

The Griffin tirade

MY ANSWER

by JOHN TYNDALL

Not for the first time, BNP chairman Nick Griffin has used a BNP organisers' bulletin to launch into a tirade against me which is poisonous throughout, frequently resorts to lies and in parts shows distinct signs of paranoia. I say "against me" but in fact this attack, like others by Mr. Griffin in the past, takes swipes at numerous people – almost a case of "Uncle Tom Cobley and all." I refer here to the bulletin issued for December 2002.

The bulletin came just after the publication of the December issue of Spearhead magazine in which we included two articles strongly critical of the BNP's handling of the Dispatches programme broadcast on Channel Four TV on the 4th November. The attacks on me and others were quite obviously a response to those articles. It is noticeable that there was no attempt whatever in the bulletin to reply to the points raised in the articles.

Since reading the bulletin I have considered what kind of response, if any, I should make. Here there are five options:-

- (1) To ignore it completely.
- (2) To use the columns of Spearhead to answer it in detail.
- (3) To produce such a detailed answer and send it only to the BNP organisers (such as I have the addresses of) who would have read the bulletin
- (4) To produce the detailed answer and send it out only to those who request it.
- (5) To use the columns of Spearhead to engage in a strong counter-attack against Mr. Griffin which, in addition to dealing with the allegations in the bulletin, makes other points of condemnation against him, of which I have many on file and which could be backed up by the testimony of others, including people who once were his firm supporters.

After some reflection, I have opted for solution (4), while keeping other solutions on hold to be employed should circumstances call for them. We should all be able to agree on one thing: that these exchanges between Mr. Griffin and his supporters, on the one hand, and me and mine, on the other, are not good for the BNP; that they are harmful to party morale; and that they detract from the energy and effort which we should all together be putting into the battle against our external political enemies. The vast majority of party members and supporters – whether they take Mr. Griffin's side or mine, and including the considerable number who prefer to take no side – would like to see this conflict brought to an end.

While thoroughly sharing that sentiment, I should add just one qualifying observation. It is that the BNP enjoyed complete internal harmony for some 14 years from its foundation in 1982 up to 1996, when Mr. Griffin joined it and a dissident faction began to gather round him which engaged in regular jibes against the then leadership, partly by private word of mouth and partly through the medium of the magazine Patriot. That year marked the watermark of transition from a united party to a divided party – though for three years afterwards I declined myself to engage in any divisive activities or talk, despite knowing what was going on in the ranks of my opponents. Only after we had put behind us the general election of 1997 and the Euro elections of 1999 did I come out into the open, face the deep divisions that had been sown in the party and endeavour to fight my corner in that conflict. When seen in the light of this background, talk by Mr. Griffin and other opponents of mine of 'divisiveness' constitute the most despicable humbug.

I should add one further truth which may surprise some people but which I think ought to be made known. From the moment of my 60th birthday in 1994, I began to think seriously about stepping down from the BNP leadership at an appropriate time not too far in the future in order to make way for a younger man, and I actually began to see some genuine attractions in a life free of the stresses of that job. I hoped very much that a would-be successor might appear who had the personal qualities and commitment that would enable me to hand over the reins to him with confidence, and thereafter give him my wholehearted support. To put it in a nutshell – and notwithstanding the propaganda of Mr. Griffin, Tony Lecomber and others – I never had any problems with the idea of letting go the BNP leadership.

My reluctance to do so at the time in question was due to one factor and one factor alone: **my assessment, after three years of close acquaintance and collaboration, of the character of Nick Griffin**, the only contender on the horizon. Putting it bluntly, I had found that he was just an opportunist and a liar; that he was in nationalist politics solely for himself; that politically he was a complete fake, swapping ideologies and convictions with bewildering regularity according to what audience he was trying to impress; and that he had absolutely no conception of the ideals of **loyalty** and **honour** that should form the cornerstones of our nationalist creed. In addition to this, I detected in him a certain streak of craziness, which I discussed with a few colleagues – only to find that they had come independently to similar conclusions.

Why then did I not get rid of Mr. Griffin? That I should have done remains an arguable point. On the credit side, he showed certain capabilities, particularly as a writer, and I needed to mobilise all available talents in the party in preparation for two vital election campaigns in three years.

