



THE BEAVER

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS' UNION

Issue 462



Mansun give an exclusive interview to *The Beaver* Music P12



New Labour, New... Britain? Politics P8

Tuesday, March 18 1997

Washington laments. Arts P10



Singing Sabbatical Gets A Telling Off

By Andrew Yule

LSESU's current sabbatical entertainments officer was, last Thursday, called like a guilty schoolboy into the equivalent headmaster's office when he had to face questions from Director Anthony Giddens. The accusation was one of phone message fraudulence and the sentence, to humbly apologise.

The whole fiasco began on Monday night, a drunken evening in the Three Tuns, when Chris Cooper, the aforementioned sabbatical officer, discovered a fault in the Director's personal security system. Professor Giddens had apparently failed to change his mailbox pin-number, leaving it the same as his actual extension number and thus opening the opportunity for anyone to access his voice mail, or, as Chris Cooper discovered with delight, to change his own personal message for incoming callers.

The Beaver has exclusively managed to obtain a copy of the hoax phone message with which Cooper replaced Professor Giddens' original message:

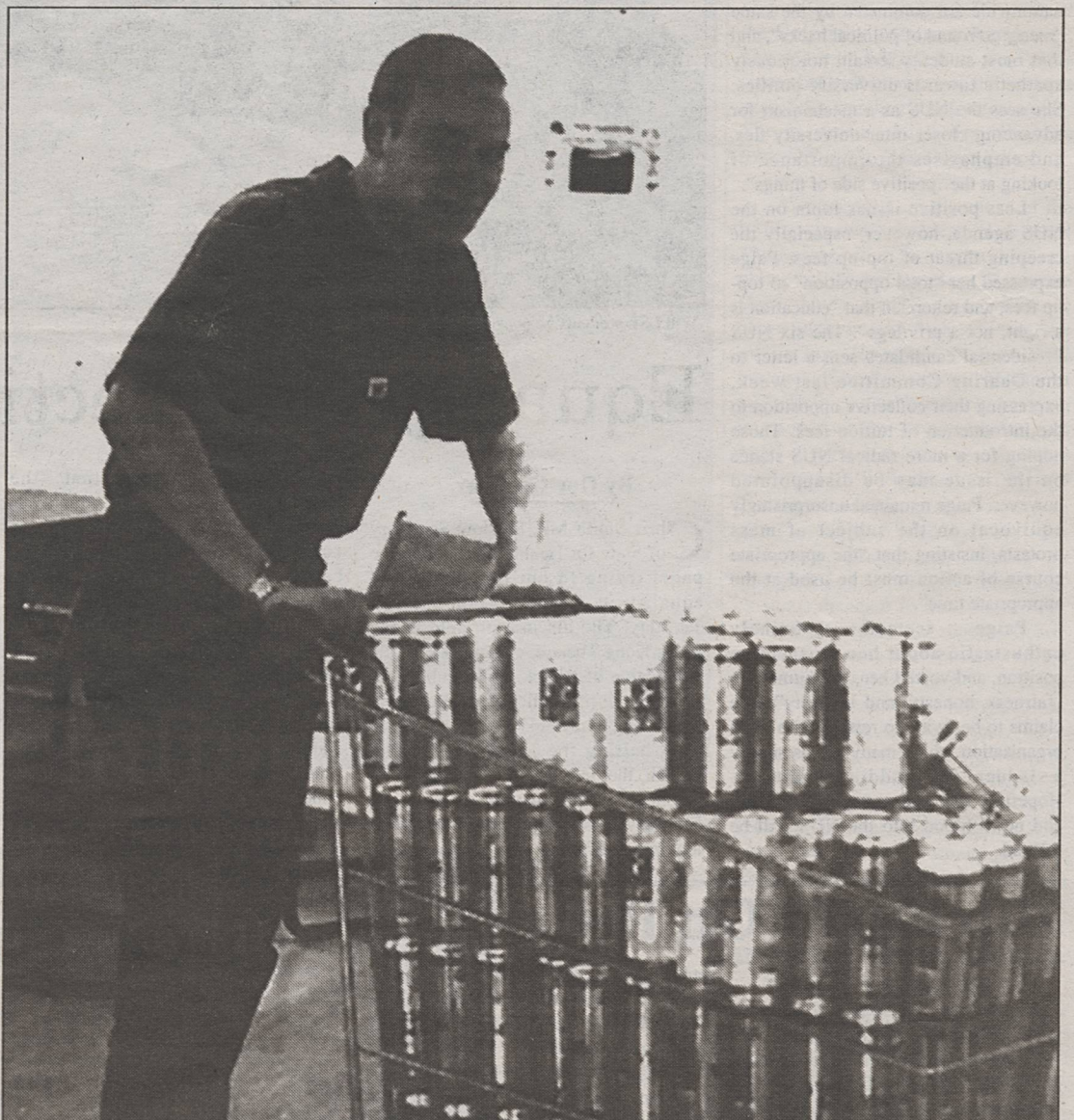
*"Doo wop bop ba doo wop,
My name is Tone,
My name is Tone,
I'm not on the phone,
I'm not on the phone,
I'm all alone,
I'm all alone,
I've got a big bone,
I've got a big bone,
(heavy breathing)
I'm having a massage,
So leave me a message."*

Speaking to *The Beaver* after a private meeting with the Director in his

office, Chris Cooper revealed that he had been asked to apologise to the Director and had done so in person. However, Cooper was quick to point out that while the message was initially nothing more than a prank, in actual fact it has had a useful purpose. The whole business highlighted an overall security risk relating to the Director's personal communications system. With the pin number identical to the actual extension number, as it always has been up to now, anyone with an understanding of the voice mail system could have accessed Professor Giddens' voice mail at will, and consequently listened to his personal and business related messages.

Chris Cooper told *The Beaver* that although he had been asked to apologise, he feels that he was lucky. Cooper is no longer a student at the LSE as he has already completed his degree. Equally, while still a sabbatical officer, he is no longer an employee of the university. Cooper suggested that had he been either a student or an employee he could have been threatened with harsher disciplinary measures.

