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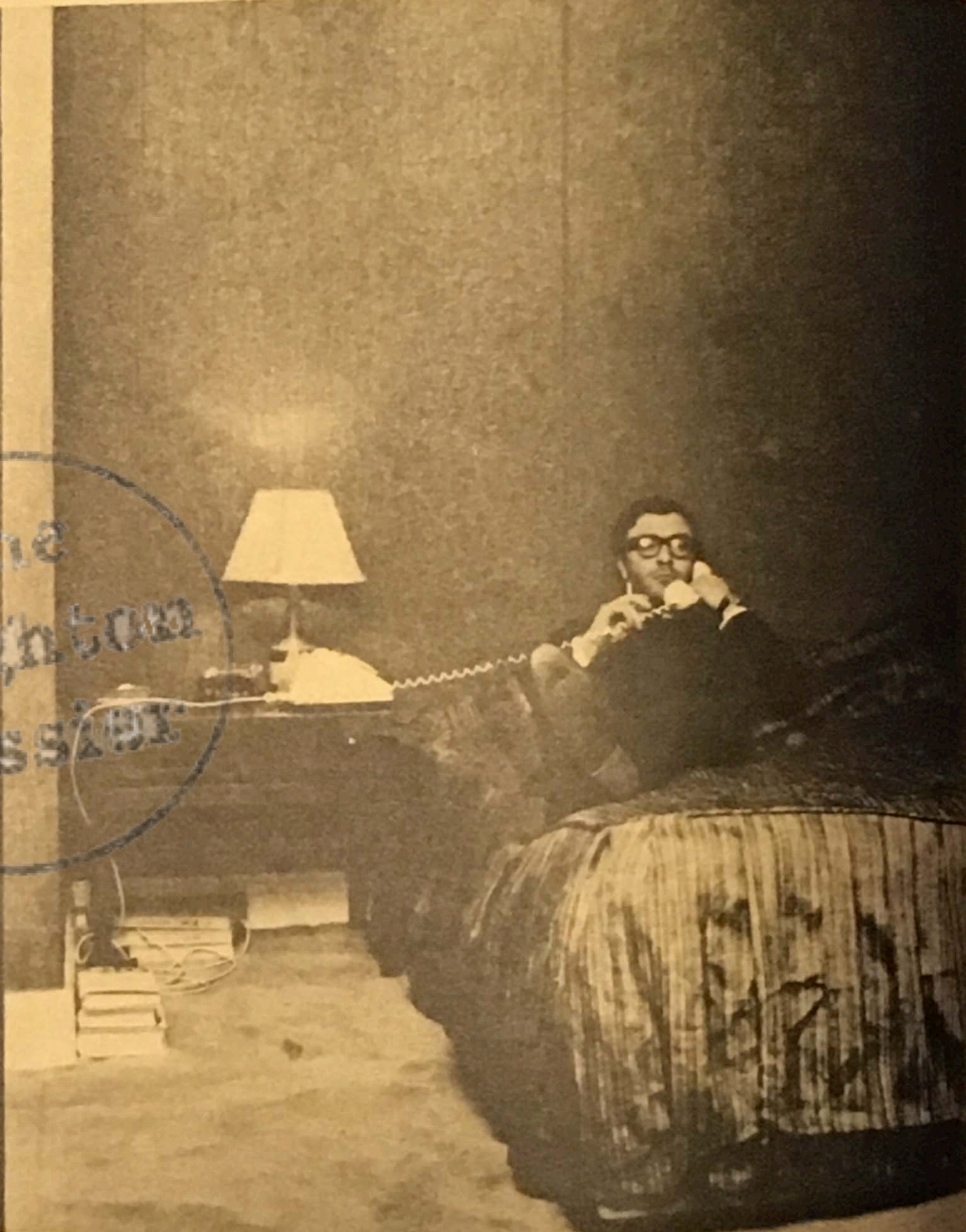
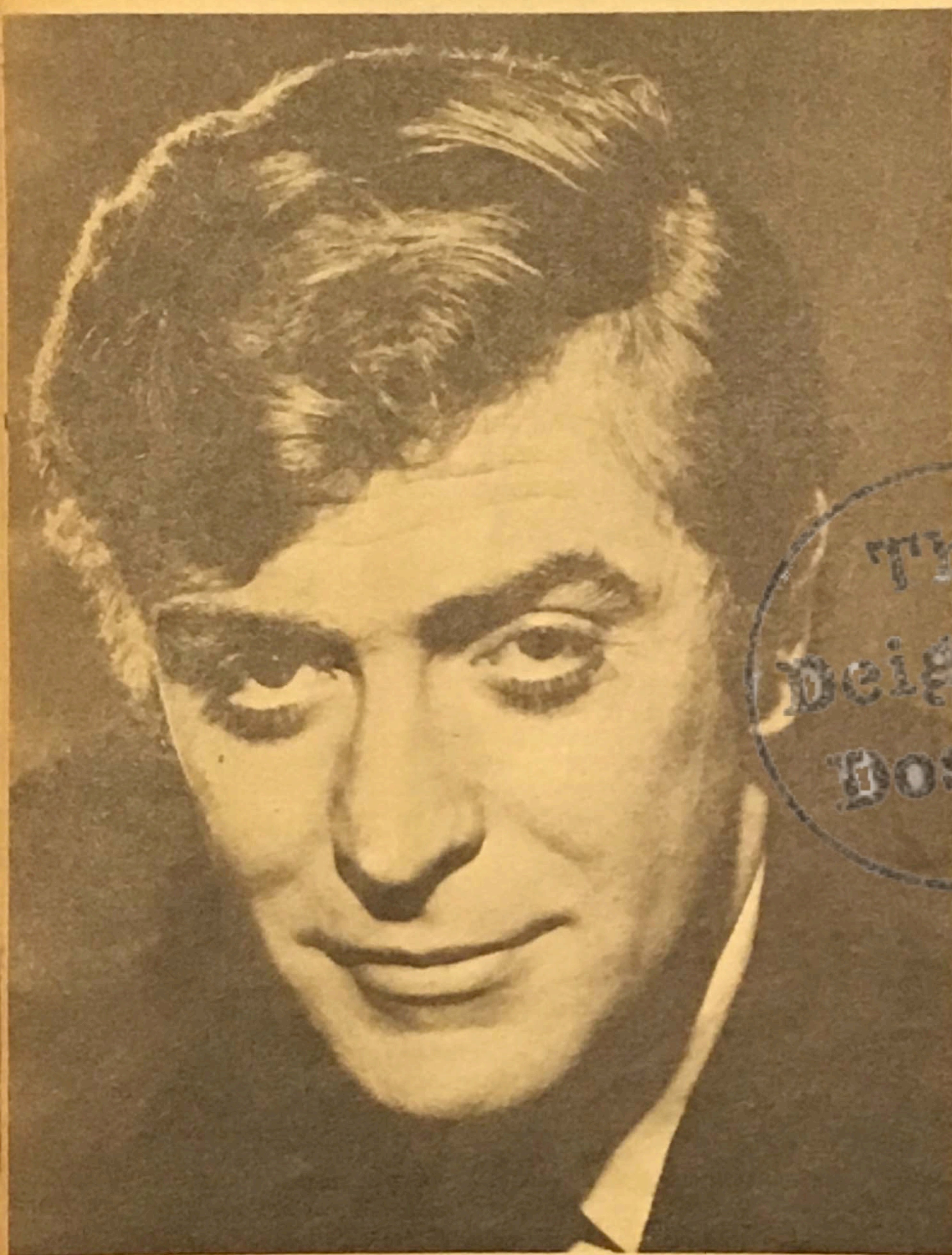
