

WAR N' PEACE



PART B

Sixteen-page supplement
War poetry • Protest music
Robert Capa • CND interview
Bertolt Brecht • Brownies

The Beaver

2nd December 2008
Newspaper of the
London School of Economics
Students' Union

Student anger at 'stealth ID cards'

> New visa rules seen as trial for ID card database > UGM resolution against plan passed

Matthew Willis

The Students' Union has resolved to mount a "sustained campaign" against the government's National Identity Scheme which it says "represents the biggest attack on our civil rights in decades."

Under the scheme, all British citizens and foreign nationals will be required to register for a biometric ID card which will carry up to fifty pieces of personal information on them and be linked to the National Identity Register, a centralised database overseen by the Home Office.

The Students' Union General Meeting voted last Thursday to suspend its standing orders in order to debate a motion which slammed the government's plans.



Students vote at the UGM
Erik Lang

The motion passed with a significant majority.

The motion stated that "no one should have to be fingerprinted, iris-scanned and charged for a licence just to live in their own country." With respect to foreign students, the motion read: "International students should not have to be fingerprinted, iris-scanned and charged for a licence just to study in the United Kingdom."

The government sees the scheme as the solution to monitor illegal activities including identity theft, illegal immigration, benefit fraud and terrorism.

The first phase of the rollout, which began last Tuesday, targets international students from outside the European Economic Area and foreign nationals married to British citizens.

International students will be requested to undergo a face-scan and provide fingerprints when applying for or renewing

their visas. Those who refuse to enrol will be denied entry, or face deportation.

Dr Edgar Whitley of the LSE Management Department said that the government is targeting international students and married foreign nationals first because "as a whole those are the ones who they believe are the most likely to be at risk of staying longer than they're allowed to and therefore becoming illegal immigrants."

The UGM motion was proposed by Maria Werdine, an masters student in European Identity, who could become the first LSE student directly affected by the government's programme.

A Brazilian who did her Bachelors at Bournemouth university, Werdine was granted a three-year student visa in 2005. The visa will expire on 30 November. Based on the date she submitted her visa renewal application, Werdine expects to be required to register for one of the govern-

ment's new ID cards.

Werdine said: "It's not only that it's a civil liberties issue, but it's the fact it's being forced on a section of the population that can't complain because a black mark will go on your file. I'm not just talking about the right to be able to have an ID card or not, but also the right to complain without having to worry. Basic rights should not be based on citizenship but on one's status as a human being."

Students' Union General Secretary Aled Dilwyn Fisher said it was "cowardly" to "go for vulnerable minority groups first" who have no political voice. Besides requesting that the LSE condemn the introduction of the National Identity Scheme as "an outright attack on our civil liberties," Fisher intends to establish a task force, mandated by the motion, to combat the scheme.



Zeeshan Malik

LSE students join Mumbai candle vigil

Over two hundred people gathered outside the Indian Consulate building on the Aldwych on Sunday to hold a candlelit vigil in memory of the dead.

Several LSE students attended. Students' Union International Students Officer Ayushman Sen was among them.

"The gathering was an important step in showing our solidarity, as humans, towards addressing a problem that isn't limited to Indians only, but affects each and every one of us," Sen said. "Personally I hope to see some positive action taken towards tackling an issue of this magnitude, and my thoughts are with all those who have been affected."

Marie Dunaway

Survey reveals LSE staff stress and bullying levels

> Long hours and students stress out one in four

Erica Gornall

Over one in four LSE staff members are suffering from stress and 13 per cent feel bullied, harassed or discriminated against, a recent LSE staff survey has shown.

The survey, conducted by the Director's

Management Team late last year, found 26 per cent who felt that "the amount of stress that they experienced was quite inappropriate or very inappropriate in relation to their job." Stress levels were reported to be equally high between staff groups and departments.

Reasons for stress included long hours, pressure to increase revenue for department heads, management pressures and students. Thirty-three percent of staff stated that "students' high expectations can cause me problems."

The drive to increase student numbers without a proportional increase in funding has also been noted as a problem for some departments.

Two months after the survey results were published, the LSE's internal Staff Consultative Committee said that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had

reported that the LSE "was insufficiently pro-active in its policies for dealing with stress."

The HSE also said that: "the School's current resources for dealing with individual cases of stress were inadequate."

LSE officials stated that "as a matter of course" staff under stress can be directed towards counselling services. However, in May, five months after the survey was published, the counsellor employed to help Staff was reportedly on sick leave and "alternative arrangements" could not be made, leaving no counsellor available specifically for staff under stress around this period.

The report also revealed that over 140 staff members (13%) felt that they had "suffered from bullying, harassment and discrimination during the three years prior to the survey." Respondents mainly did

not want to say or did not know what the cause of their bullying was, but 14 per cent of them said that they suffered due to their gender, 12 percent due to their age and 11 percent due to their ethnicity. There were more cases in central administration than in academic, teaching and research areas.

However, only 15 people approached the Anti-Harassment Panel around the time of the survey. This has caused concern that people suffering in their jobs at the LSE are not coming forward.

School academic Dr Chris Husbands, who is the President of the University and College Union (UCU) Committee, feels that the process is too "cumbersome" for a lot of people suffering for bullying. He also thinks that the official routes are sometimes frustrating for complainants.

Husbands said: "I have also occasionally been surprised... at the outcomes of

some past bullying cases... One needs to be wary against the dismissal as merely a particular management style of what, according to the definition of the School's own procedures, would undoubtedly constitute bullying."

The LSE have said that they take cases of bullying, harassment and discrimination very seriously and that they encourage all sufferers to report their cases to the Anti-Harassment Panel: "It is for individual members of staff to raise concerns or complaints; so if they do consider that they are being bullied or harassed we would advise them to approach the Panel for advice."

In light of the results surrounding stress and staff bullying, the School has said that there will be another survey in a year's time in which the areas of stress and bullying will be looked at more closely.

Collective

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Editorial Board

Executive Editor

Joseph Cotterill
editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Managing Editor

Michael Deas
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk

News Editor

Ali Moussavi
news@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Comment Editor

Sean Whittington Roy
comment@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Features Editors

Chun Han Wong
Daniel Jason
features@thebeaveronline.co.uk



Social Editor

Erik Lang
social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Sports Editors

Sam Tempest Keeping
Rob Low
sports@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Part B Editor

Holli Eastman
partb@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Photography Editor

Zeeshan Malik
photography@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Design Editor

George Wetz
design@thebeaveronline.co.uk

The Beaver would like to thank the LSE students who contributed to this issue. The Beaver is published by the London School of Economics' Student's Union, East Building, Houghton Street, WC2A 2AE. Printed at Guardian Print Centre, Rick Roberts Way, Stratford, London E15 2GN.

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Contact The Beaver
info@thebeaveronline.co.uk
0207 955 6705

East Building
LSE Students' Union
London WC2A 2AE

Residences

Union consultation finds halls residents suffer in silence

Ali Moussavi

Students' Union officers have found that LSE halls of residence are poorly equipped to deal with students' complaints when services are inadequate.

Students' Union Residences Officer Helen Roberts and General Secretary Aled Dilwyn Fisher have been visiting individual halls of residence to meet residents and discuss problems.

So far, four halls of residence have held meetings between Students' Union officers and residents - High Holborn, Passfield, Lilian Knowles and Carr Saunders.

Residents' problems have ranged from malfunctioning taps in rooms' individual sinks to faulty central heating, which has been affecting three of the four halls which were visited.

The problems with heating in halls have continued from the last academic year. For six weeks in the months of January and February 2008, residents in Passfield Hall were left with sporadic heating in their rooms, coinciding with cold weather.

Sources confirm that the problem existed when the LSE's refurbishment of Passfield took place two years ago, but that the refurbishment did not include

upgrades for the boilers due to price concerns.

In order to improve students' awareness of the complaints procedure in the individual halls, the Students' Union Executive is considering several solutions.

Roberts is currently considering a plan to flyer under the doors of all halls explaining the procedure, directing students to an online link for the complaints procedure.

Several individual halls are currently holding elections for their committees. Roberts has stressed the importance of their roles in representing students' concerns to the Residences division at the LSE and the individual halls' administrations.

The Students' Union Executive has plans to incorporate halls representatives into the structures of the Union in order to improve coordination on residences and welfare issues.

Roberts and Fisher plan to visit the other LSE halls in the next two weeks.

Roberts said: "It's a great opportunity to talk directly to students about issues they have in halls. Student participation in the complaints procedure is essential to direct the School towards the needs of residents."

Costs at issue as School mulls catering cutbacks



Ali Moussavi

LSE Halls of Residences' catering services are all currently loss-making prompting the School to state that "continuing catering in its current form is clearly unfeasible."

Several options are currently under consideration by the School to scale down the catering services in halls of residence.

Bankside, where the canteen makes approximately a £20,000 loss, is currently piloting the closing down of a number of the kitchens on all the floors in order to stop them from diverting business away from the catering facilities.

However, Students' Union officers

have pointed out that while the LSE is attempting to close down kitchens to encourage students to eat at the canteen, the prices at the canteen have increased.

At Carr Saunders, where the loss is at £10,000, the School is considering either reducing the size of the canteen and moving it to the ground floor from the top floor, or closing the canteen down completely. It currently runs a catering service for 156 students.

The School claims that the closure of the canteen on the top floor of Carr Saunders would enable the construction of ensuite bedrooms and flats. The School has made the argument that the closure of the canteen will save labour costs of £62,000 and bring in an additional estimated income of £20,000 - £35,000 annually from the room rental.

Mind & Body Week

Food for the mind, thought for the body

Week 9 Michaelmas Term 1st - 5th December

The LSE Students' Union brings you a series of events, speakers and activities to help you unwind from the stresses of life and maximise your wellbeing.

Events include

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ AU Test Your Team ▲ Global Cycle ▲ Samaritans: Mental health and studying ▲ MAB Quiz ▲ Mind, a mental health charity talk ▲ Blood-drive ▲ Bone marrow drive ▲ Chlamydia screening session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▲ Free Paintball ▲ Fresh fruit ▲ Chill Out Session with free masseuse ▲ Wii tournament ▲ Alternative sports ▲ Pilates ▲ HIV AIDS global game workshop
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Plus loads of freebies, prizes and giveaways!!!

For more information contact su.edwelfare@lse.ac.uk

Students' Union media

Clare back in the community

Long-dead LSE student journal returns to Houghton Street



George Bernard Shaw is the face of Clare Market Review's promotion campaign. Print copies of the revived student journal will be available from week 10
Photo: George Wetz

Joseph Cotterill

She's back, bolder than ever - and online. The Clare Market Review, LSE's original student journal of arts and academia, will return to campus this term after a thirty-year absence.

Student will be able to pick up the first print edition of the new Clare from week 10 of this term. A website of poems, music videos and essays was set up two weeks ago.

The Clare Market Review was founded at LSE in 1905, predating the Beaver as a student publication by forty-four years. As well as recording events around the School, the Review attracted academic and cultural writing talent.

George Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell contributed to its earliest issues; by the Review's closure in 1976, their places had been taken by Brian Eno and the Liverpool poet Roger McGough.

The first issue of the new Clare will include a feature on McGough's poetry.

Students Daniel Yates, Sean Baker and Alex Jones have led the relaunch since its

planning stages last year. At Freshers' Fair this term, a further editorial board of twenty-five students was recruited, including an art department.

The rebranded Clare will replace the Script, the Students' Union's defunct periodical.

"The Script had dwindled," Baker said. "We wanted to set up a magazine and talked to last year's sabbatical officers about it," Jones added. "They suggested taking over the Script, but they also brought to our attention the Clare Market Review."

Daniel Yates, an anthropology student and former Beaver Part B editor, had already had the idea of reviving the Review.

"Dan wanted the cream of the academic cream, the best possible content you can imagine," Jones said. "He had in his mind a really academic journal." Baker and Jones met Yates and came to Clare with an alternative "trashy, magazine-y" vision.

"We met in the middle and combined vibes from both," Baker said. Yates also became a creative force in Clare's design, look, and style.

Behind Clare's aesthetic and purpose, Jones said, were the figures of George Bernard Shaw and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, the LSE's founders and frequent Clare Market Review contributors.

"It was about linking back to the heri-

tage of LSE and moving away from this idea of LSE as a factory churning out students for work in the City," he said.

Clare was born. Nu-rave versions of Shaw, the Webbs, and Bertrand Russell have graced Clare's image and website from the start. "We worked on the concept over the summer, and it continued to get developed until this weekend, really," Jones said.

A significant online presence was part of that concept. "We also wanted a community," Baker added. "Everyone needs a website," Jones said, but "LSE doesn't really have a student web space. It seemed like LSE students needed somewhere online just to be students."

Sean Deel, a Global Politics MSc student, designed the Clare website over a weekend and developed video content for the journal.

This included a talking heads montage produced in conjunction with Loose TV, the Students' Union's television production unit. "In order for people to understand what Clare was about, there needed to be some new way of getting it across," Jones said.

Baker said the website would change how Clare operated. First and second years could use the website to hone their writing skills, while content posted online would

From claremarketreview.com

The Synonymous Tango

Nishant Bagadia

particles walking with blindfolds in the dark matter swirling around the Sun; she argues it is the minute spent kneeling at the altar; her minute in prayer rings the bell at God's door. When I arrived they were doing the tango to a forsaken melody. Melodious notes leave their pipes to journey the boundary between matter and anti-matter: my mind and my dreams—a ghost train crashing through Earth with no reaction; tracks in all directions network an eighth dimension, a clock pendulates uncontrollably until the second hand stops, a heart attack. At this moment God pauses my perception of time; taking my hand through a silent film on a chronology of life in reverse; Her child born in a distant galaxy after being murdered here on Earth.

also be used in the print edition.

"I kind of dream that the website can be more open, and the print edition can explore issues from there in more detail," Jones added, suggesting online activity would play a large part in its presence on campus.

"She's opening up a space for more creative endeavours," said Jessi Tabalba, one of two communities editors tasked with promoting Clare to the wider world. Tabalba, also studying for a masters in Global Politics, said her role was "getting Clare's name out in the community, making our name known in London - in Europe - and getting Clare back to the level of prestige she used to have."

"Many LSE students are very creative but they don't necessarily have the means to pursue that in the mainstream of LSE," Tabalba added. Clare now filled that space, she said.

And not just for LSE students. Baker confirmed that several arts and creative media students from Camberwell College of Art and the London College of Communication had helped design Clare and create videos and music for it. Clare would aim at a wider relationship with even more University of Arts London students in the future, he added.

New international visa rules

Analysis

International students now on front lines of ID card debate

Matthew Willis

Labour has billed the National Identity Scheme as the solution to a raft of illegal activities including identity theft, illegal immigration, benefit fraud and terrorism, but its attempts to sell the scheme to the public have been hampered by its inability to identify who is supposed to benefit from it.

In 2005, Tony McNulty, the Home Office minister then responsible for the scheme acknowledged that the government might have misrepresented the benefits of ID cards to the public. McNulty said: "Perhaps in the past the government, in its enthusiasm, oversold the advantages of identity cards. We did suggest, or at least implied, that they might well be a panacea for identity fraud, for benefit fraud, terrorism, entitlement and access to public services. In its enthusiasm, the government over-emphasised the benefits to the state rather than for the individual."

The government's current approach seems to be to emphasise the protection the programme offers. Announcing the first phase of the rollout last week, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said: "Foreign nationals living and working and studying here legally want to be able to prove that easily, and we want to be able to prevent those here illegally from benefitting from the privileges of Britain."

A representative of the UK Border Agency, Alex Lahood, explained that "by enrolling [foreign nationals] in this process, we enable their identity to be checked easily and to be checked to a very high standard, so should they be victim of identity fraud, or somebody attempt to manipulate their identity for any reason, it's a lot easier for us to help them establish that they are who they say they are."

Dr David Collins, of the Association of Colleges, said the programme would help weed out those foreign students who "try to get into college who don't really want to be students."

General Course student Eugene Micollet was willing to accept the implementation of the scheme in principle. "If the government believes this programme can increase our safety here, whether it's preventing illegal immigration or terrorist activities... if it believes it can achieve those benefits, then I'm in favour of carrying the ID cards," he said.

However, LSE student Joyce Lin, who is studying for a masters in City Design, does not accept the government's claim that it is trying to make life easier for non-

EEA nationals. "It's as if there's an underlying assumption that all the non-EU students are potentially untrustworthy or something," Lin said.

Although the LSE have said officially that they are unable to take a political stance on the matter, the School has pointed out that it was "not aware of any difficulties at LSE with bogus visas."

Critics have accused the government of going too far. Noting that 50 categories of personal details will be included as part of each person's record, campaign group NO2ID warns that the National ID Scheme will concentrate vast amounts of data in the hands of the state. The group has pointed out that because identity verification will become a part of such everyday transactions as bank visits and medical appointments, and because exhaustive records of these kinds of transactions could be stored in the central database, the scheme could produce a government-accessible life history of every registered individual, "to be retained even after death."

The civil liberties pressure group Liberty, which is headed by LSE Governor Shami Chakrabarti, warns as well as fundamentally altering "the relationship between individual and state," the National ID Scheme could harm race relations and "adversely affect vulnerable groups in society."

Both Liberty and NO2ID believe that the scheme will fail to accomplish its stated goals. Research carried out by NO2ID has suggested that there is no link between the use of identity cards and the prevalence of terrorism. The New York, London and Madrid terrorist attacks were carried out by individuals with valid identification.

LSE academic Dr Edgar Whitley, who recently completed a study of the public's perception of surveillance, observed that opinion polls have indicated "a gradual decline in support for identity cards alongside growing unease about the 'surveillance society.'" He writes that "there is an important role for the academy to play in informing public debate about important, technologically based issues."

Professor Christopher Coker, who heads the LSE International Relations Department, said that in his view, the UK is still a liberal society from which no one has been excluded. Airport screenings are not carried out on people according to their ethnicity, for instance.

But, he said, the UK may well have become a "risk society."

We screen everyone because of our acute anxiety and over time anxiety is corrosive. There is a 'culture of control' in this country... and over time that may change the discourse on civil liberties without anyone being aware of it," he said.

Protest complaints filed

Two formal complaints have been filed against the Metropolitan Police in relation to the demonstration outside the New Academic Building during its official opening by the Queen.

Protesters claim the police prevented a lawful protest from taking place and used unlawful violence against LSE student Joe Sammut.

Two separate complaints have been made to the police. Sammut has made an allegation of assault by a police officer and student Michael Deas has made a separate complaint about police preventing the demonstration.

The group were demonstrating against the naming of a lecture theatre after former UAE life-president Sheikh Zayed, who illegalised homosexuality in the UAE and is accused of allowing human rights

abuses. The demonstrators say they were also making a stand against "the corporate and unethical direction of the LSE".

Sammut has been told that his complaint has been passed on to a senior officer. Deas' complaint was initially investigated by the officer responsible for the operation but will now be dealt with by a different officer after Deas complained the officer would be unable to hold his own operation to account.

All students have this week been emailed by the General Secretary Aled Fisher and Head of LSE Security Paul Thornbury, who are appealing for anyone who witnessed the event to email su.gensec@lse.ac.uk and make a statement.

Loren Davy



Your Union consultation begins

Erica Gornall



The Students' Union held the first of many targeted meetings this week to get students' views on the upcoming Your Union consultation which the Executive intends to use to reform Students' Union structures.

The Executive has launched the Your Union consultation as part of a widespread reform of the Students' Union. General Secretary Aled Fisher said that the reform of the Students' Union will be a comprehensive process in which he will aim to get as many students involved as possible.

Last week, Fisher and other Executive Officers held meetings with Students' Union societies to discuss their objectives and suggestions for the consultation. Some said that the meetings were not well attended enough.

Fisher intends to meet hold other meetings and focus groups with various Students' Union bodies and committees including the Athletics Union Executive, the Media Group, the Constitution and Steering Committee.

The consultation will also include members of Union staff. Along with the Your Union consultation, the Students' Union has said that it is conducting an internal review of staffing and structures.

Fisher said that the Your Union consultation is especially important since plans are underway for the School to grant the

Students' Union its own building, which would house student facilities.

Part of the consultation process with the Media Group would involve its suggestions for what facilities a media suite in the new union building should include.

The initial round of targeted meetings is set to finish before the start of Lent Term. The Executive has said that it will report on its findings and send them out to the student body for further discussion to ensure that more views are heard in the Lent Term.

The final proposals will be submitted to the student body in a referendum in the Lent Term elections. In recent weeks, the Union's sabbatical officers have tried to approve the principle of referenda in a UGM motion to amend the Students' Union's Codes of Practice.

Areas which the Executive want the consultation to address include the Union's constitution, which Fisher claims contains inconsistencies and irrelevancies which should be amended.

Fisher has also said that he wants to reform the campaigning ethos of the Union and its structures to include a "solid volunteer activist base" and training for campaigners, such as giving advice to students who want to set up campaigns autonomously.

Finally, in light of the Students' Union's 'bailout' of the Business Society, the Executive intends to look at the funding structure of Students' Union societies, as well as providing societies with skills training. Fisher said that they need to be shown "not just how to book a room, but how to make a successful event work."

Fisher commented on the overall consultation process saying: "Your Union is throwing open the Union to its students to hear what they want from the Union, and our new building that we will be designing this year. This is the first time in a long time that something like this has happened, and I'm looking forward to building a stronger, more active and generally better Union."



Ann Makus

UGM ends in disarray for second week running

> Paper missiles and quoracy return to haunt student meeting

Phyllis Lui

Last Thursday's Union General Meeting ended abruptly for a second consecutive time last week. Officially, Chair Kevin Holder closed the meeting because students were throwing paper missiles at the stage but the meeting is likely to have closed anyhow after a student called for a quoracy count.

Union officials had already begun a head count and there were fewer than the required 150 students at the meeting.

Students sitting in the balcony of the Old Theatre have traditionally enjoyed disrupting proceedings by throwing balls of paper at the speakers on the stage.

But Union officials have been trying to clamp down on the practice after the LSE said it would prevent the Union from holding its weekly meeting on campus if paper throwing continues.

The School says that paper throwing makes it less likely that students with disabilities will attend the meeting, breaking equal opportunities legislation.

The meeting began by ratifying the previous UGM's minutes as the previous had been brought to a close due to an in-quorate amount of students being present. No motions were passed whilst last Thurs-



Paper projectiles are thrown at last Thursday's UGM Ann Makus

day's motion to amend the Codes of Practice was brought forth again, sparking off heated discussions and questions.

After the meeting had closed, a student questioned the Sabbatical officers on whether they have failed to promote the UGM, since both UGMs have not had the requisite 150 students to be quorate.

Aled Dilwyn Fisher, the Students' Union General Secretary replied that in comparison to previous years, the turnouts this term have been quite good and that the Communications Officer, Dan Sheldon, has been doing a good job of promoting the UGM around campus.

Union Jack UGM sketch



Jack is the Beaver's anonymous mole at the Union General Meeting, every Thursday at 1pm

Scholarly opinion still rages on the causes of the Great UGM Crash of 2008. AU paper throwing may have finally tipped the Union's august legislature over the edge: or maybe a stray balcony quoracy count, strafing the stage like tracer fire lighting up a Helmand night, struck the fatal blow. Perhaps the UGM's long-term problems caught up with it at last. Perhaps no amount of half-arsed sabbatical promotion could save it. Perhaps the political debate that used to grace the Old Theatre every Thursday had moved elsewhere.

Perhaps, perhaps. Jack doesn't believe it. Jack's no lily-livered UGM declinist. The meeting he saw last Thursday was in rude health - right up to a wholly undeserved shock ending.

As Jack often likes to point out, UGMs always start well. This one was no different. LSE student politicians hit the ground running with an emergency motion, frothing with fury at some not very nice

new visa rules for international students, introduced via a nasty "stealth deadline" no less. Brazilian masters students were in danger. "It wasn't publicised. It's not good enough," Anti-Racism Officer Seph Brown fumed. Motion passed. Another ad hoc task force now graces our Union. But it was politics in action.

But then it was politics inaction as the referendum motion that killed the last UGM in an orgy of inquoracy lurched back on to the order paper. Jack held his breath.

Referendums already exist, Gen Sec Aled Dilwyn Fisher insisted in support of his plan. "They already happen. They're completely, at the whim of the Executive or the General Secretary. This is about giving calling power to the UGM," he belted. He's giving away dictatorial power, people! Show some gratitude!

"It's not what we do, it's how we do it," James Bacon, the first speaker against the motion, retorted elliptically. "I like the idea of a referendum," he added, pointlessly, "but time needs to be given to sort this out properly." But preferably not a time around the Lent term elections. Students have to endure the ardour of sixteen whole ballots already, without a back-breaking referendum or two chucked in as well. Which was just about the most pointless UGM debating point Jack had ever heard.

Until Communications Officer Daniel Sheldon stepped up to the plate as second speaker for the motion. "This is a good motion," he simpered, and "please increase our relevance to students," he whimpered, like a fat child left out of a football game. Fat chance. The opposition belched out a second speaker. "If the issues are so important, vote on them in a UGM immediately," Charlie Dougherty railed. "We have the UGM for a reason - to pass things."

Oh, Charlie, reality was to prove you sadly wrong. Nemesis had already settled

into his seat in the Old Theatre wings, as if we were all living out some Kafkaesque version of a Greek tragedy, in which sad student pols had usurped the parts of Clytemnestra, Prometheus and the Trojan Women.

