

## “Clueless disinformers”: “Diving into the Wreckage” Gets Sanguinetti Wrong

On 15 October 2025, two weeks after the death of the former situationist Gianfranco Sanguinetti, the administrator of the “Diving into the Wreckage” podcast (a guy by the name of Andy) decided that he was going to go ahead with previous plans and devote one of his podcasts to Sanguinetti or, rather, to one of his books. Andy clearly didn’t feel that he needed to do much research on the subject. After all, he had a copy of *On Terrorism and the State*, which I’d edited, translated into English and published in 2014, or rather, he had access to my website ([www.notbored.org](http://www.notbored.org)), to which I’d long ago uploaded the book as a PDF, and/or access to the online archives of “The Anarchist Library,” to which someone had long ago uploaded a previous and now thoroughly outdated version of my translation. And this meager preparation would be enough to do an adequate job, or so Andy thought. *He’d just wing it* (as he’s no doubt done numerous times before) and, if or when he encountered issues or questions that he couldn’t address or answer, he’d simply rely on the expertise of co-host Varn and/or their special guest Alex, the latter of whom, it appears, is associated with the website of *Antipolitika: anarchist journal from the Balkans*.

Note that the list of links on the “Diving into the Wreckage” webpage for this episode (<https://rss.com/podcasts/the-antifada/2270360/>) includes several websites that are in a language (Italian) that, judging from Andy’s consistent mispronunciation of Sanguinetti’s first name (“John-Franco”), he doesn’t know how to speak or read. Mostly made up of links to old pages hosted by lib.com and “The Anarchist Library,” this list doesn’t include *Antipolitika*, which doesn’t seem to have ever discussed Sanguinetti and which was last updated on 25 May 2024, almost two years ago.

It didn’t take long for Andy and his crew to encounter issues or questions that they couldn’t address or answer. When presented with Sanguinetti’s opening-page distinction between offensive and defensive terrorism, Varn, after a few seconds of telling silence, confessed (mark 9:45) “I would love the context for, uh, this and the other cases of the Italian State.” He went on to say, “When I read this I was not entirely clear about why this State would do defensive – would be doing defensive terrorism, but I do get the general logic [...] But I’d still like to know the context specifically for, you know, the late Sixties, early Seventies, in Italy because I think there’s something I’m missing. [...] I’m not sure, like, what the specific crisis . . . Why was it so much more acute in Italy than in Germany, for example? I mean they had similar problems.” Andy had no answers for him (though they could easily have been found in the texts that these podcasters were supposedly discussing), and so he handed the microphone over to Alex, who, instead of addressing the history and causes of the crisis through which the Italian State was going at the time, spoke about the bombing at the Piazza Fontana, which, of course, was the Italian State’s *response* to the crisis, its murderous and failed attempt to make that crisis go away. And so no context for Sanguinetti’s opening-page remarks was given, no answers to Varn’s questions were provided.

One can only pity the poor listener, who was, no doubt, trying his or her best to follow what these people were talking about, but without success.

During the course of Alex’s meandering into-the-weeds response, she claimed (mark 20:21) that in Sanguinetti’s book *Truthful Report on the Last Chances to Save Capitalism in Italy* – which I edited, translated into English and published in 2014, and which was long ago uploaded by someone other than me to the outdated online archives of “The Anarchist Library” – its author “uses this phrase *gladium ancipitem in manu stulti*, like, ‘a two-edged sword in the hand of a fool,’ to describe how the political class in Italy used, uh, this kind of terrorism. [...] And also, uh, in one manuscript he underlined this word *gladium*, he wrote that this was probably, this word was probably what made power think that he was one of them, because, I guess, they would understand this as a reference to Gladio.” Here Andy asked her, “And that wasn’t public knowledge at the time?” “Uh, what wasn’t public knowledge?” “Operation Gladio.” “No, not as I far as I know.” “OK, so he may have just *accidentally* used a word that convinced them that he was actually one of them, in this post document?” (emphasis added).<sup>1</sup> “Yes, I’m not exactly sure when he made this, uh, note, but it was after it was published, as far as I know.”

Let me help you with that. In one of my footnotes to the *Truthful Report*, which had asked, “Thus, isn’t it permitted to conclude that the Italian secret service has become the *gladium ancipitem in manu stulti* of which the Latins spoke?” I explained that “the Latin expression employed here, *gladium ancipitem in manu stulti*, seems to include an allusion to ‘Operation Gladio,’ which was the Italian code name for the secret NATO plan in which armed groups prepared to either overthrow Communist governments after they’d been formed or before they had seized power.” In “The Doge: A Recollection,” which was written in 2012, translated into English by me, approved by its author and shortly thereafter uploaded to the [www.notbored.org](http://www.notbored.org) website, Sanguinetti says that “Here one must remark that the existence of the secret organization called ‘Gladio’ would only be publicly revealed by Andreotti *15 years after* the publication of my book, and that, at the time, this little phrase in Latin must have been understood as a veiled threat that surely came from someone who was very well-informed of the most-secret things.”<sup>2</sup> In a footnote to this passage, Sanguinetti explains that, “The only one, to my knowledge, who noted this phrase and placed it into the context of the ‘Gladio’ organization was Bill Brown, on [www.notbored.org](http://www.notbored.org), in 2012.”

Pro tip: next time, if you folks at “Diving into the Wreckage” want to avoid looking like *absolute fucking idiots*, that is to say, like *clueless disinformers*, either take your time and do your own research thoroughly and properly, or get someone on your show who knows what the fuck they are talking about.

Bill Brown, 14 April 2026

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<sup>1</sup> Given the incredible and highly unlikely success of “Operation Censor,” *providential* would seem to be a better word to describe Sanguinetti’s erudite and well-considered decision to use an expression in Latin to describe the Italian secret services as a two-edged sword.

<sup>2</sup> *Note bene*: the use of the word *gladium* was not understood as a *one-of-us* wink of the eye, as Andy and Alex seem to think, but as a “veiled threat,” a *punning* threat to reveal the existence of “Operation Gladio,” so as to intimidate and dominate certain others.