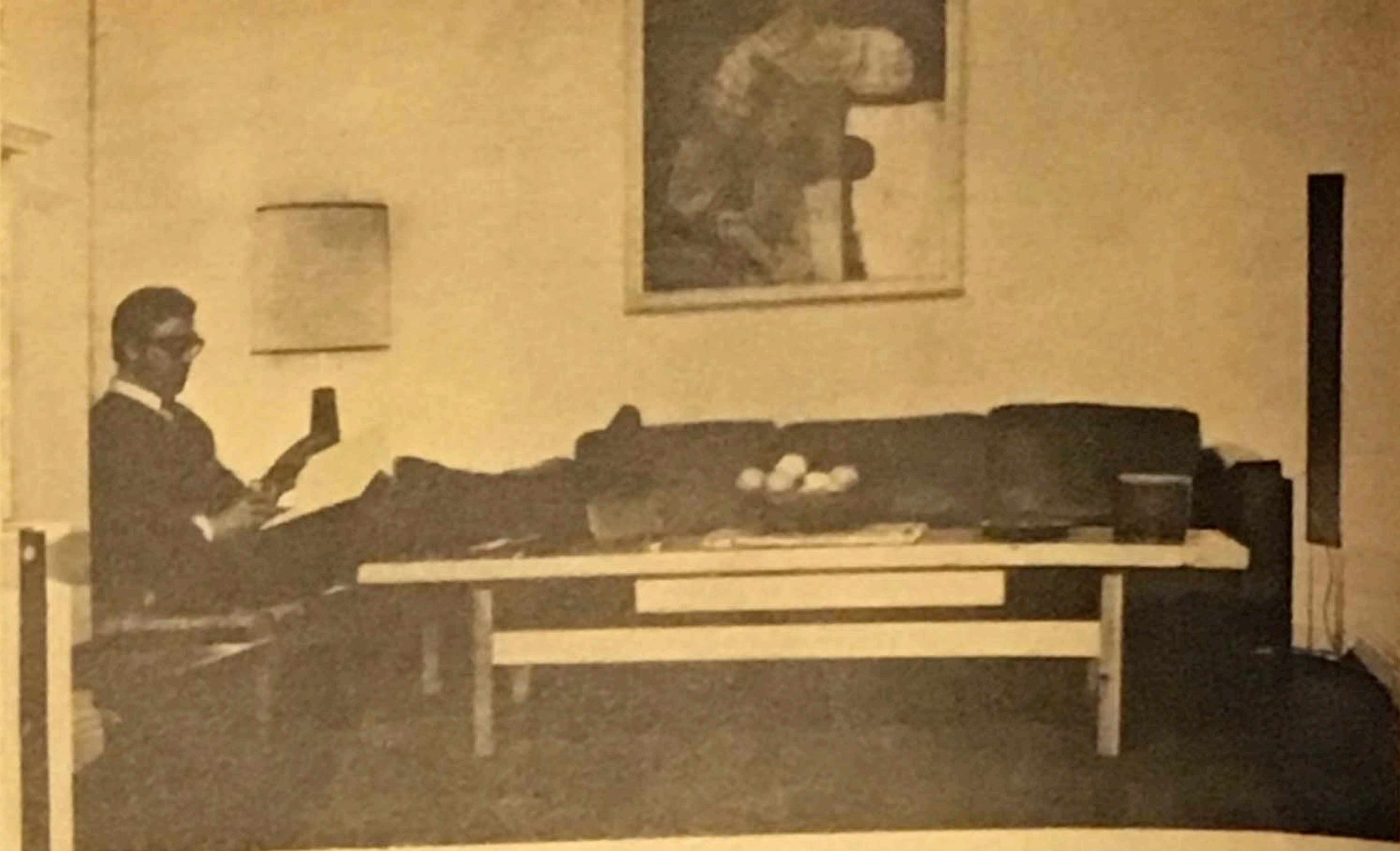