Well, sad-act student pols minus the Incredible Hulk. Jack is sorry Fisher didn't like the "hatchet job" he gave him last week. Still, heckling Bacon while he answered questions from the floor, while standing right next to him - not classy. The Lent ballot issue wasn't a problem, Fisher said, because referendums could ruin Michaelmas term elections as well. Jack was unmoved.

It even made Sheldon's return to the fray look good. Hadn't the UGM been rammed to the rafters during the great Israel-Palestine debate last year, showing there was life in the old dear yet? (Ah, Jack remembered it well: two-theatre solution and all). Not at all, he said. Those motions only come round once in a blue moon. As if, Jack thought.

The crapness of Sheldon's argument didn't matter. Because Jack was pleased, so very pleased. The Incredible Sulk notwithstanding, we were actually having a debate about something. Even if that something was a blancmange in a car wash. But is the UGM dead in the water? Jack won't hear of it. He saw the corpse veritably twitching with debate this week. If that's death, count Jack as a dodo.

And then - and then the sky fell in on Jack's world like a flooded Carr-Saunders toilet floor. Jack concedes in the nihilism stakes to no one, not even his Beaver Sport ripoff 'Philosophical Barry' (see page 22, if you must). But that random quoracy count wasn't nice. It wasn't sporting politics at all. Jack can't even blame the sabbatical officers this time. We get the UGM we deserve, and this UGM now melted into nothingness like a blancmange in a car wash. But is the UGM dead in the water? Jack won't hear of it. He saw the corpse veritably twitching with debate this week. If that's death, count Jack as a dodo.

Pulse radio hits out at recording ban at Union meeting

Erica Gornall

Pulse Radio, the Students' Union radio station, has criticised the Union Executive after a Pulse news reporter was asked not to record part of a Constitution and Steering Committee meeting.

The Constitution and Steering Committee ensures Students' Union officials and policy act in accordance with the terms of the Students' Union constitution and meets each week to discuss upcoming Union General Meeting motions.

The committee's meetings are open to all students. Traditionally, recording for reporting purposes has not been curtailed in its meetings.

A reporter from Pulse Radio was told to stop recording because Societies Officer Zoe Cooke did not want her comments to be recorded. Cooke said she was worried that her comments would be taken out of context.

The General Secretary Aled Dilwyn Fisher said that while the meeting was open to all students, he thought there should not be a recording of the meeting if one of the members was uncomfortable. Cooke is not a member of the committee but it is usual for members of the Union's Executive Committee to attend.

Reporter James Bacon said that elected representatives should be held to account in open meetings. "It is an important part of the accountability process that elected

officials, when they make comments, are eligible to be reported on," he said.

Fisher pointed out that minutes were taken at the meeting and that these could be used as point of reference for a news story.

Mark Harrison, Station Manager at Pulse Radio, disagreed, saying that minutes are not accurate enough.

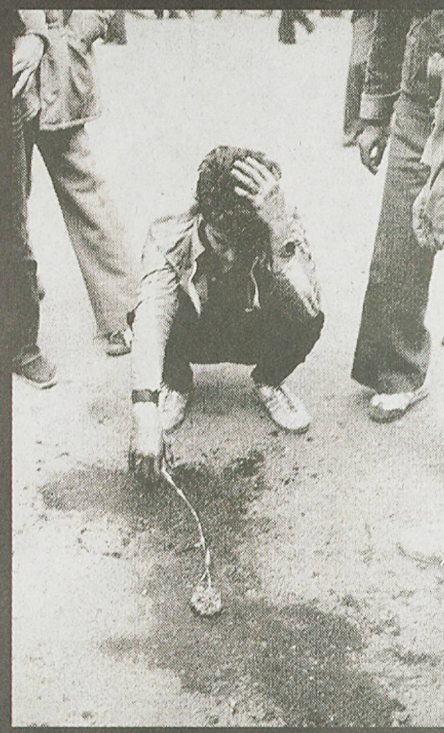
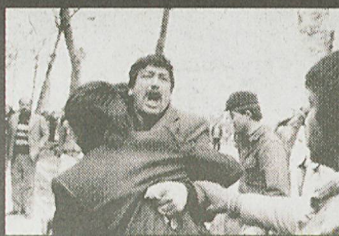
"Minutes, no matter how well they are taken, will never be as accurate as an audio recording," he said. "As a student body we have a right to know exactly what has been said by elected officers in a public meeting, not an approximate gist."

"If we allow elected SU officers to decide when they feel comfortable being recorded in public meetings, we are allowing them to decide when they will and won't be held accountable," Harrison added.

Fisher has since said that in future these rules will need to be clarified. "My opinion is that open meetings should be recorded, and that, in order for people to expect this, a provision for recording of all open meetings should be written into the Codes of Practice," he said. "If this is something that others agree with, I would be very happy for this to form part of the proposals of the Your Union reform of our structures."

"Openness and accountability are key principles of the Students' Union and I support any measure to increase the visibility of our decision-making processes," Fisher added.

Pulse is broadcast online at www.pulse.dj and in the Quad. It is supposed to be played in the Union shop and the Three Tuns Bar but this only happens irregularly.



Think tank proposal to cut fees cap comes under student fire

David Woodbridge

A report by think tank Reform proposing the abolition of the cap on university tuition fees has been attacked by student union leaders and welcomed by the Russell Group of elite British universities.

Current tuition fees for UK and EU undergraduates are capped by the government at £3,145 per year.

Aled Dilwyn Fisher, the General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union, said that the report, from the think tank Reform, represented a projection of Reform's "free market fundamentalism onto Higher Education" and that "to lift the cap on fees would deepen the marketisation of education that has already happened over the past eleven years".

Fisher added that "education should be a right based on academic ability, not a privilege based on ability to pay".

His comments follow the condemnation of the report by the National Union of Students (NUS). The NUS President, Wes Streeting, said that "against the current economic backdrop, it would be extremely

foolish to trust the provision of any major public service entirely to the market".

However, the report was well-received by university representatives. The Russell Group, an association of twenty research-intensive universities including LSE, said that "international comparisons of universities have shown that the most successful universities are those that are allowed to operate independently - particularly those with autonomy over their budgets".

The report was launched by David Willetts, the Conservative Party's universities spokesman. The report also proposed the introduction of a flat-rate voucher system for all students to allow them to pay for university and vocational training. The voucher would be worth £13,000 and not be subject to means-testing. A student loans system would supplement the voucher.

Despite Willetts launching the report, the Conservative Party has distanced itself from the proposals.

The report goes on to argue that, while public service reform in the last decade has aimed to "deregulate and decentralise... policy and skills and post-compulsory education has moved in the opposite direction".

LSE should stick to its Fabian roots, says Sutherland in migration talk

Sofia Zabolotskih

LSE Chair of Council Peter Sutherland claimed that the LSE should keep to its Fabian roots during a public lecture advocating migration last Wednesday.

Sutherland argued that migration helps the economic development of both host and source countries.

He spoke out against both stereotyping of immigrants and extreme nationalism as concepts which are "corrosive and dangerous to society". In the United States, 22% of high-skilled immigrants work in low-skilled jobs, with a further 22% in semi-skilled employment, he said.

Sutherland said that it was time to re-think what it meant to be British, and to ensure that all immigrants shared equality of opportunity and were free to realise their potential in host countries.

To achieve this, he suggested school curricula should focus on teaching diversity and that the political system should be more inclusive to newcomers, lauding the example of nine EU countries who give non-citizens the vote in local elections.

While discussing factors that have contributed to the rising trends in migration in recent years, Sutherland referred to education as a "massive industry on a constant hunt for clients."

Sutherland said that countries were realising that universities are a good means to attract migrants and are increasing their



Peter Sutherland taking questions at the lecture
Cherie Leung

investment accordingly. At the same time, some universities were lowering standards because of the economic benefits gained by students who obtain a university education.

When questioned, Sutherland denied that universities were increasingly becoming businesses run for profit. He said: "I believe that universities are not purely economic institutions but have a large social role to play, especially in relation to

migration". He also said that he believed that the LSE should always remember its Fabian roots.

Sutherland's controversial appointment as the Chair the LSE's highest decision-making body, the Council, was met with some opposition among the student body. In November 2007, a group of students staged a sit-in during a public lecture he was due to give in the Old Theatre.

Vacancies

General Manager

Reporting directly to the Executive Editor, the General Manager is responsible for all non-editorial activity within the organisation. The successful applicant will be responsible for managing the business team, marketing, events and purchasing. Excellent role for a student wishing to gain valuable experience before going into business or management.

Web Editor

The Beaver is launching a new website in January. We need help finishing the development, maintaining the site and working out how we are going to integrate it into the way we make a newspaper. Ideal for anybody with an interest in communications or new media. No experience required.

getinvolved@thebeaveronline.co.uk

The Beaver



World AIDS Day

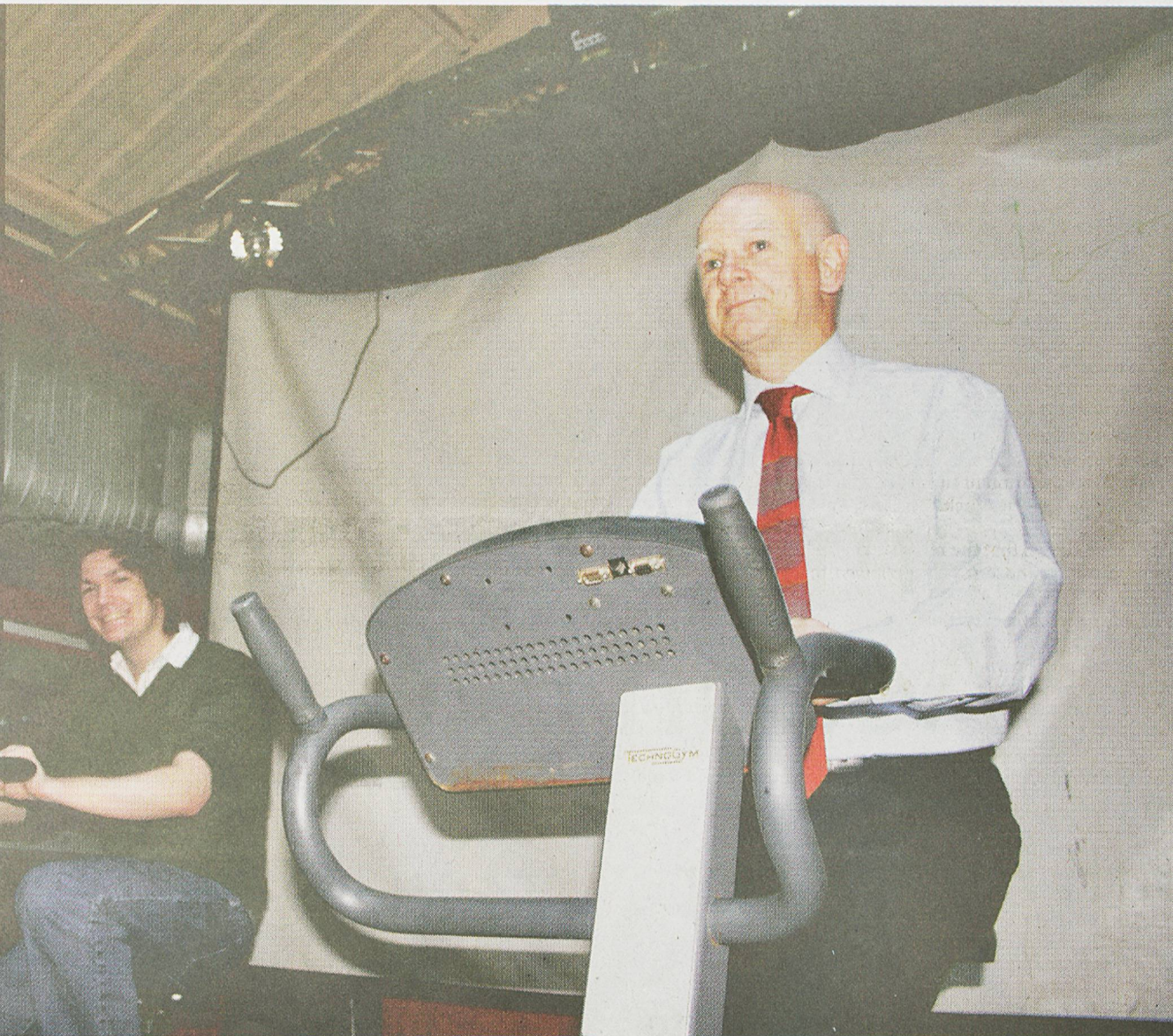
The People and Planet and Dignitas societies set up a stall in the Quad last week to promote awareness of World AIDS Day, which took place yesterday.

The day coincided with the Students' Union's Mind and Body week, which has been organised and promoted by Students' Union Education and Welfare Officer Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang.

Akpan-Inwang said that one of the reasons Mind and Body week was set up for this week of term was in order to coincide with World AIDS day.

The People and Planet stall offered red ribbons for AIDS awareness to all those who donated to the cause of combating AIDS.

Photo: Cherie Leung



Atrium show reveals Iran photojournalism

Vivek Kotecha
Zeeshan Malik (Photos)

An exhibition of photographs from Iran was unveiled in the atrium of the Old Building this week, coinciding with a public lecture on the work of current Iranian photojournalists.

The exhibition focuses on the work of the late Iranian photojournalist, Kaveh Golestan, and the pictures he took during the Iranian Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war.

It also includes magazines and newspaper headlines from the time giving an insight into how the Iranian Revolution and Iran-Iraq war were seen differently through the eyes of Iranians and by the outside world.

The public lecture examined the importance of Golestan's work to the development of photojournalism in Iran including its influence on the current generation of photojournalists in Iran.

The images shown at the public lecture showed the social changes that took place in Iran in the decades after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, including the development of women's rights, the treatment of migrants and prostitution.

The public lecture pointed out how in Iran photojournalism is thriving despite strong state restrictions on media access.

Alumni launch Palestine education initiative

Michael Deas

Two LSE alumni have launched a "solidarity initiative" that aims to increase the number of Palestinian students who apply to and attend the university.

The LSE-Palestine Solidarity Initiative aims to encourage all students, alumni, staff and academics connected with LSE to assist those hindered in attending LSE by the Israeli Occupation. The initiative hopes to twin potential Palestinian applications with LSE students and academics with the relevant subject knowledge.

Exhibiting clear political aims, the Initiative also aims to encourage people to lobby LSE to provide scholarships specifically aimed at Palestinians, abolish all postgraduate application fees and establish formal links with Birzeit University's Right to Education Campaign.

The organisers of the LSE-Palestine Solidarity initiative also demand that the university divests from companies profiting from the Israeli occupation.

Demanding the LSE to divest from such firms is the explicit policy of the LSE

Students' Union after a motion was past at the Union General Meeting.

The Initiative was founded by James Caspell and Ziyaad Lunat, two LSE alumni and student activists who campaigned for the liberation of Palestine during their time at LSE and continue to do so.

James Caspell stated, "The systematic denial of the right to education is a political problem that will ultimately require a political situation. Therefore this Initiative not only aims to support individual Palestinians, but raise the level of political consciousness and activism within the LSE community, supporting the Palestinian people collectively in their struggle against Israeli Occupation."

Ziyaad Lunat added, "Through providing direct support to Palestinians living under Israeli Occupation, we encourage the LSE community to demonstrate solidarity with Palestinian students whilst providing more opportunities for Palestinians to fulfil their academic potential."

Only two Palestinian students joined the university this year.

For more information about the initiative, visit www.palestinesolidarity.org



Econ debate cup contest held

"This house would nationalise all banks" was the motion at this year's Students' Union Economics Debate Cup final.

The final was judged by a panel consisting of Economics Society President Sophie Geng, Debate Society President Jonathan Chong, and LSE academic Professor Danny Quah, who heads the School's Economics Department.

The winning team of Dan Ridler and Emer Harrington won £100 prize money. Runner-ups Mayank Kalia and Raj Rabheru were awarded £50.

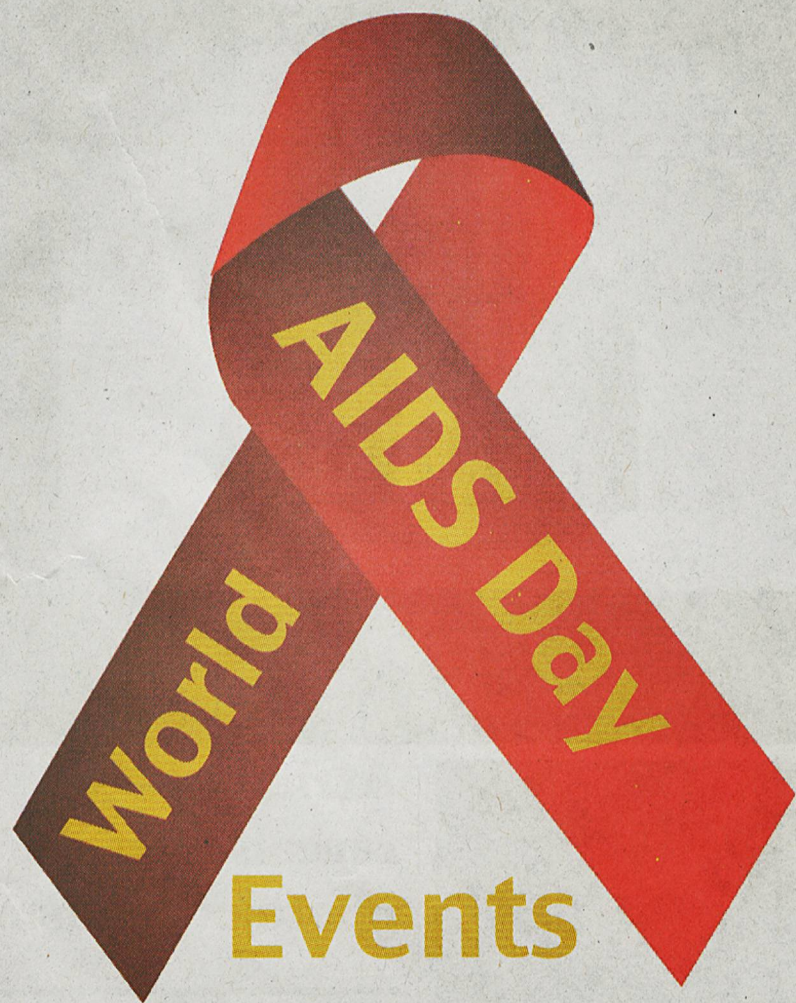
Before announcing the winners of the debate, Professor Quah praised said all teams should be proud of their performances and gave a brief explanation of the current state of the banking sector and its importance for the entire economy.

In order to win a place in the finals, the debaters had to compete in two preliminary rounds, debating on the motions "This house believes developing countries should enact protectionist trade policies" and "This house would allow businesses to buy and sell the right to pollute."

LSE debaters have enjoyed success at the inter-varsity level as well, currently being ranked second in Britain.

Caspar Gerleve

This week on campus...



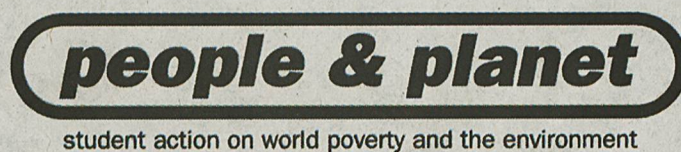
Tuesday 2nd December

Speaker from Zambia followed by the screening of the Movie "Yesterday" in the New Theatre. Starts at 6:30pm - Fair Trade treats provided!

Wednesday 3rd December

Movie screening of "Philadelphia" at 6:15pm in S221

In association with



DIGNITAS

Climate Change Action Events

Thursday, 4th December

Environment & Ethics Forum

2-3pm: Public debate on Houghton Street: How to tackle climate change: local versus global response

Oikos

5-6pm, NAB2.16: "Climate Change and Development": a discussion led by Conor Riffle, from the Clinton Foundation

People and Planet

5-7pm, H102: Towards Zero Waste: Revolutionizing Waste

Environment Society

7pm, D502, Movie screening: Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" and discussion following. Free popcorn!

Friday, 5th December

Banner Making

1pm - Banner making in the Quad for Climate March

Free Hot Chocolate

on Houghton Street if you bring your own reusable mug

Saturday, 6th December

Climate March - assemble 11am in Houghton Street, in front of old building, or come directly to Grosvenor Square. Join people all around the world to demand action now to

LSE STUDENTS'
UNION

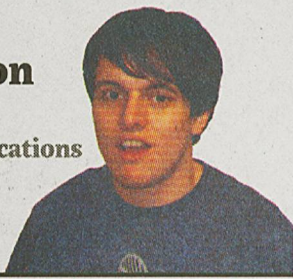
Comment

The UGM is dead. Long live Students' Union politics

We have important issues to discuss: bureaucracy and protocol just get in the way

Dan Sheldon

LSESU
Communications
Officer



The UGM is dead. It has been bludgeoned to death by pedantic bureaucracy. Its relatives, apathy and disinterest, have been informed.

For those readers who have had a life over the past few weeks, I won't bore you with the details of the latest non-controversy to rock the Students' Union. Suffice to say, our past few Union General Meetings have been occupied by constitutional willy-waving, filibustering and pedantry.

I didn't get involved in student politics to argue about constitutions. Clichéd as it sounds, I wanted to make LSE a better place for students. While we were wasting our time arguing about constitutions, students were still paying up to £17,000 per year for a poorly resourced library, teachers who can't speak English and contact time comparable to an Open University degree.

Thanks to persistent lobbying from the Students' Union, the School has promised significant improvement in teaching quality. We're also working with the School to improve the social experience at LSE with new student buildings, an improved induction period and more social space on campus. These are the things students care about, not Codes of Practice or protocols.

Our governing documents should exist to facilitate our activities, not hold us in a bureaucratic strait-jacket. As the Beaver rightly said last week, rules are rules, and they should be stuck to. However, when the rules are archaic, contradictory and unnecessarily complex, then we should exercise discretion in the best interests of the Union.

"More posters" shout some; "promote it better" plead others. Without wanting to blow our own trumpets, I think we've done a good job of promoting the UGM and other Union events this year. The first UGM of the year was a huge success, introducing hundreds of new students to our meeting and passing some important motions on the Nursery and Union reform. Unfortunately, not many returned to



The UGM at its peak earlier in the year
Photo: Erik Lang

future meetings. We need to look beyond superficial analysis to understand why so many students are disengaged with our Students' Union.

If you want an explanation of the poor attendance of UGMs, look no further than the embarrassing spectacle of confusion, indecision and pointless argument over the referenda motion. While we were busy arguing about nothing, important motions on local public transport, volunteering and the profit-making direction of LSE went unheard. No wonder most students see the Students' Union as irrelevant to them.

The UGM goes through peaks and troughs: in my first year in 2005 it was amazing: brilliant debate, controversy and genuine political differences. Since

then, it has been on a decline: this year has seen no real improvement on last year's attendance or quality of debate. I don't have any magic solutions to this problem, but I'm willing to bet that if we had some more interesting characters and more representation from the broad political spectrum at LSE, then we would have much more entertaining and well-attended meetings. We'll only attract these people by changing their perception of the Students' Union and prove that it can be more than a talking shop for power hungry hacks.

The great irony is that the intention of the sabbatical officers in proposing this motion was to allow us to have a referendum on major reforms to our governance, making our Union more efficient and accessible. The Your Union consulta-

The UGM can be more than a talking shop for power hungry hacks

tion is a genuine attempt to improve the Students' Union and to make it relevant to all of our members. Those students who complain about the Union have a choice: either engage with this consultation and turn it into a useful organisation, or let our student voice wither and die.

Poor UGM attendance is symptomatic of widespread disengagement with the Union. As a sabbatical officer, this is very concerning to me. We still have much to be proud of: a weekly meeting, a proven track record of winning for students and representation at the highest levels of the School. In many ways we are the envy of the student movement. Nevertheless, we have the potential for so much more. Let's tell the bureaucrats where to go and get on with what we do best: being a strong and active Students' Union.

WAR / PEACE

**DEAR LSE
STUDENTS
PLEASE
GO TO THE
FUCKING
UGM
THURS 1PM**

**EXCEPT
THIS WEEK'S
FUCKING
ANNUAL BUDGET
MEETING.
THAT'S EVEN MORE
IMPORTANT.**

**OLD THEATRE, OLD BUILDING
VOTE ON ISSUES THAT WILL AFFECT YOU &
HOLD YOUR UNION OFFICERS TO ACCOUNT
DON'T LET YOUR VOICE FADE AWAY**

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THE BEAVER'S
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The Beaver

Established in 1949

Issue No. 695

Telephone: 0207 955 6705 Email: editor@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Troubled, but not dead yet

To the students who go to it, the Union General Meeting is usually one of the best things about the LSE Students' Union. There is no similar democratic, no-holds-barred decision-making body left in any other student union in the country. We are lucky to have the freedom to challenge our elected Union officers so openly and easily, and to be able to propose and pass motions on almost any student and political issue of the day.

Usually, last week's UGM was a travesty, not least because it followed a similar travesty of a meeting the week before. In both instances an important motion on what role referendums should play in setting Union policy was obscured in a fog of exaggerated political posturing and pedantic procedure. This week the uncertainty will be prolonged while the Annual Budget Meeting takes the UGM's place on Thursday. What does week 10 hold in store for the UGM?