While this whole saga could be seen as little more than a silly prank, it has kicked the School into action in the form of memos being sent to all departmental and other offices reminding occupants to change their telephone passwords, to avoid a repeat occurrence with potentially graver repercussions. Chris Cooper told *The Beaver* after his meeting with the Director that Professor Giddens had told him that he actually found the message quite amusing and added that he did not intend to take any further disciplinary action.



Chris Cooper in a familiar Ents. Sabbatical pose.

Photo: Nicholas Robin

Election saga continues for Aga

By Dhara Ranasinghe

Controversy concerning this year's Sabbatical elections continued last Monday, after a complaint was submitted to the Constitutional and Steering Committee (C & S). The complaint made by the LSE Labour Club, centred on three issues: firstly, the presence of Omer

Soomro, last year's Education and Welfare Sabbatical, on the election day. The allegation was made that Soomro, no longer an LSE student, was campaigning on behalf of Narius Aga, the successful General Secretary Candidate. Second, was the issue of the campaigner in front of the ballot box, which is forbidden by the Union's constitution. Lastly, the complaint urged the Committee to address the

allegations made about the removal and subsequent dumping of ballot papers.

In a heated discussion, Aga refuted the complaints made, dismissing them as "sour grapes" on the part of his opponents. He also directed criticism at the way the complaint had been submitted. In response, Raj Jethwa, the LSE Labour Club candidate for the post of General Secretary, stressed that he was not seeking a re-election or recount.

Aga commented that he retained the utmost respect for the Labour Club, also remarking that the whole incident was "all hot air".

When questioned on what they hoped the complaint would achieve, LSE Labour's Dev Cropper remarked that addressing these issues now was important in order to ensure that "no problems arise next year". While the complaint was dismissed by the

Constitutional and Steering Committee, a number of important issues were certainly raised.

Contention appeared around the definition of a candidate's 'campaign' team, with the Acting Chair of the C&S Committee, Guy Burton, stating that there was a great deal of interpretation over the electoral regulations during the campaign.

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A new Paige in NUS history?

By Chris Roe

MARY PAIGE, PRESIDENT OF Sheffield Hallam University's Student Union and a strong challenger for the NUS presidential elections later this month, convincingly defeated the incumbent President, Douglas Trainer, in a mock ballot at Manchester University. Speaking to *The Beaver* she stressed her independence from any political party, and said that the NUS should be "politically active not politically tired." Trainer has frequently been criticised for being a Blairite because of his close affiliation to the Labour Party. Paige indirectly endorsed this view by stating that a Labour run NUS would be a "toothless lapdog" if Labour are elected, which now seems almost a certainty. She declined the opportunity to attack Trainer personally, preferring to advance her own ideas for the NUS rather than criticise those of her opponent.

Paige envisages a more progressive role for the NUS, based on a philosophy of "cooperation and inclusion". She pointed out that Union elections nationwide are dominated by the same "merry-go-round of political hacks", and that most students remain notoriously apathetic towards university politics. She sees the NUS as a mechanism for advancing closer inter-university ties, and emphasises the importance of looking at the "positive side of things".

Less positive issues loom on the NUS agenda, however, especially the creeping threat of top-up fees. Paige expressed her "total opposition" to top-up fees, and reiterated that "education is a right, not a privilege". The six NUS Presidential candidates sent a letter to the Dearing Committee last week, expressing their collective opposition to the introduction of tuition fees. Those hoping for a more radical NUS stance on the issue may be disappointed however. Paige remained unsurprisingly equivocal on the subject of mass protests, insisting that "the appropriate course of action must be used at the appropriate time".

Paige seemed genuinely enthusiastic about her prospective position, and voiced her commitment to "fairness, honesty, and integrity". She claims to be trying to restore faith in an organisation which many see as simply a ladder for budding politicians. Hopefully her promise to inject "fresh and new" blood into the NUS will be fulfilled.

Dearing Speaks to the FT

By Andrew Yule

SIR RON DEARING, HEAD OF the seventeen strong Dearing Committee set up last year to look into Higher Education funding, spoke last week to the Financial Times (FT). Sir Ron Dearing gave little away about the probable outcome, though the general picture revealed by his comments was encouragingly positive.

Simon Targett and Andrew Gowers of the FT stated that Sir Ron "wants a wider range of universities geared to national needs, offering all kinds of courses, and yet still funded principally by the State". In a separate article Simon Targett suggested that the fear of student debts of up to £20,000 "look to be unfounded". It was further observed by Mr Targett and Mr

Gowers that Sir Ron "clearly does not want to be the architect of an headlong rush for cash."

However, not everything reported by the FT was so positive. Mr Targett revealed that the Confederation of British Industry, in evidence submitted to the Committee, suggested that "maintenance is the thing that should go". So, while Dearing does not appear wholly in favour of the blind imposition of large top-up fees on students, the continuing provision of the already endangered student grant seems unlikely. Not only would this necessarily result in still more student debt, but would also severely restrict the choice of institution for the student, encouraging students to stay close to home, simply to survive on their further tightening budgets.

Unfortunately, the FT singled out the

LSE as an institution to have already "paved the way for charging undergraduates an annual "top-up" fee of £1,000". So, while Sir Ron Dearing's comments were not wholly pessimistic, LSE students will receive little comfort from this news. Whatever conclusion the Dearing Committee comes to on the issue of tuition fees may be irrelevant to the LSE as Dearing's word is by no means final, with not only the Government perfectly entitled to ignore it, as well as Professor Giddens, Director of the LSE as yet unwilling to comment on whether he will take heed of Sir Ron's conclusions, choosing to postpone a possible decision by the Standing Committee on top-up fees before the Report is actually issued. On top of it all, those students who still receive a maintenance grant may well lose that too.



Will LSE students be poorer come October?

Photo: Library

Equality: An Election Issue?

By Dev Cropper

Chris Smith MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Health, was among the panel trying to put the concept of equality in a modern context last Tuesday. The discussion, held in the Hong Kong Theatre, coincided with the publication of a book on the subject by the Institute of Public Policy Research, a left-wing think tank.

Chairing the panel was Bhikhu Parekh, the only discussant to dwell on the political philosophy of equality. Equality was suggested as a way of looking at different political ideologies.

Parekh pointed out that the meaningfulness of belief in equality is entirely contingent on the type of equality. Libertarians, for example, believe in equality of freedom; liberals in equality of opportunity; communists in equality of outcome.

