

for two days. In Hayden's view this meant that "murdering looters was now possible." In fact, the author seems shocked that the white community should try to put down the disorders in the first place. He condemns the police for endeavoring to stop the riot, and paints the looters and rioters as innocent victims of a frightened, malevolent, and racist police force out to "teach the Negroes a lesson."

Despite its bias, the book might have served a useful purpose had Mr. Hayden analyzed the negotiating that went on between Mayor Addonizio and the black militants following the first night of unrest. But again he falls short.

Black Power spokesmen find themselves in a difficult position when they attempt to make deals within the political system, for they usually hold little or no political power. Thus, they cannot threaten the customary sanctions (e.g., opposing Addonizio for re-election) and must resort to promises of violence if certain of their needs are denied. Often, too, they will make demands which are impossible for the system to meet because they realize that compromise is a customary procedure. These extreme demands frighten the political power structure, which agrees to more rational goals covertly indicated by the militants. Unfortunately, the people whom the leaders have animated to demonstrate do not understand this bargaining process; they want unattainable demands fulfilled and will not settle for less. This is the powder keg that Black Power has primed in many Negro communities today, and this is what happened in Newark.

Concessions were made. Addonizio decided to ask for City Council funds to allow additional police captaincies so that a qualified Negro officer, Eddie Williams, could become the first Negro captain. He requested that Human Rights Director James Threatt and Police Director Dominick Spina separately investigate Wednesday's conflict. . . . The mayor was doing what militant politicians were demanding.

But what the militants had demanded the mayor do was evidently not what they had told the Negro community to demonstrate for.

. . . Threatt arrived with a message to the crowd from the mayor. Threatt said Addonizio promised a Negro police captain by July 17 if the demonstration would stop. People told Threatt to get off the precinct steps where he was standing. . . . Rocks and bottles started flying. . . . David Crooms, a black free-lance photographer, was on the scene. "The rioting would have started anyway," he believes, but it began at the precinct when the demonstration was disrupted by Threatt's appearance with the empty offer.

Was the offer "empty," as Hayden now charges, or was it one of the conditions "militant politicians were demanding"? Probably it was both, but Hayden is unable to explain this apparent contradiction and claims only that the crowd by this time was not expecting results. In fact, the author seems unable to explain anything that occurred unless it was first clarified in the newspaper

from which he drew for his account.

Before the American reading public will be able to understand the riots throughout the country last summer an exhaustive study similar to Robert Conot's prodigious investigation of the Watts riot will have to be made. Quickly-produced books that exploit the reader's curiosity will not help us solve, but worsen the problems which confront us.

Dingy Lives in Brighton

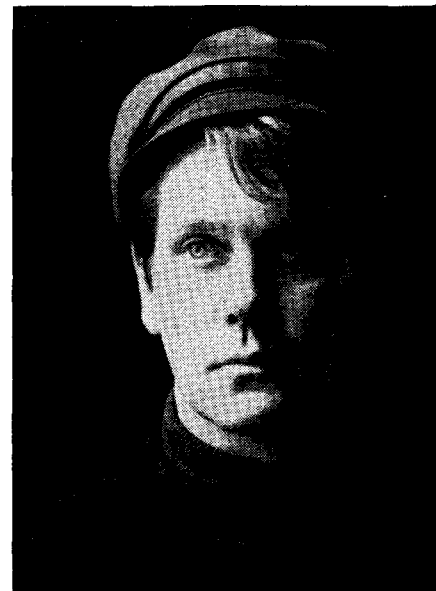
The Anarchy of Love, by Colin Spencer (Weybright & Talley. 320 pp. \$5.75), the first novel in a projected tetralogy, portrays the suffering and sexual confusion of a young people in revolt against their sordid families and the banalities of the English middle class. Edward M. Potoker is professor of English and comparative literature at CCNY.