For one thing, it's not certain we'll find a dead body. The Communications Officer Daniel Sheldon does argue in these pages that the UGM is dead, pending a massive increase in interest

from students and a change in perceptions of Union politics. The UGM's long-term survival will certainly remain in doubt so long as we lack those things. But it's worth pointing out that there was plenty of debate and a good atmosphere at last week's UGM before disaster struck. And it would be a pretty striking throwing in of the towel from Sheldon, whose role includes promoting Union activities like the UGM, if he was to leave it at the death of the UGM. It wouldn't justify the effort that has already been put into boosting the UGM, by more than one sabbatical team over the years.

Sheldon and the other sabbatical officers have done a lot to promote the UGM already, in posters and emails. They cannot be faulted for that. But is it really the case they can't do anything more to save the UGM? The sabbatical officers of two years ago literally roped in students from off Houghton Street, through the Old Building doors and into the Old Theatre. Last year's sabbatical officers both did that and gave UGM students free stuff for turning up. It wasn't subtle. But it was worth a try, and it was better than the alternative. In the face of two consecutive inoperative meetings this term,

this year's sabbaticals should bring back these incentives.

The Union's student media should also take the UGM more seriously. Why isn't there a Loose TV camera at every UGM, as there used to be? Would it not be possible for Pulse Radio to record the debates, or even to broadcast live from the Old Theatre? Above all, the Beaver needs to do more to promote the UGM in these pages. We even think we could do a better job than Sheldon. On that note, see above. Pardon our French.

The Beaver did not support the original referendum motion that lies at the heart of the web of confusion and pointlessness that has fallen on the UGM. We still don't think it is the right way to ensure the UGM's long-term primacy as the Union's sovereign democratic structure. But it is much more important that the UGM is put back on track now than that we continue arguing the finer points of this debate on the path to oblivion. If this includes getting the motion passed, it is really no big deal at all. Student politicians are forever losing their sense of proportion. But we should never take student democracy for granted, either.

Mistaken Identity

As of last Monday, non-EU students will have to be scanned, finger-printed and enter fifty pieces of personal information into the National Identity Scheme when applying for a visa extension. International students may be used to carrying an ID card in their home country, but the system currently being rolled out in the UK goes far beyond a simple ID card useful for proving your identity.

We are not going to rehearse the many arguments against ID cards being introduced in this country. Too many to mention, to be honest. But we would strongly protest against the undignified way in which international students are blatantly being used as guinea pigs in a government public policy experiment. This is not fair. If the government wants to win the argument on ID cards, it should pick on its own citizens first.

After all, it is supremely stupid to victimise international students in this way when they are meant to be at the centre of the world-class higher education system this government says it wants to build. LSE academics should continue their opposition to ID cards. But from now on we think they should be joined by the LSE itself.

Comment

Illegal and unjust: administrative detention belongs in the dock

Locking people up without charge is unacceptable in any society and we must fight to end it

Mira

Hammad

Sponsorship Officer
Students' Union Palestine Society

I was always told that the world is made up of various shades of grey. Nothing is black and white. Morality is complicated and this is why the world is so messed up. And I believed it. At a certain level I still do. But some things are clear; the rights and wrongs of some issues are so freaking obvious they make your nose bleed. And I never see this with as much blistering clarity as when I hear about cases of administrative detention.

Administrative detention is basically when someone is arrested and imprisoned without being informed of any charge, let alone receiving a fair trial. These human beings are stripped of any semblance of human rights or any form of dignity and they're not even told why. Lawyers are powerless because without a charge there can be no defence. The detainees are powerless because, against the force of the state, there can be no defence.

And the rest of the world isn't even looking. So silence becomes consent. Silent consent perpetuates one of the most gross abuses of humanity in existence; a reality so perverse that it is barely believable. You might not believe that in this era of post-modernism and freedom and human rights this policy is still carried out. At least, surely not in "forward-thinking, democratic" states? After all, the fact that people deserve to be put on trial before they're punished is undeniable - it's what Americans would undoubtedly call a 'no-brainer', isn't it? Apparently not.

About a week ago I found out about Salwa Saleh. Salwa Saleh is a 17 year old Palestinian girl who was 16 when, in June this year, she was taken from her house by Israel Defence Force soldiers and put in prison. She is still there now, and was given another three month extension in October on a sentence that can be extended indefinitely. I can't even tell you why. Neither can her lawyer because, as I found out, he doesn't know either. Nor does Salwa, Salwa's family, or, as far as I can tell, anybody except allegedly the mili-



An Israeli prison near the Palestinian town of Anata
Photo: flickr user michaelramallah

tary judge and prosecutors. The frustrating thing for her lawyer is that you cannot defend somebody against a crime when you don't even know what that crime is.

This case is the one I had in mind when I told you that some things are so blatantly wrong, so transparently unjust, that there is no grey area. For some abuses of human rights, there can be no defence. And the really galling point is this: Salwa's case is not rare. According to B'Tselem (an Israeli human rights organisation), in 2007 an average of 830 Palestinian administrative detainees were held per month by Israel.

So don't bother picking up Orwell's 1984. Because if you want to read about oppression; if you want to read the story of a state riding roughshod over the rights of people; if you want to read the story of the notion of justice being distorted into something beyond recognition, into something which is used as a weapon,

not a shield; then just type "administrative detention" into Google. And watch the amount of hits that come up. Watch the amount of people who are urgently appealing, in the only means available to them, for anybody who will point at this gross abuse of human rights and simply call it what it is.

In the face of such widespread abuse, of such flagrant injustice, it is easy to fall into the trap of believing that we are powerless to change anything. It can seem that life is unfair for these people, but we can do nothing about it. That whether you stand up against it or not, it will continue; so why bother? I wouldn't be surprised if you believe that. The majority of people do. And that's the real problem. It has been shown time and time again over the course of history that ordinary people can change the status quo.

Look at the US civil rights movement, look at the anti-apartheid movement, look at the anti-Vietnam war movement. What

Don't bother picking up 1984: if you want to hear about oppression, look at administrative detention

these movements all had in common was that they were supported by a large amount of people who had hope. Who had not given in to the cynical belief that nothing would ever change. And maybe this movement, the movement against administrative detention, will never join that list. But there's a chance that it will. A slim chance, but nevertheless, important. Since if you believe in human rights and in basic humanity, then you have to take this chance. Because it's the best one you're going to get. Because even if nothing happens now, when history looks back at this atrocity and asks if anyone cared, there will be evidence that students did, even if the rest of the world was blind.

This movement is being launched by Addameer human rights group on 4 December and is coming to Houghton Street, supported by the Palestine Society and Amnesty International. So on Friday join the Queue For Justice in Houghton Street and give it your support.

Feminists should stop belittling women

The feminist critics of Miss LSE are wrong to assume that the pageant objectifies women

John de Graft-Johnson



In the Beaver's Comment and letters pages recently there has been a lot of criticism of the Miss LSE pageant that took place a few weeks ago, which I would like to balance. The pageant itself was not based simply on "outer beauty", but afforded ample time for "inner beauty" through the questioning element. While the letter featured in the Beaver in the 18 November issue suggested the girls attempted to appear stupid, it is incorrect. There were clichés but it should be noted the winner was the one who had the entire room laughing

with a joke about a deserted island and bringing a man to a build a boat. This was a joke, not a serious statement of intent.

The linking of beauty pageants and prostitution is ridiculous hyperbole. When you reduce the girls to simple examples of "body-profit links" you belittle their intelligence. The simple fact that the girls are at LSE entitles them to a little more credit. The same criticism goes for claims that the girls were subconsciously forced into entering the pageant by societal pressure. There is no basis for claiming they are so without self-worth that they enter beauty pageants for some kind of vindication.

The association of the LSE name to the pageant simply denotes who is involved; it does not suggest the School has something to say about the attractiveness of its students. If it cannot associate the name with anything non-academic, then surely we cannot have the LSE 1st XI or XV. It's a ridiculous suggestion.

Perhaps the most worrying claim was

that the "perceived verdict of society" on the girls who don't win is damaging to their self worth. Any competition has the risk of not winning: academic, sport or otherwise. The fact that this competition was based on beauty (both inner and outer) does not mean that losing becomes a fatal strike against one's own body image. I would safely assume the girls involved had enough moral fibre to not break down at loss of a small beauty pageant.

In Anna Krausova's 25 November article, Miss LSE was portrayed as an example of failures in society.

The most prevalent of these are the pressures on all women to conform to some ideal beauty laid down by the media. The media certainly does perpetuate an image of beauty, but it is changing. The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, Gok Wan's shows and the Bravisimo campaign for Real Women are just some examples. The fashion industry has also been guilty, but is clearly moving to a

more normal stereotype with models like Lara Stone for Prada and the banning of size zero models. Iyra Banks instigated a US wide debate on female body image just last year. The widespread knowledge of airbrushing and the existence of a ridiculous media stereotype make it easier for women to ignore it, rather than being subconsciously forced to objectify themselves as claimed.

It seems the feminists will only be happy when the concept of beauty or any kind of visual comparison is destroyed. We cannot and should not remove the concept of beauty from society; it should be celebrated. Miss LSE was a great example of this. Beauty is a societal construct that demonstrates how humans use verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. A free society should strive for a better picture of a beauty, not to destroy it completely.

The feminist movement does more than protest against beauty pageants. Through its gynocentric viewpoint it

ignores the fact that societal pressures fall on both sides of the gender line. Suicide rates are often used as a barometer of societal pressure. In England, the male rate is far higher than the female rate. Male anorexia is extensively under diagnosed, yet many eating disorder units cater only for women. Male political figures like Nicolas Sarkozy are pictured and attacked looking portly next to their wives. Feminism should realize these pressures are universal and that by continuing to protest for only women's rights they are becoming proponents of affirmative action.

The Miss LSE pageant was an inoffensive celebration of identity, not just inner beauty. The Beaver gave more than ample coverage to the feminist viewpoint and hopefully now has presented a balanced view. If the feminists really want to campaign maybe they should take issue with top London clubs who actively discriminate against men: that's where the real objectification of women exists.



Miss LSE contestants
Photo: Erik Lang

Features

Environmentally Friendly: What's green with tech, corporations, and the Government?



Flickr User Brent Danley

The tech guide to a green planet

Robyn Duncan takes a look at environmentally progressive technology

There really is no point in arguing about it anymore: we are in serious trouble. No matter which way you look at it, we have managed to get ourselves into that painfully awkward place of being between a rock and a hard place.

CO₂ emissions are continuing to rise and evidence of peak oil has not resulted in a downward shift of fossil fuel consumption. The list of negative impacts we can expect as a result of climate change is growing in both length and severity. Increased natural disasters, melting polar ice caps, rising sea levels, mass species extinction, changing weather patterns, and the spread of invasive species all factor on the list. But while it is easy to become paralysed by this scenario, the worst possible thing we could do is nothing. It is time for us to look at the veritable rock that blocks our path and do some climbing!

Technology is one of the areas where we can drastically achieve reductions in energy consumption and CO₂ emissions. There is already a wide range of amazing inventions and initiatives taking place around the world. Don't get me wrong, I am not one of those people claiming that 'green technologies' will save us from our impending doom. I whole-heartedly believe in the need for a paradigmatic shift across society where our dependence

on, and consumption of, fossil fuels is drastically reduced, and our mantra of consumption replaced. But I do believe technology can lend a helping hand in this process. The not for profit organisation E3G recently reported that in order to achieve the necessary reductions in atmospheric CO₂ levels, major advances in technology are required. These technological improvements need to be realised on both the macro and micro levels. From low-energy light bulbs to using solar and wind power, to building houses out of straw bales and tires to running vehicles on vegetable oil, examples of green technologies already in use. There is no reason why we as a society cannot shift to using these green technologies.

Switching to 'green energy' is perhaps the most talked-about green technology in any conversation regarding climate change and CO₂ emissions. Thankfully, agrofuels (biofuels, derived most commonly from ethanol and palm oil) has irrefutably been de-bunked as a 'green' substitute for petrol. Massive deforestation in Brazil for the production of palm increased pressures in Mexico to supply the US with larger quantities of corn amidst the maize crisis that saw the prices of the main-stay of the Mexican diet more than double. In addition, we witnessed the turn-over of huge swathes

Technology is one of the areas where we can drastically achieve reductions in energy consumption and CO₂ emissions

of productive land to produce fuel for our vehicles, instead of food to feed the world. These two have unequivocally shown this claim to be false.

Instead, a truly green energy would make use of energy already present and would involve only its conversion, not its production. Examples of these green energies are solar, wind power, tidal power, and geothermal power. These forms of energy are being adopted at different levels across societies, from the individual to the community. One hundred thousand people in the UK are estimated to live off the grid; the majority of these people are using alternative energy sources to power their homes and communities. Atlantic communities in Canada are harnessing the power of the largest tidal fluctuations in the world found at the Bay of Fundy. Solar power is increasingly being used to augment or fully supply people's homes and offices, as is wind power, which is particularly relevant here in the windy UK. Once incorporated into the design or layout of a home, solar power can mean the difference between having to turn on the thermostat or not, and can also be used to grow herbs and vegetables indoors.

Green architecture has also had huge successes over the last years in decreasing energy consumption. Even the administration at the LSE has joined in -

the New Academic Building was awarded an Excellence rating from BREEM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method).

While the NAB is an example of a modern urban green building, there are plenty of other methods being used. US Architect Mike Reynolds has achieved fame through his design and construction of 'earthship biotecture', a design that makes use of what we normally deem waste and creates functional, off-grid, sustainable houses. Pop-cans and tires filled with dirt are two of the common ingredients for the construction of the walls. The houses integrate passive solar for indoor greenhouses and food production, geothermal heating and cooling and solar panels for energy. A recent movie made about Reynolds and his work, 'Garbage Warrior' is a must-see for both sceptic and believer alike.

While green technology is not the definitive answer to solving climate change, it is an important and necessary step in helping to curb our CO₂ emissions before we can successfully make the transition to a society that lives within its own means, valuing the integrity of the global environment and the future of the Earth more than the need for everyone to have a car, a cell phone and a new pair of shoes every week.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT POLLUTION

**ROSALIE RAY
AND KATHERINE
RIPULLONE
DISCUSS ENVIRON-
MENTAL SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY**

Can we trust big corporations?

Rosalie Ray says big corporations can be forces working for good as well as for evil

The world is finally beginning to come to terms with the damage our economic growth has done to the environment. Intensive resource use since the Industrial Revolution, including the removal of 1 to 1.2 trillion barrels of oil from inside the earth has created society as we know it today with the highest standards of living the planet has ever known, at least in the developed world.

Business structures and business practices have been growing along with the economy, from joint-stock companies that founded colonies around the world to the transnational corporation, which can manufacture, transport, and sell products all over the globe. As growth and prosperity became the dominant dreams of a generation, these economic actors amassed huge power, and our respect and trust.

But many have questioned the ability of corporations to help effect climate change. Some critics say corporations will always place profits above the environment, whereas others maintain some corporations are actively involved in contributing directly to global warming.

As the power of the corporation has become more visible, we fear such power. When we see that Haliburton made over £2.3 billion off the Iraq war in a single year, that Exxon Mobil earns more than £837 a second in a year, when we all pay record prices for petrol and oil prices skyrocket, and that Wal-Mart/ASDA has revolutionized the retail industry single-handedly, our fears can't be said to be misplaced. Corporations, it seems, can do anything, and do it only for the money they'll make.

Yet, if corporations can do anything, perhaps they can be a force for good. Most of us trust corporations to cure cancer and feed the world. Some of us also see how corporations help individuals make responsible and environmentally friendly choices. When Wal-Mart/ASDA introduced energy-efficient light bulbs, they sold 100 million bulbs in less than a

year, nearly doubling national sales in the US and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 million metric tonnes. Wal-Mart was also the only entity capable of effectively supplying the Gulf Coast of the United States in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The environment that nurtures us and that has provided the resources for the vast expansion of our economy is asking for the bill. Perhaps it is time for the corporation, arguably the only entity with a global reach, to save us.

After all, we currently have no sort of 'global government' that wields the power needed to address this global problem. Inter-governmental negotiations have produced limited results, hampered by weakness in negotiating with the very businesses that can help and the lack of a plan to ensure economic growth decoupled from resource use.

The Kyoto Protocol spawned a number of interesting ideas, including the Clean Development Mechanism, which would use carbon offsets from the rich countries to fund sustainable development in the poor ones, and the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, in which certain sectors are mandated by the government to reduce emissions to a certain level, with the distribution of reductions determined in the market. The results so far, however, have been uninspiring.

The Clean Development Mechanism has been resoundingly co-opted by the four most rapidly developing countries, and has been plagued by bureaucratic tie-ups. Perhaps even worse, the EU ETS saw emissions rise over the first two years of operation. The firms who were mandated to participate in the ETS lobbied hard for loose standards in the beginning, resulting in more emissions allowances being handed out than were needed. Clearly, governments are struggling and corporations have not yet come to the rescue.

And yet, many of them claim they are. BP has been tagging itself 'Beyond Petroleum' since 2000. It spends £975

million on its Alternative Energies Portfolio, which includes mainly natural gas, solar, and wind energies. While natural gas is not renewable, it does burn cleaner than oil or coal; however, it still has a significant carbon footprint and is not a long term solution. BP Solar is one of the largest producers of solar energy in the world, and a major player in the market, but if you consider that it achieved this position by purchasing a £29 million company, it becomes clear that its green portfolio is only a tiny part of its operations. BP is spending £3.25 billion on explorations in Alaska and £4.9 billion on ventures in the Canadian tar sands, meaning that it spends almost 10 times more on two of the least "green" and most harmful expenditures possible, than on its entire alternative energies campaign. Beyond petroleum indeed.

Some claims may be more accurate. Virgin Atlantic, for example, made the first biofuel-powered flight last February, purchased £8 billion of fuel-efficient planes from Boeing, and even uses lighter paint on the aircraft to reduce weight and thus fuel requirements. They also provide passengers the opportunity to offset carbon emissions in flight, using Gold Standard offsets, objectively the best offset option currently available in the market.

Virgin appears to be operating off of nearly pure economic incentive. The total fuel cost for Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Express planes in 2005 was £750 million a year, a number that caused Sir Richard Branson, head of Virgin, to speculate about building a new oil refinery. Instead, he has started Virgin Fuels, looking to get in early to a growing biofuels industry. With the airline industry under pressure from all sides, this appears to be their only way to stay in the air in the long term, leading industry groups such as the International Air Transport Association to call for more airlines to follow Virgin's lead.

The growing green advertising, with some claims more spurious than others,

We cannot let corporations do it for us. Just as we ask them to reduce their energy bills and fuel costs, so must we

is a sign that companies recognize that they need to play a role in solving our planet's environmental problems. However, we cannot expect them to do so without economic incentive. BP has little incentive to actually reduce the amount of energy it produces from petroleum until its renewable energy group makes more profits. Its entry into the renewable sector is a way of hedging its bets and maximizing profits. Virgin, on the other hand, has a lot to gain by going truly green, including cleaning up the tarnished image of the airline industry and reducing fuel costs.

As consumers we control the demand side of the market place. Given the innovations and ideas out now, I am cautiously optimistic about firms' ability to help solve climate change, but we cannot trust firms to solve climate change until we demand that they do.

Climate change can ultimately only be solved through the actions of individuals. We need to take responsibility for knowing our carbon footprints, where our food, clothes, and energy come from, where our waste goes, and what the local transport authority uses to fuel its vehicles. Once we hold this information, easily accessible on the internet from sites like www.corpwatch.org or even the company's own site, we should vote with our wallets, using independent certifications to guide purchases like the Fair Trade and Soil Association labels on food, or Gold Standard carbon offsets. The internet is a powerful tool for increasing consumer choice.

Lastly, we cannot let corporations do it for us. Just as we ask them to reduce their energy bills and fuel costs, so must we. Turning off the lights and the computer when you leave a room, or taking a train rather than a plane when you have the time to take a true holiday are not actions too small to count. They may seem small compared to the magnitude of climate change, but they do make a difference. Big things are always achieved one small step at a time.

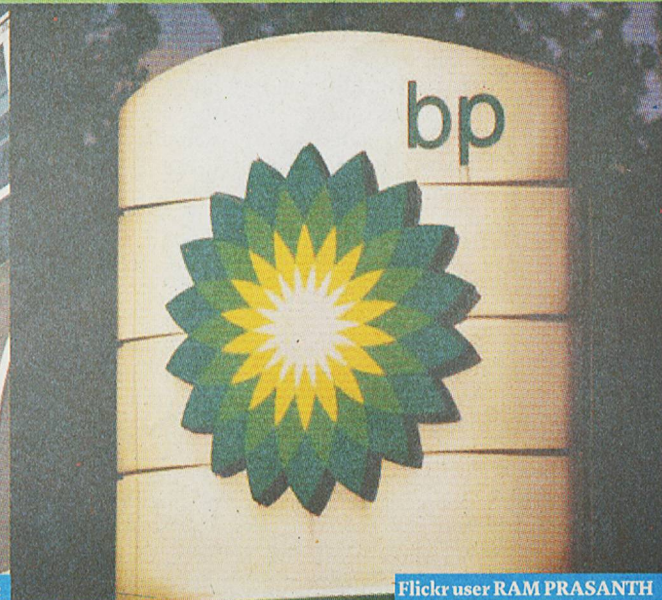
Green Businesses?



Flickr user Cubbie n Vegas



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Keeping it green

The UK government may be on track to keep its climate promises says **Katherine Ripullone**

Last week the British government made history by making itself subject to the world's first legally-binding targets for cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, committing itself to cut the UK's 1990 levels of emissions 80% by 2050, up from the previous target of 60%.

This pledge comes at a poignant time, drawing both criticism and praise. While some argue that decreasing carbon emissions should be demoted on the government's agenda given the current economic situation, others, the government included, see environmental regulation as just as important as ever.

The Stern Report, an inquiry into the effects of global climate change on this country and the world, actually projected the costs of maintaining the status quo are greater than the costs of taking action. The 'temporary recession' does not affect the short and long term plans and costs of implementing measures that would drive the UK towards a low-carbon economy.

Lord Turner, who now finds himself in a unique position as head of both the Financial Services Authority and the Committee on Climate Change, fears that the current recession may give the government a false sense of security with regards to climate change. This is because as production decreases, emissions will also decrease, "flattering" the progress data.

But any decrease in production isn't a permanent step and doesn't necessarily stop the most polluting industries from operating: dirty fossil fuel based power plants will continue to operate as normal. Therefore, Lord Turner has called for a complete cessation of the use of fossil fuels in the production of power.

While this is a drastic step, it is one which would lead to a large substitution towards cleaner energy sources such as nuclear power and carbon capture and storage. France, with a similar population to the UK, already generates 80% of its power from nuclear plants, and has no fossil fuelled plants left in its territory.

But what everyday effects would the change from fossil fuels to nuclear energy have on UK citizens? As far as energy production is concerned, clean nuclear power replacing polluting coal power plants has obvious benefits for Britain's environment, whilst electric heating would replace gas heating. Potentially, electric cars would replace petrol-fuelled cars. Power companies would pay "feed-in" tariffs to its customers - purchasing a certain portion of the energy from renewable resources and spreading the cost across all customers.

If you haven't noticed, electricity is the up and coming star of the low-carbon economy. Such a big substitution may in the long run lead to an increase in electrical production, despite increases in efficiency. How and when these changes

will occur has yet to be determined, but the general sense is that the new infrastructure will have to include not only the creation of new nuclear stations, but also other forms of renewable energy production and carbon capture.

The key question remains whether these technologies are up to this enormous task. As power stations are deemed unacceptable under new regulations, will new technologies be implemented quickly enough to prevent an "energy gap?"

Two new coal-powered stations in Essex and Kent have been proposed to help fill that gap. They have, however, been designed without carbon-capture technology. With the government's new pledge having taken on the power of law, the approval of their construction hangs in the balance. Some predictions are as high as a 20% deficit in power generation in the UK by 2015.

Energy gap aside, how exactly will this lawfully binding pledge be carried out? As with most new policies there will be a specialist committee formed, which will report back to Parliament. And, as tradition has it, the committee won't be held responsible for meeting targets, only for reporting on the failure to do so. Monitoring has always been the issue with government policies, but especially so when it comes to environmental ones. The lack of information, and high risk of moral hazard, makes policy setting and implementing extremely complex and difficult.

Perhaps the most worrisome aspect of the 80% reduction commitment is its long timeframe. I am not saying that forty years is a generous amount of time to reduce emissions by such a great amount rather, that the possibility for future governments to avoid work on the necessary commitment is quite high. One of the tenets of UK government is that one parliament cannot bind future ones—who is to say that future governments will have a different agenda, one that is not as dedicated to emission reduction?

