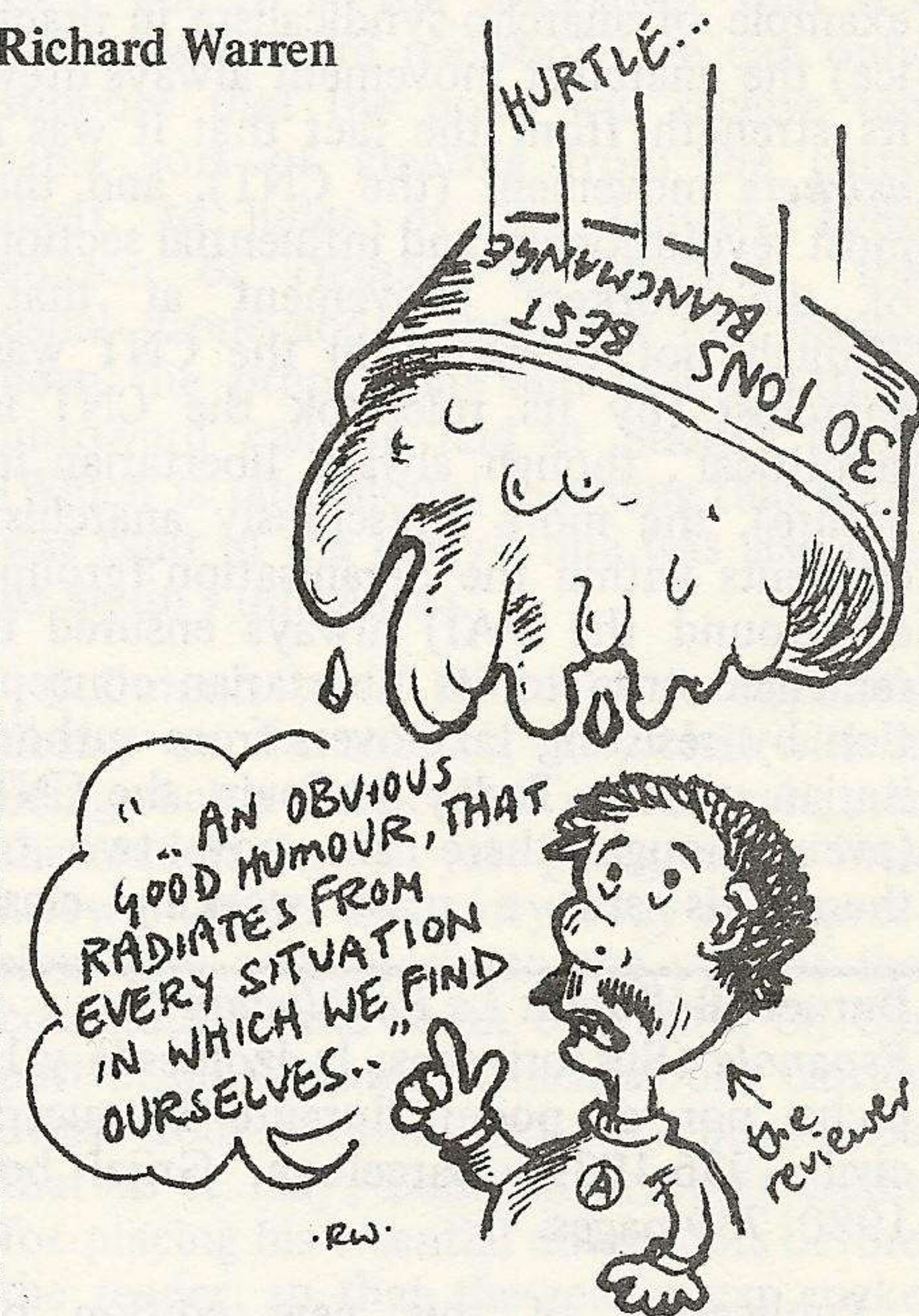
A political cartoon can dispense with the comic element altogether since it uses metaphor and symbols — likewise a process of selection and exaggeration. For instance, the bolshevik-menshevik split as a boxing match between Lenin and Martov, with Plekhanov and Trotsky respectively as seconds, shows us one aspect of the event that may or may not be true, but leaves out the rest. By implication, the cartoon claims for this single aspect the status of a total interpretation. It may be that the cartoonist, in all sincerity, has gone straight to what he sees as the heart of the matter, but the possibilities for cynical distortion are obvious. This treatment is precisely what ideologies make of reality; a fragmented view (right or wrong doesn't matter) is blown up into a totally satisfying explanation of everything. This kinship makes the cartoon an ideal vehicle for ideology. Why else do newspapers carry political cartoons?

This imposes a tremendous responsibility on the cartoonist. Much in these books doesn't measure up too well. Whether it's the outright lie (winking must have been the last thing that came easily to Lenin, but it disposes us favourably towards the man and therefore to his ideas) or the partial truth that by dint of repetition becomes total untruth (the butcher-Stalin), it's no better than the club-wielding union thugs and jackbooted labour militants dear to the hearts of certain Fleet Street hacks. (The question of a cartoonists' skill is something else — you can admire Gillray without liking his

politics. But in essence a cartoon is no better than the politics of the cartoonist). We tend to think of cartoons as a bit of harmless fun, but in fact they are about the last traditional art form with any political punch, socialist theatre hi-jinks notwithstanding. Did you notice the bronhaha a couple of years back when elements of the twitching decomposed art avant-garde transformed themselves for a fortnight into a twitching decomposed leftist vanguard? Nor did anyone else not intimately connected with the tiny snob-world of Modern Art. But the cartoon will survive, all the more dangerous because it seems so harmless.

We have to fight to claim it. This is where I start sounding vague and pompous, In the teeth of these lying grins our humour has to be humane, has to serve nothing and spare nothing. Like those Phil Ruff one-liners in *Black Flag*, it has to be an obvious good humour, that radiates from every situation in which we find ourselves — not calculated for effect, but the laughter at the heart of things. Those that think such laughter is juvenile and has nothing to do with politics have missed the point. Anything less blasphemes the human spirit.

Richard Warren



Black Flag — Organ of the *Anarchist Black Cross*. Produced as a fortnightly news bulletin & a quarterly journal.
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£17 overseas (airmail)
C/O Box ABC
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Direct Action — Bulletin of the *Direct Action Movement* (British Section of the *International Workers Association* — anarcho-syndicalist International). Maintains a network of local groups.
Subs: UK & Ireland £2/ Overseas £2.50
DAM-IWA, 164/166 Corn Exchange Buildings, Manchester M4 3BN.

Anarcho-Syndicalism: History and Action (DAM, 30p)

The ideas of anarcho-syndicalism (anarchism applied to the workers' movement) invariably bring forth either slavish adoration or churlish dismissal from within the ranks of the anarchist movement today — both responses doing an equal injustice to a subject of critical importance in the battle for a free society. A much more objective and thought-out attempt to apply the *essence* of anarchism to the class struggle, without getting bogged down in arguments over the *forms* it should take, is long overdue.

Traditionally, the choice has been posed as being between a loose network of workers' councils which (it is hoped) arise more or less 'spontaneously' during times of struggle ("Councilism", or "Council Communism"), and a more premeditated variation of that, where the workers' councils are organised, before the struggle escalates, into a permanent (union) structure ("Anarcho-Syndicalism"). But in essence, there is very little to distinguish the one from the other when it comes down to principles translated into practice. In Spain (the best living example of anarcho-syndicalism in practice) the anarchist movement always drew its strength from the fact that it was a *workers* movement (the CNT), and the most revolutionary and influential section of the workers' movement at that! Though not everyone in the CNT was anarchist (by its rulebook the CNT is 'apolitical', though always libertarian in nature), the more consciously anarchist elements within the organisation (grouped around the FAI) always ensured it remained true to its libertarian conception by resisting take-overs from authoritarian parties. Today in Spain, the CNT (even though there are now two of them!) is still a mass working class



organisation, though there now exists, also, an anarchist movement probably of equal size *outside* the CNT. In Britain we are not in that happy situation, and have the job of having to start virtually from scratch.

Encouraged by the re-emergence of the CNT in Spain during the late 1970's, "a number of class struggle anarchists (including members of the Syndicalist Workers Federation) who felt it was time to leave behind the irrelevant, disorganised nature of most of the British anarchist movement and go on to create a national working class anarchist organisation", came together in March 1979 to form the Direct Action Movement (DAM). Since then DAM has established a network of local groups and become accepted as the British section of the AIT (the anarcho-syndicalist International). Its activities have concentrated mainly on producing anarcho-syndicalist propaganda material (through its national bulletin, *Direct Action*, and a collection of interesting regionally based papers and pamphlets) which have enjoyed a wide circulation — although as this pamphlet freely admits, "In fact unemployed workers are prop-

ortionally the largest group within the organisation", and DAM has yet to make any real impact on the industrial scene (though this is a problem that faces the whole of the libertarian movement, and not just DAM).

Anarcho-Syndicalism: History and Action mentions, but fails to really tackle properly, the problem of why "Anarcho-Syndicalism has a small following and little influence in this country...", beyond some brief references to the historical influences, on its sharp decline as a movement, of the first World War and the triumph of Bolshevik state socialism in Russia. Rather unfairly, it dismisses any objections to whether it is a practical proposition for us to emulate the Spanish experience, and form a 'British CNT', as being the product of "the uncommitted reader or cynic". To the DAM's credit, they are at least amongst the few people who are trying seriously to go beyond the "little cliques crying in the wind" that passes for an 'anarchist movement'. But perhaps they should stop confusing the problem of re-organising the anarchists with organising the workers. Both are vital and need doing, though past attempts have floundered from putting the organisation-building before the activity-doing...witness ORA-AWA-LCG, et al. but in Britain they are recognisably separate issues, and need to be tackled differently.

Whether or not the DAM will manage to move beyond its propagandist stage, into actually building up an anarcho-syndicalist union here, remains a question for the future to decide. Meanwhile, this latest pamphlet of theirs is recommended for providing a simple, clearly written, digest of basic anarcho-syndicalist ideas and history, and deserves to be widely read and discussed.

Jack McArdle

Burnett Bolloten: *La Revolucion*

Espanola (Sus orígenes, la izquierda y la lucha por el poder durante la guerra civil 1936-1939) Barcelona, Grijalbo, 1980, 739 pages.

