

A Vicious Experiment in Wheenland

By Paul Rigby

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As prelude to conscripting Orwell (1) for Washington's war of petro-strategic position in the Balkans, Guardian columnist Francis Wheen bravely invited readers to mock an unnamed correspondent. The holder of conveniently pat Old Labour views, the angry straw man of Glasgow had written to object both to the war, and Wheen's support of it (2). Like LBJ contemplating Vietnam in the autumn of '64 (3), the certain cost - both domestic and to the inevitable victims - held no terrors for Farringdon Road's unfailingly "progressive" voice of conscience.

He was even less troubled by his correspondent's opening salvo, "Have you been got at by MI6?" The very suggestion that a Guardian journo might act as a spook mouthpiece was so self-evidently absurd that Wheen generously proceeded as if the question had never really been posed. Quite why was, if not immediately obvious, ultimately ascertainable: History - evidence - was on the side of his interlocutor. The source of this less than shocking revelation? Wheen's own paper, the daily house organ of what passes for the British liberal-left.

The admission came courtesy of Richard Gott, himself no stranger to controversy in this area (4), in a November 1987 edition of the paper. The Manchester Guardian, he wrote, had two correspondents in Russia at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution. The original, Price Phillips, was in no doubt that the second, David Soskice, was there at the behest of the Foreign Office, and with the knowledge of C.P. Scott, the paper's legendary editor (5). Contrary to the paper's assurance at the time, Gott revealed the following day, MI6 man Soskice had indeed filed many of his compellingly independent despatches while doubling as Kerensky's secretary (6). Covert collusion with the spooks inevitably issued in a prime specimen of Guardian cant.

In May 1923, the MG devoted an editorial to the subject. The trigger was a law suite involving Marguerite Harrison, a US military intelligence asset caught masquerading by the Cheka as a correspondent for both the Baltimore Sun and the Associated Press. Unencumbered by considerations of elementary consistency and honesty, the paper thundered: "We think...that an ugly blow at that honesty and independence which the public can ill afford to see tampered with, was struck by the combination of secret agent and special correspondent which some ill-advised American authorities evolved...The main thing is that the light thrown on this case should make the vicious experiment impossible of repetition" (7). It is the editorialist's power of prophecy that impresses most.

In the good old days of C.P. Scott, British intelligence was invisible, even as it played a key, perhaps dominant, covert role in the rise of Europe's fascist dictatorships (8). The Cold War saw only one change of note, and that was for the worse. In addition to the usual welter of British Intelligence officers and assets - by the mid-1950s, the paper was little more than a

front for the infamous Information Research Department (9) - the Guardian increasingly acted as the CIA's primary vehicle for channelling harmlessly the Non-Communist Left in Britain.

The ties with America considerably pre-dated the onset of the Cold War. In 1921, the paper formally hooked up with the New York World, the J.P. Morgan-funded (and Walter Lippmann-fronted) attempt to recreate an American equivalent of the Manchester prototype (10). The CIA's involvement was characteristically brazen. As with Encounter, it took the form of subsidy by subscription (11). Thus by August 1952, no less than nine percent of the paper's circulation of 127,000 made its way, ostensibly at least, to the US (12). The appeal to American readers - all 12,000 of them - was obvious: the paper still carried adverts on its front-page, and continued to be published in Manchester, the very heart of state power in highly decentralised fifties Britain.

The paper's move to London publication in 1961 provoked a flurry of speculation as to the source of the funding. Such questions intruded upon even the most fulsome of tributes to the paper's achievements and reputation. One experienced observer expressed the view that the paper was now set to become a "third force" - next to the Times and the Daily Telegraph - in British journalism (13). Whether inadvertent or mischievous, the phrase was inspired: By 1961, the phrase was routinely used in America to denote the CIA (14). Amusingly, the Guardian's pride in its "exceptionalism" - that the paper is uniquely independent and virtuous (by virtue of its ownership by a Trust) - replicates precisely a core belief of the American right, which ordinarily sees a rather more divine source for the blessing (15).