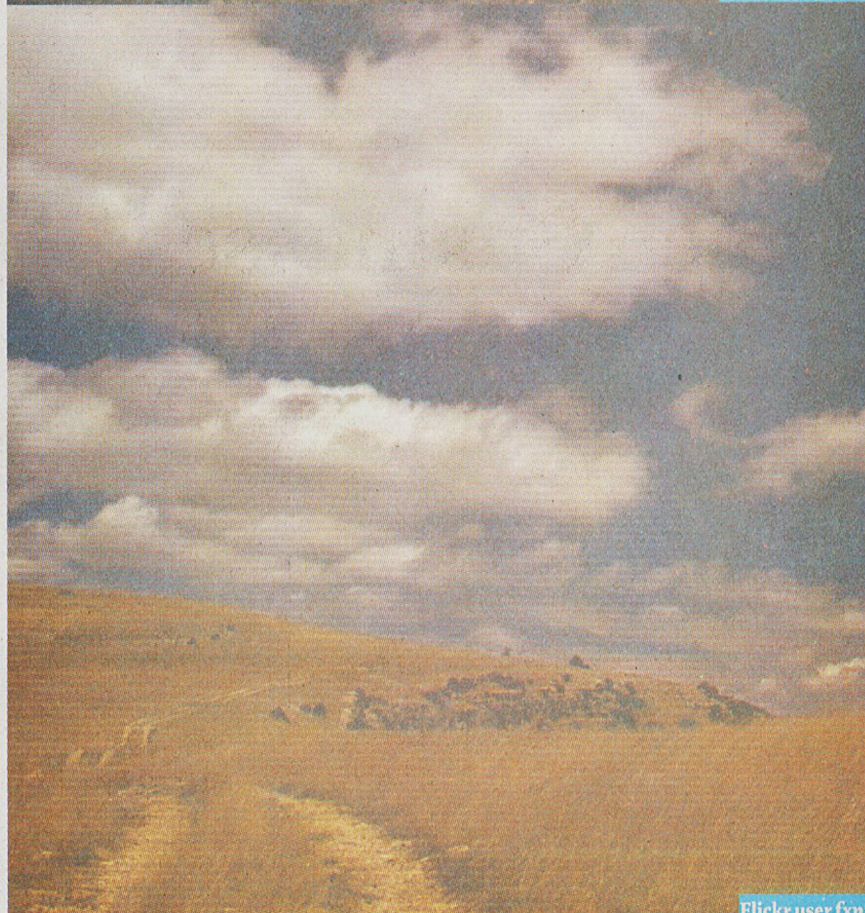
While the creation of an independent committee is promising, the lack of accountability could detract from its effectiveness. The United Kingdom has pledged certain emission reductions through agreements with other countries and entities, such as the Kyoto Protocol or through the EU, making it accountable to these external entities. Last week's domestic pledge is by far the most demanding out of all of these, but without accountability or repercussion it may be little more than rhetoric, until the goods are delivered.

Without the required long-term commitment, this pledge as of now has the very real possibility of extending no farther than the paper on which it is written.

Last week's domestic pledge is by far the most demanding... without accountability or repercussion it may be little more than rhetoric...



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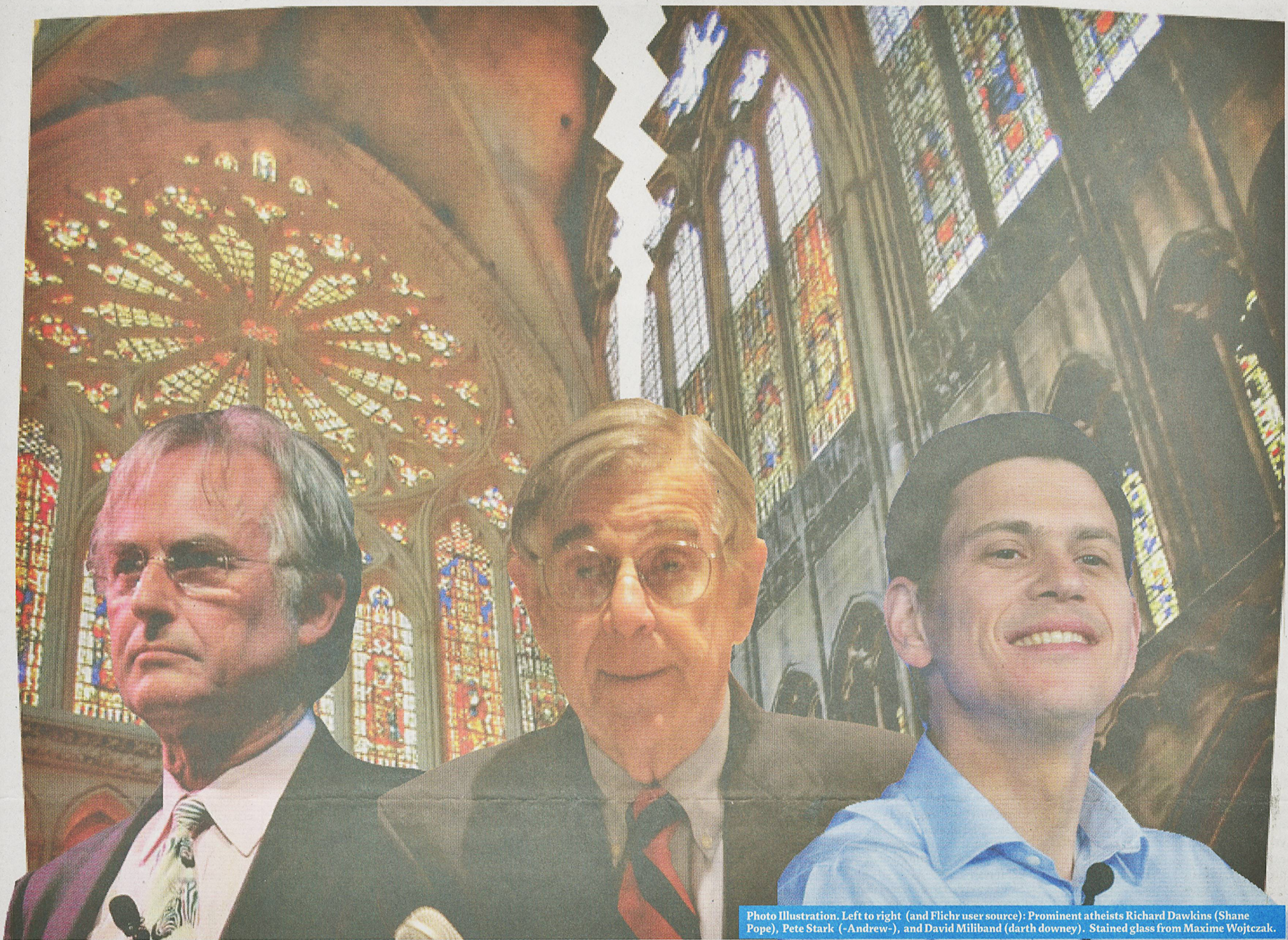


Photo Illustration. Left to right (and Flickr user source): Prominent atheists Richard Dawkins (Shane Pope), Pete Stark (-Andrew-), and David Miliband (darth downey). Stained glass from Maxime Wojtczak.

In godlessness we should trust

Martha Hampson says the door to top public office remains closed to atheists and agnostics

In June, the American Humanist Association named Pete Stark, the US Representative of the 13th district of California, as Humanist of the Year. Described as 'courageous' and 'an inspiration', Stark had made significant history, while putting much political capital on the line, in January 2007, in becoming the first US Congressman in history to openly declare him or herself as an atheist.

The rise of the Christian Right and reactionary mistrust of Islam in America is a fact that many find unnerving, not least among Americans themselves. But the depth of distrust of atheists that exists in America, as compared with that towards other religions or minority groups, is rarely examined. In the burgeoning age of Obama, whose campaign slogan, 'Yes, we can', has seemingly transcended many of the traditional societal divisions in America, is it still unthinkable that there may one day be an atheist in the White House?

Atheists and agnostics make up about one per cent of the American population, according to the American Religious Identification Survey. It may not sound like much, but the figure translates to about 30 million people. A minority they may be, but certainly a significant one. Yet while the shards from the ultimate glass ceiling in American public office for African-Americans have crashed so resoundingly in the past weeks, there remain significant barriers for atheists who have similar aspirations.

Article 6 of the US Constitution states that 'no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States' – an important safeguard in maintaining the separation of Church and State. Yet this

is not borne out either by history or in practice. Almost all American Presidents have been adherents of the Christian faith (Lincoln was a deist, who may or may not have converted to Christianity on his death bed). Though there is nothing in the Constitution that says the Presidential Oath must end with the customary 'so help me God', it is required in the oaths for Vice President, Congressmen, and all other civil and military officers and federal employees. The state laws in Arkansas, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Maryland dictate that nobody who denies the existence of a 'Supreme Being' can hold a position of State office. Although such requirements were deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1961, they remain on the statute books.

Perhaps more importantly, the American public simply would not elect an atheist President as things stand. In a USA Today/Gallup poll conducted in February 2007, respondents were asked if they would vote for a presidential candidate their own party had nominated, who was well qualified but fell into one of eight categories: Catholic, African American, Jewish, female, Hispanic, Mormon, homosexual or atheist. Only five per cent said that they would not vote for a black candidate, while 11 per cent wouldn't vote for a woman. A huge 53 per cent said they would not be able to bring themselves to vote for an atheist – by far the largest percentage. It is a figure which, if it is truly representative, makes it practically impossible for an atheist to be elected.

But this too reveals an important fact – it is still seen as socially acceptable to express distrust or dislike of atheism in a way that is no longer tolerated with regards to many other minority groups. Thus, despite the election of a black

president and the emergence of a real possibility of electing a female president and vice president being an undeniable leap forward, the importance of religious affiliation is still crucial to the progression of political careers.

Obama, Clinton and Palin shared a common ground with the electorate in that they are avidly religious in a way that the people can identify with. Even those who expressed hesitance over a Jewish or Muslim candidate could identify with them at least on the level of having a belief in a god. Overcoming the hurdle of ethnicity was relatively easy once Obama had firmly established himself as part of a continuing Christian tradition. It has been repeated often in the last month that black children in the US can now grow up knowing that they will not be excluded from the highest political office simply because of their race, but this is far from true for atheists.

Research by the University of Minnesota in 2006 shows that atheists are by far the group in American society which the average voter has most trouble understanding or identifying with. When respondents were asked which groups out of a list did not agree at all with their vision of American society, 39.6 per cent selected atheists, compared to Muslims at 26.3 per cent and African Americans at a relatively small 4.6 per cent. Additionally, 47.6 per cent said they would disapprove of their child marrying an atheist; this figure was 33.6 per cent for Muslims and 27.2 per cent for African-Americans.

What is particularly worrying is that the research discovered that acceptance of atheists has not experienced the strong upwards trend true of all other religions and minority groups (acceptance levels for homosexuals, traditionally one of

the most maligned groups in American society, overtook that for atheists in the early 1990s). The theory that increased tolerance of particular minorities leads to increased acceptance of 'others' in general does not seem to hold true in this case – a fact which is worrying for those, like me, who hope that Obama's victory signals further fundamental changes in American society.

Can Obama be the pluralising force needed for atheists to finally be accepted? It is hard to say. In his 'Call to Renewal' keynote address in June 2006, Obama advised that 'we must tackle head-on the mutual suspicion that sometimes exists between religious America and secular America...I do not believe that religious people have a monopoly on morality'. But this message of unity is contrasted with the attitude the Obama camp took towards questions about his Muslim heritage in its efforts to make a black candidate appeal to the Christian heartlands. In December 2007 former Senator Bob Kerrey was forced to publicly apologise for talking about Obama's Muslim roots, even though it was in the context of this potential ability to reach out to American Muslims being 'a tremendous strength'. ABC News commentators stated that this was an 'unintentional insult' rather than part of a 'smear campaign'. More surprisingly, Obama accepted the apology without looking at the broader issue at stake – the campaign's response left unchallenged the premise that being a Muslim is something that one can be smeared with.

Atheism, too, became a dirty word in the Senate races. In October this year Elizabeth Dole, the incumbent from North Carolina, accused her opponent Kay Hagan of taking money from the atheist

political action group Godless Americans. A Dole attack advertisement had featured a voiceover stating 'there is no God' over a photo of Hagan. The tactic was widely condemned in the national media and was a significant factor in Dole's defeat, but the outrage stemmed primarily from the fact that Hagan is not, as it happens, an atheist, but rather a Presbyterian former Sunday school teacher. Of course, lying about someone's political or personal ideologies is unacceptable, but the scale of the outrage heavily implied that being an atheist is something one can be accused of. Hagan herself commented that 'The North Carolina I was raised in would never condone this kind of personal slander', while CNN referred to the ad as 'mudslinging'.

Britain also has never had an atheist Prime Minister – all have been Christian, and even Disraeli was baptised Anglican at the age of 12. It is perhaps also significant that Tony Blair waited until after he left office before converting to Roman Catholicism. There are many atheist Members of Parliament and peers, however, including the possible Labour leadership contender David Miliband, and atheism has not been seen as a barrier to office for many decades. It has, in fact, been possible to take the parliamentary oath without the phrase 'Almighty God' since 1888.

Such staunch non-acceptance of atheists appears to be a peculiarly American problem, and it remains to be seen whether Obama's message of change can foster a sense of unity strong enough to overcome this in the future. In the meantime, let us hope Representative Stark is enjoying his well-deserved award.

From Right to Left: the political columns

Hayek

Alex
Blance



The political cash-in and grab

Finally the Conservatives may just be making a breakthrough in the area where they have, so far, been least successful since their turn around under Cameron: the economy.

Last week, Chancellor Alistair Darling delivered the Prime Minister's pre-budget report which included news of a temporary drop in the rate of value-added tax (VAT) as well as plans for a new top rate of tax should Labour win the next general election. While it normally takes some time for the holes in Brown's financial plans to be unveiled, as the 10p tax fiasco demonstrated, on this occasion it has taken just a few days. Plans have been unearthed that show the Labour government considering increasing VAT after the temporary drop, that the new tax rate will barely produce an income, and that the government is raking up even more debts than we already knew. But the triumph for the Conservatives here is not that fact that Brown's plans are typically defective, but the fact that they have successfully got out their message on the economy.

I have discussed before the anomaly

of Brown being seen as the saviour of the world economy, as the one man on the global stage who knows what he is doing, given that he is one of those responsible for the mess we are now faced with. The economy has been the one topic that Labour has continued to spin with real effect, and their consistent message has been working; polls have shown vastly reduced Conservative leads, and Brown managed to pull off a very successful win in the Glenrothes by-election. Just a few weeks ago, when Shadow Chancellor George Osborne commented on the possibility of a run on the pound caused by Labour's reckless borrowing he was attacked by Labour and the newspapers. Former Chancellor, and one of the 'biggest beasts' of British politics, Kenneth Clarke commented, "I was amazed anybody bought the idea, being spun by Gordon's people, that there was some convention that you don't talk about the pound - that's daft."

However last week was finally the Conservatives' week; the media listened to Osborne and the party got out their message about Labour's "unexploded tax bombshell" they claim will go off just as

the economy may be starting to recover. The significance of this is great. The media had seemingly been unquestioning of Brown on economics and disparaging of Osborne. If this is really changing, it allows the Conservatives the gateway they need to complete their credibility transformation, a gateway to get across a clear and concise narrative on the economy that they can keep hammering home. Brown's plans are now so widely recognised to be dangerous, because of the enormous levels of debt they will create and the little benefit they bring, and if the Tories can continue to get across this pay later, tax bombshell idea again and again, the public may just start to awaken to the problem, and realise that Labour won't save the economy, and that the Conservatives can be trusted here.

So long as the party is allowed to sustain that simple attack, at the same time as putting forward their own sensible proposals, the Conservative Party might have the final feather in their cap for government.

Viridian

March in solidarity for a greener world

Justus Rollin

Environment and Ethics officer

A march on Parliament. Just another demonstration. No, this one is different, I promise. People in more than 90 countries will demonstrate this weekend, demanding effective action to tackle climate change. The UN climate conference in Poznan, Poland will be in full swing, while people all over the world stand up.

Surely, climate change is a global problem that needs global attention and action. There has never been a single environmental threat that has united so many people all over the world. It is widely acknowledged that the poor and vulnerable are being hit hardest, whereas the global consumer class, and historically the industrialised countries are responsible for the mess the world is facing now. People all over the world will be demanding "that world leaders take the urgent and resolute action that is needed to prevent the catastrophic destabilisation of global climate, so that the entire world can move as rapidly as possible towards a stronger emissions reductions treaty which is both equitable and effective in minimising dangerous climate change" (from the Global Climate Campaign). Industrialised countries are also urged to drastically reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, the global campaign calls for heavy investment in renewable energies - paid by the rich for the poor.

I do believe that such global action will have an impact, and is urgently needed in order to spread the message all over the globe. However, I am also convinced that only true grassroots action can actually lead the way towards a low-carbon world. While the government is debating the climate bill that will translate reduction targets into law, it is the local communities that are on their way to transform lifestyles and agriculture. Take for example eco-villages that are leading the way towards truly sustainable and resilient rural communities, working towards energy and food self-sufficiency.

Nonetheless, only if we - LSE students - join in to show our solidarity with the people being already affected can we contribute towards mitigating the global plight. Even though we are still in the lucky position of business as usual, many people around the globe are not, such as women in sub-Saharan African communities who have to walk further to collect drinking water, indigenous communities in the North that are confronted with the most rapidly changing ecosystems, marginalised communities all over the globe who live in high-risk areas, affected by floods.

LSE students will assemble at 11am on Saturday, 6 December, on Houghton Street in front of the Old Building, to go together to Grosvenor Square where they will join the Climate March. We'd love it if you joined us.

Laski



Vlad
Unkovski-
Korica

Rétablissez la révolution

"Capitalism is misery. It is up to France to show Europe the way, as it always has done. We were the first to overthrow our king, and we'll be the first to overthrow social democracy. You'll see."

It is hard to believe that these words were spoken just three years ago at a conference of the moderate French Socialist Party. They were uttered by a little-known delegate from the south, Frederic Vigouroux, and came on the back of the decisive French rejection of the EU constitution in late spring 2005. A vibrant mood developed that united all spectrums of the left from independent activists through reform leftists to revolutionary socialists.

Starting with the stunning victory against the French establishment, the French Left has mobilised again and again to defeat neoliberal policies driven by successive right-wing governments. But it has never managed to translate its unity in action to success at the ballot box. To the shock and horror of many on the Left, the battered French ruling elite apparently ditched their Gaullism in favour of a Thatcherite presidential candidate in early 2007. Nicolas Sarkozy has since failed to deliver however. As the Financial

Times has written, in peerless Orwellian language:

"Sarkozy's rhetoric and his reforms just don't fit together. If he was really interested in leading a [Thatcherite?] revolution in France, he would have to muster the courage to take on the many privileges of the powerful lobbyists [working class people?]. Out of fear for his popularity, however, he isn't willing to do that."

Yet the prospect of a French equivalent of Die Linke in Germany remained distant. With over 70,000 members, Die Linke campaigns against the higher retirement age of 67, Schroeder-era unemployment laws (Hartz IV reforms), and German involvement in Afghanistan. The Party regularly scores between 10 per cent and 15 per cent in opinion polls. Its election into parliament as the fourth largest party, in autumn 2005, has reinvigorated class struggle in Germany. Oskar Lafontaine, Die Linke co-chairperson, sought inspiration from France: "We need new forms of struggle - we need to learn French. Die Linke is standing up for the general strike, for the political strike."

Now France is seeking inspiration from Germany. As the Socialist Party imploded last week over the choice of its party leader, a voice of sanity rose above

the din. Leading dissident and former minister, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who played a crucial role in the 'Non' referendum campaign, finally broke with the Socialist Party along with Marc Dolez. They issued a press statement entitled: 'Ça suffit comme ça!' (Enough is enough!). They argued that in the Socialist Party: 'the orientation that has dominated European social democracy has won out, even though it has brought failure everywhere'.

Consequently, they have posited the need to build a Parti de Gauche, or Party of the Left, following the course that 'Lafontaine has taken in Germany with Die Linke'. Lafontaine is duly a keynote speaker at the party launch on 29 November.

Further, they have offered far Left organisations, like the French Communist Party (PCF), New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA) and Citizen and Republican Movement (MRC), a common electoral front at the next European elections. For any strand of the Left to reject such a possibility in the heart of Europe, for all the problems of the project, would be catastrophic. The question posed today is not one of 'reform or revolution' but 'reform and revolution'.

Measured musings



Healthy
Planet

'Global climate change' is an emotive phrase. One which attracts opposition as well as a large following. Some argue that climate change is part of a cycle spanning thousands of years and has nothing to do with the way we live our lives, the world being impervious to anything us humans can inflict on it. Others argue that carbon emissions do have a detrimental effect on the environment and how we live, and as civilisation has progressed, there has been an increasingly negative impact on the environment.

Seeing that many people can't change how they live overnight and big business won't shut down because of environmental concerns, various charities have sprung up to allow a compromise: offsetting carbon emissions for those who want to.

Companies like EasyJet and Virgin Atlantic, amongst others, offer each individual who fly with the airline the choice of offsetting the environmental impact their flight will have on the environment.

One of the main objections with large charities, is the amount of your donation they hold back for administrative costs, which can be as much as 35%. A further

Hedge your funds green

concern is that the money which is passed on to the beneficiaries might not actually be used for the reasons the donor gave it, which is a wider problem of a lack of transparency.

For these reasons, it's always best to check how much of your donation will go to the charity's stated cause, even if you're using a reputable charity. Smaller charities won't have as many costs, and will therefore pass on more of your donation to the stated cause. When using a smaller charity, always ensure that your donation will end up where the charity says it will.

A small environmental charity to have caught my attention is Healthy Planet. The charity aims to educate people about global climate change and healthy lifestyle choices, at the same time raising money for the protection and conservation of the 77,000 national parks around the globe.

This is achieved through education in primary and secondary schools, whilst money is raised from the public and corporate sponsors through their innovative land-adoption scheme. This scheme allows people to adopt a specific plot of land the size of a hectare at the cost of just £10, from anywhere in one of the world's national parks.

Only 10 per cent is held back for administrative costs, the biggest of which are the servers the site is hosted on. The other 90% is invested in environmental projects in the donor's selected park. In return, the donor can expect a customisable certificate marking the adoption, an information leaflet with the flora and fauna located in the park, pictures of the conservation work in progress and its completion, a marker on Google Earth or Google Maps with a message of your choice, as well as an ongoing relationship with Healthy Planet and the park keepers. This makes it ideal as an original holiday gift to friends and family.

For those still concerned with any lack of transparency, this charity is essentially brought together by the contributions of various organisations. Amongst them are the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre, UNESCO, NASA and Google, who allow the charity to use its maps technology and have awarded the charity free advertising on Google affiliated ad programmes.

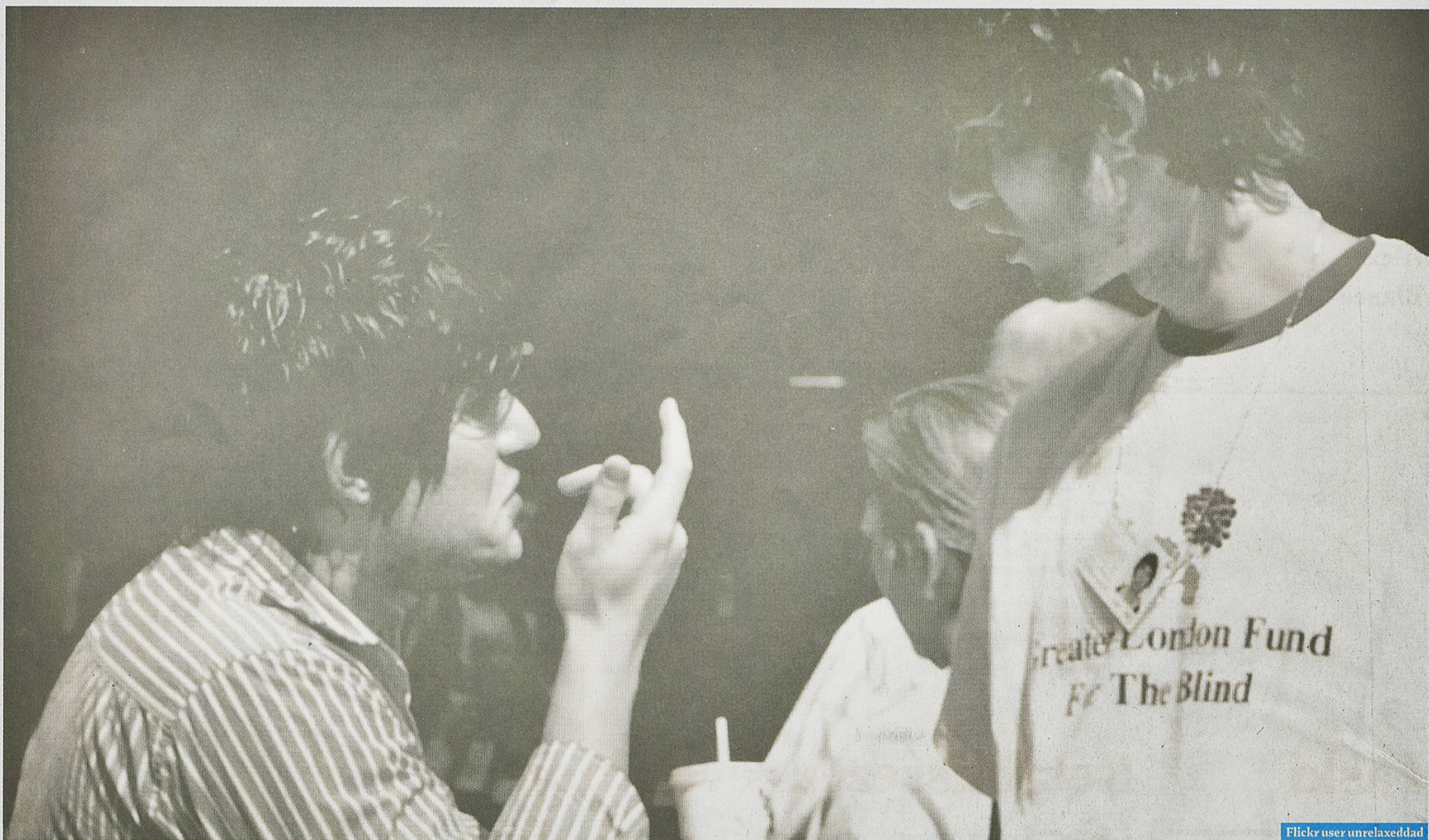
Healthy Planet is aware that offsetting only goes so far and that individuals and businesses have to actively reduce

their carbon footprint. To this end, they're developing an education programme to be taught in primary and secondary schools, which educates children and young people about global climate change and steps they can take to minimise their own carbon footprint.