# MICHAEL CAINE

EXCLUSIVE  
INTERVIEW  
BY

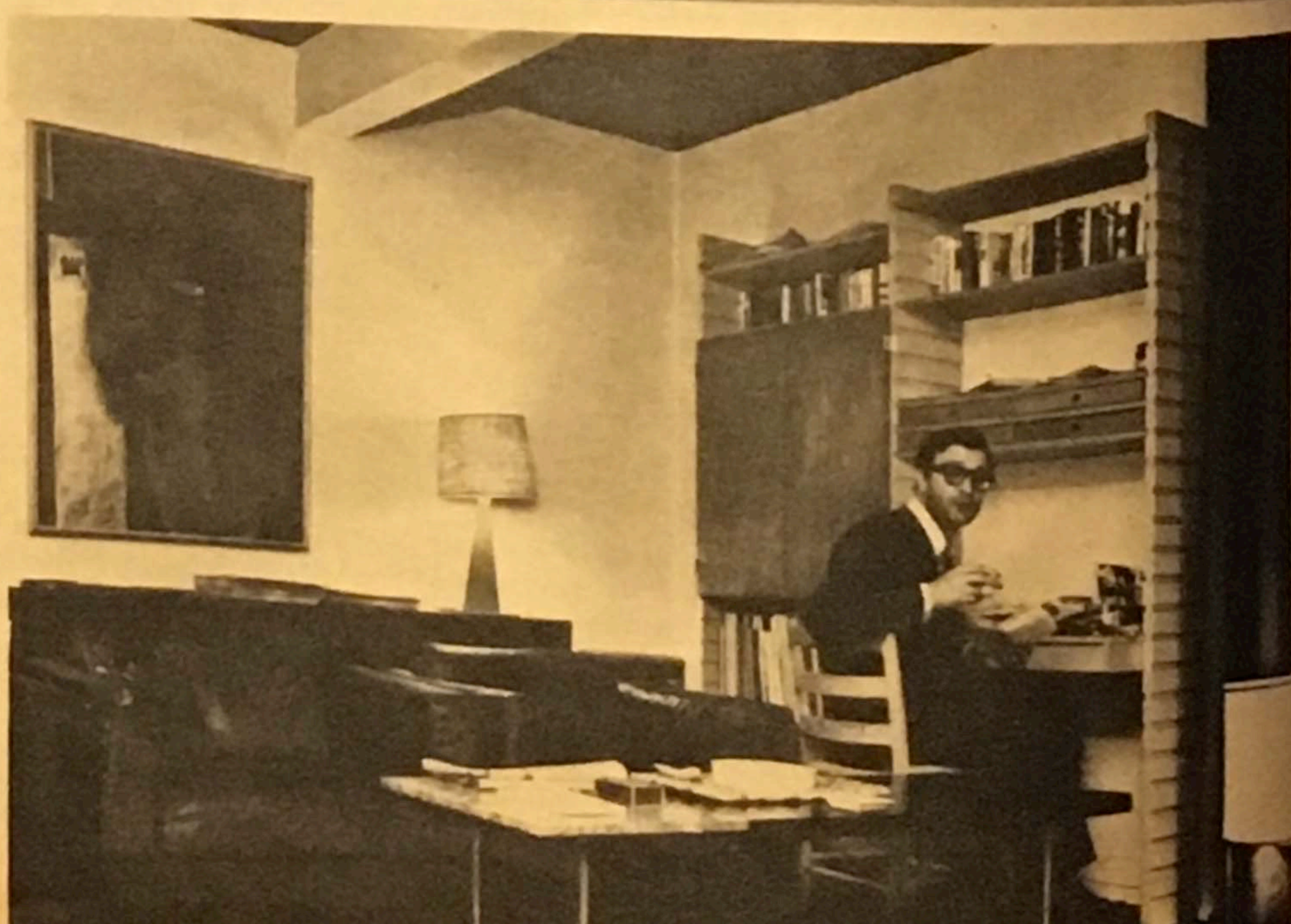
ROMANY BAIN

"It's the eyes," said one swooning fan . . . "It's the RADA accent," says the cockney-in-exile who plays officers and gentlemen



▶ A great believer in casual living, even Caine's tea-making needs minimum effort—no teapot, he just pours the boiling water straight into the cup.

▶ Sitting-room wall fitting is part of the Dino Storage System designed by Zeev Aram. The beechwood uprights, which can be 12" or 22" deep, are grooved at 3" intervals. Caine has slotted in his desk top, shelves, drawers and cupboard to suit.







Far left: Feet up, eyes down, Caine relaxes under one of several Harold Wood paintings he has in his mews flat. Left: The outside effect is almost as peaceful in this away-from-the-madding-crowd corner of Mayfair.