Nothing that has happened in the intervening period, including some very welcome election results, has induced me to change my mind over Nick Griffin; on the contrary, everything that I have witnessed has served only to strengthen my views about him. The contents of the December bulletin are only the latest example.

Mr. Griffin's attack

The bulletin piece begins with a charge that *Spearhead* magazine has engaged in “a disgraceful collection of factional jibes and carping.” As with our criticisms of the *Dispatches* programme, it would be far better if Mr. Griffin dealt with the ‘jibes’, as he calls them, and answered them. As I have said on a number of occasions, *Spearhead* – which was supporting the BNP from back in the 1980s when Mr. Griffin was regularly attacking it – will voice criticism of the party when it is deserved and praise when it is deserved. Mr. Griffin fails to mention the numerous occasions when we have given such praise. Where criticism is concerned, we have in fact only published a fraction of what we might have published, such have been the numerous bad moves made by the party and Mr. Griffin over this time. Of course, one would imagine that no “factional jibes and carping” against me and my allies have been engaged in by Mr. Griffin and his supporters! Do you really want me to issue a list of these? It would be a big and time-consuming task, and you would probably be bored reading them long before you had finished.

Next, Mr. Griffin says in the bulletin that “The editorial information box (of *Spearhead*) has been changed to remove any reference to supporting the BNP...” Clearly, Mr. Griffin is depending here on his organisers not having any continuum of copies of our magazine whereby they may check on this, because the fact is that the information box to which he refers *never has had* any reference to the magazine supporting the BNP or any other specific party. He knows this to be applicable from at least 1996 onwards because he was its editor at that time and subsequently for three years. In other words, Mr. Griffin is, as is his frequent habit, playing games with the truth in the hope that no one will notice.

This habit of playing games with the truth goes far beyond what he has written in the December organisers' bulletin. I have myself witnessed him on television, just after the announcement of the Burnley victory last May, stating before the millions of viewers that ‘the previous leadership’ of the party showed no interest in contesting council elections – news that will be strange to those who worked hard to achieve the victory at Millwall in 1993 and again to achieve near-victories in council elections right across East London a few months afterwards, to say nothing of the many other areas we fought as and where we had the active teams to do so.

I have not so far used *Spearhead* to expose and challenge this lie because if I did so with every ‘porky’ that we have heard from Nick’s mouth and pen the magazine really would be depressingly full of “factional jibes and carping.” If you happen to have taped the news broadcasts just after the Burnley results, just play them back and find out whether I am making this up!

A little later, Nick changed his tune on this matter, presumably after a number of people had challenged him over the Millwall achievement. Instead, he acknowledged Millwall, as he had no choice but to do, but was saying that I had been reluctant to contest the seat and was only persuaded to do so by others in the party’s then leadership team. Consult Richard Edmonds, John Morse, or any one of several others who were then present and you will find this story laughed out of court.

I came to know of this particular Griffin lie by pure chance. A young lady student visited me a few weeks ago to question me about the party’s history for a PhD thesis she was doing. She told me she had spoken to Nick Griffin on the same subject and that this was one of his claims!

The bulletin goes on to attack certain people who have contributed articles in *Spearhead*. It is my policy with *Spearhead* to publish articles where the writers have something interesting to say, even when I do not in all respects agree with it. I do so without regard to other actions or political affiliations, if any, involving those writers. For instance, I strongly oppose a number of the political stances of the International Third Position, in particular its policy of supporting Scottish, Welsh, Ulster (and indeed English) separatist nationalism and thus Balkanising Britain (a policy, incidentally, which not long ago was being espoused by Nick Griffin). But if a writer connected with that group sends us an article which I think worth publishing, I shall do so. *Spearhead* is an independent magazine, and its position in that regard is stated very clearly in the box on page two of every issue, to which Mr. Griffin has referred.

I might add that Mr. Gareth Hurley, the ITP writer, and I do have one thing in common notwithstanding our considerable differences over political issues: we have both been colleagues of Nick Griffin and have come to identical conclusions about him.

Mr. Griffin then goes on to accuse *Spearhead* of “defences of Nazism.” I challenge him to produce any proper evidence to support this charge. What we have done is criticise writings on his and some of his associates’ part which have attacked Hitler and the Nazis in a very misleading and at times

thoroughly dishonest way, seizing upon the well-worn themes of Hollywood and Zionist propaganda in so doing. *Spearhead* has not for more than thirty years defended, and it does not today defend, 'Nazism'. As far as we are concerned, it is a non-issue in the Britain of the 21st century and should be interred as appropriate – something which Mr. Griffin was not doing when as editor of *The Rune* magazine in 1995 he allowed the publication of an article which constituted a virtual glorification of the *Waffen SS*.