Publication of this new edition of Bolloten's work constitutes a crucial contribution to our knowledge of the theme, on account of the author's serious scholarship and extraordinary erudition. Before venturing an opinion he names and places his sources in context. This approach has enabled him to pierce the veil of communist propaganda more tellingly than anyone else and to ferret out startling truths about the libertarian movement. Bolloten's method may be summed up as first familiarising oneself with one's subject and every fact thereof (including the negative) and only then weighing all the evidence in the balance. Perhaps because I find this methodology personally appealing and because I have employed it myself, I am tempted to regard Bolloten's work as a sort of "fellow traveller" with the libertarian viewpoint.

Now that I read the book in its entirety and not just for its references to the collectivisations, I see it in a quite different light and appreciate that its view has altered somewhat. As Bolloten himself warns in his preface... "Readers of *The Grand Camouflage* (the earliest version of the book) in its English, Spanish or Mexican editions, will find in the present vastly expanded volume a wealth of new materials". This same caution is to be found in the 1977 editions of the book in the United States and France.

To discover the differences, one has to look to editions of the book which saw the light before 1962. This shows that Bolloten has since assimilated new material in several chapters which have taken on a much expanded relevance... chapters like 'The Brewing Upheaval', 'The Communists Strive for Hegemony', 'The Communists Pilot the Cabinet', 'The Anarcho-Syndicalists enter the Government', 'Balancing the Class Forces', 'The Communists and the Popular Army' or 'Largo Caballero Hits Back'. I note also that

there are wholly new chapters such as 'Catalonia: Revolution and Counter-Revolution' or 'Barcelona: The May Events' a new epilogue, and an index of names. Place the 1980 Grijalbo edition under review alongside the US edition (*The Spanish Revolution*. The left and the struggle for power during the civil war, Chapel Hill, 1979, 664 pages) or the French one (*La Revolution espagnole: la gauche et la lutte pour le pouvoir*, Paris, Ruedo Iberico, 1977, 564 pages) and one finds that it is basically the same text except that some points are more thoroughly dealt with. Two pages are devoted to Camilo Berneri. Formerly Berneri did not even receive a mention. This time too, Bolloten drops the reference to Sam Dolgoff's book (mentioned on page 481 of the Chapel Hill US edition) which is one of the few texts on collectives available in English. But he retains the paragraphs on the contacts between the USSR and Germany in 1937, which are not to be found in the French edition (See the Grijalbo edition pp 172-175).



Camillo Berneri

Indeed, the only page from the earlier editions of the book which is not included in the Grijalbo edition is the one which I feel is of the greatest importance, with its magnificent opening:

"Although the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in July of 1936 brought in its wake a thorough going social revolution in the anti-Francoist zone — in some respects a revolution more profound than the Bolshevik revolution in its early stages — millions of persons of discernment who were living outside Spain were kept in the most utter ignorance of it, thanks to a policy of duplicity and dissimulation for which history has no parallel to offer". (Mexican edition of 1962, page 17).

This omission, taken together with the absence of allusions to Chomsky and his interpretation of the war (which is also the interpretation of A. Peirats or Vernon Richards... and by the way, I note that a quote from Chomsky appears on the dust cover of the Chapel Hill edition of Bolloten's book) and the long quotations from Cesar Lorenzo (speaking as Prieto's son) depicting anarchism as utopianism starkly contrasted with the practicable approach of participating in government, leads one to the conclusion that this present edition singles out the anarchists and communists as targets for criticisms.

Or, to put it another way: Bolloten has switched his sights away from what appeared (up to 1962) to have been his chief target... the "thorough going social revolution" which was camouflaged by a "policy of duplicity and dissimulation for which history has no parallel to offer", and cheerfully unfolds the history of the civil war instead, with especial emphasis on the communists.

Now, briefly, to go through Bolloten's book in this edition, I must say I heartily endorse his emphasis on the importance of hunger and poverty as driving forces. But it seems to me he is mistaken in taking seriously the PSOE in 1934 and also in utterly ignoring (in his text at least) the attempts to install libertarian

communism in 1932 and 1933. I must also part company from Bolloten when he shows this tendency to present the libertarians as some sort of monolith; his earliest reference to the CNT (p 52) is altogether too sanguine and completely ignores the phenomenon of 'trientismo' and the manipulations which it brought in its wake. By chapter two such shortcomings are behind us and we are into the text proper. Pages 101 to 139 deal with the collectivisations (with only a very few alterations since 1962); he is quite sympathetic, but to dwell to the extent he does upon the superficial comments of a H.E. Kaminsky when plenty of collectivists' accounts are now to hand, is quite illogical, as is the bit about... "puritanism... one of the characteristics of the libertarian movement..." (p 126). One has only to spend a few days in any country with a communist regime to run across a puritanism harnessed along with sectarianism, which is the cornerstone of the Party's propaganda. And it seems to me that Bolloten would have done better to stress benevolent assistance as a characteristic a propos of the shipments of foodstuffs and goods, or on their cultural activities, with the schools and libraries, and — above all — the espousal of retirement and free medical services. These are things which sit uncomfortably with Bolloten's insistence upon the "forcible" nature of collectivisations. There were certain instances of imposition... true, but the very fact that the collectives survived the "liberation" by the communists' army units is obviously evidence, strong evidence to the contrary.

And Bolloten's contention (p 640) that the CP ceased its attacks upon the collectives in order to woo the CNT over to ousting Indalecio Prieto, does not convince me. The change in tactics may have been ordered by Moscow since the USSR was coming to an arrangement with Germany at the time, or it may have been because of the CP's own grassroots members were beginning to protest (see p 317, and also Ronald Fraser's book *Blood of Spain*; Allen Lane, 1979).

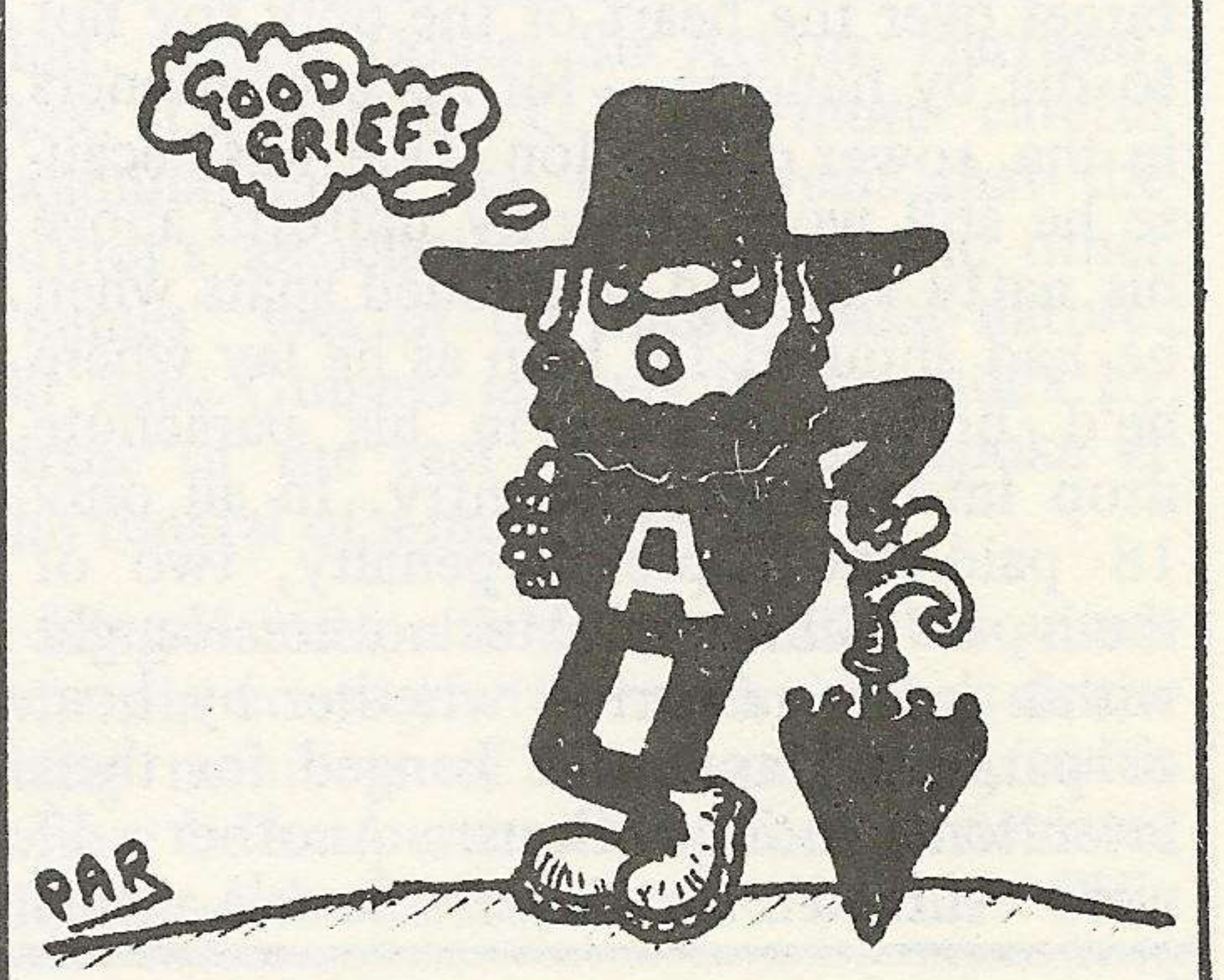
Bolloten has a formidable mastery of his data, but he cannot see beyond the hierarchical set-up; he speaks of government policy and the strength of the committees but leaves the to one side; he speaks of the military side of the war, the militias and the Soviet advisors and delivers a negative judgement upon improvised efforts. An exception is his chapter on the Iron Column (on which he has more to say than Peirats; indeed the chapter is a fine and forceful piece of testimony) but Bolloten fails to discuss people's war, Makhno's ideas, or the much felt need for guerrilla tactics. Instead Bolloten prefers to grapple with his anarchists by means of quotations from Bakunin or Malatesta or Horacio Prieto, but obedience to their recommendations would have made nonsense