Austere, masculine furniture is the theme throughout; matching teak dressing table and wardrobe with natural wood stool blend with the unusual navy and brown colour scheme.



Another corner of the bedroom—low wardrobe leaves space for an extra light, and parked under a second Harold Wood painting is one of the Turbo-flow heaters which Caine has dotted about as a substitute for central heating.



Huge, cushy bed for a star who obviously takes his comforts seriously; cover is in hessian to match the heavy full-length curtains; bedroom colour scheme navy and brown.



**W**E'RE in for a spate of Down-trodden Spy Films," said the bespectacled six-footer, stretching his tight trousered legs from the depths of a leather sofa. Mata Hari would have envied. "Real down-to-earth thrillers about real spies in real situations," he added, lighting a Gauloise, "and believe me, they present difficulties 007 never knew."

I was taping the first of the D-t. Spies, Michael Caine, who after his superb performance as the officer in *Zulu* has been cast as Harry Palmer, the seedy spy in Harry Saltzman's film of Len Deighton's off-beat espionage novel *The Ipcress File*. At first I was a bit nervous lest my tape would suddenly emit incomprehensible Ipcress noises. But it seemed quite normal and I started to brainwash him about the ethics of spying.

"A good spy must be completely immoral," he said. "He must be a liar and a cheat and a thief. He must be crafty, two-faced, sadistic and a killer. Not exactly a good friend. In fact, to paraphrase Hemingway, if you've got a spy for a friend you don't need an enemy. So he's not exactly a delightful chap to play in the first place. Then there's another little problem. I have been given the leading role in this picture. What's called the starring role when stars play them, so I'm naturally expected to become a star. Now a star is someone who stands out for many reasons. Personality, looks, this sort of thing. But the most important facet of a spy's make-up is that he can mingle into any kind of background, and that he is completely ordinary and self-effacing. So how do you become a star at the same time? I just don't know. And until I see the film I shan't know if I really knew how to play it, instinctively, yet almost by accident. But for someone like myself, it's a pretty scary adventure. You see there's no pre-sold image like James Bond had. Seven million copies of *Dr. No* had been sold before the first film even appeared. There's no great entertainment angle, no glamour in *Ipcress*. No Aston Martin covered in trick guns to take your mind off things. There's just this Harry Palmer. Why, he didn't even have a name in the book. We gave it to him. It's all in the first person. It's a pretty scary responsibility for the joker playing the part.

"But Harry Palmer has one saving grace. He's a reluctant spy. He's been blackmailed into it, which is the way they get most of their spies in peace time. And he doesn't like the job or his superiors one little bit. In fact he sends it up rotten the whole time. He's got a quick tongue and an eye on the main chance, so you can get a lot of fun and humour out of it. That's what I've tried to do. If I haven't, I've failed, and that's that. But I have tried very hard."

#### Office-boy start

This most likeable, fairly modest Londoner, who wears horn-rims on and off the set and is the first screen hero to do so since Harold Lloyd, is a professional actor who has learnt the hard way, seen a lot of life, and deserves a break. Born in the Old Kent Road on March 14, 1933, his mother was an office cleaner, his father worked in Billingsgate Fish Market as a porter. He lived in the Elephant and Castle area all his life, except for six years during the war when he was evacuated to Norfolk. He was educated at Wilson's Grammar School, Peckham, and his first job when he left school was as an office boy for a film producer. Although he wanted to become a film director he didn't seem to be getting on very fast and he took a series of other jobs, including pneumatic drill operator, warehouse worker, and a cement mixer on construction sites. (The only exercise he takes now is on a parallel bar fixed to his wardrobe!)

Suddenly he decided he wanted to be an actor and joined the famous boys' "Clubland" drama classes in the evenings.

He was twenty by the time he had done his national service, part of it in Korea, and he returned to a job in Smithfield Meat Market, till he saw an advertisement for an Assistant Stage Manager in a Repertory Company at Horsham, and signed on for £2 10s. a week.