Today's Guardian appears very different. In the columns of Wheen and colleagues, spook malfeasance is regularly exposed and denounced. More attentive scrutiny reveals, alas, a less edifying truth: A more subtle and elaborate dishonesty has merely supplanted an older, and cruder pattern of lying. The new dispensation offers a world in which MI5 conspires frequently, MI6 when in conflict with CIA, and the George Bush Center for Intelligence only when the New York Times decrees. No such reticence, it is striking, attends the paper's treatment of conspiracies among what the paper presumably considers the lesser breeds (16)

Still closer attention confirms that Wheen's criticisms of British Intelligence are purely tactical, and highly selective (17). Consider his account, as found in his biography of Tom Driberg, of the assassination of Aung San in 1947. Of the Burmese leader's murder, all Wheen could offer was that he "was mown down by a machine gun at a political meeting" (18). In fact, the assassination occurred at a heavily guarded pre-independence Cabinet meeting, and was the product of a large and well-organised conspiracy (19). Among its British plotters was a senior Fleet Street figure so well known to Driberg that he duly - unavoidably - features in Wheen's biography (20). But Wheen omits to mention the same figure in connection with the assassination, and similarly overlooks the angry parliamentary reaction of a Labour MP, who denounced a right-wing cabal with close links to the Conservative Party. The name of this conspiracy theorist MP? Tom Driberg. In a lengthy 1997 piece on the case, Guardian readers were implicitly invited by a guest contributor to

believe that this cabal of "old Burma hands" was entirely unconnected with MI6 (21). Students of the Gandhi assassination a year later doubtless found it difficult to banish the suspicion that both murders were part of a broad and distinctly institutionalised strategy which used the incipient Cold War as a smokescreen and pretext.

Yet Wheen's real obsession - one shared, less than coincidentally, by an astonishing number of other contributors to the paper - is with selling the Allen Dulles line on that locus classicus of American Stalinism, the Warren Report. The frequency with which critics of that multi-volumed monument to establishment mendacity are smeared and insulted has long since ceased to surprise (22). Which is as it should be, for the Guardian is, after all, not merely predominantly an MI6 paper (23), but the house-organ of Britain's "social democrats," arguably the most pliant and subservient group known to the CIA and Foggy Bottom. The ability of a Jonathan Freedland (24), Mark Lawson (25), or Martin Walker (26) to overlook an assassination here, or a bloodbath there, is no doubt highly prized in imperial Washington, and guarantees intermittent, though assuredly lucrative, appearances in those few branches of the American media where, rather quaintly, it is still felt necessary to furnish the occasional cloak of moral and intellectual respectability for the charnel consequences of dollar diplomacy (27). Though Wheen has assiduously put rhetorical distance between his "own" views and those of the "social democrat" clique which dominates the Guardian, in practice, his is not merely of a piece with their work, but a leader in the field. Again, the chief tactic is one of selective concession, allied to a wholesale whitewash of the CIA.

A March 1996 column, "A theory to end all theories," constitutes the quintessential expression of Wheen's fidelity to the CIA version of post-war US history. It is all there, from the child's version of two notorious scandals - "Richard Nixon did indeed try to conceal the truth about Watergate, and Ronald Reagan did trade arms for hostages" - to the obligatory citation of Richard Hofstadter's "The Paranoid Style In American Politics." A motley assortment of spook-serving nutters are quoted, and held up as representative of all those who talk and write seriously of the CIA's responsibility for the liquidation of a Kennedy or Martin Luther King. For the genuine researcher, predictably, he offers nought but abuse (28).

The "rancid stew"²⁹ of cowardice, hypocrisy, and codswallop that is Wheen's moral imposture was nowhere more manifest than in the silence with which he responded to Clinton's recent apology to Guatemala (30). US-backed forces there murdered approximately 200,000 (31). The records of this five-decade long slaughter are unusually detailed and voluminous (32). By any reasonable criteria, those responsible within the US should be brought before a court as a matter of urgency. If Wheen were remotely consistent, he should now be banging the drum for NATO air strikes on CIA headquarters.

It was only to be expected, therefore, that Wheen, like his paper, would miss the mass influx of CIA personnel into Albania in the early 1990s (33). Miss it he duly did, too, even as the Agency created the KLA, and rendered it the dominant force in exile politics. Wheen did no better with the CIA's work in sustaining - not least through old friends in Israel - Milosevic and his repulsive cronies in power. The CIA backing both sides? Perish the

thought, for that would mean that the entire crisis had been contrived, and the Kosovans used like mice in a lab. And the purpose of this utterly fantastic scheme? To create a pretext for the vast expansion of the US military presence in the region, and establish a precedent for military intervention in the oil- and gas-rich states of the Caucasus and Central Asia (34).