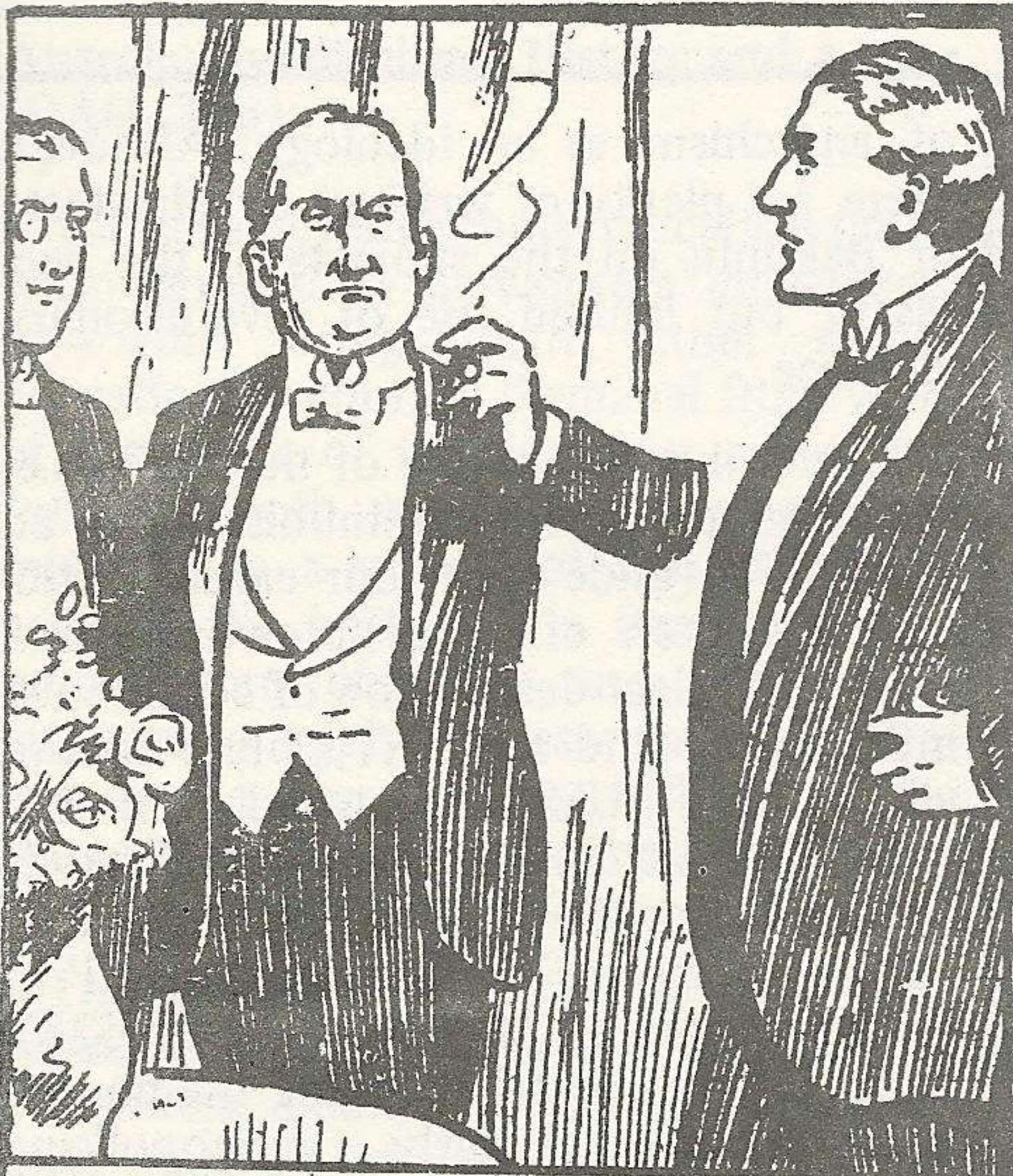
of anarchism as an ideology. Although there are plenty of writings by Malatesta or Bakunin on the subjects of the necessary but limited use of revolutionary violence.

Concerning the kernle of the book, i.e. the conduct of the communist party in the USSR (aside from our earlier criticism), Bolloten offers a noteworthy and extremely clear description of communist infiltration. And the CNT's blind egoism when the POUM was ousted from the Generalitat at the end of 1966 still stands out as deplorable. The POUM, of course was to repay the 'Friends of Durruti' in the same coin in May 1937 (see p 538). While all that was happening the communists were quietly monopolising command of the army; they failed to achieve 100% success in this, but they did manage to hold up various initiatives like the famous Largo Caballero offensive against Extremadura (see pages 382, 422, 604). Bolloten's use of Russian sources is highly significant. And the glib review of the book in *El Pais* (of 31 August 1980) by Ludolfo Paramio is typical. The only argument Paramio can advance on the CP's behalf is the allegation that it's policy was more realistic! One can only suppose that the book will receive the same sort of greeting from the Party itself, to judge by the January 1980 edition of *Tiempos de Historia...* the usual drone about the Party line having been the proper one and how anything untoward can be laid at Stalin's door. (Which is tantamount to saying that what was right in the Party's line was also due to Stalin's influence).

Bolloten's work is crucial to anyone's library on the subject, but, what with it being such a fat book, I wonder whether the readers are not just going to dip into a few chapters and carry away an impression of a conspiracy on the part of the communists and weak confusion on the part of all the others, such as one carries away from Thomas Jackson's books. Be that as it may, Bolloten deserves credit for placing his essential documents before the reader, so that the reader can make up his or her own mind... and that is a most un-academic thing to do.

Frank Mintz





MI5 British Security Operations 1909-1945. Nigel West (Granada, £1.95)

Certainly this is a book future spy-writers will ignore at their peril, past ones study with enlightenment, some greet with snorts of rebuttal as indeed began to happen soon after publication. The author's laborious delving and tending has produced a very readable history of the UK spy catchers and manipulators in the period covered. Readers will beware and judge its total veracity from my few later remarks. Whilst separate States exist their myrmidons of high degree will continue to bicker and some no doubt eventually order theirs of lesser degree to tear at the throats of the others. As in Art so in War: any Means justifies the End. So torture, spies, any slimy method is supposed to be correct, and indeed is so if mass murder is thereby curtailed. It appears that MI5 was more successful than its opposite numbers of the Abwehr and KGB.

The ramifications of MI5 are explained in an eight page 'family tree'. Chapters cover specific operations against the CPGB, the British fascists, spies, double agents, etc. The first war gets scant space although eleven spies then ended on the scaffold because for five years prior to hostilities the Kaiser's men had operated from a scruffy barber shop near Kings Cross railway station — all unaware that their mail was being opened, studied, themselves tailed!

Illustrations include photos of operators, captives in peace and war, documents, even the lint that served as target over the heart of the only spy not to die by hanging — for his executioners in the Tower of London. That was because he still wore his army uniform above his natty suit and outmoded spats when he had shouted for help as he lay where he'd broken his leg in his parachute drop into the Fen country. In all only 18 paid the supreme penalty, two of them in Gibraltar. Most were caught within hours of arrival whether by boat or parachute and were hanged for their intentions not actions. Another 47 were 'turned' to act as double-agents

in various ways, many to send back messages to confuse as with incorrect troop movements prior to the D Day Normandy landings. Some heroes became Nazi spies only so that they could 'turn' immediately they landed in the UK. Two such came ashore on the Moray coast to awaken a sleeping fisherman with revolver butt hammering on his door and demands for directions to the nearest military post. Later on down in the London Scotland Yard canteen an ultra patriotic girl, aware of the incorrect gossip circulating, refused to serve them much needed refreshment even though they were accompanied by their equally thirsty interrogators!

Pre-war MI5 activities included the dramatic Arcos Raid which made headlines in the late twenties for some 150 police one afternoon charged into the City offices of a Russian Trade Delegation and Arcos import company. (Much to the disgust of the *Daily Mail* or *Express*, I forget which, the latter had been selling cheap dairy foods here so headlines had appeared: "Flies found in Russian butter!") MI5 found no flies but caused much trouble by taking four days to study, photo or remove documents, to smash in cellar doors behind which defenders were burning sensitive papers. It helped to end diplomatic relations. Opportunity to raid had been caused by the inept Wilfred Macartney who had boasted to a fellow clerk from whom he wanted information that he was a Russian agent. The clerk promptly blabbed and was ordered by MI5 to string him along. A secret Manual was provided, Macartney seen to pass that to a Russian — hence the Raid in hope its 'discovery' would justify all. It wasn't, so the spy was watched for some months before finding himself at the Old Bailey where he got ten years. Later he wrote *Walls Have Mouths* and became the first CO of the British Section of the International Brigade in Spain.

Apparently the Communist Party HQ in King Street, Covent Garden had its phone monitored from its beginning in the twenties whilst top members were card-indexed. Doubtless subsidiary organisations got similar treatment. Secret members seem to have escaped attention even though spies insinuated themselves. The CP was always well aware of that possibility for as well as 'Trotskyist' the many drop-outs or expelled over the years were always labelled 'Police Spy' normally incorrectly! One young girl called Olga Gray escaped discovery for seven years. Captivating activist Percy Glading she eventually graduated into a photographer of 'borrowed' armament blue-prints. Her old 'friends' were much shocked when she appeared against them as chief prosecution witness at the Old Bailey in 1938. Another MI5 spy was Joan Millar who penetrated the British Fascists and helped to get her erstwhile 'friend' Anna Wolkoff a ten year sentence. Anna's heart had been imbued with hatred of the Bolsheviks since childhood and worked in her White Russian parents' emigre

cafe in a Kensington alley. She had passed records stolen from the American to the Italian Embassy.

In this long study by an author I understand is too young to have experienced any of the times considered it would be perhaps surprising to find no errors of fact or opinion. Considering that most of his evidence is 'hearsay' and would not be admitted in a court even though he has seen some records, etc. I can only say he has done well, but not well enough. Much is left in the air. He says all the 400 odd seamen discharged from the RN after Invergordon were "usefully card-indexed" by MI5 — but no more. Did he see them at all? Some of them? What entries did they hold? He alleges that Tom Driberg (the well known journalist and MP first as Independent and then for Labour) was MI5 Agent M8, that he'd joined the CP on MI5 instructions, that the now exposed Blunt had in 1941 exposed Driberg as a spy to the KGB, that they'd told Harry Pollitt who then sent for Driberg to confront and expel him. All very plausible and Tom Driberg is dead! But Tom wrote his autobiography and told of being an active communist since joining the party as a Brighton schoolboy; that he never knew why he had been expelled in 1941, that not Pollitt but a Fleet Street worker had been ordered to tell him he was expelled. Moreover, he afterwards found no difficulty in getting Moscow visas and in 1956 actually had two long talks with Khrushchov in the Kremlin, alone except for an interpreter. His first visa had been to allow him to interview the defector Burgess. Now whatever Pollitt's reason for not wanting Tom in 'his' CPGB any longer isn't important, probably it was only because of some anti-Stalin remark or just that he was a bit too bourgeois and mixing with too many top people. Readers may judge for themselves whether the KGB would have granted a known MI5 Agent visas to meet a prize defector and twice allow him to be alone with the top man of the USSR!