MI5 INFILTRATION

Next, Mr. Griffin refers to an alleged statement by me that the BNP is now run by MI5. This is something of an exaggeration but it is not entirely devoid of truth. I have believed for some time that government agents (probably MI5 but possibly also Special Branch) have infiltrated the BNP quite heavily and today occupy a number of top positions in the party. I have my own views as to the probable identities of these people but it would be wrong for me to name them because I could be mistaken and thus do them an unfair injury. I believe that these agents have in some cases been recruited outside the party and subsequently planted in it, and in other cases recruited on the inside and 'turned' by use of bribery and blackmail. These are very common practices employed by state security services all over the world, past and present, against dissident political groups.

I believe that the remit of these agents, far beyond merely providing information to their paymasters, is to cause trouble and division and, where possible, to use their influence in promoting personnel changes and policy initiatives calculated to harm the targeted organisation and thus neutralise it as a threat to the established powers.

I make no apologies for stating that I believe this has happened to the BNP. I do not go so far as to say that the BNP is now "run by MI5," but I do believe that agents working for that and other hostile bodies, very probably including the *Searchlight* organisation, have attained sufficient standing and influence in the party to play a part in some key personnel and policy decisions.

And if people should dismiss my claims as absurd or paranoid, let me refer them to the statement made by a Scotland Yard spokesman in the *Daily Express* newspaper on the 8th February 1999 that "intelligence officers will infiltrate far Right groups like the British National Party" with a view to breaking them up and closing them down. What does Mr. Griffin think these intelligence officers have been doing since -- sitting on their hands?

In his bulletin Mr. Griffin makes reference to numerous other people in such a way as to insinuate that they are my close political associates and allies, whereas the fact is that they are only people with whom I have some friendly contact and nothing more. I make it a rule these days – and I suggest a wise one to anyone involved in political work – to fall out with as few people as possible, in fact the very minimum necessary. It was a rule I did not stick to sufficiently in my younger days as a nationalist campaigner, with sometimes regrettable results. The rule means maintaining amicable relations with people and occasionally co-operating in areas where there is common ground, while agreeing to disagree in other areas where there is not common ground. In that regard I have for the past two years or so maintained friendly contact with Steve and Sharron Edwards (former leaders of the West Midlands BNP), while disagreeing with their decision to leave the BNP and take part in the Freedom Party breakaway. In a looser way, I have had occasional contact with Eddy Morrison, while I have made it perfectly plain to him that I do not support his White Nationalist Party venture. I have told all these people that I believe the only way forward for nationalism in Britain is through the BNP, and I have strongly discouraged all schemes to promote our cause outside the BNP (at least where political parties are concerned; there is room for separate non-party activities). However, the fact that I have not always been successful in this is not a reason to treat these people as 'enemies'. In fact, I have a great deal of sympathy with Mr. and Mrs. Edwards over the way they were treated when in the BNP by Nick Griffin, despite their originally being among his leading supporters. We still disagree over some matters, most of all the existence of the Freedom Party, but we are in total agreement over the matter of Nick Griffin. What these two people now have to say about Mr. Griffin, after once regarding and treating him as a friend, eclipses any language I have ever used on the subject, at least publicly!

DAMNED BY ASSOCIATION!

In another cheap little piece of innuendo, Mr. Griffin uses the bulletin to establish an association between me and Martin Webster by saying that a person at whose home I have stayed when in the North of England, Pete Barker, is "Webster's northern confidant." This is quite pathetic. Pete has offered to put me up on three occasions when I have been in Lancashire and I have accepted his offer because I find his company congenial, as I do that of friends of his who have sometimes been present at his home on such occasions. To imply that this means that we agree on everything politically would be absurd, although we probably do agree on much. Pete Barker's connection with

Martin Webster (if any) is his business, not mine. I have no such connection – and have had none since I resigned as National Front chairman in 1980, mainly over the issue of Webster's homosexuality. Interestingly enough, Mr. Griffin at that time was a close associate and friend of Mr. Webster and supported him in that conflict. For him now to be using Webster's name as a stick with which to beat me really takes the biscuit.