Moscow will fight. We know this for sure because, for almost a decade, it has been engaged, in stark and revealing contrast to the Cold War, in a murderous covert struggle with Washington. The best known, if not highest ranking (35), CIA officer to die in that war was Fred Woodruff. At the time of his murder in August 1993, Woodruff was station chief in Tbilisi, Georgia (36). By complete coincidence, as the Guardian's Martin Walker detailed at the time, the State Department was busily soliciting comments from client chancelleries on the infamous Directive 13. That Directive's prime purpose was the establishment of the criteria under which Washington could plausibly justify military intervention in Russia and its traditional spheres of influence (37).

Moscow's response to that document contained two components. The first was the rank and service of the corpse. The second, the manner of his death. The former left no doubt as to the seriousness of Moscow's resolve, while the latter guaranteed a restrained reaction from the US media. Inhabitants of Wheen's world will find the explanation puzzling. No so those conspiracy theorists so regularly assailed, and ruthlessly censored, by Wheen and his ghastly paper.

Woodruff died of a single shot to the head while allegedly travelling in the right-rear passenger seat of a government vehicle driven by the chief of Shevardnadze's bodyguard (38). Moscow offered no less than four blatantly incompatible versions of the single, magic bullet's point of origin and subsequent trajectory. Three of the four - from the front (39), the rear (40), and the Georgian grassy knoll to the right front (41) - were purely for public consumption, and of no consequence. Not so the fourth. According to this version, the shot had emanated from the front seat of the car.⁴¹ The message to Washington's elite delivered, it remained only to serve up a Georgian Oswald (42).

This is the way power really functions. It bears as much resemblance to the censored and corrupt guff purveyed by Wheen and the Guardian as a lion does to a unicorn. Unchallenged, their lies will lead us to disaster.

Notes

1 A less prudent invocation than Wheen realised. The belief that Orwell's connections to the British spook community long pre-dated the aftermath of the Second World War was not confined to Moscow and the CPGB, but rarely found public expression outside of that world. Subsequent to the completion of this piece, it did. See ROGER HOWE, "A Divisive Tendency," Tribune, 22 October 1999, p.8:[Review of John Newsinger's Orwell's Politics (Macmillan, £42.50)]: "The suspicion must remain, in view of the Information Research Department revelations, that Eric Blair was some kind of plant, a competent young

policeman picked while out in Burma to infiltrate the Left, building up a pseudo-identity. At any rate, it seems certain there are large hidden objects in Orwell's life-story, black holes for academics to fall into";

"Tactically, Orwell tended toward the divisive. The POUM militia were [sic] largely ineffective. The Independent Labour Party split...The English Socialist Party envisaged by Orwell sounds like the ultimate splinter group, a cross between the Socialist Party of Great Britain and the English National Party."

2 FRANCIS WHEEN, "Why we are right to bomb the Serbs," The Guardian, 7 April 1999, G2, p.4. In his column of 14 April, Wheen had recourse to alleged MI6 phone taps as part of an attack on the previous Conservative government's excessively close ties to Milosevic ("Peeps from a pipsqueak," G2, p.5). Wheen's dependence on such a source - when need arose - was revealing, and suggests the chairman of the Scott Trust should have a word. For as columnist Hugo Young once wrote, "[F]or journalists to have dealings of any kind with the secret service of any country makes them a likely tool of the paranoia which is the professional condition of secret services" ("Spies slip out of the shadows into their Thames ziggurat," The Guardian, 27 December 1994, p.18). Wheen sought to cover his back by sourcing the alleged MI6 intercepts to a Sunday Times article of some time before.