Adopting land is quite an interesting idea, one which hasn't been replicated by anyone else. Adopting land is quite an exciting process and the credentials that Healthy Planet is packing are formidable. That Healthy Planet rewards you for your choice of adoption is something familiar with charities, famously the 'adopt a child' and 'adopt an animal' programmes. In addition, Google is promising that Healthy Planet adoption map will be one of the layers on the standard Google Earth application. This means that your plaque could be seen by a potential 400-million active users, which certainly adds some spice to this charitable investment.

If you're thinking of donating to any charity, Healthy Planet certainly seems like a serious contender for your donation.

Daniel Jason
Features editor



Flickr user unrelaxeddad

Keeping a dash of the cash

Charity mugging isn't pretty, but **Ben Jones** thinks there is some redeeming value to their work

Wearing bright jackets branded with the names of Britain's worthiest causes, along with a youthful optimism and a 'paid-by-the-hour' smile, street fundraisers ought to be difficult to shun. However, recently there have been calls for a complete boycott of this latest menace to prowl British streets – the Charity Muggers, or Chugger.

Recently, the charity watchdog, Intelligent Giving, has called for a complete boycott of chuggers. The 'Mystery shopper' survey they carried out within London revealed that chuggers have been caught misleading the public about how they are paid, harassing shoppers who say they are not interested, and asking donors to lie on direct debit forms to help them meet their targets.

But a complete boycott would cause devastating losses to many charities, some of which who rely on face-to-face fundraising for up to 75 per cent of their income. Ultimately it will be up to the general public to decide the future of the chuggers, and the reasons for negative public feeling are all too familiar. The most frequent arguments made against paid street fundraisers include the use of aggressive or deceitful tactics, lack of knowledge of the charity, refusal to listen to a person who doesn't want to stop, the use of sarcasm or other negative language intended to make a person feel guilty. Another common complaint is the sheer density of their presence within any given area, with tourist spots such as Leicester Square and Covent Garden becoming particularly notorious for this.

As a response to this recent surge in numbers, various guides have appeared on the internet suggesting the best and most effective techniques for dodging chuggers. They encourage wary pedestrians to use phrases such as 'I already give to a portfolio of charities each year via Gift Aid' or the more confrontational, 'I'm sorry, I'd like to make a donation online where a greater proportional of my money will actually go to the causes.' There are also tips to make yourself a less visually appealing target. Wearing headphones or

Face-to-face fundraising has in recent years become a major source of income for many charities around the world

talking on a mobile phone will make you less approachable, and if neither of those is possible, simply looking unhappy will have an effect.

However questionable the chuggers' methods may be, it is still the case that they are pretty effective at what they do. Face-to-face fundraising has in recent years become a major source of income for many charities around the world. The practice of hiring paid street fundraisers whose main task was to talk to the public and convince them to make a financial contribution began in Austria in the late 1990s, and spread rapidly. The reason the technique is so popular is that charities usually get a very profitable return on their investment (often around five to one) because the person is asked to donate on a regular basis. By securing long-term donations, charities are able to plan future campaigns with the knowledge that they have a guaranteed amount of money to work with. A chugger might spend five minutes persuading you to sign up, but the average time your direct debit will go out for is six years.

The first thing that usually pops into our head with chuggers is making evasive manoeuvres. Too often, we forget that they are actually doing a tough job. Street fundraising is known to be a difficult profession; it is not uncommon for a chugger to be met with abuse and even occasionally violence. All street fundraisers are trained, often using roleplay, in the best ways of making people stop. Charities tend to look for outgoing and confident people to make up their street team, as so much of the chuggers' success relies on their ability to convey the organisation's message.

In the end, the work of chuggers are benefiting good causes around the world. With the exception of those who are discourteous in their attempt to solicit your credit card details, they should be politely tolerated on our streets. However, if you would like more of your money to reach and benefit the needy, it is best to donate to your cause of choice online or give your spare change to those with buckets rather than clipboards – the student raggie.



A chugger stops a pedestrian in New York City with an over-enthusiastic approach. Photos: flickr user andy in nyc

Social

LSE Photography: From London...



View of Trafalgar square (photo: Anca Dumitrescu)



View from the London Eye by evening (photo: Erik Lang)



Big Ben at sunset through the London Eye (photo: Erik Lang)

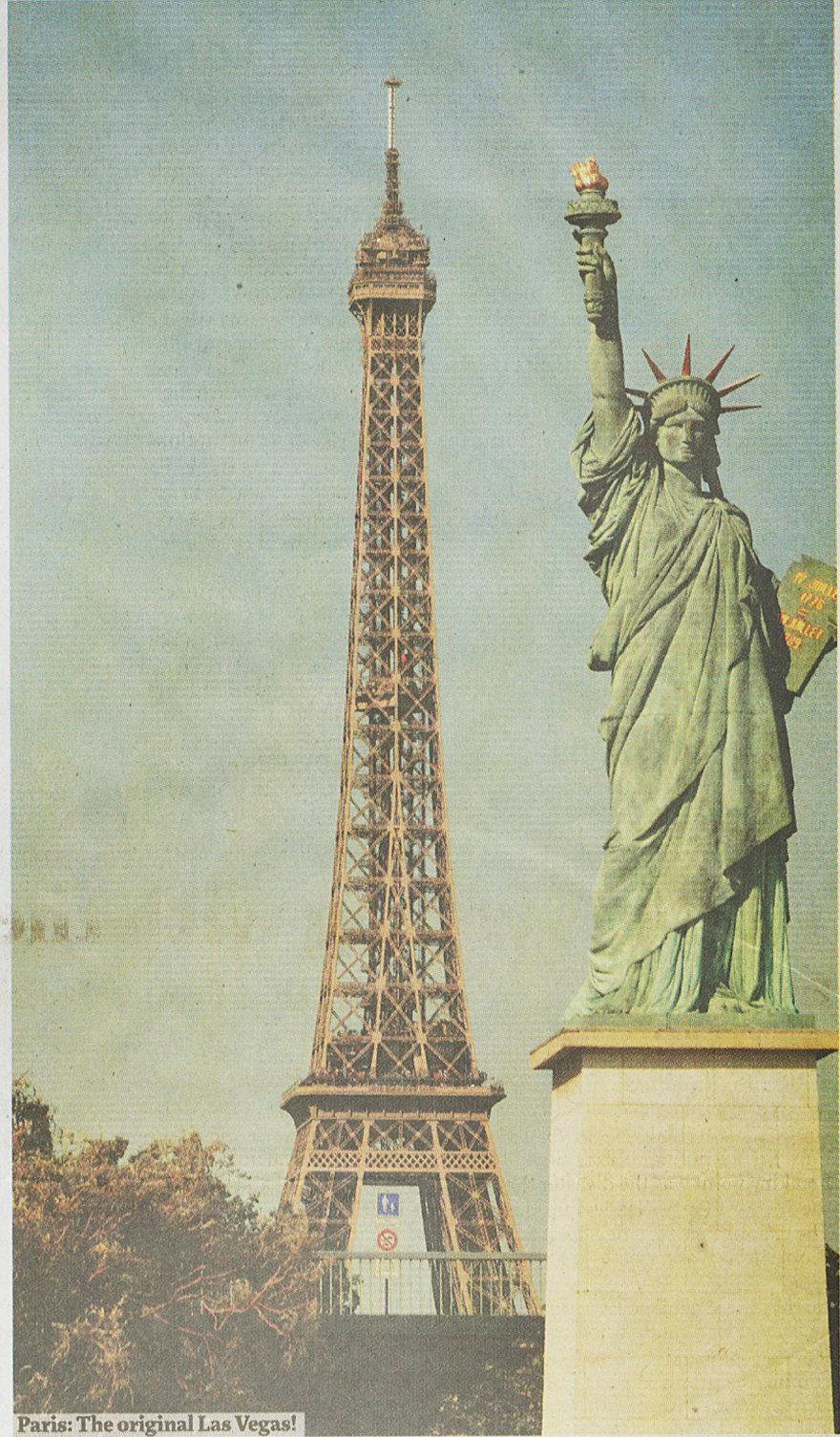
LSE Photography this week: ... to Paris



Institut de France from un bateau mouche 'fly boat'



The Seine is the new French Riviera



Paris: The original Las Vegas!



The unforgettable kiosks bordering the Seine

Photos: Erik Lang

Write for The Beaver in Social

1) **Photography in Social:** photography@thebeaveronline.co.uk

2) **Promote your society:** thebeaveronline.co.uk/listings

social@thebeaveronline.co.uk

Society Report

LSE students write to Queen Elizabeth II and to president Sarkozy

The main goal of the Franco-British Student Alliance (FBSA) is to promote mutual entente and initiative among students in France and Britain. What began as series of networking events for alumni and students of the participating schools, under the patronage of The Queen and the President of France, has now set itself the new objective to provide French and British governments with informed policy recommendations based on student discussion, research and analysis.

According to Students' Union FBSA Society President Nick Oudin "The FBSA is taking advantage of its high institutional support to give students an opportunity to exchange ideas and information with academics, executives and politicians to reach pertinent recommendations from a student perspective."

Each year, the Alliance presents a report to leading decision-makers on both sides of the Channel. It will now integrate policy recommendation as a conclusion of independent student research and an associated panel discussions and forums. The intention is to spark debate among students of associated universities which include Oxford, Cambridge, Sciences Po, l'Ecole Polytechnique, HEC and ESSEC.

The Alliance's project began last

month with a conference on higher education, research and business in Britain and France. The French Ambassador to the UK, two French business leaders, and two LSE academics, constituted a panel chaired by an LSE PhD student.

The founders of the French think tank, Le Cercle d'outre-Manche, then explained how they found France could learn from British reformism to make its universities not only more attractive, but also more business-friendly and efficient.

By the end of the debate, the assembly agreed that French higher education lacked international exposure due to the small size of its institutions and their tendency to focus on single disciplines. Also the fact that you have to speak French to study in France was preventing universities from reaching main international league tables.

It was concluded that France should follow the British model by federating higher education institutions into multi-disciplinary clusters. France should also introduce a centralised system of admissions, similar to UCAS, to facilitate access to its universities, the group said.

The businessmen argued that France should create and take advantage of reputed brands such as La Sorbonne, as well

Professor Barr insisted that implementing fees would not hinder access to education



From left to right: Mr Vaissie, Mr Boris, Miss Hoareau, Dr Corbett, Prof. Barr

as develop degrees entirely in English to attract a more diverse range of students. Professor Barr insisted that implementing fees would not hinder access to education, as long as student loans were made easily available, and would improve the quality and competitiveness of its public universities. Dr Corbett pointed out that French and British higher education reform is no longer a localised issue but a regional one which should remain within the framework of European achievements.

By launching its first research project to investigate 'why a philosopher can become a banker in Britain and not in France?' it is clear that the FBSA intends to carry on the initiative and hopes that LSE students will take up the challenge. This first conference illustrated how comparative analysis and student input can generate a flourishing exchange of ideas. Nick Oudin affirms "LSE students definitely have the potential to address such a personally relevant issue." Students of LSE, unite!

Alex Boyce

What is wrong with the French?

Frenchman Erik Lang thinks that French politics are ridiculous

This might sound obvious, but if you are French it is difficult to admit. But recent events have left me with no other choice than to shout it from the roof tops. French politics is ridiculous. The breaking point was the disaster that was the Socialist Party's leadership election. The chaotic race for a new First Secretary is one of the worst elections I have ever seen.

Initially, Ségolène Royal was said to have lost by 42 votes. She couldn't accept it and quickly told the media her loss was completely wrong. Her victorious rival Martine Aubry went on TV gloating she was the new leader. After several of days of panic and confusion, the electoral committee said that Royal had in fact lost by a greater margin of 102 votes. Aubry is the new leader of the Socialist Party after winning by just 0.04% of the vote and Royal looks like a bitter loser. Isn't democracy great?

But Aubry's victory means she is now responsible for renewing the Socialists' values and ideas which is close to an impossible task. On the other hand, Royal is now free to further her ambitions in the knowledge that 60,000 members of the

party supports her.

We expect to see Aubry, Royal and Bertrand Delanoë compete for the Socialist nomination at the 2012 presidential election. Royal does not represent a serious candidate and Aubry is obsessed with fighting the power with the unions. Delanoë may be the breath of fresh air French Socialists now desperately need. One of the smartest one in the party, Delanoë didn't try to get elected for Secretary of the party even though he was one of the strongest contestants. By not standing for First Secretary, he showed he was a team player and he has been one of the greatest Mayor of Paris since he was elected in 2001.

The right wing in France has been in power for the last thirteen years. The country has gone down the drain but the left is currently failing to provide an alternative. We need a French Obama to restore the previous glory of de Gaulle.

Whoever wants to present themselves as an alternative to Nicolas Sarkozy, they will have a tough job competing with his immaculate record. After telling a fisherman "bugger off, you asshole" he had to get drunk with the Russian president and

give a press conference at the G8 right afterwards.

He's also developed a taste for suing those who try to point out his less than fortunate actions.

It all started in January when Ryan Air used his image for an advertising campaign without authorization. In February, the 'Bling Bling President' sued the magazine Le Nouvel Observateur for publishing a 'false' text message to his ex wife Cécilia saying he still loved her and would cancel his future marriage with Carla Bruni which was happening 8 days later. In May he sued T-shirt makers made fun of his name. How dare they make fun of our impeccable president? In September he sued someone for looking through his bank account, we French are some curious beavers. October was a good month, the former director of the secret services was sued by Sarkozy to defend his private life and for defamation. He just lost another lawsuit against a business that launched a voodoo doll of him. We French, we just love our president so much that we would pay for the chance to stick needles and pins into a doll resembling him.



Listings: This week around campus

TUESDAY 02 DEC 2008

Event: The Love Circuit- LSE and Kings Speed-dating!
Society: Young Love
When: Tuesday, December 2, 2008; 19.30pm - 03.30 am
Where: LSE SU and Los Locos!
Description: Feeling lonely at Christmas? Looking for someone special? We have the perfect night for you!! We are organizing an inter-university speed dating event between LSE, KCL, UCL and Imperial with all proceeds going directly to the Prince's Trust. For just £10 the ticket to this event includes:
 Entry to speed-dating
 Free "love shot" upon entry
 Free entry to Los Locos club in Covent Garden - Free drink at the club
 For information on how to get tickets call one of the organizers below...
 Andrew Simpson- 07708745800
Event: Zambia!

Society: People and Planet
When: Tuesday, December 2, 2008; 6.30pm
Where: New Theatre, LSE
Description: Speaker from Zambia followed by the screening of the Movie "Yesterday"

WEDNESDAY 03 DEC 2008

Event: Talk by Praveen Kumar G on Disability and Development.
When: Wednesday, 03 December, 2008 5pm-6pm
Where: H216
Tickets: This event is free and open to all with no ticket required. Entry is on a first come, first served basis.
Event: Film Night
Society: Dignitas and People and Planet
When: Wednesday, december 3, 2008; 6.15pm
Where: S221
Description: Movie screening: Philadelphia

THURSDAY 04 DEC 2008

Event: "What? Where? When?" evening
Society: Intellectual Games Society
When: Thursday, December 4th, 2008; 7pm - 9.30pm
Where: D702
Description: Our second "What? Where? When?" evening. Join in with your friends or Society (up to 6 per team) and let the best team win! (See our facebook group for more info.)
Event: Global Warming
Society: Environment&Ethic Forum
When: Thursday, December 4, 2008; 2-3pm
Where: Houghton Street
Description: Public debate Houghton Street: How to tackle climate change: local versus global response.
Event: Climate Change
Society: Oikos
When: Thursday, December 4, 2008,

5-6pm
Where: NAB 2.16
Description: "Climate Change and Development": a discussion led by Conor Riffle, from the Clinton Foundation

Event: LSE recycling Time!
Society: People and Planet
When: Thursday, December 4, 2008; 5-7pm
Where: H102
Description: Towards Zero Waste: Revolutionizing Waste

Event: Global Warming
Society: Environment Society
When: Thursday, December 4, 2008; 7-9pm
Where: D502
Description: "Is it really an inconvenient truth?" - Film Screening and subsequent discussion - Free Popcorn!

FRIDAY 05 DEC 2008

Event: Banner making for Climate March

Society: Environment&Ethic Forum
When: Friday, December 5, 2008; 1pm
Where: Quad
Description: Join in and get ready for the Global Day of CLimate Protest.

Event: Free Hot Chocolate
Society: People and Planet
When: Friday, December 5, 2008, 10-5pm
Where: Houghton Street
Description: Bring along your own reusable mug to get free hot chocolate!

SATURDAY 06 DEC 2008

Event: Global Climate March
Society: Environment & Ethics Forum
When: Saturday, december 6, 2008; 11am
Where: Houghton Street, in front of Old Building
Description: Join people all around the world to demand action now to prevent the catastrophe that threatens to engulf us all.

AU resuscitates PULSE

Sophie Hunt
SU Treasurer in waiting

Friday 28th November was a momentous day in the life of Pulse. Not only did the AU (read the FC) break the all time records for peak listenership, hourly listenership and daily listenership, it also broke the record for the largest amount of swearing on air, highest slander records, and the award for how many 'DJ's' can be fitted into the studio at any given time.

In standard AU style, the takeover was run as a competition. The club managing to get the most number of listeners to be crowned victorious and awarded several crates of alcopops (aka leftovers from Party in the Park). There has been some debate between participants on the equality of this system, but as previously agreed the rankings were on the peak number of listeners at and given time, which puts the FC in the number one spot with 57 listeners, followed by rowing in second with 36 and women's hockey in third with 30.

Although the stats are less reliable, the number of listeners over the hour is far more impressive. 77 tuned into netball at some stage and some 139 into football. Unfortunately, this does mean that 62 also

tuned out rather swiftly, which was probably wise given that it meant they avoided a full 6 minute karaoke rendition of stand by me. A worker in the SU shop told me that the FC show was 'the worst radio' she had ever heard and 'worse than walking through the Tuns on a Wednesday night, as at least then I have had a drink'. Good work lads. Congratulations to men's rugby who had 35 tune in over the period, and a peak of 34, which shows people actually stayed to listen to their show. That's probably because it was actually pretty decent radio. Across the day there were 480 listeners.

Certain themes running every show were notable- every show mentioned the Carol, 4 discussed Zoo Bar Vs Walkabout, 3 mentioned/discussed chat up lines, 2 talked about the fittest members of the AU and several covered the wonders of Calella... not that we aren't an original bunch. Biggest cringe moments go to Mr Healy and Mr Jackson for their dedications to certain netball freshers. There seems to be wave running through the AU exec for getting with first years, I am glad they are all so keen to make new comers feel welcomed.

All time best moments go to Young-hum for summing up Calella in one simple shitting story and to Jacko for his explanation to Boca as to why "we like to play on grass" is third on the list of the top

'10 reasons to date a rugby player' facebook group. The worst ending is a toss up between netball, who said goodbye then continued to chat for a while not realising they were on air, and to women's hockey who thought it applicable to play God Save the Queen. Well done to rowing who managed to sneak the phrase 'meat curtains' into their show in reference to 'a high up member of the AU' and to women's rugby who sang 'darling it's better down where it's wetter'. Most lairy travel update goes to the FC. You probably have to listen to that one- it is for whatever reason at the beginning of the rowing podcast.

For those of you that missed any of the shows you can catch up by going to www.pulse.dj and click on listen live, then on demand, then Friday. Not necessarily the most productive use of time, but bloody funny. Also, for more similar standard radio tune in every Thursday at 11am for the AU hangover show, where, with a little help from our friends, we name, shame and generally sympathise with all of you feeling rough at home.

Thanks obviously go to Mark, the boss of pulse, and all his committee and other helpers for showing our 28 DJ's how the equipment worked and all those tuning in and texting in abuse.

Cocky Hockey Draw

LSE 2 - 2 Surrey

Victoria Satterthwaite
Lemmy C. Yatiz

The hockey girls have been having an AU some season so far; winning all our matches apart from Wednesday's battle against Surrey Poly. But fear not, we did not lose. Surrey had also won all their games this season but were above us on goal difference so this was a very important match.

Both teams started strong but Slurrey managed to slip one in on the post half way through the first half. We didn't give up though, with our central midfielders Dani, Azra, Alison and Heaps providing some big balls for the forward to run onto. Before long our top goal scorer, Haugh, who scored 6 goals last week (and a waiter), managed to gain another goal just before the end of the half.

In the second half Haugh managed to gain another goal, but Surrey kept battling hard to equalise. About this time, their weedy men's team came out to support them and started a rude personal attack on a number of our players. We'd like to think that they managed to gain their equaliser due to the fact that we were

rather distracted by their obscene description of Pickles' beaver.

Betty and Serene were our 'men' of the match, due to keeping the goals away at the back, and finished it with two goals apiece. We were happy with this and we know we'll shaft them at Battersea.

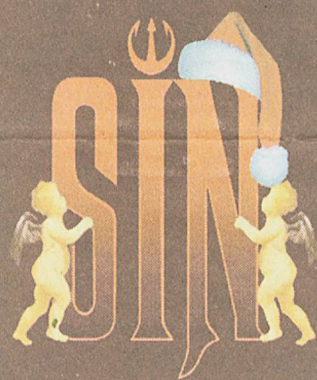
I'm afraid to say that we betrayed LSE AU night after the match and decided to go off the beaten track. The hockey ladies graced Roxy, the UCL night, shocker! Although we had a brilliant time downing £7 jugs of cocktails, we were brought down by a Turkish invasion. We all know Pickles has a thing for foreign men, which led to her current beau bringing 15 sleazy friends, who subsequently hit on each hockey girl one by one.

A special mention to Chadders, who decided to turn straight for the night in order to gain points in golden balls. We neglected to inform her that girls counted...

So overall it was a successful Wednesday night. Alex got to her hubby's and threw up into a wok, Pickering made mint brownies, Vicki got some G Crow, Alison nearly got something she didn't want, Serene DA BEAN came out, and finally, Heaps got (cough) a winner.

The AU Carol

@



Friday 5th December 2008

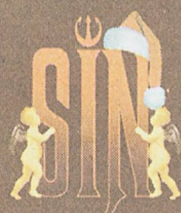
Doors: 2.30pm - 7.30pm @ SIN

AFTER PARTY & FREE ENTRY TO FRESH

(AKA CRUSH!) UNTIL 11PM!

TICKETS: £7, INCLUDES 5 FREE DRINKS

Fines will be administered as usual including the return of the 12 days of Christmas and the Mixed Grill!



SIN plays host to the legendary AU Carol 2008



Results

Netball

LSE 1s 20-21 St. Bart's 1s
LSE 2s 39-17 Royal Holloway 3s
LSE 3s 21-13 Uni Arts 2s
LSE 5s 15-42 UCL 4s

Mens Tennis

LSE 1s 9-1 Portsmouth 1s
LSE 2s 10-0 Queen Marys 1s

Hockey

LSE 1s 2-2 Uni of Surrey

Squash

LSE 1s 3-2 King's 2s
LSE 1s 4-1 QM 1st

Women's Rugby

LSE 1s 10-135 Reading 1s

Football

LSE 1s 4 - 0 LSE 3s
LSE 1s 0 - 0 Imperial 1s
LSE 2s 1 - 4 Middlesex 1s
LSE 3s 0 - 2 UCL 4s
LSE 4s 0 - 2 Vets 1s
LSE 4s 3 - 1 LSE 5s
LSE 5s 3 - 2 Kings Medics
LSE 6s 2 - 2 RUMs 3s
LSE 7s 2 - 2 Queen Mary 4s

Womens Basketball

LSE 45 - 53 UCL

Beating around the bush



Philosophical Barry

to justify claims that this weekly muse is superfluous. The aim of this stylistic feature is to mimic philosophers past and present who have always masked the paucity of their ideas with eccentric linguistic choices and the exhaustive use of polysyllabic terminology.

Also, the lack of a coherent theme means that I am perfectly placed to react to developments within the world of the Athletics Union and the wider sporting community. For example, if I were not saddled with the duty to write this defence, I would probably have looked at sporting rivalry in lieu of the many derbies at LSE this week. This would have provided a perfect opportunity for me to comment on the fierce competition between Tom Jackson and Henry Adefope for who has the least manhood in the AU.

Finally, at the risk of sounding like a Netballer moaning how hard it is to catch a ball, throw it and catch it again, it is very difficult to write to a consistently high standard. We all have our off days, 'rugeronis' as they are now commonly known, and in hindsight some of my attempts at japes were a tad too adventurous. From now on I'll stick to those things that no decent human being cannot find funny, the FC's record breaking radio show, Womens rugby's attempts at appearing feminine, and finally Jonathan Saville's repeated attempts to seem charismatic. Attempts which have thus far been spectacularly unsuccessful.

To close I would just like ask one question of those who have repeatedly queried the relevance and in-joke nature of this column: Who is Sean Farrar?

philosophicalbarry@thebeaveronline.co.uk

My topic for today: this column has hitherto been too abstract and unstructured to be deemed relevant. Discuss.

