

PE5 'Death of Paul Foot'

You say (Eye 1111, page 4) that Paul Foot had remarkably few enemies. Let me register as first of the few.

My last crack at this man was published in the *Oldie* in February this year. I said that Foot argued in his review of Ricky Tomlinson's shameless autobiography that the latter's 1973 trial and conviction were 'disgraceful', that the charges were 'trumped up', and that the sentence of two years' imprisonment was 'savage'. As a barrister practising at the time I pointed out that none of this was true. It was the use of flying pickets by building workers, and later by miners, that was disgraceful. It involved the criminal use of coercive force on a large scale, and was rightly banned by Thatcherite legislation (not overturned in the years of subsequent Labour rule).

Foot's virulent desire, from an early age, to inflict maximum harm on values which I and many others hold dear caused more hurt than would anything I say, or might say, about him now in very bad taste when he is no longer with us.

{*Private Eye*, 6-19 August 2004. PE5.}