3 The Guardian ordinarily prefers not to dwell on the cynicism of "Landslide's" 1964 election victory, for good and obvious reasons. For a typical piece of evasion, complete with obligatory anti-JFK dig, see MARTIN WALKER'S "Remembering the way of LBJ," The Guardian, 7 November 1994, p.20. Attacks on LBJ are invariably CIA-sourced, and designed to bolster the lie that the Agency was dovish on military intervention in Vietnam. For a recent example, see PETER LENNON'S "The attack that never was," The Guardian, 17 April 1999, Saturday Review, p.3. The unquestioning faith here reposed in the "CIA's chief radar analyst, Gene Poteat," is remarkable.

4 In December 1994, Gott was charged by The Spectator, the right-wing weekly with positively organic ties to the Anglo-American spook empire, with being a KGB "agent-of-influence." He subsequently confessed to having accepted free trips from the Cheka. This was obviously not the full story. A more plausible reading would have Gott being used by British Intelligence to move against the paper's editor, Peter Preston, under whose editorship the paper came to resemble a Foggy Bottom house journal. There was an amusing footnote to the saga of Gott. Dominic Lawson, the editor of The Spectator, was himself subsequently exposed as a witting disseminator of MI6 propaganda on the Balkans. Like father, like son: In 1966, Lawson's father, Nigel, the future Conservative chancellor, was editor of the same weekly when it published a fulsome review of a CIA-authored work on the assassination of JFK. The book in question was Inquest, by Edward Jay Epstein, the Angletonian mouthpiece; and the reviewer, senior CIA man Ray Cline. The Spectator declined to reveal Cline's background. An addiction to advancement by collusion with the spooks manifestly runs in the Lawson family.

5 RICHARD GOTT, "The MG and 1917," The Guardian, 7 April 1987, p.18;

6 RICHARD GOTT, "Giving a voice in the paper to both reform and revolution," The

Guardian, 3 November 1987, p.26. This headline, it should be noted, was a lie. As Gott's text leaves no doubt, Soskice/MI6 had no interest whatever in reform in Russia. To the contrary, their agenda here, as everywhere else, was entirely reactionary.

7 GEORGE SELDES. *Tell the Truth and Run: My 44 Year Fight for a Free Press* (New York: Greenberg, 1953), pp.122-123.

8 MI6's role in the rise of Franco is reasonably well known. The full story of MI6's roles in Weimar Germany, and in the emergence of Mussolini, awaits a teller. MI5 created the earliest fascist British movements of the post-First World War period. For the latter, see JOHN HOPE, "Fascism, the Security Service and the curious careers of Maxwell Knight and James McGuirk Hughes," *Lobster*, (22), November 1991, pp.1-5; and, by the same author, "Surveillance or Collusion? Maxwell Knight, MI5 and British Fascists," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 9 No. 4, 1994; and "British Fascism and the State, 1917-1927: A Re-examination of the Documentary Evidence," *Labour History Review*, Vol. 57 No.3, Winter 1992. On all of the aforementioned, the Guardian offered only silence, a fact which puts into perspective the Guardian's reputation for being, throughout the 1930s, the most sympathetic Fleet Street commentator on the plight of Germany's Jews. For a taste of the paper's characteristically repugnant smugness on this issue, see the obituary for David Ayerst, himself the author of a monumentally self-satisfied history of the paper, "All the views fit to print," *The Guardian*, 23 September 1992. According to his obituarist, Ayerst argued that "from Peterloo to Suez the Scott family throughout...endeavoured to speak plainly and truthfully."

9 For a list, by no means exhaustive, of Guardian editorialists, columnists and reporters working with and for the IRD, see PAUL LASHMAR & JAMES OLIVER. *Britain's Secret Propaganda War, 1948-1977* (Stroud, Gloucester: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 1998): John Midgeley (p.118); Guy Wint (p.121); Victor Zorza (pp.120-121); and Darcy Gillie (p.97). Gillie was commended to IRD by Orwell (p.97). Zorza, the paper's resident Sovietologist, was later to earn a reputation as a critic of the CIA line on détente. Earlier, however, he had run the spook propaganda line on the Beria interregnum. Wint wrote editorials. Midgeley had earlier worked for *The Economist*, "many" of whose staff, according to the same authors, "were very close to the intelligence establishment" (p.118). That link evidently endures. "Joan Phillips," the deputy editor of *Living Marxism* (see note 33 below), worked, under the name of Jane Hoey, for the *Economist Intelligence Unit* ("Media News," *Private Eye*, (918), 21 February 1997, p.10). By the late 1960s, *The Guardian* was the recycler of much material from a series of CIA fronts, most obviously the news services of Kern House Enterprises Inc., a typical Delaware-registered scam. See Lashmar & Oliver p.134.