While I believe that my literary efforts to this date have been remarkably successful in wedding the disparate worlds of philosophy, sport and the AU (the latter two obviously being divorced), some believe the opposite to be the case. The defence of my position has taken some Andy Rogers-level persistence in its construction. Gladly, my efforts have yielded more favourable results than the fourth team captain's attempts at initiating sexual intercourse. Perhaps he has been taking this clichéd headline in a far too literal manner.

It will be conceded that the author has tendency to use language as difficult to understand as Ciaran Deeny or Matthew Box. This is, however, not sufficient

Fourths to be reckoned with

LSE Fourths 3 - 1 LSE Fifts

Scott Jarrett
George Crow



So it began, yet another 'El Classico'. The second helping of a derby double header. With a longstanding rivalry dating further back than the infamous 'Old Firm' games of Glasgow, the stage was set for an epic 4th team victory. The filthies, however, got off to a slow start, earmarked by Jon 'I need my arms sawn off' Bown giving away an early penalty; 1-0 to the 5ths.

The goal was the wakeup call the 4ths needed, and they began piling on the pressure in a game that was uncharacteristically free flowing. That is until a horrific challenge on the young Andrew Simpson threatened to catalyse the resort to former matches of bloodshed. Valiantly, however, Simpsom managed to hold in his tears, refrain from acting (as per usual) and walked away in a composed manner. Unphased by any 5th team scaremongering, Ash Mehta skilfully tricked his way through the midfield and rifled a shot past Sam 'Heurelho Gomes' Tempest Keeping; 1-1.

The filthies continued to exert their dominance on the game with what can only be referred to as sexy football, and Bernie Schultz AKA Michael Ballack made the score 2-1 to the 4s as the keeper fumbled yet another save. A recurrent theme in the 5th team this season is the allowance of early leads to be overturned, due to a severe lack of balls. This was displayed marvellously by the centre backs who split to allow Matt Perkins to delicately head the ball over a floundering STK; 3-1 to the 4ths.

The second half began with the 4s continuing to dominate the midfield battle; however Jon Bown, clearly unsatisfied by his first error, decided to concede a second penalty. Up stepped a nervous Captain Caz (the team's regular penalty taker at this point was off the pitch with a terrible case of heartburn) to slot the penalty home.

However, he was thwarted by a heroic Jarrett save, whom, some would say is worthy of a 3rd team call up.

At this point in proceedings the 5th team began to show signs of desperation, with their only opportunity coming from ex 3rd team squad member James Cunniffe. Yet again, they were denied by a salmon like Jarrett. The somewhat prematurely festively plump referee, Abbott, blew the final whistle. The score was 3-1 to the 4ths. To all those present in the crowd it was plain to see that the score line flattered the 5ths, and none were more delighted than Greasy Crow and new team mascot Luke 'Goldilocks' Davies.

With the game over, the question on everybody's lips was whether or not 4th team left back Nadir's presence would be felt in the shower. Yet again, he did not appear, leaving only the usual crowd of Simpo, BJ, O Brizzell, Jarrett, Greasy and Rog to perform the customary 'mangina' celebration.

The decisive factor in the victory was the standard Friday night of Crush, where some reports state that drinks were being spiked by a certain STK, desperate to distract attention from his mental frailties. Alas sly 5th team tactics did not deter 'big name' 4th team players from conducting a game of strip taps (LADS) and desperately failing to convert gash. Without naming names, Andrew Simpson needs to take a long hard look in the mirror.

A relatively successful night, followed by a very successful game of football by the filthies. 'El Classico': job done.

Women's rugby cannot score on or off the field

Samurai Tempest Keeping
Additional reporting by Ali Moussavi

AU President Sophie De-La-Hunt's political future was placed on life support last week as it emerged that she had engaged in a massive conspiracy to defraud nine thousand Beaver Readers. Scoregate has cast serious doubts over De-La-Hunt's electoral credibility as a possible candidate for Student's Union treasurer 2009.

It has since been revealed that the Womens Rugby team has been misleading Beaver Sports editors into printing false scores from their ULU fixtures.

The conspiracy became evident after sources in the Carr-Saunders common room confirmed that Womens Rugby loudmouth Lizzie Bacon was overheard chewing the fat with some fellow late-night revellers. LSE running team stalwart and News editor Ali Moussavi immediately reported the information straight to Philosophical Barry, who in turn passed it on to Sports editor Sam Tempest Keeping.

While Bacon and De-la-Hunt have already been implicated, no one is sure how many of the Womens Rugby squad have been complicit in scoregate.

When asked for comments De-la-Hunt responded, "yeah, it's great isn't it, we got bored of losing".

However certain circles in the AU have pondered over the absurdity of getting bored of losing only to adjust scores to lose by a lesser margin. The usually reticent Philosophical Barry said, "If you are going to cheat the first rule is don't get caught. Second rule is don't tell Lizzie Bacon about it. And finally at least make out that you won."

In focus

Capo-yeah-ira

Samurai Tempest Keeping
Sports Editor

In a vain attempt to gain revenge for my exposition of his surprising likeness to Vanessa Feltz, Rob opted to send me to a similarly physically taxing AU club this week. Unfortunately my packed schedule proved to be more inflexible than the Lowster himself so I was unable to sample the delights of Capoeira first hand. Thus In Focus will take a slightly different direction this week.

Capoeira is an art form which combines Friday night dance moves with elements of what we commonly see on the streets of Cardiff after the clubs have shut their doors. No, not fake-tanned whales (no pun intended) being violently sick after a few too many WKDs, try valley boys trying to smash the shit out of anyone not addressing them in an incomprehensible welsh dialect. Think break dancing, without the shell suits and bad boy high top

Nikes, wedded to more traditional music and theatrical expression.

The LSE's Capoeira collective has existed since 2004 when the club was founded by Pedro Campolina. In conjunction with his own school, the Grupo de Capoeira Aprendendo Angola, the club not only practices Capoeira but also aims to raise awareness of the art-form's history especially its strong links with the cultural traditions of both Brazil and countries on the African continent.

Tanja Lipiainen, the club's treasurer speaks fondly of her club. "Our group practices 'capoeira angola' which originates from African slaves who were brought to Brazil. Some believe that as a form of self-defence slaves practiced capoeira but had to mask it as a dance because their masters would not allow them to train martial arts. But capoeira angola is not just about movements, it also involves tricks, singing and playing various instruments."

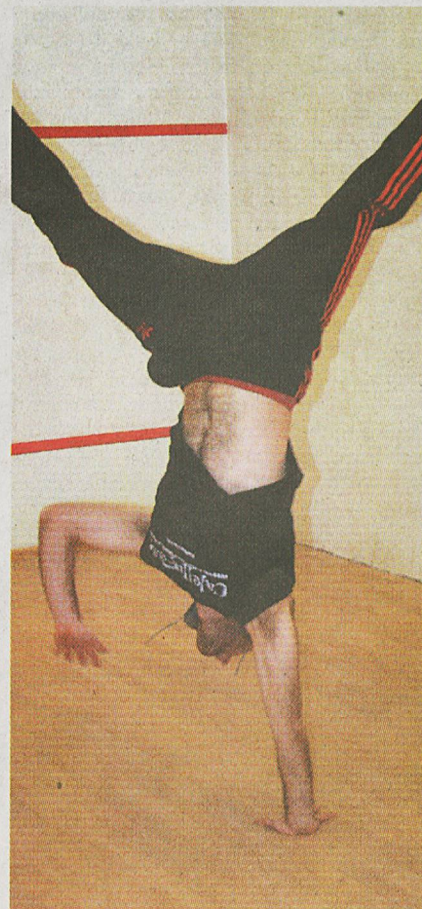
The physical benefits are obvious. As opponents engage in a non-contact battle involving a medley of kicks, elaborate spins and handstands one can only mar-

vel at the flexibility and coordination of its contestants. Lipiainen said "There are no competitions in capoeira angola. Instead the highlight of our practices is the 'roda'. Roda literally means a circle and in capoeira it is formed by about eight people playing instruments & the rest sitting in a circle and singing the chorus." The music is a massive part of the exhibition and on the whole is very enjoyable, apart from when it gets played for hours on end as it was at freshers fair at the start of this term.

If you fancy improving your knowledge of African history then you should have gone to SOAS. But if you want to do this at the same time as getting fit and learning some new moves to bust at Crush, then get in contact with t.t.lipiainen@lse.ac.uk or visit www.londoncapoeira.co.uk.

Classes held in the Old Gym:

Wednesday 8.00-10.00pm
Saturday 1.00-4.00pm
All standards and races welcome



Gamblers Anon

Every week we seem to bring miserable reports of the outcomes of our bets. This week is no exception; however there is some semblance of a silver lining. Yes Alexandra Burke wasn't eliminated from X Factor, Ruth Lorenzo took that crown. Liverpool only managed a 1-0 win, as opposed to the 3-1 result that was required. We did find solace in England's losing performance against India in the last One Day International, as Kevin Pietersen was England's top batsman, scoring a Nelson (111). A rare victory for Gamblers Anon.

This week we are pushing for there being five or more goals in the upcoming Manchester United versus Sunderland match. United won't have Ronaldo, but they are due a massive victory, and unfortunately for Roy Keane's men this will resoundingly come against them. We are so confident on this that we will place a full £20 on the aforementioned outcome. Foolhardy it may seem, but just wait until Saturday comes. Just remember this when you're watching Match of the Day, we told you so.

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AU WAX
Wednesday
3rd December
7.30pm
in the Tuns

Brought to you by RAG

Sport

AU Wax!
See inside for details
« Page 23

The Battle of Berrylands

Score

Two sides of the same coin: 1sts and 3rds opine

1^{sts} 4 - 0 3^{rds}

Rob Low and Ed Healy
Club Captain and First Team Captain

"You gotta look at the guy next to you. Look into his eyes. Now I think you are going to see a guy who will go that inch with you. You are going to see a guy who will sacrifice himself for this team because he knows when it comes down to it, you are gonna do the same thing for him." Al Pacino in Any Given Sunday. As clichéd as this may be, this is how the 1st team's preparation started two days before the game. There was a brief look at the opposition, their 'danger men', and their probable line up, but the skipper didn't feel the need to delve into too much detail on this, as he didn't feel too apprehensive about what they might bring to the table.

Instead he focused on what we could do to ensure victory. This game was 100% in our hands, he told us. Our work rate had to match theirs, and then our ability would carry us through. Every ball had to be fought for, every sprint run as if your life depended on it, every pass executed with precision. Perhaps over the top for some, but the results speak for themselves.

The match itself was fought in good spirit, bar one unsavoury incident which led to a red card at the end of the game. The 3rd team started off with plenty of belief, and attacked with purpose. The ball didn't make it often enough into the box to cause real concern for the 1st team, but a goal was required to settle any pre-match nerves. Dicky Roberts duly provided with another accurate free kick. 1-0 to the 1st team.

This wasn't enough to stop the belief from the 3rd team, and they continued to battle hard; all except for Henry that is, who seemed to shy away from every tackle, and kept telling us he had three dislocated shoulders. What a 'lad'. Alex 'Scouse' Casimo popped up just before half time with a Gerrardesque goal to leave it 2-0 at half time.

This did nothing to dampen the 3rd team's spirits after the game, and charismatic captain Gabriel Butu seemed to be doing his job as their leader. Unfortunately that man Dicky Roberts rose to the occasion once again following a Rob 'Rory Delap' Low long throw into the box. The game was won. To rub salt into the wound substitute Georgi Ivanov audaciously



Photographs (Jack Blumenau) - Above: Jol Popovic dribbling down the left; Below: Fenton flicks it on

scooped it over their collapsing goalkeeper and then volleyed home to make it 4-0.

Highlights from the game include goalkeeper Ed Healy dribbling round Gabs Butu, Rob Low volleying Teddy's face instead of the ball (apologies once again for that), and hoards of women on the touchline shouting stuff that they didn't really understand; bless.

What about the overall picture? More goals have been scored at the half-way point this season than in the whole of last season by the 1st team. The last time the 1st team was this prolific a championship was won. It is already clear that they need one result to go their way, and if it does, and the 1st team continue to have the tightest defence in the league and are as free scoring as they are at present, silverware is in sight.

Gabriel Butu and Teddy Todorov
Third Team Captain and Bulgarian

The match kicked off at 2:15 on Saturday, but for the 1st XI it began last Thursday, in a library study room with a match-specific Healy PowerPoint presentation, obliterating once and for all the accusation that Ed Healy has no sense of humour.

Library Crow got the better of Monty, and then the half-time whistle went. We are inclined to sympathise with the sentiment of Virgil, "This one day my whole life contained", and so nothing further will be said. Simon and G sing, "The only news I need is on the weather report", and if we omit mention of this, and so you, the reader, had scarce any notion of whether the wind blew west, or whether a fog intruded just then, when it was least welcome, then you would do well to give up on this composition altogether.

Rhiannon 'Single on Facebook' Edwards, fact, said the 'weather was depressive' and there was not a single word that could be added to this description that could improve it factually and philosophically, so we'll move on.

The second half was much the same as the first; Brian Healy's Gestapo glare had Mark Eisinger breaking sweat. We

only mention this so the disciplinary committee understands the tenebrous motives that led to his red card. Jo 'Scared of the single life' Popovic quite unintentionally protected Healy Snr. from an intentional assault.

The second half's most curious incident came after yet another Rob 'Playmaker' Low projectile throw. The curious incident went like this, in chronological order: Rob Fenton missed a chance, it fell to Scouse and he failed to convert (see EFG for details). Curious indeed.

So what of the match? It was quite mundane, but there is really no need to make such a fuss about it. We have a word limit, and as we approach it we are beginning to realise that there are many anecdotes to tell, panegyrics to compose, a pastiche or metaphor for lambent clarity, and before we have even been able to, in our best explanatory manner, tell you the difference between the epitasis and an epithet, we come to the moral part. Life happens, and as arguably the greatest wisdom consists in living in the moment, we employ all the girls to drink up and dress down for the Carol on Friday.

Also, Henry 'Face the shower wall' Adefope asked us to include him in the match report. Truthfully, he repeated his performance with Sophie - all we got was two minutes of effective contribution.



1st Team Player Watch

- 1st Team rating**
- 7 - Quiet day at the office, but good PowerPoint.
 - 8 - Read the game well, looked very comfortable.
 - 9 - Star Man - Defensive rock, generally heroic performance.
 - 8 - Teddy can still be found in his back pocket.
 - 7 - Mind on the post match sandwiches, but still solid as ever.
 - 7 - Battled hard with Louis, winning more than he lost.
 - 7 - His missus was arriving that afternoon, so his mind was on all the sex he was about to have.

- 3rd Team rating**
- Healy** 5 - Tried his best to turn the result around.
 - Frenchie** 6 - Mind elsewhere, concentrating on his audition for Harry Potter 6 in the role of the young Professor Snape.
 - Lowster** 10 - Average defensively, but started every single one of the team's dangerous attacks.
 - Fenton** 7 - Did everything right but just couldn't score.
 - Jacquesy** 5 - Starved of the ball but not otherwise.
 - Monty** 6 - Isolated - not suited to the long-throw game.
 - Scouse** 6 - Vocal throughout.

- 1st Team rating**
- 7 - Won the midfield battle with Scouse, solid form after injury.
 - 7 - Tries to beat the fucking world, but can't even beat Banfi. Dangerous nevertheless.
 - 9 - Close second for MoM, was asked to provide a match winning performance and delivered.
 - 7 - Worked tirelessly for the team a, crucial input in the third goal.
 - 8 - Showed glimpses of the class he can produce when fully fit.
 - 7 - Well taken, and very cheeky, goal.
 - 7 - Showed good touches in possession, challenging for the right wing spot.

- 3rd Team rating**
- 5 - May have solved Healy's midfield selection dilemma.
 - 8 - Followed Popovic's constant instructions to good effect.
 - 6 - No notable contribution.
 - 7 - Took his top off on 60 minutes after Ed told him that Rhiannon was single.
 - Not worthy of a mention.
 - Not worthy of a mention.
 - Not worthy of a mention.

- 1st Team rating**
- Hughesy**
 - Knoertzer**
 - Dicky**
 - Tiago**
 - Gurpreet**
 - G-Unit**
 - Chris**

- 3rd Team rating**
- Brooksy**
 - Amar**
 - Sachin**
 - Russ**
 - Library**
 - Adefope**
 - Yogi**

- 1st Team rating**
- 3 - What is it with crazy Yank 'keepers at LSE. What a Rugeroni.
 - 5 - Contained Nature or 'Knoertzer' at times, but allowed Dicky to come from behind.
 - 7 - Did alright.
 - 6 - Silly mop haircut didn't get in the way of his heading.
 - 7 - Loves the long ball game, and contained Monty well.
 - 3 - Mentally unstable.
 - 5 - Man marked Rick Roberts, who scored twice. Lacking match practice.

- 3rd Team rating**
- 5 - Age of his eldest son.
 - 7 - Number of weeks before his first BUSA KO.
 - 8 - Devout, but still won't say no to a Zoo Bacon sandwich.
 - 6 - 'X Factor will be the best part of my Saturday night'.
 - 7 - Thorough and diligent on his day release from the library.
 - 6 - Quiet but complained loudly about the shower temperature.
 - 6 - The Duracell bunny just kept on going.

- 1st Team rating**
- 5 - Lost the midfield battle, another crazy Yank.
 - 4 - Might as well have been back in Newcastle.
 - 6 - Loves being the star man for the 3s, but wasn't on this occasion.
 - 4 - Didn't rise to the occasion, as per usual.
 - 5 - Not much time to show what he can do.
 - 7 - Linked up well with Teddy, final product was missing.

- 3rd Team rating**
- Mark** 6 - Did well under the circumstances.
 - Mike** 6 - Incidentally, the number of Byker Grove episodes he has appeared in.
 - Teddy** 10 - If you were a McDonald's burger, you would be a McGorgeous.
 - Butu** 10 - You're hotter than a bunsen burner set to full power.
 - Harry P** 6 - Triple that and you've got the number of words in his surname.
 - Tomas** 6 - Double that and you've got the number of words in his english vocabulary.

If you have a view...
thebeaver.spots@lse.ac.uk



inside

rant	----->	3	- liz cheesborough
inner peace + soldiers of the small screen			
film	----->	6	- trent maynard
big screen bloodfests			
literature	----->	7	- tom simpson
welsh war poetry + a mottled dawn			
music	----->	10 + 11	- j. boys + l. mcLaughlin
protest songs + reviews + mix tape			
theatre	----->	12	- lois jeary
mother courage			
visual arts	----->	13	- c. schmidt-zur-nedden
gerda taro + looting goods			
food	----->	14	- sophie marmont
rationing + beetroot brownies			
journeys	----->	14	- graeme birrel
n-dubs warfare			
identity	----->	15	- louisa evans
cold war clothing			
sex & gender	----->	16	- helen reeves
the new street war			

captains

partB interviews - **the GND** - 4+5
 we ask kate hudson about banning the bomb

feedback chat

To the thugs at partB,

I found the coercion of Jelly babies in last week's partB into performing obscene sex acts to be wholly exploitative. I intend to start a rights group, SHITAC (Society for the Help of Inanimate Toffee and Confection) and run for a Sabs position off the back of it.
 Yours fumingly,

Jemimah Puddleduck

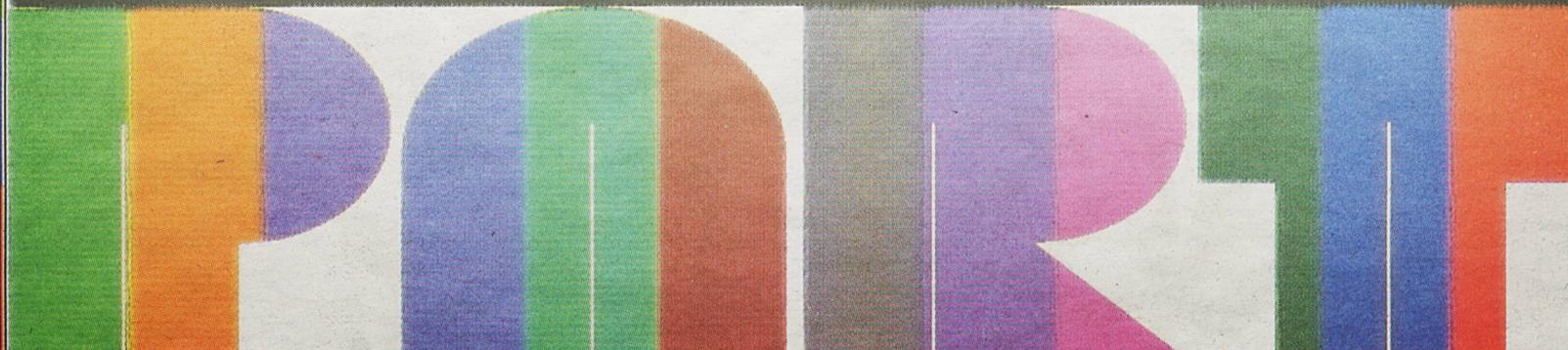
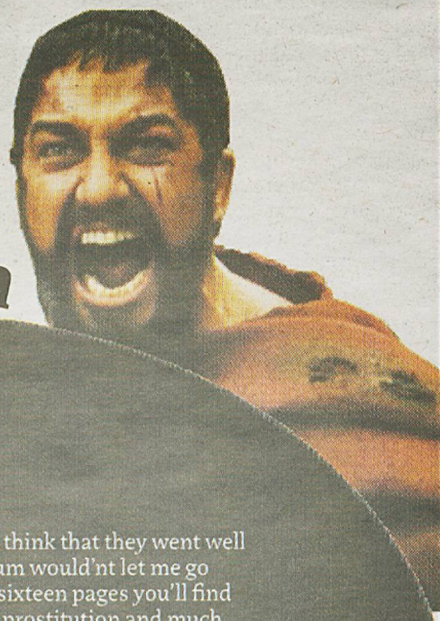
An open letter to LSE students,

In the course of wandering Hades for several millennia now, I have come to the conclusion that peace > war. As a younger man I was well into war, but thousands of years of playing Risk with deceased dictators has taught me the value of diplomacy.
 Peace,

King Leonidas xxxx

holli eastman

Free hugs to all partB readers this week. War and peace are like jam and cream cheese, you wouldn't think that they went well together but once you try it... Self-indulgently I have lived out my alternative life in this issue, my mum would'nt let me go to Bradford and do Peace Studies so packed me off the LSE instead. Sad times. Throughout the next sixteen pages you'll find a plethora of praises of peace, an amazing article on protest songs, an insight into the legalisation of prostitution and much more inbetween. So read on my sweets, read on...



War – the ultimate threat to oneself, to one's nation, to ones future. The majority of people in the West we have not seen conflict on our home soils for a generation if not longer, leaving it as a relic of our glorious histories and a foreign travesty we follow in the news. We see videos, 3D maps, correspondents in their now familiar press jackets; the glow of orange explosions in the background. We can almost feel it; we are almost there. But we are not. We are safe.

Turn back the clock thirty years and these factors show little change; beyond the lower quality visuals on BBC news, our nations are still beyond the thrall of full warfare. As the Vietnam War implodes upon America the hippies turn on, tune in and drop out – after all, give peace a chance, man. The stark juxtaposition of war and peace; the youth of America simultaneously filling the jungles and festivals in defence of their rights, one with weapons and the other with words. The hippies fronted the youth revolution with their swaying psych rock, bare breasts and beatnik ideology; acid under their tongues and flowers in their hair. At the same time, the American troops staggered under the weight of a challenge they had never anticipated. By 1971 over half of all troops had used opiates, with over twenty per cent addicted to heroin not provided by their Vietnamese rivals, but flown in first class by their patriarchal state. One side faced the darkest of all missions with their men closeted in the grips of heroin, secret heroes who undertook mandatory rehabilitation before they could return to welcoming arms. Over the water the pacifists of peace and love braved public scorn as they burned draft cards and celebrated transcendental consciousness. Both histories can be looked back at with glory and criticism; both hold the ever-illegal tale of drug use and violence close to their hearts. Have we changed?

Today we are still at war. There are more guns, more stabbings and more murders on the streets than ever before. We're in the midst of a climate of fear – not power-driven political hyperbole, but stark fact in statistical form. There are more drugs too; with wider availability and variation than the hippies could have ever dreamed of. We are not a blinkered society; we know of drugs trafficking and addiction, teenage shootings and stabbings – but the TV does not show us images broadcast from overseas, it shows us what is happening right here. The war has come home. We live in a city where one hundred stabbings have happened so far this year, where heroin is easier to pick up than cannabis. We see the Evening Standard headlines and discuss The Wire over a joint or two, travelling to the media's havens of danger to pick up 'something for the weekend'. We're not criminals, we're students doing as thousands do every Saturday night. The middle-aged secretary who can see the take-away fights from her bedroom window knows it too. The Guardian readers with their crime and drugs 'pull-out-and-keep' supplements discuss it over coffee. Over four million illegal firearms float beneath the radar of society. In forty per cent of crimes where a firearm is present they end up being fired, with twenty-two per cent causing injury or death.

This is not a British phenomenon, nor a Western one; we live in a world where we are at war against terror, crime, drugs, religion, polarisation and poverty – a host of globalised demons. Are we aware? Certainly. Concerned? Of course – parents now buy stab-proof hoodies off the internet and teenagers can't cross postcodes for fear of death. Action? What to do is another matter altogether. Society has problems, but we don't put our defence budget in to sorting it out. Why should we? We are at peace with our war and at war within our peace.

lizcheesbrough tunes in, shoots up, drops out

marionkoob declares war on the silver screen

We like war - in fiction. We need the gut wrenching conflict, the brink-end situations in which the main character has to choose between his own life and the one of others; his moral integrity or his future within the span of seconds. We are fascinated by this endless cycle of conflict, which has been ongoing ever since, we may safely say, the dawn of civilization.