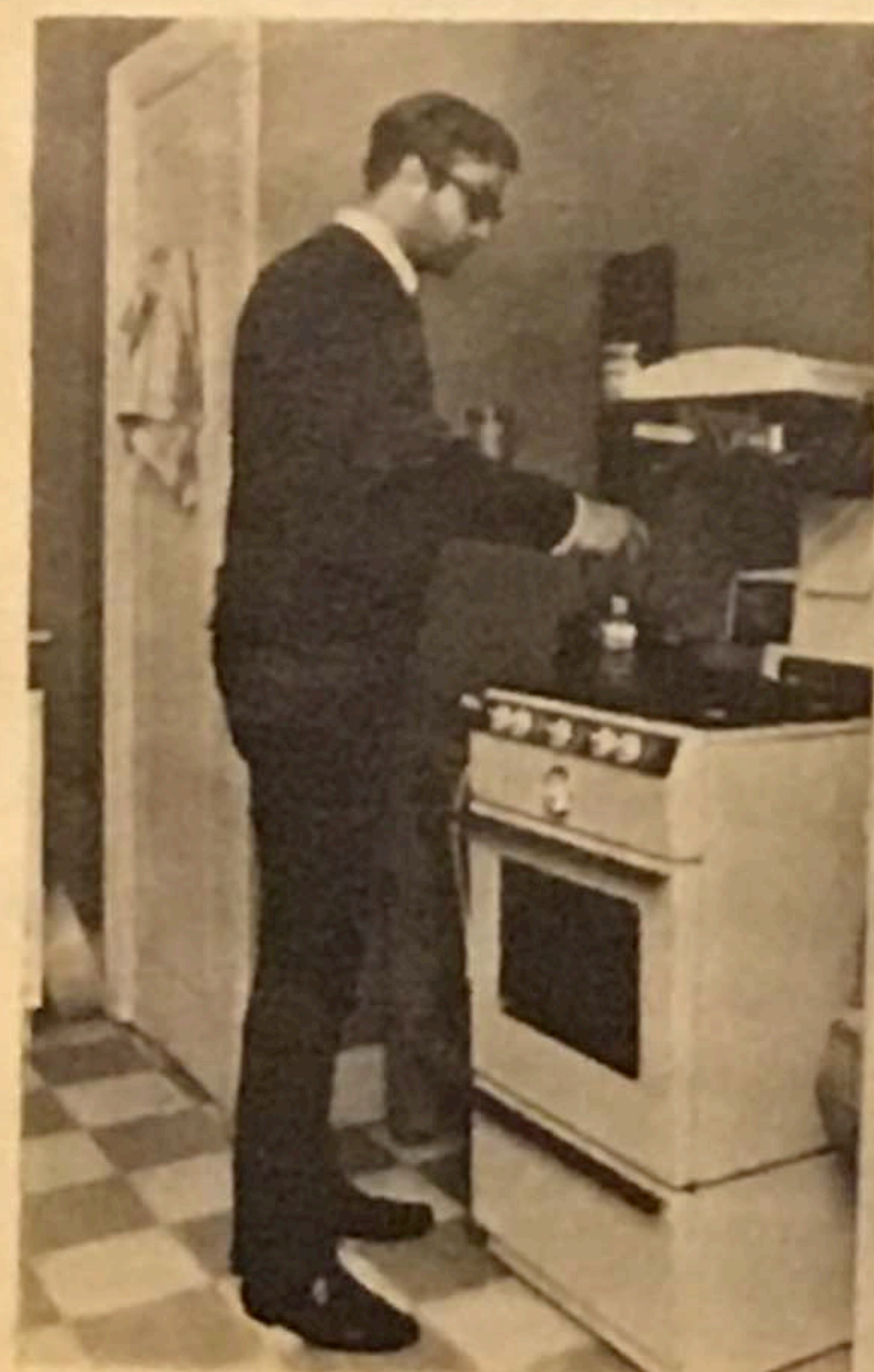
But it was a struggle. Golden haired and with an athlete's physique, he played every kind of juvenile lead in rep., and learnt the language and accent used by his ex-RADA contemporaries. (It was to stand him in good stead when he finally hit the headlines in *Zulu*.)