10 LUCY MAYNARD SALMON. *The Newspaper and the Historian* (New York: Octagon Books, 1976 [reprint of Oxford University Press, 1923]), p.123, f.15.

11 FRANCES STONOR SAUNDERS. *Who paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999), p.186.

12 "The Press: A radical change," *Time* (Atlantic Edition), 25 August 1952, p.41.

13 "Journalistic shot in the arm," The Guardian, 1 August 1961, as reprinted in The Guardian Century, Part Seven: 1960-69, p.5, as issued free with the edition of Saturday, 20 November 1999. The commentator was Arthur Christiansen, former editor of the Daily Express.

14 RICHARD & GLADYS HARKNESS, "The Mysterious Doings of CIA," Saturday Evening Post, (227), 6 November 1954, p.66: "Besides its spy network, and the open CIA function of research, the agency operates a superclandestine third force..."; HARRY HOWE RANSOM. Central Intelligence and National Security (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp.203-204: "The CIA: A Third Force?: Quite possibly the ascendancy of CIA to prominence and power in national policy making represents the growth of a third force..."; RICHARD STARNES, "Arrogant CIA Disobeys Orders in Viet Nam," The Washington Daily News, 2 October 1963, p.3: "Unquestionably Mr. McNamara and General Walters both got an earful from people who are beginning to fear the CIA is becoming a Third Force co-equal with President Diem's regime and the US Government - and answerable to neither."

15 HUGO YOUNG, "A biased strategy," The Guardian, 20 December 1993; POLLY TOYNBEE, "Guarding the Guardian," The Guardian, 10 September 1999, p.21: "The Guardian is not like any other national newspaper..." Quite so. No other British national so routinely bothers to masquerade as independent of intelligence service control.

16 Africans, Asians, Latin Americans and the white tribe of southern Africa conspire regularly in the pages of The Guardian. Among Europeans, this unnatural vice resides only in France, a point long staple in post-war US and British spook propaganda.

17 Compare the frequency with which Wheen assails MI5, as opposed to MI6. For the former, see The Observer, 10 October 1993; "Spooks, simpletons, and a nose for truth," The Guardian, 10 September 1997, G2, p.5; and "The spy left out in the cold," The Guardian, 25 August 1999, G2, p.5. I can find only one equivalent all-out assault on MI6: "Spies, lies, old school-ties," The Guardian, 19 May 1999, G2, p.5.

18 FRANCIS WHEEN. Tom Driberg: His Life and Indiscretion (London: Pan Books, 1992), p.216.

19 KIN OUNG. Who Killed Aung San? (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1996).

20 See note 9, pp.171 & 211. The journalist in question was Frank Owen, at the time editor of the Daily Mail. He was previously of Beaverbrook's Evening Standard. In 1945, he edited SEAC, the newspaper of the South-East Asia Command. Owen was not by any stretch of the imagination an "Old Burma hand."

21 FERGAL KEANE, "Save us from our friends," The Guardian, 19 July 1997, The Week, p.5.

22 The obsession inevitably found expression in the paper's coverage of the death of Diana. In the editorial "Diana's never ending story," 16 February 1998, p.14, the paper revisited an old CIA line: "The Americans who could never accept the assassination of President Kennedy built a conspiracy industry that flourishes to this day." An "industry"? The paper might more usefully have explained a curious feature of the aftermath of Diana's death: Why have all subsequent recreations in the British media sought to depict the Mercedes as coming to rest upright rather than upside down, as it unquestionably did. It should be noted that it was, rightly or wrongly, MI6 which came under widest suspicion for her death.

23 The paper carries obvious MI5 material, too. See anything, for example, about Northern Ireland by John Ware or Peter Taylor.