By EDWARD M. POTOKER

"**P**ERHAPS it wasn't so bad just to get married without much thought, just to have a family, just to listen to the Light Programme and ITV; to go to Newquay for honeymoons and to eat fish suppers when you go out. . . . To read a cheap newspaper in the morning with three large cups of tea. . . . To accept without question the standards of the society you live in. . . . Was this the life?" Reginald Pearson and Sundry Simpson, hero and heroine of this sometimes serious, sometimes droll, always well-paced novel, decide, provisionally, that it isn't. The dead, slow mediocrity of the middle classes, which fills them with loathing, propels them into art, anarchy, and quaggy eroticism. A few of their misadventures instruct the reader painfully; their high jinks entertain him mightily.

Sundry, who lives and paints in a Brighton apartment left to her by a weird grandmother, meets and falls passionately in love with Reg, who when not otherwise employed is, naturally, writing a novel. But handsome, sensitive Reg is a queer fellow, an energetic invert kept by London-based Bengy Balchin, a fat, fatuous, and utterly swishy retired army major. When Reg isn't being pursued by Bengy ("Oh dear boy, at least give me your company for a few hours. Let me just look at you, that's all I ask, just to look at you, just to feast my eyes on you."), he roguishly stirs up the emotions of the Brighton locals, Stevie, Babylou, and Banana Lil.

Now, Sundry can't tolerate Reg's ec-



Colin Spencer—"more than phallic frolics."

centric infidelities. Why, after the amply exhausting comforts she provides in her own bed, must he indulge in such nasty, squalid lechery? Rightly or wrongly, she feels crassly deceived, negated as a woman. Reg's explanations about "a little pure hedonism" and his preliminary amusement at being called a "gorgeous beastie" only make her furious. And he chafes at being labeled a common "tart." It is these seminal tensions that give rise to the central actions of *The Anarchy of Love*.

HOWEVER, Colin Spencer, a writer of considerable talent, provides more than phallic frolics to divert teeny boppers of differing ages. His book, the first of a projected tetralogy, explores perceptively and sometimes brilliantly contemporary British high, middle and low life. It is a realistic novel of social awareness and, as such, echoes the work of Arnold Bennett, D. H. Lawrence, and Ivy Compton-Burnett, among others. Sundry and Reg believe they live in a nihilist age, but know that their suffering and sexual confusion are rooted in the squa-

lor and sordid entanglements of their family lives.

Reg, for example, hates his father, who was a Fascist and a fanatic follower of Sir Oswald Mosley. In and out of jail for political excesses, the father is finally incarcerated for killing a Negro in a racial outburst. Reg, assuming that his father must resort to homosexual affairs in prison, tortures himself with fantasies of homoerotic incest. He accepts, rather guiltily, the favors, money, and culture bestowed upon him by Major Bengy and Sir Percy Dickins, an ancient London dandy, because he feels such things are owed to him by his father. From this psychic wound, which he desperately tries to heal, he expects the flow of creative energy that will ultimately prepare him to accept the complexity of life and maybe the inevitability of heterosexual love.

Sundy's home life, a stupid, senseless muddle, has nauseated her. Her father, Eddy, is a belching, crepitant boor who incarnates vulgarity. Drunkard and braggart, he steadfastly ignores his wife, Hester, while yielding considerable vitality to his mistress, Mabel, who giggles hysterically when he pours Drambuie into her mesial groove. Typically, he exercised his paternal sense of humor on Sundy when she was young by putting a music box on the toilet roll so that it played as one pulled the paper. "She'd sat there for ages, pulling and pulling until the lavatory was piled high with paper, and the silly little German marching song had tinkled on and on." Later on, at a party, he jumps into a fish pond and emerges nude while Mabel giggles. When Sundy coolly announces her marriage to Reg, Eddy's chuckling response is, "I shall be afraid to bend down when he's around." A real blighter, that Eddy; but made of the stuff, one is reminded, from which Empire once grew. Wife Hester seeks refuge in Christ, Who gives her what He can.