In the same section of the bulletin Mr. Griffin speaks of my having "fallen out with nearly all of these people in the past" and that I am well aware of their record of betrayal, splitting and failure." If there were space and time here, and if I were so inclined, I could document Mr. Griffin's own record in these regards dating back to the 1980s and right up to 1999, and I could produce ample affidavits from others in so doing. In fact, in every organisation in which he has played a part, including the BNP, he has been a catalyst of internal division. Talk to anyone who was closely and actively involved in the National Front in the 1980s and ask him or her about the achievements of Nick Griffin in disrupting and fragmenting that party at the time.

Running my eye over the list of the various people Mr. Griffin ropes into his attacks on me, I am reminded that this is far from the first time I have seen such lists issuing from his pen. Slagging off almost everybody in sight seems to be a regular habit with him when he runs out of arguments, and the tendency is repetitive: he engages in numerous allegations against them and slurs on their character without any attempt to produce concrete evidence to back up his claims. This was done recently against nationalists like Peter Rushton and Bob James, two others who have fallen foul of him, and I see that Peter is again mentioned in the latest Griffin diatribe against me.

Another person included in Mr. Griffin's symphony of smears is Rick Fawcus of Tyr Services. Again, Rick and I just have friendly contact with each other; we are not close political associates; he has his way of serving the cause and I have mine. Various charges are made by Mr. Griffin against him concerning alleged 'theft' of monies claimed as belonging to the BNP. It is for Mr. Fawcus to deal with these charges in his own way, as he tells me he intends to do; they are not my business. However, one thing that he has told me is that he protested against one such charge in a letter to Mr. Griffin's confederate Tony Lecomber and received a reply apologising and acknowledging that there was nothing for him to answer for. He has heard nothing from Griffin & Co. over any other alleged 'thefts'. Why not?

What do all these people have in common? And what do they have in common with me? They have all come to know Nick Griffin through personal experience and they have all reached the same conclusions about him. That is why they have been put on the 'hit list' – a hit list which will assuredly grow in the future as their ranks are swelled.

GRIFFIN THE TARGET, NOT THE PARTY

In the midst of this diatribe, Mr. Griffin accuses me of 'courting' these people in my bid to 'pull down' the BNP. Here he makes the mistake, common to many of his kind, of speaking of himself and the party/cause/nation as if the two were synonymous, Nick Griffin is not the BNP, any more than I was the BNP when I was leader. I make no bones about the fact that I wish to see Mr. Griffin removed as BNP leader in the fullness of time and will do whatever I can to that end within the boundaries of the party's constitution. In this, I am far more honest and up-front about my intentions than Mr. Griffin was when in 1997 he declared in a *Spearhead* article (he was then editor) that he had no intention for "quite some years to come" of bidding to become party leader. But in equating my intention to remove Mr. Griffin with 'pulling down' the BNP he is engaging in a monumental piece of conceit, not to say delusions of grandeur. I have given my life to building up the BNP. I had been doing so for 14 years before Mr. Griffin entered it. I have not the slightest intention now of allowing it to be destroyed, 'pulled down' or whatever other expression Mr. Griffin might like to use. I can assure Mr. Griffin that his demise will not mean the demise of the BNP.

This is what makes so preposterous and ridiculous the claim also made in the bulletin that I harbour an "intention to break away" – by which I must presume he means launch a new and separate party. Once again, Mr. Griffin is here engaging in one of his not infrequent resorts to lies and fantasy. I have no such intention whatever, and to every suggestion that people have made to me that I do such a thing I have turned the idea down flat. I have in fact as good as been offered the leadership of certain rival parties if I break with the BNP, and I have likewise turned those offers down flat. I need no lessons from Mr. Griffin on loyalty to the BNP -- nor indeed on loyalty *per se*.

As an attempted back-up to the 'breakaway' claim, Mr. Griffin goes on to allege that I have been trying to get myself expelled. But this is not going to happen, he assures everybody. If I choose to renew my membership for the coming year (which I have recently done) my application "will of course be accepted."