An index in a book like this is important. This one goes to 25 pages. Under Driberg is only "see M8" and there it is incomplete. I looked up "Springhall" — absent! Yet there ought to have been three ref's, particularly for his trial when he got seven years for passing helpful information to the USSR when they were British allies in the Hitler war. That sentence was later reduced to four years as West apparently never discovered. There are other stupidities in the index as well as the book itself but the publishers otherwise may be pleased with their production and the author of quite a good adventure story. After all, has any wide ranging history book, whether Soviet or British or whatever, ever stood the test of detailed examination!

Barry Duncan

And Nothing But The Truth. An Autobiography. — Alan King-Hamilton (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, £12.50)

Alan King-Hamilton will be remembered by readers of *Anarchy* as the judge who presided over the *Persons Unknown* trial at the Old Bailey in 1979. That was his last case and the epitaph to what *The Times* described as "an undistinguished judicial career which has now, mercifully, ended." Since going into retirement King-Hamilton has produced this autobiography which the blurb claims to be an assessment of his career and "a behind-the-scenes look at life in Chambers, at the Old Bailey and the Middle Temple".

Although classical allusions and quotations from Shakespeare appear in the Preface, the remainder of the book is rather less pretentious in its literary style. The effort of producing early sentences like "sterr(ing) between the Scylla of excessive modesty... and the Charybdis of conceit" clearly proved too much for the ancient judge for on page two we find a more characteristic and less flowery description of King-Hamilton's entry into the world:

"I was born on 9 December 1904, in London, in West Hampstead. My father (who, incidentally, was a founder member of the Automobile Association in 1905 and remained on the Committee from then until 1957 when he became one of the two vice-presidents, and was the sole surviving founder when he died in May 1959) was a solicitor with a small family practice in Lincoln's Inn Fields."

From this paragraph we glean two things about the book: its unremitting banality and the author's obsession for measuring a person's worth by reference to the number of clubs he belongs to or the array of letters after his name.

The following passage sets the intellectual tone:

"My earliest childhood recollection is of being in my pram — and I could point to the exact spot to within a few feet — on a hot day in, it must have been, the summer of 1905 when I was about six or seven months old. The hood of the pram was down but a summer shade or awning was up. All round was a fringe. I recall my nanny lifting the fringe up and playing "Bo-Peep" with me to my huge delight."

Few of us can claim that our first childhood memory exceeded King-Hamilton's in-depth but then few of us bother to commit it to print.

We learn little of the influences King-Hamilton must have encountered in his youth from the four-page chapter *Early Years*. His father was a middle class Jew, a solicitor and, as we have seen, a founder member of the AA. Apart from one additional piece of information, that he read *The Times*, we get nothing more and King-Hamilton senior remains a cipher. Of his mother there is not a single ref-

erence. This could be simple over-sight but for the fact that the allusions to friends and colleagues reveal that the author is incapable of anything remotely resembling a psychological profile or a penetrating insight. The people he encounters are summed up in the only way he knows how. Take the following examples: "My vice-president was Selwyn Lloyd (who became Foreign Secretary, Chancellor of



the Exchequer, and the Speaker of the House of Commons)." Sir Richard Jackson (a friend of King-Hamilton's), CBE "...A former heavy-weight boxing Blue at Cambridge... (appointed to) the staff of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and later Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard, head of the CID and President of Interpol." Assessing people by the length of their CV's seems to be the technique.

Of his wife he has this to say: "Rosalind, only daughter of Dr and Mrs Ellis of Hampstead." And that's all. The paragraph dealing with his courtship and marriage to Rosalind reveals King-Hamilton to be a true romantic. After deciding that Rosalind is the girl for him, he consults with her mother and asks her how much Rosalind would need for housekeeping. Satisfied that he can afford her, the author takes his courage in both hands and marries. Looking back, he says, "I marvel at our courage." Courage was apparently required because the newly-weds had to make do with £600 a year (it was 1935), out of which they had to find £3 a week for housekeeping which included the wages of a resident domestic servant.

The courage displayed by King-Hamilton in 1935 evaporated in the summer of 1939 when he fled with his family to Bournemouth to avoid being caught in a lightning German air raid on London. Many families did, of course, leave London during the Blitz but few equalled King-Hamilton's marvellous exhibition of backbone by fleeing the capital before war had been declared.

King-Hamilton's courage had failed him earlier, as he admits, when in 1926 he was delegated to go and harangue striking miners in an effort to get them back to work. Instead, he joined his fellow students as strike-breakers, an experience he found "mildly exciting."

In dealing with the General Strike he shows his usual preference for trivia. The Strike he describes in 23 lines without touching on any of the issues involved. Of greater importance to King-Hamilton, apparently, was the "juicy" divorce in which Professor Haldane was implicated and the wearisome double entendre involved in the Sex Viri, the six dons who acted as moral guardians at the university (38 lines).

The chapters in which King-Hamilton describes his early career, apart from being trivial, are full of snobbery and name-dropping. There is a complete lack of reference to anything outside the privileged world of Cambridge and the Bar. Only two political events merit inclusion: the General Strike because of his activities and the abdication of Edward VIII, which gets in only because King-Hamilton's leader, Walter Monckton, "was a very close friend of the King."

Famous names abound. In the Index we find: Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur; Harrison, Rex; Chesterton, G.K. A more careful examination of the text reveals that the author's association with these and other "names" was of the most casual nature. Sir Alec Guinness appears in the Index by virtue of the fact that he once spoke at the funeral of a mutual friend.

King-Hamilton is at his most obsequious when in contact with royalty. When describing members of the royal family with whom he has personally spoken he deviates slightly from his usual treatment. No CV's

here. Instead the Queen has, according to the author, "*a wonderful capacity for putting one at one's ease and I was captivated by her engaging charm and personality.*" What else?

The sole value of the book lies in the unconscious insights it affords us into the mind of a judge. From a narrow background, he progressed through a cloistered world. There is no hint that at any time did he scrutinize the values and opinions of his privileged milieu. There is no attempt at self-critical analysis; rather the book is self-congratulatory throughout. He laughs loudly at his own jokes (pp9, 10, 15 and 16) and people are frequently complimenting him (pp18, 125, 156/7, 181 and 218). He likes to portray himself as reluctantly pushed forward by others. People seek him out, as when, in 1938, he was "*persuaded to stand for election to the Finchley Borough Council.*" Again when he was appointed a judge he argued that he could not possibly cope but was persuaded, and "*so had to try it.*"

There is something suspicious about all this. Name-dropping on this scale and the evident anxiety to recall compliments suggest a sense of social and intellectual inferiority. This perhaps stems from his inevitable, though undisclosed, encounters with anti-semiticism at the Bar, and from

the "*taint*" of coming from a family of solicitors. It may also arise from his own rather mediocre CV: a poor academic record, an indifferent practice as a barrister, never in the top flight as a judge.

These failures he never faces up to. Instead, he excuses them with "*I could have, had I really tried.*" He took a third at Cambridge but could have done better had he not been too busy sampling the more attractive things university had to offer. Similarly he would have been awarded a "*half-Blue*" in the fencing team had not "*Oxford fielded two left-handed fencers (against whom I was never much good).*" He could have been called to the Bar earlier "*but I had to purge myself of the taint of having been to a solicitor's office.*"

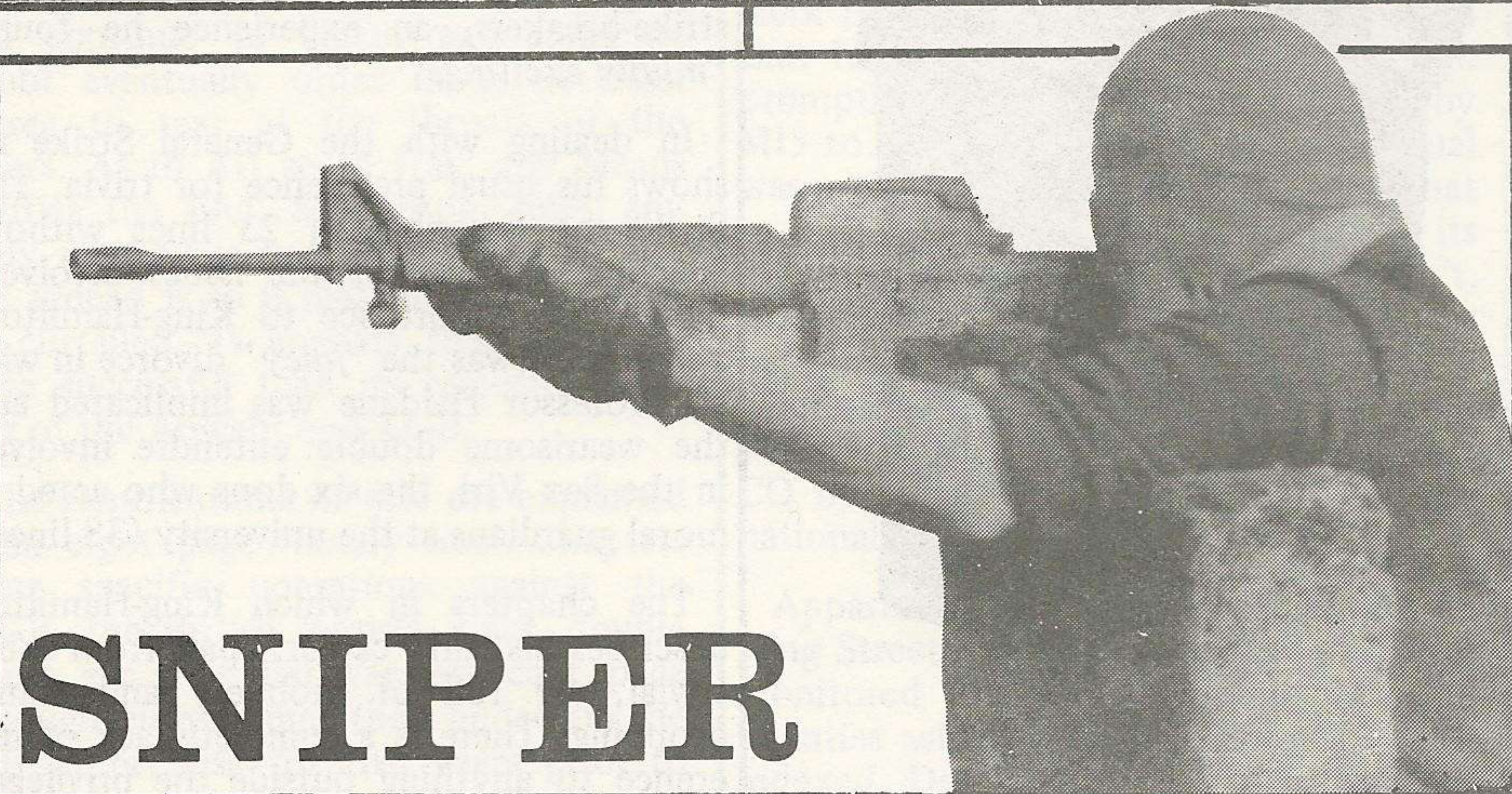
Excuses are coupled with a touchiness about gaffs. These he tries hard to cover up. His motion at Cambridge "*That This House Disapproves of Woman*", he explains, was never intended seriously and he was "*amazed*" it attracted such controversy. It never occurs to him to admit mistakes. The touchiness and defensiveness suggest the author is a man keenly sensitive to rebuke, a man doing his utmost to win the approbation of his contemporaries. Nowhere is this more evident than when dealing with Court of Appeal rulings. When the high courts agree with him he cites