Chris Smith, picking up on the same theme, pointed out the problem for socialists trapped between thinking equality of opportunity is too simplistic and the equality of outcome totalitarian, find it difficult to decide just what they believe in.

Smith's search for the reconciliation of equality and diversity

was a welcome attempt by a politician to consider his political philosophy. Much of the rest of the discussion, however, descended into the banal ritual of most political debate.

Smith called the Government names and said the road to a good society would be long and hard, but he failed to change the impression that New Labour is not even on the slip road. Anne Phillips and John Lloyd, the other panelists, and several commentators from the floor, attacked the Opposition's strategy without acknowledging the factors that have created it.

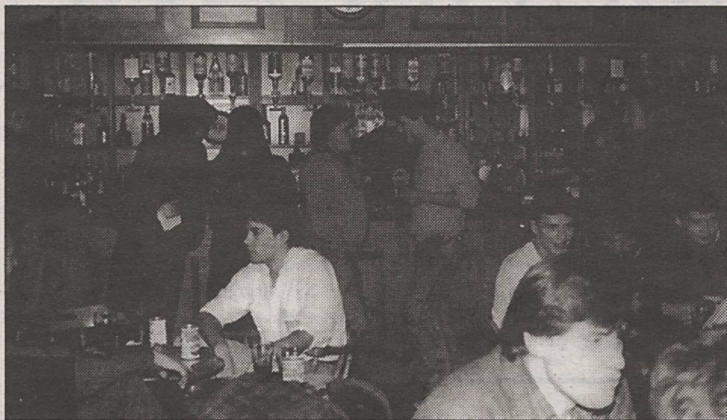
10p Extra On Beer Fear

By Andrew Yule

Conservative Students have this week warned of an increase in beer prices under a Labour government. In a statement released on March 12 the Conservative Students quote Charles Hendry MP, Conservative Party Vice-Chairman as having said: "A £4 an hour minimum wage would put up the price of beer by a staggering ten pence,

according to the independent family brewers, Fullers of Chiswick. Drinkers up and down the country would find that hard to swallow."

The Conservative News brief went on to claim that a minimum wage of £4.15 an hour, supported by Labour, would "destroy over one million jobs." This was declared a threat to student jobs in particular, due to the low-paid, casual nature of most students' part-time jobs.



Does Labour no longer stand for beer and sandwiches?

Photo: Library

News From The Archives From This Week: 21 March 1978

On 21 March 1978 *The Beaver* reported an NUS invasion by students from the LSE. There was utmost secrecy surrounding the plans for this major event for fear of the "puerile hirelings of NUS should thwart [student] aims".

It was reported that a group of well dressed students gathered on Houghton Street for a briefing. The motive for the occupation was said to be a clear attempt to wake the NUS up to the fact that whilst "they grow older in their ivory towers the Government proposes to implement policies which are not in the best interests of students". The main issue chosen by the LSE students was

Quotas since they were seen as part of the Government's attempt to reduce the number of people in "tertiary education so as to make massive cuts in expenditure more palatable to the public".

Once the party arrived at the front door of what they described as "the offices of that incompetent and moribund organisation that claims to serve student interests, the NUS", the Deputy President, Ashby, was persuaded to open the door by telling him that they wanted to see someone from the Publications Department. Soon enough, Ashby began to realize that all was not well. The students however

Women's Rights Are Human Rights

By Carla Covarrubias

LSE experienced an outburst of women's activities as part of the international women's week. One of the events was the launching of a brand new society: The Human Rights of Women Society (HRWS). The event included a lucid introductory speech by Professor Christine Chinkin on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), also called the "Women's convention". She pointed out the weaknesses and strengths of the Convention, as well as raising the question of whether law/ international law is necessarily the best way of empowering women.

There were enthusiastic discussions about what the best strategies for change are. The question was left to be answered in future debates. There was a wide range of people present, spanning from professors in law to undergraduates interested in the subject matter. What can be unanimously concluded is that there is a strong interest at the LSE in understanding what needs to be done in order to stop the continuous discrimination against women internationally. And the amount of people who came to the talk shows a promising start for this new society! Moreover, you don't often get a women's meeting led by a man! Dr Beyani, lecturer at the LSE in human rights and law, was an excellent example of the wide scope there is in this new group.

The Human Rights of Women Society is a forum for debate about the rights of women (as distinct from 'normal' human rights) and the best strategies for change. Examples on how to implement change was illustrated by CEDAW. Another form of pressure towards change is, of course, interest organisations. A representative from the organisation Akina Mama wa Afrika illustrated with great enthusiasm how this group works in London to promote African women's rights and interests. Their activities range from work supporting refugees, future leadership-workshops for young African women, anti-skin bleach campaigns and other activities promoting African women in the North.

Future activities are will be conducted in the form of further exchanges starting off with a panel discussion on human rights and culture, so watch out for posters!



refused to leave "given the fact that [they] had all got dressed up in [their] suits, it did seem a bit of a pity to go".

The outcome of the 'invasion' was generally a positive one as it achieved two things. The first of these was that one national paper gave the group significant news coverage. Secondly, all other newspapers were informed of the student invasion, consequently spreading their story to a relatively large, national scale.

By Miriam Chalabi

New Labour: New Life For Britain?

Dhara Ranasinghe

MILLBANK MEDIA CENTRE, home to the Labour Party's General Election campaign and the epitome of the party's 'new' image, was the scene for a Student Conference last Tuesday. Student papers from around the country were given the opportunity to quiz the party on its' policies.

The speakers included Peter Mandelson, Labour Party Campaigns Manager; Nick Pierce, Assistant to the Shadow Education Minister, Bryan Davis and Estelle Morris, another member of the Labour Education team.

Mandelson, the party's chief Spin Doctor spoke first and in a rather soft spoken manner, highlighted the need for a change of Government in order to maintain a healthy democracy. He went on to espouse a "one nation" Britain, in which a Labour Government would work alongside business and industry, secure an adaptable economy and provide "strong leadership".

Addressing the issue of education, Estelle Morris stressed that education would be a priority under a future Labour Government and identified it as an essential issue if Britain was to become a "world leader and not a world follower".