#### Arrived with *Zulu*

A short, inglorious stint at Theatre Workshop and five years as a television bit player kept him in work, just. Meanwhile, in 1955, he married Patricia Hayes, from whom he is now divorced, and they have a seven-year-old daughter.

But people began to notice him. A small part in the film *Hill in Korea*, understudying Peter O'Toole in *The Long and the Short and the Tall*, and playing it on tour, a good Cockney part in *Next Time I'll Sing to You* and Horatio in the BBC's *Elsinore Hamlet* all added to his reputation as an actor with a touch of star quality about him. With *Zulu* he had definitely arrived. And with the release of *The Ipcress File* there is every...

Cooking joints and fry-ups is a favourite Caine hobby when an anti-social mood takes him, so his super gas cooker isn't just for show.







## MICHAEL CAINE

... possibility that he will be a name to conjure with by the summer.

People in the business have great faith in him. He has been signed up for eleven films by Harry Saltzman, who is also half the producing management for the James Bond films... which can't be bad. So the future looks promising.

When he signed the contract in June, the first thing he did was to move out of the furnished flat he shared with Terence Stamp and take a five year lease on a mews property at Marble Arch. "I only brought with me an electric razor and a teaspoon. It's cost me £3,000 so far, but I reckoned that either I'm going to be rich enough to have a big expensive place or I shall be so poor I shan't even be able to afford to live here, so five years seemed a good length of time," he chuckled, and lit another Gauloise.

Like most actors, Caine collects mascots; he lines up his Trolls and Gunks on top of a mirror.

He has decorated the sitting room and bedroom but hardly started on the rest. The room we were in is very elegant, very muted, very warm and relaxing, and though modern, quite unclinical.

"The whole place is designed to be shut off and insulated against cold and sound, so I can play stereo as loud as I like and not disturb anyone."

The basic idea behind this room is that all the materials and colours are natural. The sitting-room walls are Japanese grass papered, others all over the house are cloth or hessian. All the furniture is either leather, teak or unvarnished wood. The colours are all autumnal, ranging from tweedy orange curtains through every shade of beige and brown, including rushes in a jar. "I hate bright colours. I've done the bedroom in navy and brown," he admitted. (And very masculine and old school tie it looks.)

The lights are well placed, and especially planned so that it gets darker towards the television. The heating is all by turbo-flow fires, though he eventually intends to have central heating, and he has bought a much-admired, angular free-standing Hotpoint fire. "So people can't all crouch around it like they do when they are stuck on a wall."

## Young men lag behind

His clothes are spare and sombre, and usually blue. "I favour a way of dressing that is casual but very expensive," he explained. "I only wear suits when I have to. My trademark is my blue button down shirt which I always wear because I cannot stand those bones that go in, and always get bent at the laundry when you forget to take them out, and which you can never find when you want to, so little bits of collar wrinkle and stick up in the wrong places."

On the whole he thinks young men in England still lag behind their continental counterparts.

"On the Continent men of 40 wear the clothes a man of 20 thinks are way out here. And so many men still wear wide bottomed trousers with turn-ups. I just can't stand the way tailors in England still cut great floppy legs and baggy bottoms. And those awful sports jackets that make the slimmest man look as if he has a huge behind." (His are skin tight.)

"I dig the very young kids though. I think their clothes are very smart. They're just not going to be pushed around any more. At sixteen I was scared of everyone over 21, and tried to emulate my elders. The younger generation now say 'to hell

with it'. Of course they're better looked after, and they don't have to go out and search for things. They've got everything in their own circle. They don't need adults any more."

If they did they might copy Mr. Caine and his gang of eye-catching chums who invite a lot of publicity wherever they go. Known as pace setters, their presence in restaurants and clubs sends up the pleb. customers. "Nightlife is hard to find in London," he said sadly. "Everyone is looking for where it swings. Some paper mentions a group of actors frequenting a certain place, and all the guys think 'well, er- if these guys go there, there must be some dolly birds around.' The next time you try and book you can't get a table, or if you can, you don't recognize a single face in the club."

## Original king-size chip

Caine is a bit moody socially. "I have spates of staying out till four in the morning for a couple of weeks, and then I sit in here and get terribly involved with television and cook myself joints and fry ups. I have every kind of record for every kind of mood and I just go into retreat."