them with pride. When they disagree he reacts defensively. I could count only three occasions when he admits he is wrong. Two of these admissions come after the Court of Appeal has criticized him, and the other when he regretted allowing *Gay News* to bring Bernard Levin and Margaret Drabble as witnesses of character for the paper.

Descriptions of some of the more famous trials over which he presided are to be found in chapters ten to 17. These include the *Gay News* Blasphemy Case (during which he felt guided by "*some superhuman inspiration*"), the trial of Peter Hain for theft, and the *Persons Unknown* Case. His observations are of little interest, though he does include his own explanation of why the *Persons Unknown* Case did not constitute a political trial. He had directed the jury at the outset that it was not political — therefore it was not political. Simple. It is the same kind of logic that prompted another of his observations (this one is not included): "*Anarchism is not political. There is no party called the 'Anarchist Party'. Therefore Anarchism is not political.*"

Behind the simple logic, it would seem, is a simple mind, and the book does little to contradict such a conclusion.

Ronan Bennett



"Socialist Republics"

An interesting phenomenon arising from the bankruptcy of liberal reformism in Britain is the growth of the so-called 'socialist republics' (these have arisen with the capture of local labour parties by, mainly, petit-bourgeois leftist elements armed with sociological degrees, and their subsequent election into local government in 'safe' labour areas). Islington (in north London) and Sheffield spring to mind immediately, but numerous Labour-held boroughs seem to be following the same line.

The salient point of their political strategy is the decision to all but give up trying to convince the working class of the value of their package deal of leftist panacea's, and to build a power base on the support (or, more accurately, coercion) of political and ethnic minorities.

This has resulted in large financial grants to organised minority groups, which, of course, the gutter press seize on with glee, and use to fan the flames of resentment against black workers within the white working class.

True or false, there are many working class people in Islington, for example, who believe that they will not be rehoused or employed by the council unless they are black or homosexual. The fact that the unorganised black working class receive as little benefit from this corruption is lost on people whose only source of information is either the Tory press or the "socialist republic's" own propaganda rags which openly boast of their corrupt practices (though that is not their description).

This is not an argument against separate organisation by political or ethnic

minorities but a warning that council-funded groups will not remain independent. Like all patrons, these "socialist republics" will expect, and have the financial muscle to insist on an influence, albeit subtle, on the form of the organisational structure.

One example of this manipulation, is an insistence (in funded groups) on a formal hierarchy i.e. Secretary, Treasurer, etc. This single example makes the task of dealing with a group that much simpler, so that, instead of 30 (or whatever) angry people, it becomes necessary only to mollify two or three individuals with bribes (well-paid community jobs) or merely flatterng references to 'community leaders'. These individuals then have a vested interest in the careers of their benefactors. This is not a particularly new method of stifling dissent but it is something that these so-called "socialist republics" have perfected, indeed improved upon, by creating groups of 'community leaders' whose access to previously closed communities helps to 'educate' future voting-fodder as to the 'benefits' to the community of their socialist administrators.

These people are planning to continue their useless careers on the backs of the minority groups. They are not the harmless lunatics many comrades seem to believe, but like the social workers they sprang from, they exacerbate divisions in order to perpetuate their privileged existence. They are dangerous.

Not Angry, just plain Nasty!

Remember the theft of pistols and a machine gun from Oakington Barracks in December 1981, which the media and police tried to blame on the Angry Brigade? No paper mentioned the fact that *Column 88* and *Heil Hitler* slogans had been taped on the access road to the Barracks on a number of occasions prior to the robbery. There have been five other ACF and Barrack arms robberies in the area in the past. Will all that iron-mongery go on gathering dust under the beds of Adolf's later-day Supermen for much longer? A few trigger-fingers must be starting to itch...

Billion-Dollar Anarchist

A few of you Len Deighton fans out there may have missed the *Guardian's* interview with him recently, on the occasion of his return to spy fiction (with *Berlin Game*, Hutchinson, £8.95) after a seven year break devoted to churning out war stories (both fiction and fact). The Deighton recipe for success — which began with *The Ipcress File* in 1962 — relies heavily on careful research ("the carrot that keeps him running").



"His best contacts are in the German memorabilia market. They provided an entree to the 90th birthday party of a top SS general and enabled him to reach a conclusion about the Hitler Diaries episode. 'I know some of those people. I would have been astounded if there had been any truth in it.'"

But not all of the author's political entress have been to Nazi birthday parties:

"Deighton says he has been through the entire political spectrum. As an RAF photographer he attended anarchist meetings in Soho. He discovered recently that he was investigated by the security services while studying at the Royal College of Art. 'I'm still an anarchist, but a right-wing anarchist. I am sort of anti-statist. I am very keen

on a society in which people don't have to have political attitudes if they don't want to.'"

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, but at least we know now where Deighton drew his inspiration for the delightful satire of an anarchist vegetarian restaurant in *Spy Story* (1975.)

Only Fools and Horses...

If we seem to concentrate overmuch in this column on the subject of informers we can only plead that there is a lot of it about... For some "comrades" the malady is deliberate; others become the tools of the police despite themselves. In all cases the end result is the same: more people in prison who should not be there (and *would not* be there if certain mouths stayed shut!).

The end of the recent 'Welsh' conspiracy trial in Cardiff offers some hard lessons which *must* be learnt. In many respects the outcome was a carbon-copy of the *Persons Unknown* case: four defendants acquitted, one on the run after jumping bail, and another sentenced to nine years after making signed statements to the police.

The comparison has substance. The person who received the nine years (for possession of detonators, and obtaining a false birth certificate and passport) was Dafydd "Taff" Ladd, who previously jumped bail during the *Persons Unknown* case. Ladd remained out of sight for nearly two years, before suddenly deciding to surrender to the police. All outstanding charges from the *Persons Unknown* case were mysteriously dropped; and instead he was charged with co-conspiracy in the 'Welsh' case (pertaining to a series of bombings claimed by the *Workers Army of the Welsh Republic*). Amongst those arrested at the same time was Jenny Smith, Ladd's girlfriend.

The brief facts of what followed are these:

- (1) Ladd offered the police a deal in exchange for them granting Jenny Smith bail.
- (2) He made and signed two written statements to the police *after* being expressly advised *not* to by his solicitor.
- (3) He led the police to a cache of detonators hidden in Wales, the existence of which they were previously oblivious to.
- (4) John Jenkins (who received two years for harbouring Ladd whilst on the run) and Brian Rees (who got three years for possession of the same detonators that Ladd had led the police to) were both arrested *after* Ladd was taken into custody.
- (5) Conspiracy charges against Ladd were dropped and he changed his plea to 'guilty' on the secondary

charges of possession, etc., after the trial began. One result of this was that his two signed statements to the police did not then have to be introduced as evidence in court.

Nine years may seem harsh on the charges to anyone not familiar to the working of the courts in political trials. But Ladd was no 'first offender'. He had already served a five year sentence for political bombings during the 70's, and later skipped bail during the *Persons Unknown* case (in which the prosecution painted him in a damning light, and the informer Stuart Carr — who also got nine years for his efforts, and was himself introduced into anarchist circles by Ladd! — made him out to be a leading figure in the alleged "conspiracy"). A 20 year sentence would not have come as a surprise: witness countless IRA trials of a similar nature with *less* evidence! And the 25 year sentence given to the 'un-political' David Martin recently for possession of arms and 'GBH'...

We cannot yet establish the precise contents of Ladd's signed admissions to the police. But the facts outlined above do allow us to draw a general conclusion for the benefit of others who may fall into the unhappy situation Ladd put



himself in: When in custody and facing (or merely threatened with) charges, say and sign nothing. No matter how black things look it pays *not* to co-operate. The going rate for those weak individuals who through greed, spite, cowardice, or simple lack of ability to stand up under pressure, agree to 'co-operate', is *nine* years. Silence offers a fighting chance of acquittal. And if all else fails at the end of the day, prison is a preferable fate to the stigma of the grass (or his just deserts!).

It might also profit anyone seriously contemplating serious political activism to submit people coming to them shrouded in heroic aura of previous revolutionary struggle to closer scrutiny before trusting their futures to a dubious legend.