When questioned by a student from City University on the difference between 'Old Labour' and 'New Labour', Mandelson argued that 'New Labour' was a "fresh political force", rejecting the old ideology of nationalisation and centralised planning. He also stated that it rejected the Thatcherite ideology in which everyone acted for themselves only. In reply to a question by Lancaster University, on what had happened to Labour's pledge on a Bill Of Rights, Mandelson replied only, that Labour would incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights if elected.

On the issue of student hardship, Nick Pierce criticised the present student loan scheme and argued in favour of a system of support.

In response to a question put forward by Warwick University on the Government Assisted Places Scheme, Morris stated that it was a "myth" that it would benefit children from less affluent backgrounds.

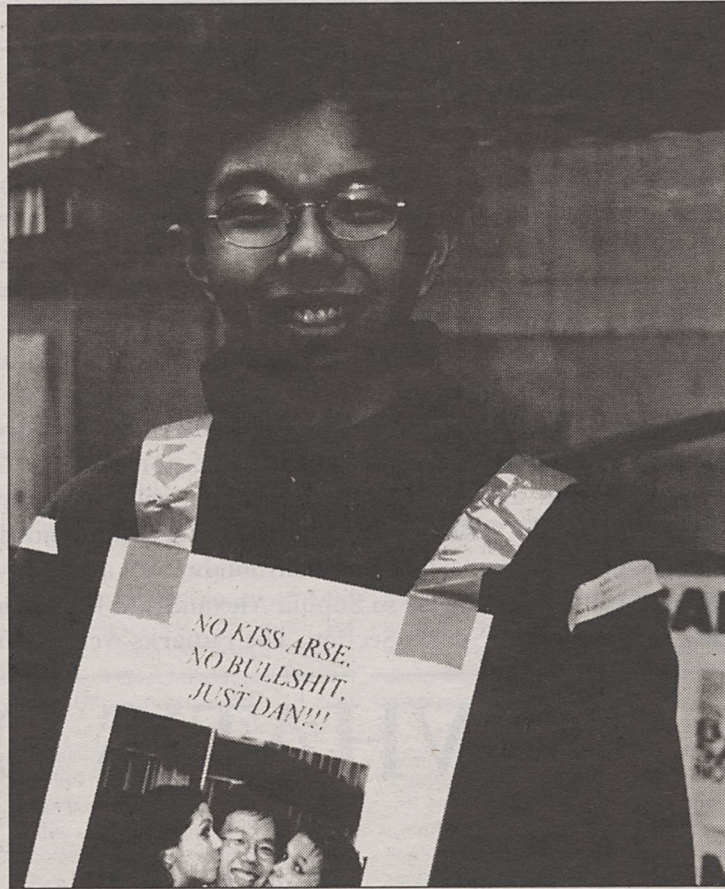
What would be the future of Oxbridge under a Labour Government? This was the concern voiced by one Cambridge student. Oxbridge would continue to have a "prosperous future" Nick Pierce replied, adding that he hoped to see more students from state schools going there.

Election saga Continued from page one

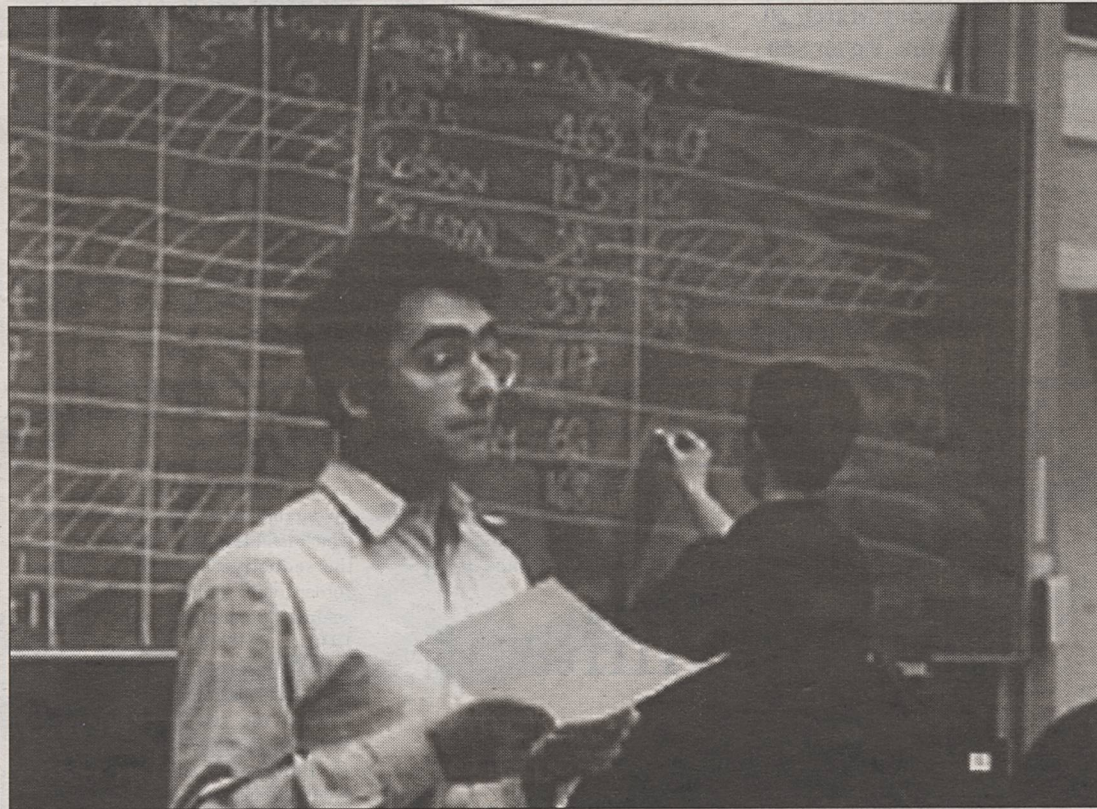
The question of a lapse of security over the ballot papers was also identified as a general concern. The loss of ballot papers at the count led to the subsequent resignation of Joseph Roberts, Returning Officer. Roberts felt, that he was responsible for the lapse of security at the elections. Roberts went on to state that the job of Returning Officer was "too much work for one student" and he appeared to be voicing a general view in urging the need for the Sabbatical elections to be run by an outside agency.