24 Freedland, like fellow-columnist Polly Toynbee, argued that American selectivity in the field of humanitarian intervention should be the occasion for renewed hope, not scepticism. Neither supplied any grounds for such a conclusion. For Toynbee's spectacularly witless vapourings on the subject, see "Left behind and left seething as a new way struggles to be born," 12 April 1999, p.14. It included the following priceless sentence: "Our only booty will be the satisfaction of trying to establish liberal democracy as far as we can." Go tell that to Lockheed, or Standard Oil. Or even Pat Buchanan, who more realistically noted "America cannot police the planet on a defence budget of 3% GDP" (Washington Post, 13 April). But it can if it uses a series of regional proxies. For Freedland's enthusiastic endorsement of the assault on Serbia, and delight at the imminent end of Vietnam-era reservations on the use of ground troops, see "Clinton may even defy the Dover Test. That's the one about body bags," The Guardian, 7 April 1999, p.18. It is only fair to point out that not all Guardian journalists were blind to the "ironies" of the interventionist argument. See ISABEL HILTON, "A memo to the US: no one should be above international law," The Guardian, 29 March 1999, p.16.

25 MARK LAWSON, "Honestly, there are no conspiracies," The Guardian, 1 October 1998, G2, p.8. In accordance with Lawson's truly bizarre - and very funny - "continuum theory," Oswald did it. His take on the Lincoln assassination is awaited with some eagerness. The lie that the US & British establishments do not resort to conspiracies and assassinations is arguably the keystone of their respective propaganda systems. For another piece of CIA-serving hackwork, see Lawson's "What if Oswald had been a lousy shot?," The Independent, 23 November 1993.

26 For many years, until his recent and decidedly mysterious sacking, Martin Walker was the paper's premier JFK hit-man. See, for examples, "JFK: Half man, half myth," The Guardian, 19 January 1991, Weekend Supplement, pp.1, 4 & 5; and "Sixties man incarnate had a headache coming on," [a review of China Lobby propagandist Richard Reeves' President Kennedy: A Profile of Power], Literary Review, September 1994, pp.6-8.

27 Thus Martin Walker, for example, popped up in the pages of the Washington Post reviewing two books on Yeltsin's Russia. Both contained fleeting, and decidedly unenlightening, references to the murder of CIA man Fred Woodruff. See "In the post-

Soviet wonderland," 20 April 1997, p.X01.

28 FRANCIS WHEEN, "A theory to end all theories," The Guardian, 13 March 1996, G2, p.4. Dean Swift, this wasn't.

29Wheen's phrase to describe the arguments of parliamentary opponents to the NATO invasion of Serbia. In the course of his rant against the uncomprehending unwashed, Wheen inveighed against their "historical amnesia." For a journalist who hadn't forgotten American support for the ethnic cleansing of Serbs from Bosnia and Croatia, see SIMON JENKINS, "Suckers for punches," The Times, 14 April 1999, p.18: "President Tudjman, supported by the Americans, did to his Serb population in 1994-95 exactly what Mr. Milosevic is doing to his Kosovans."

30"Clinton regrets support for Guatemala," Washington Post, 11 March 1999, p.A1.

31 MARY MCGRORY, "Apologies are U.S.," Washington Post, 14 March 1999, p.B1.

32 DOUGLAS FARRAH, "Papers show U.S. role in Guatemalan abuses," Washington Post, 11 March 1999, p.A26.

33 JOAN PHILLIPS, "America's Baltic Intrigue," Living Marxism, (60), October 1993. For a sustained pretence that the CIA was not the creator of the KLA, see ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, "Arm the KLA. And if that doesn't work, send in the ground troops," The Guardian, 31 March 1999, p.15. The CIA armed the KLA to provoke, not to conquer. There is every likelihood that the KLA will be transformed in due course into the core force of an Islamic "rogue state," against which the European and American tax-payer must be protected at extravagant cost. For the paradigm of such operations, see the rise of Fidel Castro, whom the CIA installed for the purpose of reviving the Cold War by bringing it to US shores. Living Marxism, it should be noted, came under sustained attack by both Private Eye and the Guardian after becoming embroiled in a squalid row over the alleged falsification of film footage of a Serb camp for Bosnia prisoners. Both sought to imply - ironically enough, by wondering "who and what lies behind such an expensively produced magazine" (Letter to the editor: CAROLE HODGE, "Living a Lie?", The Observer, 9 February 1997, Review, p.2) - that Living Marxism is a front for British intelligence. The case made was at once compelling and utterly hypocritical. Private Eye was founded - or, rather, initially fronted - by Andrew Osmond, a serving MI6 officer, at a time when Britain's external intelligence arm was in open revolt against Macmillan's attempts to end the Cold War, and change tack in southern Africa. The Observer became a government tool no later than the mid-nineteenth century. See ALEXANDER FREAN, "The battle for Britain's oldest Sunday paper," The Times, 1 February 1995, p.21: "Launched in 1791 by W.S. Bourne, an impecunious but resourceful young Irishman, as a high-principled anti-government paper, it had changed allegiances by the mid-19th century and established close links with the Government. At that time it even published editorials in support of its foreign policy written by Lord Palmerston, who kindly arranged payments to the paper from Secret Service funds."