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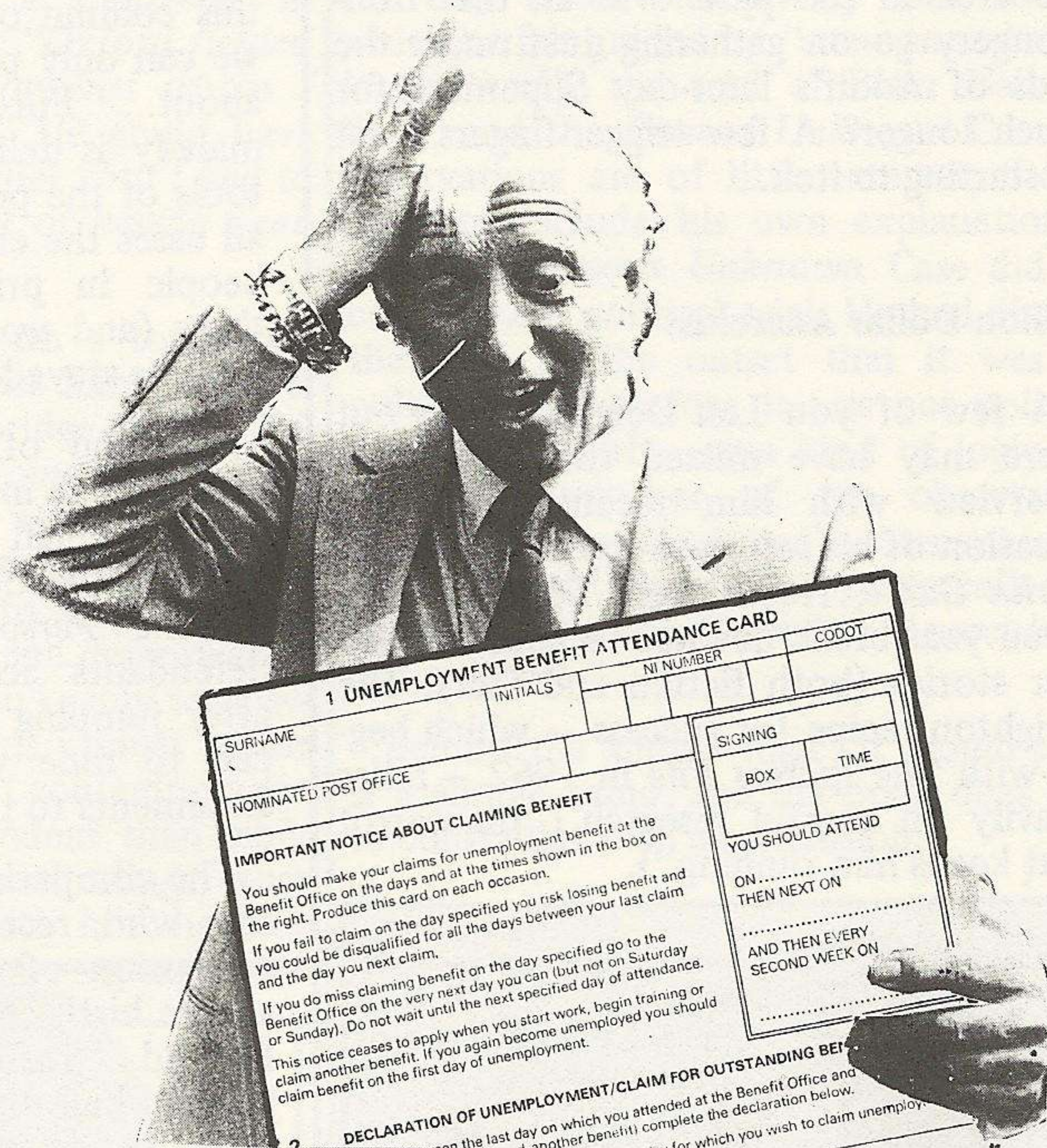


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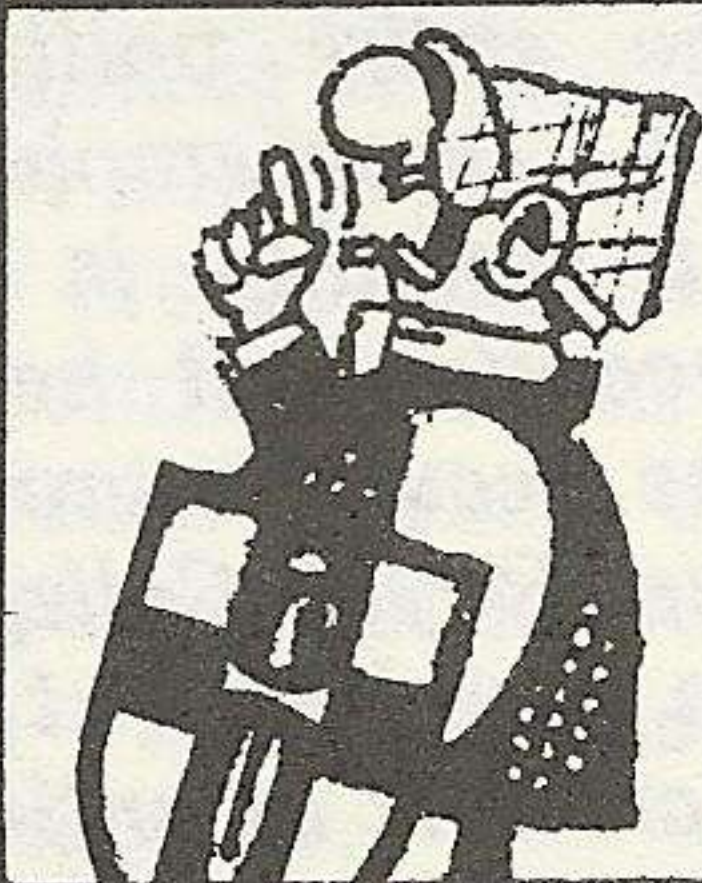
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TOILERS' PAPER

THE LABOUR MOVEMENTS OWN DAILY *'of the wankers, for the wankers, by the wankers'*



Letters



Long, boring letters are not encouraged. Please spare a thought for our oppressed type-setter, and wherever possible type your pearls of wisdom (double-spaced) on one side of the page only. All communications should be addressed to Anarchy Magazine, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

REFRESHING THE COMRADES OTHER PAPERS CAN'T REACH

Dear Comrades,

After an absence from politics of almost four years I read your last edition of *Anarchy* with pleasure and excitement. You have helped to renew my commitment. I did, however, see various letters with which I became enraged and disgusted. As a male anarcha-feminist and committed anarcho-syndicalist I must protest in the strongest terms at the letter of 'Alf' from Hampstead who writes, quote "There is an almost total lack of debate in the Anarchist movement. Pacifism, syndicalism, feminism, are in ascendancy, all in my view totally irrelevant to the advanced capitalism which we in Britain live under".

First of all the oppression of half the human race by the other half is not "irrelevant". The struggle of women is a subject which all anarchists should be involved in, regardless of sex. To anarchist women freeing themselves from male oppression is seen as the primary front upon which they struggle. It's no good keeping the fight against sexism till after the revolution. It's got to be fought here and now, on a personal, as well as political level. I have noticed since my return to the British anarchist movement from Canada and the US, a lack of commitment on the part of male anarchists to the struggle against sexism which verges on sexism itself.

As an anarcho-syndicalist I also take exception to being called part of an "irrelevant" movement. Alf's views of "advanced capitalism" seem to me to be a cop-out in order not to be involved

in day to day struggles. Anarcho-syndicalism is still the industrial wing of anarchism and the fact remains that so long as the majority of the population of the world are wage slaves, so long does anarcho-syndicalism still have relevance. Of course, world capitalism has changed since the beginning of the century but this still does not negate the syndicalist organisation and methods of struggle. They may not be perfect but they're the best we've got.

Finally, when is the British Anarchist Movement finally going to get around to organising a viable nationwide federation. It's important in my estimation to co-ordinate all anarchist activity in the fight against Thatcherism and the State. Only a British Anarchist Federation can in my view be the co-ordinator of such activity.

Salud y Anarquia

P.R. (Tyne & Wear)

22 CARAT SWINE

Dear Anarchy Collective,

I am sorry that this is such a belated response to your letter of September 9, but I was away in France, and then researching in North America until early October, and then off immediately again to a speaking tour of Germany from which I returned only two days ago.

Thanks for letting me see the item on Gerry Gable. A 22 carat swine. I think you covered just about everything on him.

Yours sincerely,

David Irving
81 Duke Street, London, W1.

Editorial note: 'Revisionist' historian David Irving figured prominently in *Sniper's* account of the dubious career of *Searchlight* director Gerry Gable published in our last issue. We sent both Mr. Irving and *Searchlight* copies of the article for their comments. So far neither *Searchlight* or Gerry Gable have made any response...

VANCOUVER ONE

Dear comrades at Anarchy Magazine,

I really hope that things are going well for you.

I am currently on trial with four other comrades, and have been now for two months. I must say that the courtroom is truly one of the most horrible places I have ever had to do time in: the whole environment inside one is like death warmed over. Boring and lifeless, a pompous hypocritical sham — that's what justice is all about, day after day, sitting in that courtroom. See, even trying to describe it is boring. This trial alone will likely last another four months.

Anyhow, I would most appreciate it if I could be sent your magazine, as there is

virtually no other source available for the information contained in it. Myself, and the others, would be most interested in reading every issue thoroughly, for sure. I am hoping that you can send it to me, even though I am a prisoner and cannot send any funds. Any recent back issues would be excellent also.

Take care. Much thanks for your help.

In resistance,

Brent Taylor

Editorial note: The five comrades imprisoned in Vancouver would, no doubt, get a great boost from receiving your letters and postcards of support. Show your solidarity by writing to: Brent Taylor, Julia Belmas, Gerry Hannah, Ann Hansen, Doug Stewart at: Drawer "O", Burnaby, British Columbia, V5H 3N4, Canada.

IF YOU'RE ANGRY & YOU KNOW IT, CLAP YOUR HANDS...

Dear Anarchy,

Have recently received *Anarchy* 36 as part of the Refract subscription. I did not see *Anarchy* 35 and, therefore, am not really in a position to pass comment on it. However, while opposing the indiscriminate violence of incumbent and aspirant Stalinists alike, of whatever political hue — whether Republicans or Nationalists and the credence which such *Anarchy* reviewers as A.N.A. appear to give to their politics (I really can't see what merit there is in fraternising with the Soviet Union or in being 'anti-Brit' and adopting the heel-worn terminology of Nationalism and Statism, although it is certainly guaranteed to polarise English Nationalism!); whether Democrats or Fascists — I feel I must pass comment on the question of violence as such.

Certainly, to support all actions, whether violent or otherwise, but peculiarly because of their violent nature — and such actions which 'seem' to fit in with one's own political philosophy — and merely because of that is as clearly irresponsible as it is self-defeating to oppose all actions which involve violence because violence has been involved. This is borne out by *Anarchy's* support of the so-called RZ action in Germany. And if a quarterly publication has to *rush* to meet a deadline... Well! Perhaps the same excuse could be used by *Socialist Worker* and other Trot publications whose headlines are often identical with the NF's *Nationalism Today*?