Now that really is interesting! In the recent past a number of party activists have been expelled or proscribed just by a sweeping wave of Mr. Griffin's arm and with no proper judicial or disciplinary procedure employed to find them guilty of anything, but John Tyndall, who on the 'evidence' of Mr. Griffin has been a much naughtier boy than any of these people, is to be allowed to stay! This surely is a case of disciplinary decisions being made for reasons of political expediency rather than for reasons of discipline and justice. I am not being expelled -- essentially so as not to give me an excuse to launch a breakaway party. In fact, if there were the slightest evidence that I was planning a breakaway party I very definitely *should* be expelled. Mr. Griffin knows very well that I have no such plans, otherwise he would summon me to a disciplinary trial and produce the evidence, then have me kicked out. As it is, what he seems to want is to have the luxury of *accusing* me of planning a breakaway while not taking the action that obviously should be taken if I were! What kind of internal discipline is that? I would submit that it is all of a piece with the 'discipline' whereby others have been excommunicated from the party for no greater crime than speaking less than respectfully about Mr. Griffin!

THE LAWSON LEGACY AND THE USE OF MONEY

I should finally say a word about another matter to which Mr. Griffin refers in his bulletin and which he has also mentioned in a recent *Identity* article. This is a sum of money bequeathed to me personally back in 1991 by one John Lawson, decd. I believe that I have dealt perfectly adequately with this matter in a statement printed in *Spearhead* in February 2000 (copies available on request). Actually, the sum in question was not £56,000, as Mr. Griffin has claimed, but a slightly smaller sum. I did not make this money available for use by the BNP under Mr. Griffin because I had no confidence in the party's financial administration at that time and have not had since. A number of others, including the then party treasurer, came to the same conclusions later in the year 2000. I believe now that large sums of money are presently being badly mis-spent by the party in having a grossly inflated payroll for full-time and part-time staff, comprising (at the last count) 30 people! No, that is not a typo -- *30 people!* If I surrender to Mr. Griffin that portion of the Lawson legacy in my possession, I suspect that much of it will be thrown down the drain in the upkeep of this ridiculous payroll. That I am not prepared to do.

Most of that portion of the legacy still remaining after the expenditure of about half of it on the Euro Election in 1999 is still intact, though a small portion has had to be used to make good shortfalls in the income of *Spearhead* as a result of Mr. Griffin's action in sabotaging its circulation through the BNP. The greater part will be placed again at the disposal of the party if and when I have confidence in the people in charge. None of it, I can assure everyone, will be used to finance any breakaway party in any circumstances, notwithstanding Mr. Griffin's allegation that that is my plan.

It is interesting that Mr. Griffin in his bulletin refers to the 'huge difference' that the residue of the Lawson legacy would make to the party's chances of winning seats in the European Parliament in 2004. He might also have mentioned the London mayoral election in the same year, regarding which he is now flying a kite for the idea of an electoral pact with the multi-racialists of UKIP under the terms of which the BNP would stand down in favour of the UKIP candidate. Well, I might suggest that what would make a huge difference to the party's chances in both those elections is the reduction of its presently huge payroll to a number about a quarter of the present size, and then the re-allocation of the money saved to either or both of these elections. How about it Nick?

HYSTERIA

I would say in conclusion that Mr. Griffin's attack on me in his bulletin has about it the flavour of an hysterical chorus girl spitting venom at a theatre critic who has had the temerity to point out some flaws in her act. I suggest that it would be far better that some of the issues of genuine internal controversy within the BNP, which are causing real concern to many members, should be properly addressed and discussed. Among these I would number not only the recent *Dispatches* TV programme but also hints by Mr. Griffin that he would like to admit non-white members; a dropping of the party's commitment to an eventual all-white Britain; the plan (at one time) to adopt as council candidate for Oldham a woman with three half-black children by (I am told) three separate black sex partners; the granting of a regular column in the party's newspaper to a Sikh writer; not least, the suggested electoral pact with UKIP just referred to.

What Mr. Griffin seems determined upon is that we will not have a serious internal debate on these matters. Rather than this, he just lashes out in personal abuse at those who dare to raise them. It is not convincing and it is not impressive. Most of all, it is not the sign of a leader who has the confidence that he is right.

If there is anything in the Griffin bulletin which anyone thinks has not been adequately answered in this document, please let me know and I will provide clarification. I have already had a few advance requests for the document, not by people who seriously believe Mr. Griffin's allegations but only so that it may serve as a source of reference when talking to any who may believe them.

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