The debate on electoral procedure is now left open, to be possibly taken up by the UGM, where improvements may be suggested in time for more election drama next year!

For the full election results, turn to the page five



As the remaining results for the Executive Slate came through at the beginning of last week, it was established that Independent candidate Dan Lam had won the most seats, thus easily securing his seat on the Executive Committee. Photo: Nina Duncan.



Joseph Roberts, Ex-Returning Officer.

Photo: Nick Robin

News From Nowhere

NEWS of serious criminal activity from Birmingham this week, as four students face disciplinary action at the hands of the university for a drunken prank gone terribly awry. In a state of heavy intoxication, the students culminated an evening of imbibing fiendish alcohol with the fun activity of placing small piles of washing powder and ravioli outside the doors of every room in the Queen's Hospital Close Hall of Residence. Aren't they aware of the grave dangers involved in a ravioli/ Non-Biological Bold Ultra cocktail? The students were ordered to clear up the mess and to apologise to every resident who were so inconvenienced by this heinous crime. The (over?) reaction of the university authorities was somewhat ridiculed by one resident who excitedly exclaimed, "it's about time something happened in this boring place" Well quite...

Over-reaction seems to be the name of the game at Birmingham with riot police being summoned after twenty students from the Coalition Against Rent Rises occupied the Vice Chancellor's building overnight in a protest against a 30% rise for some of the University's Halls of Residences. The police, in full riot gear, were made somewhat redundant when the students peacefully marched out in the morning. The issue has been described as 'ongoing' by the Uni's News Editor.

Also ongoing are the antics of the LSE's very own sabbaticals. Last week *The Beaver* office received a desperate phone call from Gen. Sec. 'Desperate Dan'. Upon answering the phone our News Editor heard a slightly scared Dan quavering 'Help, we've been held hostage'. Sam Parham, also kidnapped said 'Help, we've been held hostage, but don't worry - they're giving us beer'. What a surprising sentiment from Sam. It turned out that Kings College lured our credulous Crowe and Parham into their evil clutches under the pretext of holding an emergency meeting into their (non-existent) decision to disaffiliate from the NUS. Once there, a shocked Crowe and Parham were told that they would not be released until the LSE paid out the princely sum of £50 to supplement their measly rag week proceeds. How dare they prey on the caring, student-oriented consciences of our sensitive Sabs? The upshot was that the Union Treasury issued Kings with an IOU which gave rise to the ironic question: why didn't the Treasury save their money and let King's keep the Sabs? Allegedly, Kings settled for the meaningless IOU because Parham was drinking them out of beer...

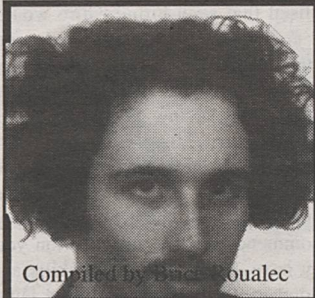
Beer drinking at Liverpool University is being threatened this week by a bunch of...er...nuns. *The Beaver* heard that the Union building is situated opposite a nunnery and eight of their black shrouded members have complained about the level of noise issued from the building in the wee hours of the morning, when all good nuns should be in bed and all good students should be pissed. This serious clash of interests has resulted in the council sending environment officers to the venue to assess the levels of noise. The Union has vowed to launch a fight against the possible loss of their entertainments license that may result from the complaint. If the worst comes to the worst, eight nuns will be no match for a whole heap of drunk students...

Compiled by Tasha Kosviner

School's Out

This Week's Questions

- 1.) Describe this term in one word.
- 2.) What's the funniest thing that's happened to you this term?
- 3.) What are you doing over Easter?



Compiled by Buck Boualec

Kathrin Bennhold, 3rd year Econ and David Wilson 1st year Bsc Psychology



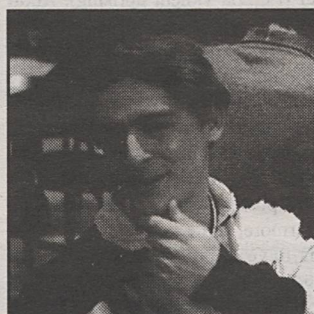
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1)Dance | 1) Dance |
| 2)The election's disaster | 2)Wearing a dress |
| 3)Visit my boyfriend's grandmother | 3)Skiing |



Maen Elaydi 1st year LLB

- 1)Destructively enjoyable
- 2)Fashion show
- 3)Skiing in Aspen

Nicolas Douillet 1st year IR



- 1)Excellent
- 2)Getting pissed
- 3)Getting more pissed

Jasper Ward, 3rd year Sociology



- 1)Skill
- 2)The fall of a vending machine on my foot
- 3)Go home and see friends and drink.

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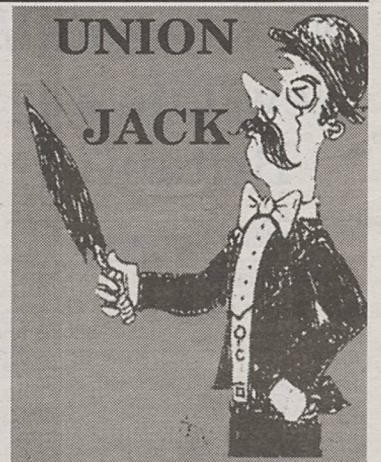
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Centenary Uncelebrated

It is not everyday that one of the foremost Student Unions in Britain has its Centenary. It is not common either, that nothing is done to commemorate an event as significant as this, particularly when this occurred against a backdrop of unions operating with considerably weakened powers, having lost their legitimacy under the Thatcher administration. There was no musical, and the soon-to-be non-existent Centenary Ball only seems to be taking on the proportions of a mythical figure in the minds of certain Union officers. Or perhaps the failure to celebrate the Student Union's Centenary only serves to underline the dire state we are in, as the Union slowly but surely slides into oblivion. We are all responsible for this: the Union's services are unappreciated and are hardly acknowledged. Consider life at the LSE without the Tuns, the Veggie Cafe, the SU Shop, SU Reception and the Print Shop (and of course, UGMs and *The Beaver*). Enjoy your holiday: we all deserve it, don't we? LC

I would like to apologise to Sophia Alexandraki for the hurtful remarks made by Dan Pickering in the Sports Section. The remarks were unjustified and unfounded.