Perhaps I may comment on some of the commentators who were in a position to pass comment? A.Y.M. makes the point that to attack the police will ensure

that they are replaced in even larger numbers. The corollary of this is surely that to become passive law-abiding citizens is to ensure that the police will be withdrawn in ever larger numbers. Who knows, if we do nothing, perhaps even the State will wither away? He says, correctly, that policemen are only people in uniforms. So were the SS for that matter! The police are to be opposed merely because they exist. They are the embodiment of an externalised authority, the civil arm of the State, and necessarily anathema to the politics of self-regulation. And while we're on the subject, DJC should remember that orgasmic potency may guarantee a personal or individual freedom of thought, of self, — free from all authoritarian hang-ups, but it does not insulate either thought or self or person from the rigours, injustices and violence of class society. Only a more fortunate placement in society can guarantee that.

A.Y.M. says the whole of your magazine emits a mood of violence. Is this not to be expected as a natural response to the violence which permeates class society? Then we come to A.Y.M.'s comments on the writer who says that grasses should have their legs broken. On the subjective level of gut revenge, such an act is surely understandable but, objectively, it is hardly going to stop the grass from talking. Perhaps a more suitable punishment would be to have the tongue torn out by the roots! Certainly, if the writer to whom A.Y.M. is referring is seriously suggesting this on an objective level then it is closer to Britten's philosophy that fear can act as a 'deterrent'. A.Y.M. denies Dorothy Prosser's 'right of personal revenge'. Of course, justice and revenge are not quite the same thing, but the 'right of personal revenge' is a more humane justice than that practiced by law. And it is right and natural to feel anger and hurt, to want to give vent to these feelings.

It is good strategy in planning an assault on the system to attempt to predetermine what the effects of such action will be toward generating a positive and revolutionary awareness. As, for instance, the Wimmin's Fire Brigade actions. But on a personalised, individual, subjective level this is not always the sort of response that oppression generates — it is, in such a case, a spontaneous fury that must satisfy its lust on the oppressor with every measure of strength it can muster. And is that to be wholly condemned out of turn when such is the stuff of revolutions? Can the revolutionary act truly detach itself from the gut feeling of anger at an injustice or a hurt done and still remain true to itself? Whether the struggle remains on a subjective or an objective level is more often determined by class or by a more or less fortunate placement in society. Certainly, Eddie Horner's response was on the subjective level: he acted from the position of the oppressed against the oppressor. And rightly so! Does DJC never feel frustrated and angry

enough to take such actions because of that and no more? We too are the victims of class society. While it is obviously an error to claim that 'we ARE the people', can we not act on our *own* behalf as well as on the behalf of others?

Perhaps the truly revolutionary response would arise out of a unity of purpose of the burning anger of the subjective and calculating strategy of the objective.

Fraternally,

L.D. (Surrey)

CHALK & CHEESE

Dear Anarchy,

Issue No.36 was very impressive in both style and content with a few exceptions. Although I accept that "signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the *Anarchy Collective*" this does not absolve *Anarchy* from responsibility for all articles, reviews, etc. — there is, presumably, some form of editorial control? There are two items which concern me:

The item on *The Frankfurt Bombings* (unsigned, therefore a collective response) which says "... Confusion is bound to arise when the extreme Right begins to jump on the bandwagon of 'anti-Imperialism' even to the extent of using the same rhetoric." Surely this tells you something of the nature of 'Nationalism' and 'Anti-Imperialism'. I would suggest that there is nothing odd or confusing about National(ist) Socialist groups using anti-imperialist rhetoric.

The second item was the review of the book *The Longest War*. A mixture of truisms, evasions, and the profoundly ludicrous. I'm aware that a book review is only one person's opinion, but I cannot allow a comment like the one below go unremarked in an Anarchist (revolutionary) magazine "... instead of trying to make the struggle into what we would like it to be, see it as it really is..." If we are not trying to make the struggle into what we would like it to be, how could we possibly claim to be revolutionaries, or Anarchists. This is not semantic sophistry, this whole review is symptomatic of a particularly revolting attitude prevalent in many demoralised leftists who, lacking the means or will to even attempt to effect the poverty of their own lives, vicariously applaud the actions of the IRA from the sidelines whilst criticising those who oppose the concept of national unity instead of class unity, exhorting us "to see it as it really is".

Those are my two main criticisms, a make of them what you will, as I said, I think in general the magazine is very good, keep up the good work and best wishes for the future.

S.B. (Essex)



"Of course I love my country, but I'm not a fanatic about it."

Anarchy (Provisional Wing) replies:

Whilst having a definite editorial policy (see A35), *Anarchy* does not seek to impose a 'party line' on its contributors. Rather we hope to provide a forum for differing opinions, which at the same time reflects and stimulates thinking within our ranks.

Disregarding the personal slurs against our reviewer (A.N.A. is no more or less "demoralised" — still less, a "leftists" — or unable to effect "the poverty" of their life than is S.B.), what is at issue is not the criticising of class unity over national unity, but whether or not we admit the reality of a situation that refuses to fit neatly into an anarchist dogma, and our responses to that. Do we forgo action altogether, or shape our actions to fit the situation and try at least, as A.N.A. pointed out, to make "our own contribution to moving events more in our own direction..."? We would all like class unity to suddenly cut across the sectarian divide in Ireland, and for the struggle between rival nationalisms to give way to open class warfare. But it has not. And there is little hope of it doing so until the structure that ensures the continuance of a divided working class (the Orange statelet thrown up by Partition, which institutionalises sectarianism in the interests of the British ruling class) is removed.

Nationalism and Anti-Imperialism overlap. But they are not identical. Witness the 'nationalist' states of Latin America, for example, which demonstrate a closer affinity and identity of interest between themselves and US Imperialism, in waging war against 'their own' people, than in challenging the domination of 'foreign' Capital. It is a matter of class allegiances which predominates, not patriotism. Hitler was not an anti-Imperialist but a rival-Imperialist. The neo-Nazi attacks of Hepp & Co., against "Americanism" are different from those of the RAF and RZ against "US Imperialism" by virtue of their intent. That the targets (US soldiers) chosen may be the same should not disguise the simple fact that their motivations and aims are entirely different. Revolution and counter-revolution may well adopt some of the same methods, but they are as different in content as chalk and cheese.

THUS SPOKE THE MAJOR

Dear Sir/Comrade, (delete whichever does not apply)

I recently received a copy of *Anarchy* which I presume was sent to me by yourselves. I would like to thank you for this gesture and to say I enjoyed reading it, and found its contents to be both imaginative and interesting; unlike the usual spiteful whinings served up in so many Left magazines.

I particularly liked the article by Christie on Freemasonry, and I had come to much the same conclusions myself on this subject. I have a copy of his *Towards a Citizens Militia*, and although much of it appeared to have been lifted from an earlier book by Dach Bern, it was well compiled and easy to read, although not perhaps without some flaws.

Regarding the article on the Frankfurt bombings in which I am mentioned, I am afraid you have been misinformed, possibly by reading that rather pathetic and mendacious little rag *Searchlight*, which I found long ago to be worthless as a source of reliable information. Should you be interested in fact and not political fiction (it would be a pity to see *Anarchy* sink to the level of *Searchlight*) I inform you briefly that I have known only one member of that gang of odious little criminals, and that is Tillmann with whose family I have been friends for a number of years. He asked me if he could come over for a few days holiday and as I knew nothing of his new found "comrades", I agreed. I

found the views expressed by the pair to be immature, confused and lacking any conviction, the sort of thing one might expect from adolescent criminals seeking a layer of phoney politics as a "conscience saver". I can assure you that in the Third Reich they would have received short shrift. For myself I consider the "Strategy of Tension" to be utter clap-trap, and merely an excuse for criminal activity, no matter by which side it is applied.

As one who has an interest in survival techniques, I was interested to visit an anarchist commune last year. An illuminating experience which I enjoyed. In the "alternative society" which will certainly exist should the big bang come, their self-reliance will stand them in good stead.

You will appreciate that I can hardly wish you Good Luck, but I am nevertheless enclosing £2.50 for the next four issues of *Anarchy*.

Signed:

I. Souter Clarence (8 Overbury Road,
Parkstone, Poole,
BH14 9JL)

PS: Concerning Hepp

He was *not* staying at my house, and I have never met the man, nor had I heard of him prior to this affair. I do not know what his politics are, and hesitate to trust press reports, but as an alleged terrorist he would get no help from me, in fact just the opposite.

EDITORIAL NOTE : *This is the first time Ian Souter Clarence has broken his silence on the Tillman affair, and commented on*