Is it despicable to enjoy such entertainment, to appreciate a make-believe scenario of something that continues to provoke so much horror and pain? I don't think so. Resurfacing these stories, fictionalised or not, are a way of keeping fresh in our minds the idea of how such situations can be like, reminding us that Remembrance Sunday isn't just for the military, schools and the Queen. Over the past month, as my eyes drifted across the sea of those who marched by wearing a poppy, I wondered just how many took the time to think about what they were remembering, and why.

However, war in films and other fictional mediums can have a different effect altogether. Such stories can glorify war, make it seem like the honourable and proper moral path, taking us right back to a 1914 mindset. At the time, young men were pressured into volunteering to fight for 'the war that would end all wars'. Those who refused were humiliated in diverse ways, from being given a feather to highlight their cowardice to social exclusion. Being a pacifist back then, both in state and society, was not much of an option – although poets such as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen did clear the path for resistance against such governance.

Yes, seeing dashing young actors run across dangerous territories, on different continents, in different time periods of different conflicts accustoms us to a singular image of war, infused with the notion that duty, patriotism and honour are qualities which are undeniable to soldiers and protagonists alike.

The reality is dirtier, and much more of a compromise. You can rarely do the right thing in war, and most of the time you barely have the wits about you to think of it. Sassoon indicates that pacifism, and the disgust one may feel toward warfare has nothing to do with cowardice (indeed, he was known for his exploits in battle)

but rather humanity. The parallel realities 'this is the ideal we are fighting for' and 'we are killing other human beings' hang incredibly near, but can never quite be superimposed. How to understand the massacre, the horror in the face of these concepts? It all seems trivial.

And so it is with profound disillusionment about the rest of the world and about one's self that the soldier is left. Not a heightened sense of pride at having saved Private Ryan. In his war novel All Quiet on the Western Front, Eric Marcia Remarque gives his protagonist the best ending he could have thought of – death. For after all he had gone through, there was no other positive outcome possible.

war and piece



RMT

give peace a chance?

holliestman bans the bomb

In the era of the war on terror the subject of conflict seems unavoidable. In every aspect of life we are faced with confrontations, anger and violence - be it in the queue for a kebab or in a hotel in Mumbai. The days of peace, love and harmony, the values advocated by the Yippies and Hippies of the Sixties seem to have fallen from memory. Today such values are described as deluded and naive, held by groups of unwashed dreadlocked folk who live in trees and don't pay council tax, not applicable to the dog eat dog world of capitalist society. We have been told that struggle and strife is essential for progress to happen, that it is inherent. Is this really the case? Or is there an alternative, can global peace be achieved, and more importantly, is there hope for the future? The CND think so.

For over fifty years the **Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament** has been at the for front of the peace movement in the United Kingdom, attracting support from prominent figures in British society including the likes of Michael Foot and Bertrand Russell. Many may think that they have not heard of the CND, yet unbeknown to most, the globally recognised peace symbol is their creation. The famed circle, with the dividing line down the middle and two adjoining off shoots, which has adopted by so many individuals seeking to make a difference across the years is the organisation's logo, designed in the Fifties to represent the world and the letters N for nuclear and D for disarmament within it.

I spoke to **Kate Hudson** who has been the Chair of CND for five years. Throughout her time in the position she has been involved both nationally and internationally in campaigning on a plethora of anti-war and anti-nuclear issues.

Launched in 1958 the CND have been actively pursuing and campaigning non-violently to rid the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and to create genuine security for future generations. They oppose all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction: their development, manufacture, testing, deployment and use or threatened use by any country. The organisation planted the seeds for the Greenham Common protests which started in 1981, where a group of women set up a peace camp at the site where cruise missiles were due to be set up at a Royal Air Force base in Berkshire, in the south of England. The Greenham Common protesters produced images which defined a decade and a time when people and politics mattered and when people believed that people power the individual could make a difference. Kate herself was involved in the Greenham Common protests. She describes the time as a moment when thought the dangers facing the world were "too important to just sit back and ignore".

"those IR buffs amongst us will be familiar with the term M.A.D, mutually assured destruction, an acronym which could not be more apt"

The threats may have changed, our new foreign foe is dressed in a different guise to those of the Cold War era. We now fear public transport and suicide bombers, not sputnik and the soviet spy. The Cold War may have moved to a warmer location but tensions and the fear of foreign aggression are still rife. The CND is as relevant today as ever, while the location of the war and the enemy may have changed the goals are exactly the same. Oddly enough the topic of nuclear disarmament has never been viewed as a particularly sexy political issue. In the early nineteen eighties the party formerly known as the Labour party embraced a pledge for unilateral disarmament into the to bosom of its election manifesto only to be quashed at the polls by the Iron Lady and the New Right. At the time Labour MP Gerald Kaufman described the manifesto as the 'longest suicide note





in history'. Since then both key participants of the Westminster have actively dodged the issue.

I ask Kate if she thinks that war has become an inherent part of our society. In today's world globalisation and the expansion of press freedom have resulted in our screens and newspapers being constantly covered with scenes of violence and destruction in far off lands. Many people feel that such an exposure to warfare has resulted in society, especially the younger generations, becoming desensitised to the scenes of brutality before them. Kate doesn't believe that this is the case. She feels that the increased exposure to the scenes of war have "alerted people more to the subject". The influx of war images and information has led to more people becoming opposed the act, today, especially in the post 9/11 era, she tells me that "the resistance is becoming greater". We now have a greater understanding of what happens at war. Kate describes how much things have changed since the "times when a mother would wave her son off to war with little clue as to what the consequences of his excursion would be". Today almost all of us have a understanding of what the experience of warfare entails.

"The Cold War may have moved to a warmer location but tensions and the fear of foreign aggression are still rife"

In Britain, the younger generations are often portrayed as being apathetic and passive to anything which occurs outside the sphere of facebook or their Nintendo Wii. Contrasted to the active and enthused young protesters of the Seventies and Eighties, today's generation are frequently shown to lack the political mite and passion of their predecessors. Kate disagrees with how the youth of today are portrayed. She has found that "the youth of today are involved in a wide range of issues, from environment to anti-war demonstrations". Kate tells me of the times when she has seen youngsters "stand up to Members of Parliament and question what right they older generation has to decide their future for them". After all, on the issue of nuclear disarmament it is the younger generation's future existence which is essentially at risk.

People today are becoming more aware of the issues. Kate has found from speaking to people on the subject of nuclear disarmament that if they think logically they can see that there is only one end. By continuing on the same path as we are the only end is one of mutual destruction (those IR buffs amongst us will be familiar with the term M.A.D, mutually assured destruction, an acronym which could not be more apt), a Nash equilibrium the likes which even the most equipped economists of this fine institution would not be able to solve. A war of the scale of the conflicts of the early twentieth century would simply not be able to occur in today's world. The aggressor may have changed since the time of the Iron Curtain, but the threat to the world has not. In 2006 America restated its intentions to maintain its first strike policy, maintaining the right to protect its interests by force if a threat is detected. Thus the aims of the CND are as applicable today, if not more, than they were all those decades ago.

In the current economic climate the CND believe that there is no time like the present to ban the bomb. Replacing the Trident system in the United Kingdom (a missile based nuclear weapons programme based on submarines, which act as a sea deterrent) is estimated at a cost of at least fifteen billion pounds. Kate tells me that most people can see that this is an unnecessary expenditure.

Kate professes that the CND are in a unusual business position. She sees the aim of the organisation as being "to effectively put themselves out of business" by achieving the nuclear disarmament which they have been campaigning for all these years. Achieving their goals however, would not mean the end of the organisation. Kate sees the future of the organisation as "helping others internationally, helping to fight for the wider goal of achieving world peace".

The Cold War may be over and a new dawn of potential hostilities may have arisen bringing with it new threats, new foes and new uncertainties. The CND remain constant, reminding us that the we hold the key to our own national security. Mutually assured destruction is indeed, M.A.D: a fact that governments across the world should pay attention to.

blood and celluloid

trentmaynard on the relationship between war and film

Film, more so than almost any other medium, has the ability to exorcise personal - and national - demons. Increasingly contemporary society has begun to work out its issues through cinema; we use it to question, to ponder, to record, to rehash, to reminisce, to explain, to defend, to attack, and sometimes, even to learn.

The twentieth century was a century of growth and change and transformation, of struggle and crisis and providence. But if anything truly defined the century, and the history that marked decades and eras, it was war. From the First and Second World Wars, the Arab-Israeli conflicts, to the Cold War, Vietnam, Gulf, and Yugoslav wars, and to the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the personal and national scars have run deep.

While war shaped the century, it's undeniable that the twentieth century was also the century of cinema. Louis Lumière brought his motion picture camera to the table in 1895, and it wasn't long before the century turned over and the technology spread. The silent films of D.W. Griffith, F.W. Murnau and Sergei Eisenstein led way to the films of Jean Renoir, Alfred Hitchcock and Roberto Rossellini, while the classic Hollywood studio films gave way to auteurism in the sixties. The seventies brought on a decade of rebellious cinema, while the eighties offered a blossoming in the international film scene, resulting in the diversified scene of the nineties, when alternative voices emerged in independent films.

War and film have been interacting since the very beginning. Some of the most revered films of the early days of cinema pointed their lenses at issues of warfare and conflict. Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), for example, tells the story of an uprising against the Russian Tsar, and Renoir's *La Grande Illusion* (1937) follows captured French officers during the First World War.

World War Two ushered in widely popular documentary-style military pictures in both Germany and Britain. It also showed the staggering political power of cinema through the emergence of propaganda pictures. After the end of the war, filmmakers began bringing it to life on film, showing the personal stories and tragedies on the silver screen and reenacting the battles that changed Europe, Asia, and the world.

The *Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) told the tale of three World War Two veterans returning to small-town America after the war. Their homes - just like themselves - had been forever altered during their time away, and the film follows their struggle to reintegrate into regular life. The film took what would have previously been deemed an ancillary approach to the impacts of war, but it heralded a change in the way film would examine war in the future: showing what happens after the weapons are laid down and the soldiers return to life as normal (when nothing will ever seem normal again).

In decades since, war films have continued to deal with the demons left behind from the World Wars, but also have responded to newly arising conflicts. The Vietnam War, which proved particularly troubling for both the people directly involved and the Americans populace watching the conflict from home, gave birth to a whole new breed of war film. The disillusionment with the war, coupled with the changing social values of the time, was reflected in the cinematic responses to the war. Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) used oppressively morbid imagery and drugged-up, dream-like sequences to help evoke the 'atmosphere of the war within the social context of the 70s, resulting in a film that perfectly captured "the horror" of it all.

Contemporary cinematic responses to war have become just as diversified as the industry itself. Thus, war films have taken the shape of big-budget Hollywood epics like *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and *Pearl Harbor* (2001), low-budget personal accounts of more recent conflicts, like the Bosnian film *No Man's Land* (2001), the magical-realist approach in Pan's *Labyrinth* (2006), which deals with warfare in a way all its own, and *Waltz With Bashir* (2008), an animated film which defies genre in the way it tells the story of a former Israeli soldier coming to terms with his actions in the first Lebanon War. Furthermore, in the 21st century, film now transcends the very idea of just an "industry" as technology has placed the opportunity of filmmaking in the hands of the masses. In an era where people on the frontlines are capturing footage on their cellphones and portable video cameras, the possibilities for the home-made war film are endless.

One thing all war films have in common - no matter what conflict they cover or what approach they take to storytelling - is the inherent power they hold in processing the emotions surrounding armed conflict. They allow nations and individuals to grieve over the spilling of innocent blood, and to wrestle with the guilt over past transgressions. Thus, they provide catharsis and closure for both victims and instigators; salvation through art. War films have been with us since the birth of cinema, and as long as shots are fired and blood is spilt, they will remain an important tool in both history and healing.



poetry

meganjones thinks wyn won

War poetry usually brings to mind the English poets of the First World War, such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Rupert Brooke. But how many of you are familiar with Hedd Wyn, the Welsh war poet of the First World War?

Hedd Wyn, the bardic name of Ellis Humphrey Evans, was a shepherd and a gifted poet. Having taken second place for the chair in the National Eisteddfod (the Eisteddfod is the annual Welsh language cultural festival) at Aberystwyth, he had set his heart on winning the chair at the Birkenhead Eisteddfod of 1917. However, due to a shortage of men to fight, the government put pressure on farmers such as Ellis's father, stating that only two sons were necessary to help farm the land. As the oldest son, Ellis felt obliged to join up, despite his misgivings about war and killing.

In the midst of the terrible conditions of the trenches, and the trouble faced in trying to get Welsh language correspondence past the monoglot English officers, Ellis submitted his poem Yr Arwr (The Hero). The poem described the realities of war for both the soldiers and their families back home.

From the stage of the Eisteddfod in Birkenhead the judges proclaimed the winner of the chair to be Private E. H. Evans – Hedd Wyn. They also stated that he had died on the 31st July, 1917 during the battle for Pilckem Ridge, Ypres. The Archdruid Dyfed said "Y Delyn a ddrylliwyd ar ganol y wledd / Mae'r wyl yn ei dagrau a'r bardd yn ei fedd" (the harp was destroyed in the middle of the feast/the Eisteddfod in tears and the poet in his grave). Instead of the usual charring ceremony, the chair was draped in black amidst death-like silence, and the poets came forward in a long procession to place their poems of tribute on the chair in memory of the dead bard.

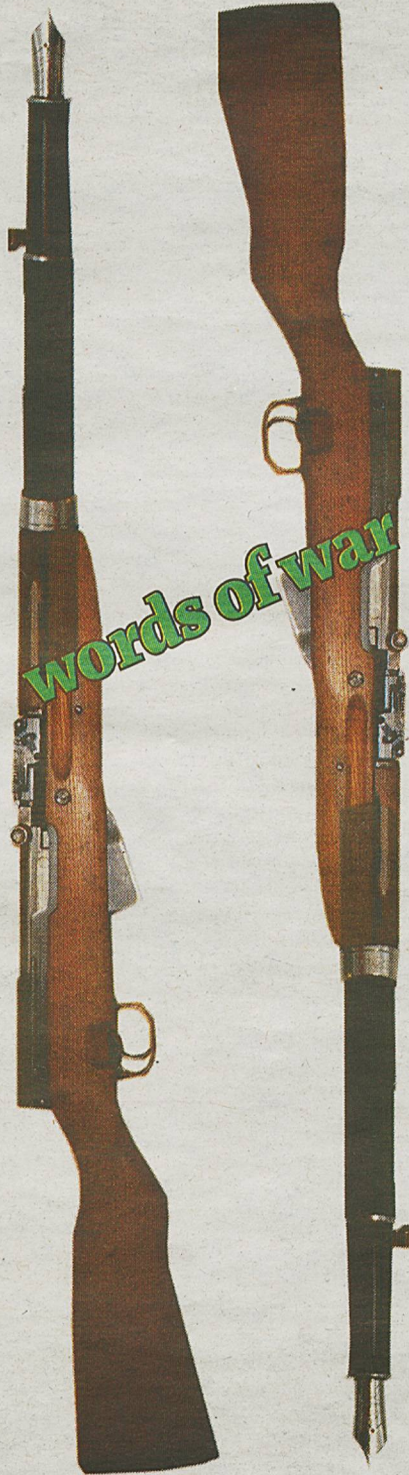
David Lloyd George, Prime Minister and Welshman, was present at the charring ceremony. This was very unpopular due to his previous appearance at the National Eisteddfod in Bangor (1915), where he gave a very patriotically British speech, trying to cajole young Welsh men to die for the British Empire.

Hedd Wyn is the most emotive figure in twentieth century Welsh literature, being as he is a symbol of a generation of Welsh men who perished in the First World War. This was a man from a rural corner of Gwynedd, who had never previously left Wales and had been sent to fight for a cause about which he knew nothing, and cared even less. There was a strong feeling amongst Welsh communities that their men were dying for a British cause that had nothing to do with the Welsh people.

War, by Hedd Wyn.

And seeing God had turned away
A sword they raised to slay their own
We hear the tumult of the frat
On humble houses its shadows frown.

And there the weeping willow trees,
Bear the old harps
The cries of the boys fill the breeze
Their blood is mingled with the rain.



What wicked creatures men are. We kill and harm and loot and plunder. We tie men up and take them hostage, we slide knives over throats, we put the cold muzzle of a gun against warm, pulsating skin and pull the trigger, blithely. We've learnt the magic of magnitude – we can blow people up now, reducing them to limbs that lie listless on streets like strips of splintered wood. We stop awhile, panting – we're human after all – but rested, we get up, dust our hands and dance to the same ghastly, grisly tune. All over again.

The stories of the Urdu writer Saadal Hasam Manto's (pen name 'Manto') stories centre round this dance. Mottled Dawn is a collection of fifty short sketches that deal with the Partition of the Indian subcontinent that took place some sixty-odd years ago. 1947 was a strange year – a time of neither war nor peace. India splintered into two – some might argue, three – and a million people shuffled across freshly-demarcated, albeit controversy-ridden, borders. Not all made it to the other side alive: trains of corpses – corpses only, though, on occasion, a cowering child – screeched to halt at stations crowded with expectant relatives. 1947 revealed to the world the lunacy of a land divided.

In Toba Tek Singh, the opening piece, Manto tackles directly the theme of lunacy: Bishan Singh is an inmate in an asylum in Lahore (Pakistan). His hometown, Toba Tek Singh, is in Pakistan, but he is, by virtue of his creed, now an Indian. He refuses to leave the land to which Toba Tek Singh now belongs; the resulting furore reveals the extent to which irrationality has engulfed the world – so much so that it is the madman that appears to be sane. Exasperated, Bishan Singh christens the ground beneath his feet Toba Tek Singh:

'On one side, behind barbed wire, stood together the lunatics of India and on the other side, behind more barbed wire, stood the lunatics of Pakistan. In between, on a bit of earth which had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh.'

At around two and a half thousand words, Toba Tek Singh is one of Manto's longest pieces. His shortest piece is a sentence long; most stories, though, constitute a fistful of sentences, no more. He has no time for long-winded sentences, or twisted syntaxes, or big words – all that seemed superfluous, mere frill, at a time when people around him were either clutching knives or being cut open by them. In one of his shortest pieces, a man saunters up to another, inquires whether he is Muslim and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, simply kills him. That is it, that is the story. What more could have been said, after all?

It is odd reading Manto today. Especially last week when, men stormed the hotels of Mumbai, demanded proof of nationality, and selected for themselves a host of hostages. Is this proof of eerie prescience on Saadat Hassan Manto's part? It is not, though we wish it was. It is, instead, humanity dancing that macabre dance all over again

alizehkohari reviews a mottled dawn



war and peace.

is war an interlude during peace, or is peace is an interlude during war, mused le tigre Clemenceau. Indeed, what is one without the other? War is the price of peace. The cost of learning its meaning. The penalty for betraying its trust.





the times they aren't a-changin'

not in **loisjeary's** name

Bob Dylan is the ultimate protest singer, right? Wrong. Although 'Blowin' in the Wind' and 'The Times They Are A-Changing' became synonymous with the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements of the 1960s and '70s, Dylan was a reluctant figurehead, who never fully committed to a cause and who was, in retrospect, a small figure in a much larger peace movement.

To look back at this period and claim that music made a significant difference to the political landscape is to wildly romanticise the image of the musical troubadour battling against 'The Man'. Despite appearing at the March on Washington in '63, Dylan soon denied ever being a spokesman for his generation. His abandoning of protest songs accompanied his musical evolution away from folk music to a rockier sound – protest songs were for tale-spinners, he was moving on. Many of his most resonant lyrics have had their meaning projected onto them through association with subsequent political events. 'Masters of War' may speak out against 'you that build all the guns/you that build the death planes', but predating the bombing of North Vietnam by two

years it was only later to be appropriated by the anti-war movement. Sometimes it's all too convenient to forget that 'Blowin' in the Wind', with its references to doves and cannon balls, was only made famous because of a money-spinning release by Dylan's peers, Peter, Paul and Mary.

This is not to say that Dylan's protest songs have no value. His songs gave voice to widespread discontent and Dylan's genius is in the way that his songs transcend generations or movements, bringing expression, whether intentional or otherwise, to countless causes. The contemporary raft of anti-Bush songs fail to achieve this universalism. Bright Eyes' 'When the President Talks to God' is a vitriolic example of a protest song explicitly rooted in the present and so unable to provide lasting meaning to any particular cause. Oberst attacks Bush, but it follows that when Bush has finally departed the White House, his protest will be over. The best protest songs need not be subtle – John Lennon's 'Give Peace a Chance' is not ambiguous in its anti-war stance – but they do have to be suitably vague so that people from a range of political per-

suaions can adopt them as their own.

In many ways Dylan embodies the problem in relying on musicians to be the spokespeople of agitation. For most musicians, it is the songs which come first, the causes later. Peter Doggett, author of an exploration of the link between music and revolutionary politics 'There's a Riot Going On', argues that whilst many musicians were paying lip-service to the revolutionary causes of the 1960s, most were ultimately motivated by cash and fame. The in-lays may have dedicated their albums to the revolutionaries, but they kept all of their earnings from the proceeds, without donating anything to those causes they proclaimed to support.

We mainly have Joan Baez to thank for Dylan's brief flirtation with musical protest, and she presents a rare example of a musician truly dedicated to the causes she supports. A life-long peace and civil rights activist, the bond which she formed with Dylan drew him not only into the wider folk movement but also to the campaigns which she held dear. A 1968 draft-resistance campaign poster shows Joan sat next to her two sisters under the slogan 'Girls say yes to boys who say no'.

It is an iconic image of a time when musicians spoke out against war without worrying that it would be perceived as unpatriotic. It was during her time in jail for repeatedly barricading the entrance of the Armed Forces Induction Centre in California that she met her future husband, Dave Harris, who himself had been incarcerated for draft evasion. While other musicians let the spirit of the Sixties fade away, Baez remains an ardent campaigner for peace, human rights and environmental causes, unafraid to speak out and act out against injustice. There's no getting away from the fact that Joan Baez is best known for covering other people's songs, including Dylan's, while her latest album prominently features a cover of Tom Waits' 'The Day After Tomorrow'; however, her ethereal, fragile delivery remains the true voice of the peace movement, the consummate folk singer.

The question is, forty years on, have we learnt anything from the lessons of the Anti-Vietnam War movement? A cursory listen to the noises being made by musicians on and off the stage suggests another resounding no. For those artists who bothered to speak out against the Iraq war, most seemed content at making a

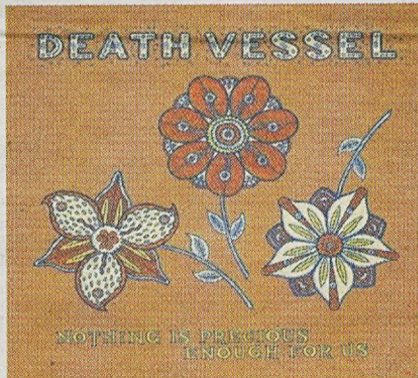
single statement and then abandoning the cause altogether. The video for Madonna's 'American Life' transplanted the Iraq war onto the catwalk, complete with some truly bizarre erotic dance moves, which serve only to detract from any meaningful political point being made. Not only was it withdrawn from the music channels for being unpatriotic and potentially offensive, but the single that followed it was about 'Hollywood' for crying out loud. In Britain, the 'Peace Not War' compilation CD, produced by the grassroots organisation, may feature dedicated and erudite campaigner for peace and social justice Billy Bragg, but it is also home to a song by Chumbawamba – are they really our greatest musical hope in these times of trouble? The spirit of the Sixties seems to be alive and well in Devendra Banhart, but unfortunately this is the source of his trouble: his lament 'it's simple, we don't want to kill' sounds almost too hippy to be taken seriously. Musicians need to find a new way to present an anti-war message, learning from,

but not copying, the protest singers of the past. They need to not be afraid of appearing unpatriotic, and finally put the cause before the chords.



death vessel - nothing is too precious for us

by **emily kaiser**



Death Vessel, an impressive folk act from Brooklyn, just released their sophomore LP on Sub Pop, bearing a title of lazy angst, *Nothing Is Precious Enough For Us*. But the record is anything but lazy, instead presenting solid musicianship through intricate guitars and other assorted strings.

On tracks such as 'Jitterkadie', the plucking of each pleasant note is like speeding up a nature program, sounding the innocent cheer of every moment a new flower breaks onto the screen. No really, it's like that. Songs like 'Peninsula' and 'Bruno's Torso' keep the album on the ground, slowing and saddening the mood and showing that a ukulele has a dark side after all.

Hovering female vocals were really appreciated throughout the album, until I read that it was actually solo-style front man Joel Thibodeau singing the high-pitched airy-ness. Despite the mild boys-school choir creepiness, they're maintained well and his nebulousness does not take away from the quiet sadness of some songs, nor his melancholy from the pep of others. Lasting 11 tracks, the album is the perfect distance to travel just far enough without ever needing to settle away from home. It's prime for a comforting nap, which perhaps isn't much except when it's exactly what you need.

album reviews



kanye west - 808s and heartbreak

by **john degraft-johnson**

Kanye West transcended rap into pop superstardom, and in his latest album it's difficult to say he 'rhymes' at all. Based on the in-vogue Auto-Tune effect and the late eighties TR-808 drum machine, he produces a melancholy yet brilliant pop expression of grief. This is dangerously divergent from the mainstream, but dangerously well-executed. 'Love Lockdown' is a brooding, tribal-drum-heavy triumph, even the traditionally dire rap collaborations don't detract, Lil' Wayne putting in a stellar turn.