Right, OK, I know I promised I'd be funny this week... Jack merrily turns up at the UGM, ready for heated debates on the corruption of the campaigns or the recriminations of the elections. And what happens? Sweet - and oh how sweet it was - fuck all. So, we have a quandary. One column; nothing to say. Before y'all decide to say 'what's new' (ho-ho!), I'll just sit down for a while and think of some rambling topic to discuss.

In saying that nothing happened, Jack overstates the case slightly. In actual fact, we did witness the unceremonious resignation of Jo 'Stalin' Roberts (I'm joking, Bernardo) our most impressively in control returning officer. Here we seem to have a man filled with responsibility (?) and pride in his job (??). As such, he nobly decided to carry the can in what the LSE will now know as 'Baljitgate'. Or will it? For, no-one quite seems to know exactly what went on the night of 6th March 1997? The facts not in doubt: on the night in question, 35 ballot papers were removed from a table (exhibit a) and were found in a bin (exhibit b). All were first preferences for Aga. But, who took them? First inclinations were that Raj lopped them off the table to help himself in a recount. Then, the more machiavellian began to suspect that Nicholo Mahal may have had a hand in the intrigue. But, why? He supported Aga; why would he want to take votes away from his own man? Not logical. However, in his long and tedious resignation letter, Roberts inferred that it was indeed Mahal who had half-inched the offending ballots. So, ladies and gentlemen of the Jury - the evidence is before you. Who did? Personally, I plump for Colonel Mustard, in the tuns, with a large Ginsters chicken slice. Perhaps this is a case where there is a good deal less than meets the eye. But, intriguingly, perhaps not. The case of the missing ballots will rumble on.

Speaking of which, the thankfully outgoing Parham was in contrite mood. Having commented that 'if you vote for shit, you get shit', Sam realised that such biting satire would not endear him to the great and good of the sabbatical structure. Of course, he didn't mean it - he didn't know what he was saying. For Sam, this is actually surprisingly convincing. Neither will it help his chances at the ULU elections. Anyone reading this from ULU, Jack can wholeheartedly recommend Sam for any position you may have. His organisation skills are second to all, but the Duck and Dive will certainly experience a boost in trade. You pays your money, you takes you choice.

On the subject of money, and to end on a boring note, Dan Crowe was being most secretive on a new revelation in the on-going top-up fees debacle. He couldn't tell the UGM, because it was a secret, so nah-n-nah-na-naah! Perhaps, worrying about his place in the history books, Crowe is going to begin a revolution to end educational injustice. All we need to topple the system, comrades, is one last almighty candle lit vigil!! Jack can smell Giddens' fear from here. Or, perhaps Dan is just telling another little joke. If so, we ain't laughin'.

WHAT'S ON

CEEDS**Presents**

**His Excellency the Lithuanian
Ambassador Justas Paleckis
"Lithuania's Road to Europe"**

**Thursday March 20
4.30 pm, Room S50**

The Management Society

invites you to hear

Mr Alan Britten

*Former LSE Student and current Vice-President of Mobil
Oil*

*On**The Joint Venture Between BP and Mobil Oil*

Chaired by Professor Leslie Hannah, Pro-Director
Tuesday March 18
6.00 pm, A85

Reception Following: refreshments will be served
All Welcome

For the first time in LSE history, the LSE Yachting Team (eight postgraduate students) have been invited by Whirlpool Corporation to participate in the biggest student event in Europe from April 12 to 20: the Course Croisiere Edhec (Les Sables d'Olonne, France). They will represent the LSE amongst 6'000 other international students during this week of intensive fun and sailing. Details in your next *Beaver*.

Bring Back Those Lazy Hazy Crazy Days of Militant Strikes

Dear *Beaver*,

I have read Ben Selwyn's account of the prospects of temporary fascist parties in Europe (*The Beaver*, March 11, 1997) In my opinion, he has failed miserably in his attempt to understand this threatening phenomenon, which is hardly surprising given his outdated Marxist views. I am neither a member, nor a supporter of the French National Front, but I would like to comment on a few of his errors, because I believe that proper understanding of fascism is more beneficial than dry Marxist clichés about it.

First and foremost, I find his assumption that fascists are unable to achieve power due to the lack of consent of the 'capitalist class' completely ludicrous. We, and all Europeans for that matter, are living in a parliamentary democracy. The fact that there is no fascist government in any European country is due to the fascists' inability to achieve real electoral breakthrough, rather than to the will of the unknown and unknowable 'ruling class'. We should not forget that both Mussolini's PNF and Adolf Hitler's NSDAP, were mass parties. Indeed, by the time Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor, he was a leader of the strongest political party in

German parliament (Reichstag). Thus, I would argue that his appointment owed more to his political skills than to the will of the "capitalist class" (whatever that is).

Secondly, I would like to stress that I find the notion that there is a "ruling class" which has the ability to 'hand over power' simply unbelievable. It is a bit like anti-Semitism, isn't it? There are dark forces behind the scenes, pulling the strings.

Capitalists, international monopoly... Yeah, right!

Thirdly, fascists have long ago abandoned the revolutionary path to power (i.e. via violent uprising). Adolf Hitler once famously remarked: "If outvoting them takes longer than outshooting them, at least the results are guaranteed by their own constitution". Today, fascists do not need to build mass organisation of stormtroopers, because they believe that they can achieve power through electioneering. Furthermore, the gangs of young neo-Nazis have committed considerable number of violent attacks in mainland Europe (e.g. pogroms in Rostock, Solingen,...) and it is wrong to assume that neo-Nazis and fascists are incapable of creating an atmosphere of terror and fear.

Fourthly, the strikes of communist-

ridden trade unions are not detrimental to electoral prospects of fascists. On the contrary, popular unrest stirred up by hard Left (void of any ideas) is not favourably viewed by general public, which is in turn more likely to listen to the seductive fascists' message of "order, order, order". Popular backlash against Communism in the 1920s and 1930s contributed to fascist electoral fortunes, hence making Ben Selwyn's claim that "class conflict" can somehow counter the rising tide of fascism extremely dubious.