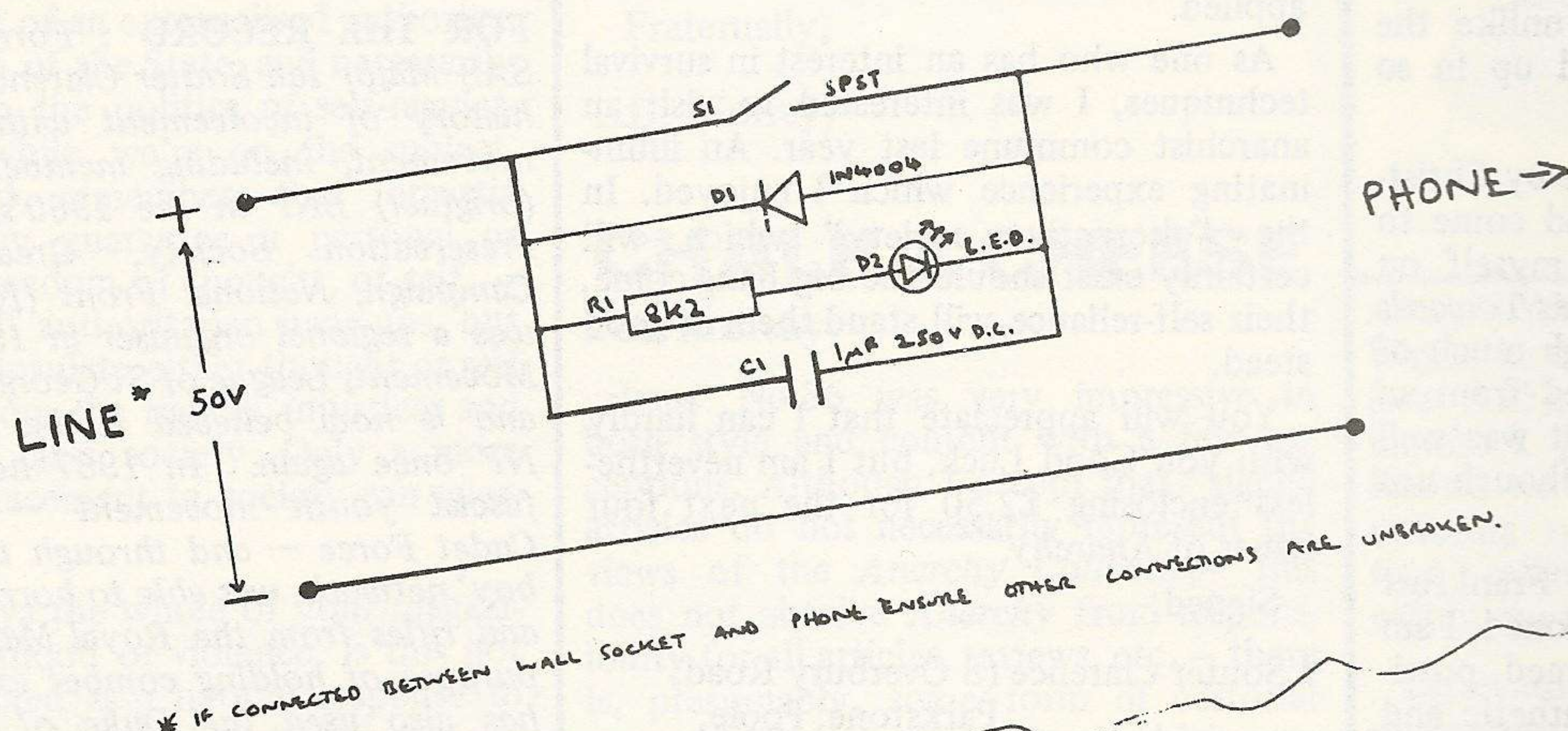
the allegations of his involvement in the safe-housing of wanted neo-Nazi terrorists. ANARCHY is keeping an open mind on the matter, pending more verifiable evidence, but we note that except for his claim not to know Hepp, Souter Clarence's version of events does not differ in any essential way with what we said in our last issue (see A36, "THE FRANKFURT BOMBINGS : SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT").

FOR THE RECORD : *Former wartime SAS Major Ian Souter Clarence has a long history of involvement with the fascist movement, including membership of the (original) BNP in the 1960's, the Racial Preservation Society, Greater Britain Campaign, National Front (for which he was a regional organiser in 1977), British Movement, League of St George. and is now believed to be back in the NF once again. In 1967 he founded a fascist youth movement — the Viking Cadet Force — and through the SAS 'old boy' network, was able to borrow transport and rifles from the Royal Marines for the purpose of holding combat exercises. He has also used the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (to get youth grants) as a cover for his, rather more than Boy Scout, activities. Frequent allegations have been made linking his name with the now dormant "Column 88" (allegedly once the main para-military and intelligence gathering organisation of the Nazi movement in Britain). Souter Clarence has, elsewhere, denied such involvement, but freely admits to running "Survival" courses attended mostly by fellow Right Wingers, including fascist activists from the Continent.*

Ian Souter Clarence (left) and Micheál Griffin (centre) of the League of St George, with Roger Spinjewijn of the (now illegal) VMO, at the graveside of Belgian members of the Waffen SS in Diksmuide.



FREEPHONE



This is the text of a leaflet that's been circulating in photocopy form.

"British Telecom's recent record profits and continued appalling service have prompted the circulation of this information. It comprises a method of making telephone calls free of charge.

The circuit inhibits the charging for incoming calls only. When a phone is answered, there is normally approx. 100 mA DC loop current but only 8mA or so is necessary to polarise the microphone in the handset. Drawing only this small amount of current is sufficient to defeat BT's ancient 'Electric Meccano'.

It's extremely simple. When ringing, the polarity of the line reverses so D1 effectively answers the call when the handset is lifted. When the call is established, the line polarity reverts and R1 limits the loop current while D2 is an LED to indicate that the circuit is in operation. C1 ensures speech is unaffected. S1 returns the telephone to normal.

Local calls of unlimited length can be made free of charge. Long distance calls using this circuit are prone to automatic disconnection; this varies from area to area but you will get at least 3 minutes before the line is closed down. Further experimentation should bear fruit in this respect.

With the phone on the hook the circuit is completely undetectable. The switch should be thrown if a call is received from an operator, for example, or to make an outgoing call. It has proved

extremely useful, particularly for friends phoning from payphones with permanently jammed coin slots."

The leaflet and diagram are written in technical jargon. A few notes to assist decipherment by those of us who have yet to progress beyond blue touch papers. What the device does is allow people to call you without paying for it — you only directly benefit from the virtuos glow this gives you.

S1 - SPST : An on/off switch. (Single position single throw).

IN 4004 : A type of Diode. An electronic device which only allows current through in one direction. The charging system is initiated by the reversals of polarity — current changing direction — so this inhibits the reversal of polarity which sets off the charging system. (But see below.)

R1 8K2 — A type of Resistor. This only allows 8mA of current through — undetectable

R1 8K2 — A type of Resistor. This only allows 8mA of current through — undetectable by the charging system but enough to be audible.

LED — A Light Emitting Diode. A little light which tells you that the system is in operation (and reminds you to switch it off if necessary).

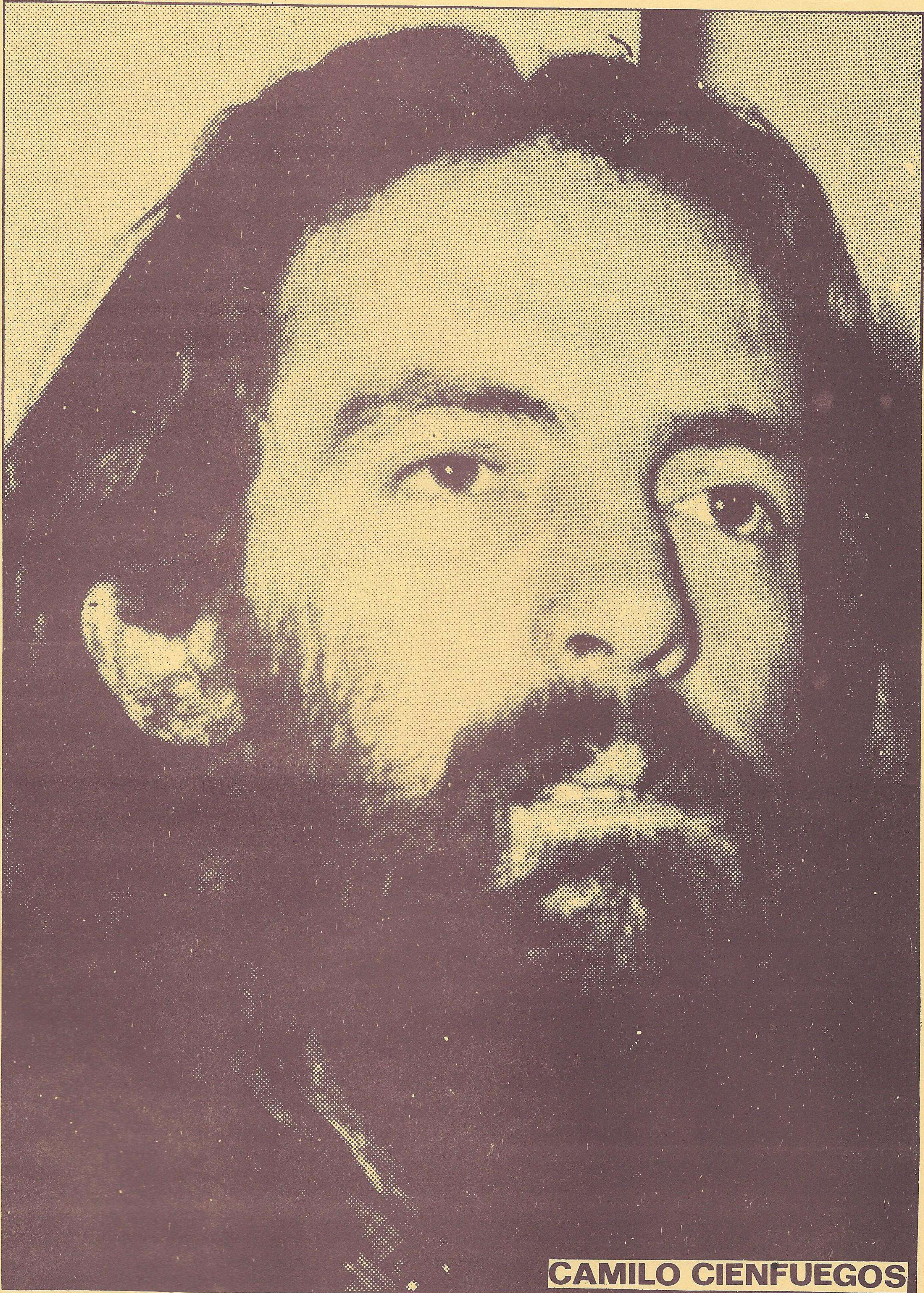
C1 — 1µF 250 v. DC. : A type of Capacitor. This stops direct current but accepts alternating current (I don't fully understand it but basically this means it lets through sound waves — in this case voices.)

A simple book on basic electronic construction should be enough to enable you to translate the circuit above into a working device. (Being totally ignorant myself it seemed possible to me after it had been explained to me.) The tricky bit will probably be working out which is the positive wire in the phone cable.

A friendly telephone engineer speaks : This device probably works but I have a few reservations. I'm not sure about local calls of unlimited duration — this device only affects the first unit of a phone call. Subsequent units are metered differently. It might work — I just don't see how.

I disagree that its undetectable when the handset is in place. I'd recommend leaving it switched off until the phone rings and only then switching it on before lifting the receiver. Engineers can detect unauthorised devices on the line, and in any case the metering on all lines is checked annually. Call boxes are regularly monitored to check that money is being put in — if it isn't but a call takes place questions will be asked.

This device will only work on old mechanical exchanges, and perhaps (I don't know) on newer TXE exchanges. It will not work on the System X exchanges but these will only be coming in over the next 20 years. However the new method of recording itemised bills which is to be introduced over the next 2½ years will probably be triggered off before the phone is answered — this may make this scam more visible, and if so will constitute evidence of your misdeeds.



CAMILO CIENFUEGOS



*Too many chiefs
not enough
Anarchists!*