THE principal fault of this novel is the puzzling, often tedious mélange of wild humor and sentimental banalities. When Mr. Spencer preaches about the search for love and self-expression between lovers, about human values in a gross environment, he sounds like a latter-day D. H. Lawrence. Perhaps knowing this, he inserts very funny jokes into his text which occasionally underscore rather than allay the clichés and platitudes that attend his preaching. There is also some blurring of the point of view, for the author does not hesitate to step in and tell us when to laugh or cry or what to think about an event or character. Finally, it is tiresome—not to say a bit coarse—to have many of the crucial recognition scenes occur in or near toilets.

Notwithstanding these strictures, *The Anarchy of Love* is a solid performance

with much to recommend it. Explicit are a powerful narrative gift, a wealth of characters and invention, an unflagging vigor that recalls Balzac and Stendhal. There are also impressive lyrical passages and artful patches of descriptive prose. Whether it is Brighton, Croydon,

the ecstasy of passion, or the horror of abortion, Mr. Spencer can render the scene with a painter's precision. This prolific young Englishman has more to learn about the craft of fiction, but the forthcoming novels of his quartet can be watched for eagerly.

Defeat on the Volga

The Battle, by Alexander Kluge, translated from the German by Leila Vennewitz (McGraw-Hill. 255 pp. \$5.95), mingles fiction with statistics and documents to depict the German defeat at Stalingrad. J. P. Bauke is chairman of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Columbia University.

By J. P. BAUKE

NO BATTLE in modern times has agitated the Germans more than the one they lost at Stalingrad in 1943. The annihilation of the Sixth Army jolted the German masses into the realization that the tables were about to be turned, and for the first time during the war even fanatic Nazis had their optimism put to the test. Goebbels's ministry of propaganda, while carefully doctoring the factual information on the disaster, engaged in a rhetoric of superlatives when the news had to be broken to a stunned country.

The defeat was officially proclaimed as "the supreme epic in German history," an event "that outshines the greatest heroic feats in the history of the world." The entire press was under orders to present to the Germans "as a sacred beacon this noble example of supreme heroism and ultimate self-sacrifice." During the three days of national mourning public demonstrations of grief

were forbidden, so that Stalingrad could be turned into a myth that would "impart a sense of obligation to all future generations of Germans."

In the Nazi mind there had been no defeat. Yet the thousands of Germans who lost relatives in the fighting kept the memory alive. To this day, Stalingrad marks a neuralgic spot in the consciousness of Germany. In the intervening years, novelists and historians have variously analyzed the presumptions and the blunders that led to the defeat on the Volga. Most of the accounts, of the my-country-right-or-wrong persuasion, are marred by the self-pity that suffuses so much of German writing on the war. The hero-worshippers, on the other hand, admire the fighters of Stalingrad for their courage in the face of certain catastrophe and quite ignore the uses to which Hitler put that courage.

Up to now the exception was Theodor Plivier's *Stalingrad*, the best German novel to come out of the war, a realistic masterpiece and an eloquent plea for peace. Plivier, on location as an observer on the Russian side, wrote from experiences of which the young generation of Germans has only secondhand knowledge. If Alexander Kluge, a distinct voice among the new writers, approaches Plivier's success—and there can be no doubt that he does—he goes about it in an altogether different way.

As in his previous book, *Attendance List for a Funeral*, Kluge breaks with traditional fiction and presents prose that is closer to X-rays of broken bones than to color photos of livid flesh. He prefers counting the dead to soliciting the reader's pity for the wounded. In place of gory set-pieces and battlefield close-ups, with enemies that can see the whites of each other's eyes, Kluge's book has statistics and, above all, documents of the period. In fact, *The Battle* is daringly close to the point where documentation leaves no room for "fiction."

In Kluge's ingenious novel the verifiable, recorded facts crowd out the fleeting impressions and shifting emotions of the individual soldier. His heroes are not red-blooded patriots fighting for

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