Fifthly, I do agree that BNP is a small and insignificant fringe party. In fact, before I came to England, I have never heard of it. If British fascism has been "dispersed". I wonder why has Ben Selwyn devoted any space and attention to it in his "Elections '97" statement (*The Beaver*, March 4, 1997)? I suppose that, as the traditional working class is progressively diminishing, the poor Marxists need new justification for their "struggle". Hence, they invented the threat of fascism, which is non-existent in the UK. (In 1992 general elections, BNP/NF candidates received an average of 455 votes. How "threatening"! Alternatively, Ben could be jealous of the electoral successes of the French National Front. After all, Socialist Workers can only dream of getting 15 per cent share of the vote... As shown by recent LSESU elections.

Lastly (on a lighter note), I failed utterly to comprehend Ben's view that: "new organisation must grow which can fill this vacuum". Do we really miss the militant strikes of the 1970s? Did we like the London tube strike? I don't think so. Well, maybe I am just another bourgeois reactionary serving the interests of international capital.

Yours

Jan Brack

Letters to *The Beaver* Election Fall-out

Dear *Beaver*,

Through the columns of this newspaper, I would like to thank each and every person who helped me as well as those who voted. I was genuinely overwhelmed by the support I received, support which went down to the grass-roots and which did not depend on any party machinery or ideology.

I must admit that I expected my opponents to behave in a more dignified manner and to take defeat more gracefully. The word disgraceful would be mild indeed to describe the way certain members of the Labour Club behaved that night (and I repeat certain members, because I do respect the rest of them). Moreover, some of the comments from them in *The Beaver* were downright nasty and in extremely bad taste.

Judging from the way his performance has been throughout the year, Dan Crowe's comments were ironic indeed. For Jon French to describe the result as "a bad night for the Union" more so, coming from a man whose honour and credibility can be judged by the fact that he ditched the very own Association he headed for a year in a move of sheer desperation to get elected.

As for Sam Parham, who by popular consent has been described as the worst Sabbatical in the history of

this Union, I refuse to respond to what he said, simply because it would mean lowering myself down to the level he has stooped to. Throughout that day, he tried his utmost to drag some mud in the proceedings, as if enraged at the way the elections were run smoothly. In the mentally-deranged state that he is at present, craving attention of any sort, the man requires pity and nothing else.

I also wish to condemn in the strongest possible terms, the scandalous act that took place after the counting took place and the results were announced. 35 ballot papers, all of them first preference votes for myself, were stolen from the ballot box, in an obviously desperate last ditch effort to steal my victory away by hook or by crook.

Until sufficient evidence comes to light, I have refrained from naming names and I'd like to request elements who thrive on spreading rumours to restrain themselves. Blaming Baljit Mahal simply because it's easy to kick a man when he's down is not right. I am simply upholding a basic legal principle: that of a man being innocent until proven guilty and of simply letting justice take its course and I expect others to do the same. Justice will prevail and I hope the perpetrators are brought to light.

Finally, I wish the rest of the elected members the best of luck in the year ahead and look forward to working with them.

Yours sincerely,
Narius Aga

Phone: 0171 955 6705 Fax: 0171 955 7717
c/o The Editor, *The Beaver*, LSESU, East Building, Houghton Street,
London WC2A 2AE
Letters to *The Beaver* can also be handed in at SU Reception.
Deadline for publication in next issue of *The Beaver*: Wednesday 9.00 pm.

"Get More For Less, Without NUS!"

Dear *Beaver*,

While Dev Cropper's article "Elections alone are not enough" in last week's *Beaver* was well written and contained eloquently argued points, I feel that, as the "candidate running on a (sic) NUS disaffiliation ticket", I must write in response to his lack of enthusiasm for this course of action. It has become crystal clear to many students who bother to take an interest in this sort of thing that the NUS has become nothing more than a vehicle for left-wing sabbatical officers and a training ground for potential future New Labour MPs. It is a wholly unrepresentative and entirely ineffectual body.

Dev's insistence that we should "work to change it from within" is, sadly, both too facile a statement to make and too unrealistic a prospect; given that at the moment its higher echelons are populated entirely by New Labour puppets, and as it seems likely that Douglas Trainer will be re-elected as NUS President, I cannot envisage anyone of Dev's (or indeed my own) political persuasion having a hope of attaining a position on its Executive. The way forward is to disaffiliate from the NUS, and encourage other

universities to follow suit; we will lose nothing in terms of service provision - in fact we would gain in many cases by being able to cast our net wider in order to get the best possible deals - and we will be free of the millstone around our necks that the NUS metaphorically represents.

Far from this approach being "confounded by (its) own logic," to me it makes perfect logical sense, which can be summed up in one snappy soundbite - "Get More For Less, Without NUS!" The advantages in terms of improved services for students, combined with the fact that in my opinion the School authorities will take an LSESU independent of the NUS much more seriously when it comes to negotiations over top-up fees and other issues, are quite clear. I hope that the next academic year will see the LSESU at least put the idea of disaffiliation to the student body: for it to decide on this issue. Whether the incoming General Secretary will have either the courage or the initiative to do this remains to be seen.