I asked him if he had the chip so many successful young men with his background seem to collect.

"I did have. I used to have the original king-size working-class chip, but it's very hard to feel underprivileged in here," he grinned looking round the room. Which is more than sensible of him, as I can't stand chaps who have made it yet feel they're being got at all the time.

Michael's divorce has not put him off marriage. "I'm a great believer in it," he said quietly. "I'll get married again eventually because I'd like a lot of children. It's insecurity that ruins marriages, and though on the surface I suppose I still look pretty insecure to a husband snatcher, I'm not really. It's just that when you get this sort of near to—sort of er, (cough) making it, when you fall, you don't half fall a long way," he said, shaking his head.

"I wouldn't want to let anyone in for that. I would hate to share failure with someone, because I regard it as a personal disgrace. I'd loathe to be watched going through it. If 'Ipcress' flops, I shall shut myself away from everyone. I shan't go out at all, but just sit here till the rent runs out."

I believe he almost meant it. But I think it's pretty improbable that Michael Caine will be missing from the West End scene once Harry Palmer hits the espionage trail. If he is, he's got a super flat to be miserable in. ●

## SHE TUCKS THEM IN

## And so to bed

BY M. ALEXANDER

THEY are the most blessed gift of all, children. Especially when they are tucked up in bed and you can put your feet up for ten minutes.

Now you must read the news so as to be bright and knowledgeable when your husband comes home.

The flat is tidy. You put on some lipstick, comb your hair and pick up the newspapers.

"Mumme, I'm hungry."

"Darling, you had a big tea."

"Mummy, I AM hungry."

"Well, don't wake Jonathan. Go and get a biscuit and run back to bed."

Patter, patter. James arrives at the kitchen. Reaches the biscuit tin and drops it on the floor. Horrible noise of biscuits and crumbs trodden underfoot as a triumphant voice calls, "I've found a chocolate biscuit."

James appears with a hot melting biscuit to sit on Mummy's knee and have a little cuddle. When the biscuit is finished you suggest that James goes and washes his hands and face.

Noises off from the bathroom insinuate that both taps are full on and the plug is plugged in.

Heavy breathing and grunts. Then...

"Mummy, I can't turn off the taps."

A little later, all is quiet. You've wiped up the puddle and picked up the paper.

"Mummy—quickly!"

"What is it?"

"I can't get this Plasticine off my eyebrows."

Never in the field of a mother's endeavour has so much Plasticine that cost so little, gone so far.

Back to the bathroom...



CANADA. Playing on granny's knee must be pretty chilly for this Eskimo nipper. Not that he's neglected—Eskimos believe in displaying "great patience, some discipline and devoted attention" in bringing up their children—clothes are obviously of secondary importance.

"Mummy, Mummy, Mummeeee!"

Just ignore it. Be firm. You've got to be cruel to be kind. Children need discipline.

"Mummy, I haven't cleaned my teeth."

"Mummy, I haven't CLEANED MY TEETH."

"In the morning, darling, you're tired now."

You are promptly reminded that everyone, from God, the dentist, Daddy and the lady on television will be angry if James is not allowed to clean his teeth this instant. Memories of the last time James tried to bring half an inch of toothpaste from the tube to his brush prise you from your chair and into the bathroom for the third time.

Five blissful minutes of silence, then a tentative suggestion.

"You went when you came out of the bath," you answer.

"Well, I want to go again."

"All right, Remember to pull the chain."

Patter, patter, patter.

"Now go straight back to bed."

Then comes the final...

"Mummy, you didn't kiss me goodnight."

You put on more lipstick and feel the need of a sherry. Well, why not?

You raise the glass to your lips and the front door opens.

"Hello, darling—had a good day?" ●

● If coping single-handed is too much, you can have peace of mind (if not peace absolute) with a Tri-onic Baby Alarm (£5/2/6 from Army & Navy Stores); a two-way microphone in baby's room and two-way speaker in yours give prompt warning of nocturnal activities; you can admonish or soothe without leaving your easy chair—or nice warm bed as the case may be.