34 Editorial, "Directive 13," Wall Street Journal, 18 August 1993, p.A10: "The parallel with Yugoslavia, where the West also sought to 'mediate,' is compelling."

35 That honour almost certainly goes to Fred Cuny, who disappeared in Chechnya in 1995. His vanishing prompted an unprecedented outpouring of public grief from three of Britain's leading intelligencer-journos: WILLIAM SHAWCROSS, "Search for an aid expert," Sunday Telegraph, 30 April 1995, p.27; ROBERT FISK, "Fred Cuny saved thousands of lives. Now has he lost his own?", The Independent on Sunday, 14 May 1995, p.12; and CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS, "Bill and Boris: A fragile friendship built on fear of something worse," The Independent on Sunday, 27 August 1995, p.18. For an insistence that Moscow's posture was a bluff, see MARTIN WOOLLACOTT, "Russia may be bluffing. NATO must win, as the importance of victory to us is great," The Guardian, 10 April 1999, p.23. Woollacott was right about Serbia, but then Russia was always going to make its stand within its own territorial borders, as events in Chechnya have proved. All of the above cited are MI6.

36 ANATOL LIEVEN, "How Moscow military aided the collapse of Georgia," The Times, 28 September 1993, p.15.

37 MARTIN WALKER, "Russia fears U.S. meddling," The Guardian, 19 August 1993, p.7.

38 ANATOL LIEVEN, "U.S. treads heavily on Moscow's new imperial dreams," The Times, 14 August 1993, p.10.

39 IAN BRODIE, "Murdered CIA agent was training Georgian Guards," The Times, 11 August 1993, p.10. In this early version, Woodruff was hit "in the forehead as he sat in the front." With the Cheka's assistance, a consensus was soon reached that placed Woodruff in the right-rear seat.

40 JAMES ADAMS & ROYCE GROH, "Georgia calls in CIA to fight new Cold War," Sunday Times, 15 August 1993, pp. 1 & 13. Adams was in characteristic form. The "single round from a Kalashnikov went through the rubber seal surrounding the rear window and struck Woodruff in the head." And thereafter struck a nearby flying pig.

41 ANDREW HIGGINS, "CIA agent's murder is hard blow for Georgia," The Independent, 24 August 1993, p.7. Higgins' version was attributed to the alarmingly well-educated barmaid - she boasted a degree in philology, and three languages, as they tend to - who was allegedly seated beside Woodruff when the shot struck. Though "Marina" did not directly invoke a Georgian grassy knoll, the inference was unmistakable, for she insisted there was no damage to the windscreens front or back; and "Freddy" did have his window wound down. That repulsive deployment of the diminutive, "Freddy," is eerily reminiscent of the attempt by a number of senior CIA men to feign intimacy with, and affection for, JFK. The spook mind-set is of course universal, and universally debased.

41 JOHN KAMFNER, "CIA role in Georgia exposed after US 'diplomat' is killed," The Daily

Telegraph, 11 August 1993, p.10. Kampfner's piece included some additional touches. The chief of Shevardnadze's bodyguard, Gogoladze, was, according to an unnamed source within the Georgian Interior Ministry, "in a state of drunkenness" at the time of the shooting, and was generally "known for his excesses when drunk." The Georgian equivalent of the Cellar club was not offered.

42 Anzor Sharmaidze. See: REUTER, "Georgian killer of 'CIA agent' jailed," The Times, 8 February 1994, p.12.