The lyrical contrast to the 'good life' he was living in *Graduation* is stark, most of the lyrics based on his mother's death and his break-up. What his ex did was the 'The coldest story ever told', but we should be thanking her for forcing Kanye's emotions to the surface. I would compare it to **Radiohead's** *Amnesiac* in his artistic development, a powerful yet worthy comparison. It may divide his rap fanbase, but genres and creative limitations mean nothing to the Louis Vuitton Don.

sigur rós

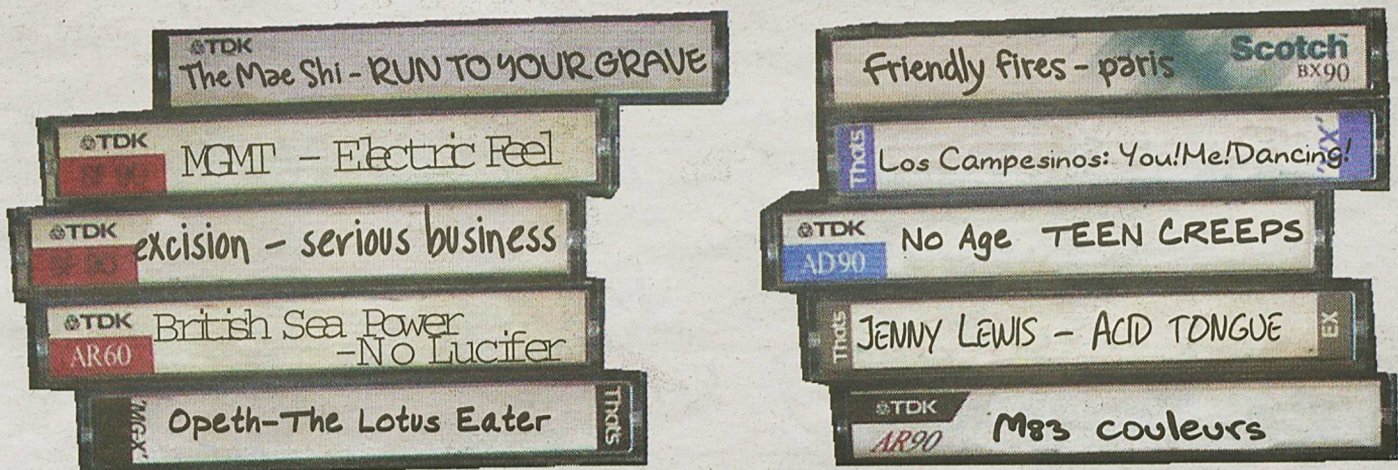
liammclaughlin says
iceland is bankrupt

Sigur Rós, the Icelandic post-rock band have sold out two nights at the massive Alexandra Palace venue in London. Their success astonishes me; for what is essentially a post-rock band they have broken the boundary between the realm of muso elitism to accessible pop with ease. Thousands flock to their live shows and praise is lauded on them liberally from every corner of the media. However as I look around at the happy gig goers at Wood Green station I wonder how many of them know any more of Sigur Rós than their smash hit single, Hoppipolla which broke them when it was used on the adverts for the BBCs

Planet Earth series. The shimmering, life affirming piano lines of Hoppipolla are definitely amazing but there's more to Sigur Rós than that. Or is there...? When I saw them at the Electric Picnic festival this summer, Hoppipolla got the biggest cheer and incredibly drunk people were enthusing about how great Sigur Rós are despite them delivering a thoroughly pedestrian performance with their sombre, icy music. Maybe it's me but there's something dubious about all this hyperbole and all these smattering 'fans'. Maybe that's why I ended up selling my ticket for thirty smackers to a tout.

2008 mixtape part 2

we round up the best songs of the year



courage mon brave?

ashwindesai is no hero

War is waged by the bourgeoisie for the bourgeoisie. The lower classes are its eternal victims: if they choose to participate, they can rarely, and even then at great risk, profit. If they abstain, they starve. It is this argument that **Bertolt Brecht**, the twentieth century's most outstanding dramatic visionary, weaves throughout his classic play, **Mother Courage and Her Children**. Brecht sees war as 'an extension of business by other means,' launching a stinging critique of wartime heroism and morality as well as of the capitalist economic system. Six years and thousands of innocent lives into the Iraq war, one of the most privatised wars in history, one cannot help but feel the enduring relevance of this seminal work.

Brecht is keen that his audiences do not hang up their brains along with their coats and hats at the door: his works have a great deal to teach audiences. He uses historicisation in his theatre in order to convince his audiences that social and political climates are subject to change, thus providing an avenue for critical evaluation and ultimately, action. The use of Brecht's famed '*Verfremdungseffekt*' (commonly called alienation effect) in *Mother Courage* prevents the audience from being seduced into passive spectatorship (as encouraged by cathartic forms of theatre), instead encouraging them to actively and rationally consider the stage proceedings. It also underlines the inner contradictions and inconsistencies inherent in 'civilised' society.

The story, a chronicle of the Thirty Years War, is one of a canteen wagon owner, Anna Fierling, who travels across Europe in order to earn her living. As Brecht wrote, 'In wartime, the big profits are not made by the little people.' *Mother Courage* is the quintessential 'little person'.

Blessed with a shrewd and calculating mind, she is also burdened with a natural anxiety for the wellbeing of her chil-

dren. Her character is highly contradictory; her positions vary with the change of the wind: for example, she laments her existence, claiming that a 'long anger' is needed to change the world, yet as soon as her business regains its footing, she forgets ever having had such an impulse.

There is genuine heroism in Brecht's play, but even this comes about in error. *Mother Courage*, ironically, only ever demonstrates cowardice. She earns her nickname through the courageous action of crossing enemy lines at Riga. Why? Only to prevent some loaves of bread from being wasted. She herself despises the heroic ideal, claiming that General Tilly only lost his life because he got lost in fog, and erred to the front of his lines by mistake.

The story is also of her children: Eilif, Swiss Cheese, and Katrin. As *Mother Courage* barter her way across Europe, her children are sacrificed, one by one, to the war. It is largely through their fates that Brecht challenges the bourgeoisie's handling of the values that it sees as fundamental to its civilisation.

The immorality and vice of the dominant class is carefully examined in the play, with Brecht resoundingly claiming that virtues are fatal to their possessors. Yet even the virtues he mentions (with the exception of Katrin's kindness) are dubious. The eldest son, Eilif, previously decorated for having 'played the hero in God's own war' by murdering innocent peasants seeking to guard their cattle, repeats his feat in peacetime, only to be led away to be shot. Virtues for the state vary depending on circumstance: morality, supposedly, is malleable.

Swiss Cheese is captured by the Catholics and refuses to surrender to them the

cash box he has been entrusted with by his Protestant regiment. Seemingly an honourable action, *Mother Courage* notes that his behaviour is a result of radical impulse and sheer stupidity. She is put in a position where she is able to save him from his captors: but she must sell her wagon in order to raise sufficient funds. Her concern for her own financial security leads her to barter, only to come to the damning realisation that 'I believe - I haggled too long.' Her beloved child is sacrificed for the sake of her own sustenance.

Katrin is *Mother Courage*'s only genuinely virtuous child. She is mute, though it is through her expressions that the horrors of the war are most powerfully communicated. Having been brutalised by unruly raiders, she has no hopes of a comfortable family life. Again, as *Courage* goes off to barter goods, her child is shot, sounding a signal of alarm to a town under threat of attack. Her mother arrives, and thinking her daughter to be asleep, sings her a lullaby (though only of the need for material comforts). All she has left is the dream that her Eilif may still be alive.

Brecht does not even soothe his protagonists' distress, as many others have done, with the sweet embrace of death, instead leaving her to continue her business into the indefinite future. She, of course, is not too disturbed by this: as the armies of Europe march by, she beckons them to take her with them. She is, as the Marxist critic Walter Benjamin once noted, a genuinely 'untragic heroine.' Her wagon, that last remaining child, and her most dear, is still with her, and has many miles yet to travel across Europe. And, as she continues in her chase of the material, one cannot help but wonder whether its wheels, or her beating heart, will ever come to a rest.

While *Mother Courage* remains Brecht's greatest masterpiece, it is a tough ride for audiences. Brecht himself proclaimed that 'art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.' Yet however magnificent the work, two hours of ruthless alienation and rationality-driven theatre provide some deft hammer blows for even the keenest of theatregoers.



nick user: Eric Mensel

propagating peace

holliestman captures conflicts

In August 1936, as thousands of refugees were fleeing to escape the outbreak of civil war in Spain, Robert Capa and his wife, Gerda Taro travelled to Spain to report on the events that were unravelling in the country. Enticed by the chance to partake in the first modern media war, the two eager photographers were keen to take their place in history. Both Capa and Taro swung to the left of the political spectrum, both wanting to use their photography skills to alert the rest of the world to the tragic events in Spain, and to try to rally the cry of no pasaran to whoever would listen.

Capa is revered as being one of the best photojournalists of our time. His works are seen as redefining the way that modern warfare was photographed. He travelled the world capturing conflict scenes from not only the war in Spain but also the Second World War and the Sino-Japanese wars. The majority of the exhibition is devoted to him, as you wander from room to room, each covered in scenes from another war zone, you become completely absorbed in the silicone squares in front of you.

For me the photos from the Spanish conflict are particularly poignant. Under a photograph of a volunteer soldier who had been blinded in both eyes while fighting on the Republican side there is

a quote from him, saying how he has no regrets, and if he had his time again he would go and fight because he knew that what he was fighting for was worth saving. Such sentiments are harrowing. In



today's world, filled with morals and convictions just as disposable as a Primark dress, it is easy to forget that once upon a time people held such strong ideological beliefs that they were ready to give up their lives to fight for them.

Gerda Taro did die for the cause. The Span-

ish conflict would turn out to be the only one which she photographed as she was killed while fleeing from the battle of Brunete. Her works fill only a small corner at the back of the exhibition, and her name is often overlooked in photojournalism history, nevertheless she was the first female war photographer, no mean feat considering the macho nature of war, a factor which is very much reflected in its reporting.

The political leanings of the couple no doubt colour their works. This raises an important question - can war journalism be apolitical, or do all war journalists, photographers or otherwise, become mere propagators of a cause? For many in Spain the latter was certainly the case, most unpartisans who visited the country were to leave with staunch ideological beliefs which would remain with them for the rest of their lives.

Downstairs the exhibition moves into a contemporary field, encompassing scenes from Iraq and Afghanistan. Again the rooms are filled with images of soldiers and civilians. Looking at these we are reminded of the fact that the methods of warfare may have changed dramatically from the Thirties and Forties, but the role of photojournalism and war photography in shaping politics and opinions remains as relevant as ever.

raiders of the lost art

christinaschmidzurnedden investigates art theft

The British Museum is guilty of theft. Art theft to be more specific. While the case of the Elgin Marbles might be old news to you, it is still the prime example of the controversy surrounding restitution claims of art looted during wars and colonial times. When thinking about war, most people imagine death and destruction. However another form of subjugation, although less brutal, is to damage a country's cultural heritage by depriving it of its art. Much of that art is now located in prestigious museums around the world which are reluctant to hand it back. Museums like the British Museum benefit from ill-conceived international art law and the difficulty of establishing an art object's exact provenance and proprietor. Instead of researching more into their art pieces' origin, the general answer of the British Museum to restitution claims has been 'we have better facilities than you to preserve art'. This seriously calls into question the moral obligations of a so-called 'public benefit corporation'; especially towards the descendants of Holocaust victims.

It has recently been established that almost every art museum in the Western world contains Nazi loot. The labelling of art by artists of Jewish origin as 'degenerate', a term ironically borrowed from Jewish Max Nolde's book *Entartung*, is probably the most shocking

story of cultural degradation. Hitler, himself an artist *manqué*, appointed SS art commissioners to confiscate all art possessed by Jewish Germans and art by Jewish painters to begin a new era of exclusively 'Aryan' art. The obsession with that idea made people like Rosenberg say questionable things like "the Aryan Nordic race has produced not only the German cathedrals but also Greek sculptures and the masterpieces of the Italian



Renaissance". As modern - and in particular impressionistic - art was considered as inferior as art by Jewish painters, paintings by artists such as Van Gogh, Matisse, Kandinsky or Klimt were equally taken from Jewish Germans and banned from exhibition. Often, these works were also sold at auctions for knock-down prices to finance the Nazi party.

There was one particular auction that still sends the shivers down the spines of art lovers today. On June 30, 1939 a compilation of 126 major works of art by Picasso, Braque, Klee, Matisse and Van Gogh were offered for auction at Lucerne. There was a desperate atmosphere of buying to preserve art but not all works were sold in the end. Hitler had already found a solution by establishing the Commission for the Exploitation of Degenerate Art. Goebbels announced the permission of open commerce of that art and said he 'hoped to make some money from that garbage'. The 'art purification' reached its most devastating dimension when 1004 paintings and sculptures and 3,825 drawings, watercolors, and graphics were burned as a practice exercise in the courtyard of the Berlin Fire Department's headquarters. If every museum would make the effort to research into the story behind their paintings, would they still be bold enough to keep them?



journeys

gang warfare

andreas demitri lives in the n-dubs

Palmers Green: a place for feuding wars between historic rivals over valuable turf? Too put it simply, no, not quite. My not so well informed friends here at the LSE seem to believe that as a resident of "Norf Lundun" I wander the streets with my hood up with gangs of incoherent "yoofs" harassing the local community by launching stale kebabs at innocent bystanders. This was all deduced because I wore tracksuit bottoms one day to uni (only proving that we're all victims of stereotypes). If you want war you'd do better to look in places such as Edmonton where the "N1g homies" and the "N18 crew" have been battling it out for the superiority of their post code for years.

Palmers Green, the area I call home, is a small relatively peaceful area that makes up part of the Borough of Enfield (Amy Winehouse is from here). It has roads with tarmac and painted lines, shops that sell goods and services, residential areas where people live in, a railway station to commute

to and from the centre of London. Not many surprises there. So what makes this place so special? I find this tiny thirteen-thousand strong community has such character and life that so many other places in the heart of London lack. Drivers hooting while in their tinted out black Fiat Punto with unnecessarily large exhausts as they pass their favourite barber, multicultural cafes, restaurants, butchers, bakeries, pubs, chippies, that offering cuisine and delicacies from countries such as Cyprus, Poland, Turkey, Italy and India. Broomfield Park, a green luscious visual delight with a historic, although somewhat burnt down old mansion called Broomfield House, that welcomes kids and adults alike to venture inside and attempt to conquer the blatantly unstable wooden climbing frame that used to be a grand house. It's as simple as life can be in London, with no cinema or some sort of modern leisure centre in the direct vicinity which requires you to make the most out of what you've got.

OK, admittedly there's a Starbucks, a Wetherspoons, a

McDonalds (or as many young, tracksuit wearing, heavily gelled, patterned, spiky haired "yoofs" with slits in their eyebrows like to call it, home), Greggs, Pizza Hut and so on; it still manages to keep its unique personality in the face of globalisation.

Now you're probably thinking "surely this guys biased, he lives there, of course he's going to big it up!" Palmers Green definitely has its flaws, like a sweet shop named Smokers Paradise neighbouring the Cancer Research UK charity shop. The one pound shops that don't quite sell anything for one pound! How about its ridiculous commute to LSE? It's in that mythical "no-mans-land" known only as Zone Four. I'd just like to clarify that I have braved the epic journey and can confirm its existence. The high street is pretty stunted too where you may occasionally, from those brave enough, be given a dirty look for no apparent reason from "yoofs" or old men walking their dogs!

If none of this convinces you of its loveliness, Palmers Green did feature in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. You know the bit with the purple bus? No? Home to the Lemon Tree kebab shop that won Take on the Takeaway? No again? Well if you do decide to come, it's a top notch place for a sunny day out, if nothing else.



flickr user: aethephos

your country feeds you!

sophiemarment 's ministry of food

food

part B recipe

beetroot brownies

easiness - 5/10
tastiness - 9/10
cheapness - 8/10

stuff that goes in it:
300g Bournville dark chocolate
250g unsalted butter
200g caster sugar
50g muscavado sugar
3 eggs
150g self-raising flour
200g cooked/peeled beetroot



1. Preheat oven to 170°C, gas mark 3.
2. Baking tray time - grease and line with baking paper and grease again (baking tray of approx 20cm/30cm/2cm).
3. Melt butter and chocolate together in one bowl over a steaming pan of water.
4. Whisk eggs and sugar in another bowl, then add the chocolate mix and combine.
5. Sift in flour and fold in, then add in grated beetroot.
6. Cook for approx 25mins, depending on your cooker, check after 20 minutes. If you stab it with a skewer then it should come out pretty much clean.
7. Leave to cool and then peel them off the baking paper - they come off like a dream!

My grandparents grew up during the period of wartime rationing. Many people don't realise that rationing actually continued well after the Second World War, only ending in 1954. Due to an upbringing which was overshadowed by the scarcity of food, my grandma is a great one for conserving leftovers and using everything down to the very last potato-peeling. She has been known to freeze any last drop of gravy or stock in ice-cube sized portions.

Whilst this is a constant source of amusement and a running family joke, some of my grandma's idiosyncrasies have come in useful in my student life. Scraping and saving is a feature in both Forties wartime Britain and in 2008 student kitchens. It's all about leftovers, people. So here are a few top wartime tips that will help you to save on your food bills:

1. Use Sunday's leftover vegetables to make 'bubble-and-squeak' - whack everything in a saucepan with a bit of olive oil and fry.
2. Make stock from left-over meat bones. Cover the bones with water and add a carrot, onion and a stick of celery and boil for three hours.
3. Combine left over potato peelings with flour, salt and pepper to make potato pancakes.
4. Keep fresh herbs in pots on the windowsill rather than buying dried.



cold war casual

katiejanepEEK explains why the war was done

Fashion has the power to capture the mood of society, and to indirectly communicate the atmosphere of a particular country or period in time. The Cold War illustrates this with differing fashions aptly represented either side of the Iron Curtain.

In America, elegant and expensive outfits came to represent the liberal capitalism, the US stood for and the image of 'the man in the grey flannel suit' became an iconic symbol of the typical hardworking American businessman.

Soviet dress was drab and constrained, with little room for consumer luxuries. Men and women weren't permitted to don the mini-skirts and flares the like of which their American contemporaries enjoyed in the 1960s. Where they would have worn these clothes, with a fairly sparse plethora of activities for entertainment in Soviet Russia, was another matter.

Similarly, fashion in communist China was an exercise in restraint. The most iconic Chinese image is that of the

Maoist suit – a blue cotton jacket with four symmetrical pockets – a uniform which came to represent the imposed uniformity of the communist state. American style clothes such as jeans, heels and ties were dismissed as the representation of a bourgeois lifestyle. If caught indulging in these 'Western fancies', the daring person in question might face torture or beatings – an extreme price to pay for fashion, you might say.

World leaders – and let's not be sexist, their equally important wives – became key representations of their societies at large. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy came to represent the quintessential American woman of the 1960s – stylish, refined and with all those Hermes headscarves, clearly very rich. Later, Ronald Reagan perceived the use of fashion in politics in adopting 'Reagan Red' as his signature colour – although perhaps a slightly misguided choice due to the colour's immediate association with communism. And Reagan's red-wearing wife Nancy was surely the flagship for the success of capitalism – in 1985 packing frugally for a ten day trip with merely \$250,000 worth of

clothes in eleven suitcases.

Soviet leaders came to be defined by their ill-fitting, colourless suits – and perhaps Stalin for his strange moustache which, despite his thirty-one year rule, never came into fashion. Yet, on his 1985 assumption of the premiership, Mikhail Gorbachev exuded a strangely fashionable image wearing a clean-cut suit. It is possible that the growing understanding between Nancy Reagan and Raisa Gorbachev as they bonded over their fashion whims helped to bring the Cold War to its final conclusion. Well, maybe not. But similar tastes in fashion did indicate growing cultural similarities between the two superpowers and help dispel Americans' outdated stereotypes of Russia.

Fashion may not have caused the Cold War and it may not have solved it, but it was an important cultural dimension, which, looking back helps to understand the cultural rift which existed between communism and capitalism.

Sex & Gender

the war over prostitution

helenreeves explains the case for decriminalisation

There is a modern day split in feminism over prostitution. Such debates have come to the fore in recent weeks in the wake of Harriet Harman's new proposals which seek to impose more punitive measures regarding prostitution, criminalising both financial gain from prostitution (the running of brothels) and for sleeping with a trafficked woman.

Such measures are traditionally supported by many feminists, with prostitution seen as an evil of a misogynist (and capitalist) society. All efforts should be made to eradicate it, legislative or otherwise. The female body is not something that should be commodified, and its sale reflects a form of sexual slavery. Extreme opinion also poses all prostitution as violence against women. Organisations such as Object view the sex industry as fundamentally objectifying women, and promoting harmful attitudes to women's status and value, as well as to male and female sexual identity.

Contrarily, organisations such as the International Prostitutes Collective (and its UK body the English Collective of Prostitutes) campaign for the abolition of laws that criminalise sex workers. This is viewed by many feminists as controversial. But to support decriminalisation is not necessarily to disagree with the above. A common misrepresentation is that feminists who support decriminalisation are pro-prostitution. Though they agree a society without prostitution may indeed be preferable, they simply believe that as it stands, decriminalisation would make the lives of sex workers safer and would provide a better, more suitable environment for rehabilitation.

Most sex workers are mothers and/or young people who are struggling to survive, with prostitution the only viable way to feed children or a drug habit. For most it is simply the quickest way to raise funds in times of economic hardship. Instead of criminalising women's poverty, and sending them to prison where such problems are only exacerbated and children are separated from their mothers, the government should instead channel resources into ameliorating the reasons why women go into prostitution at all. More money should be spent on housing, mental health, childcare, drug rehabilitation, domestic violence and support networks for all women in need. This would alter women's pathways and help to stop prostitution being seen as a viable economic option.

While no feminist would support the slavery of trafficked women, it is often argued that the problem of trafficking is best regulated through existing laws that pertain specifically to it. Harriet Harman proposes immediate criminal culpability for any man who sleeps with a trafficked woman. But pragmatically how is this to be enforced? With serious reflection it seems unworkable. Will the police use entrapment? Apparently this measure is meant to make men 'stop and think' before sleeping with a prostitute, but this is unlikely to yield much effect, and will only push the plight of trafficked women further underground. Many of the negative aspects associated with prostitution such as rape, sexual violence, kidnap, underage sex and traffick-

ing all have their own existing laws to safeguard against them. Efforts should be made to curb these problems in their own right through better enforcement of existing laws - which could more easily be enforced in a decriminalised atmosphere - not through criminalising the consensual sex between adults that normally occurs in prostitution.

Currently, women as prostitutes do not have adequate recourse to the law and are treated with contempt. They are rarely believed in instances of rape. For example, one woman at a recent public meeting on decriminalising prostitution described how she was kidnapped, repeatedly raped and tortured, resulting in internal injuries requiring four hours of surgery - yet the police would not even take a statement. As a prostitute she was simply not taken seriously. Whether a prostitute or not, sex without consent is rape; prostitutes like any other women know the difference between consensual and non-consensual sex. Even nationally rape has a shockingly low conviction rate of only around five per cent. Efforts should be made by the police and legal authorities to improve this situation. Prostitutes, like all women, should be able to report rape and violence without fear of arrest.

The banning of brothels is also based on misguided information. While of course no woman

should be kept against her will or exploited, in actual fact most brothels are run by a group of women working together to provide a safer working environment for one another. The organisation is mutually beneficial and above all safer. Women are ten times safer working in such environments than working on the streets, where they are left vulnerable and unprotected. Criminalising brothels pushes women onto the streets where their decreased visibility puts them in far greater danger of violence and attack.

In New Zealand prostitution has been decriminalised for five years, during which time its sex industry has *not* grown, as predicted by critics. In fact more sex workers felt able to access agencies for help, given there was no longer fear of arrest, and many felt more able to leave the sex industry since prostitution offences were wiped from their criminal record and no longer serve as an impediment to gaining other employment. Importantly, sex workers are far more likely to report incidents of violence to the police, including street workers, and attacks are able to be dealt with more quickly as women may come forward with information without fear of arrest. Judges have ruled that sex workers are entitled to the same protection under the law as anyone else.

I do believe that prostitution is the product of a misogynistic society that in many ways objectifies women, and that society would be more equitable without it. I personally would certainly be happier if the human body was beyond being bought and sold. As a feminist I am very conflicted over this issue, and in no way have definitively decided on my opinion. Yet, criminalising the women who partake in prostitution - in many cases consensually - seems absurd and unhelpful. This appears to me to represent a criminalisation of women's poverty, while it is in my view, the horrifying poverty many women are forced to live in today that is criminal.

The tragic murders of five women in Ipswich almost two years ago should have spurred the government on to take this evidence more seriously, instead of pursuing increasingly repressive policies which are driving sex workers further underground increasing women's vulnerability to violence. Support for decriminalisation is more widespread than first supposed. As well as the ECP, such a view is also supported by the Green Party, the Liberal Democrats, the Royal College of Nursing, the Communication Workers Union and the National Association of Probation Workers amongst others.