Yours sincerely,
Jonathan French

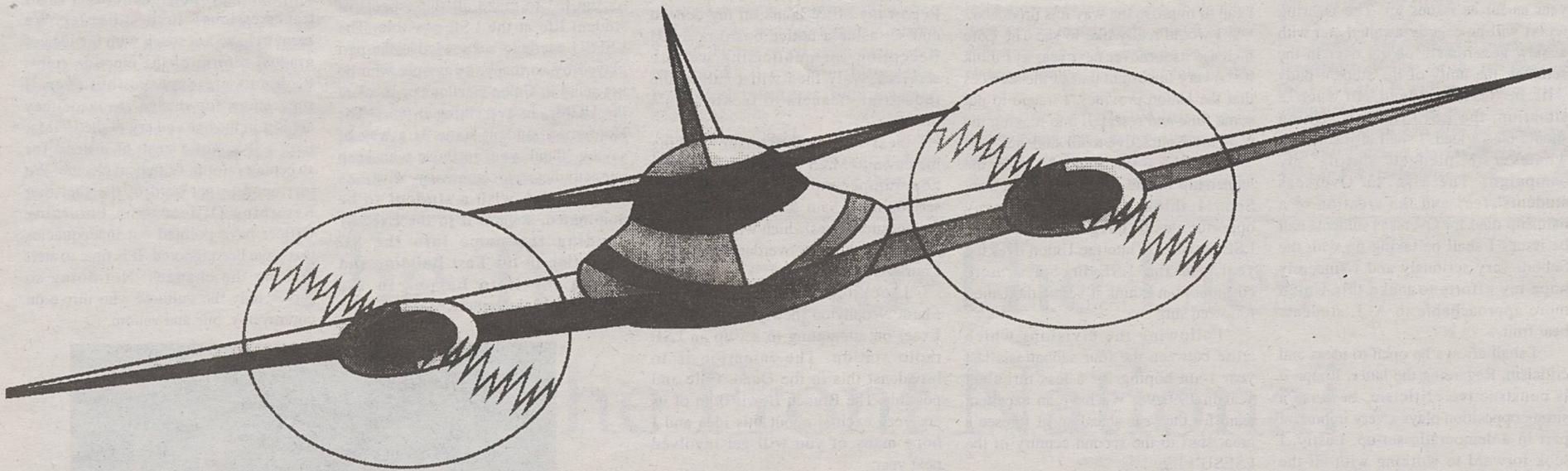
Sincere Apologies for Pathetic Behaviour...

Dear *Beaver*,

In last week's *Beaver*, I was quoted as saying that the election results were "a travesty for the union" and that "If you vote for shit, you get shit." I'd like to apologise for these remarks. An evening of high emotions and substantial quantities of alcohol unfortunately had taken its toll on me.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all of next year's sabbaticals the best of luck in the coming year. I hope that they all prove to do excellent jobs - which they will have to do in a year dominated by the crucial challenges of the Dearing Review of Higher Education and the ongoing threat of top-up fees. Again, I would like to say sorry, particularly to Narius Aga for any offence my comments may have caused. But, as my Labour colleague Dan Crowe once commented famously, "We all make mistakes sometimes."

Sincerely,
Sam Parham
Education and Welfare Sabbatical



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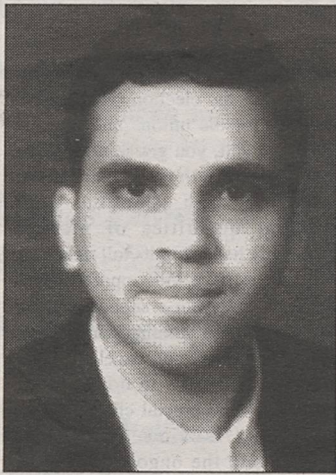
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BOOK NOW FOR THE SUMMER BREAK

VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Three of next year's sabs outline their ideas

Narius Aga
General Secretary



The year ahead looks extremely bright for this Union. I sincerely believe that the four sabbaticals elected will get along well with each other. In the atmosphere in which the Union operates, the importance of teamwork cannot be overemphasized and for the first time in years, we have the chance to maintain this spirit throughout the year, all four of us being independent and fairly like-minded politically.

It is also an extremely important year as far as issues go. The Dearing report will be eagerly awaited and with a new government taking over in the summer, the unity of the student body will be tested indeed. In such a situation, the LSE Students' Union should take a lead. I shall also stand by whatever I pledged during my campaign. The rise in Overseas students' fees and the creation of a hardship fund for Overseas students hall be issues I shall be taking up with the School very seriously and I sincerely hope my efforts to make this Union more approachable to ALL students bear fruit.

I shall always be open to ideas and criticism. Regarding the latter, I hope it is constructive criticism, because a strong opposition plays a very important part in a democratic set-up. Lastly, I look forward to working with all the other students elected on the Executive and the various other committees and wish them luck in the year ahead.

Imogen Bathurst
Treasurer

A vision of the future by the future treasurer!

With any luck our beloved Three Tuns will be refurbished over summer. This is mainly thanks to Darrell Hare but it does mean that we will at last get our 1 am. extension that we have been chasing for so long. Hopefully this will help generate more money and enjoyment over the next few years. However such a large expenditure on the bar ensuring I enjoy my sabbatical year to the full leaves me with the less enjoyable task of trying to make more money.

One of my first aims will be to get the now infamous cash point installed. This will serve the dual purpose of giving the Union revenue directly from the bank and will also encourage you lot to take money out under the influence of our newly decorated bar and spend it forthwith!!!

I am totally committed to improving the image of our Union. Hopefully careful negotiations with the Beaver collective will result in everyone getting what they need. I think The Beaver is one of our Union's most valuable assets and I will do as much as I can to improve the way it is produced.

I would really like to see The Cafe increase its turnover next year as I think it is a very important part of the services that the Union provides. I intend to put some time and research into making the Cafe more attractive to all students.

On the less financial side, under the leadership of the first fee-paying Gen. Sec., I think there will be many opportunities to integrate more of the LSE population into the Union over the year. As the LSE becomes more cosmopolitan I think it's time the Union followed suit.

Following the divisions which arose between the four sabbaticals last year I am hoping for a less turbulent year in 1997/98. We have an excellent team for the year ahead and I foresee a great start to the second century of the LSESU's life.

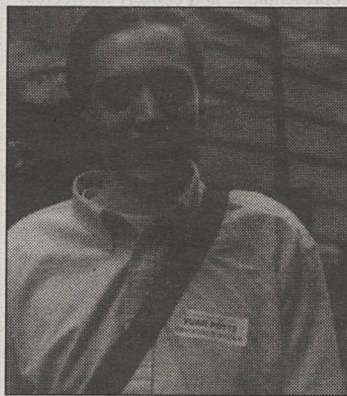
In the words of Rich - On a scale, I'm going to make no amount of money and have no amount of fun!

Yuan Potts
Education & Welfare

It's finally over! After a campaign which seemed to last months rather than weeks... I'm a sabbatical (or at least will be if I can sort out my degree.)

I must thank Anj and the other candidates for a clean and friendly campaign; it's a relief not to be embroiled in the crap that's gone on in some of the other races.

This year I hope we will work better as a team: we can achieve more working together and sharing responsibility than being fenced in by our job demarcations.



My first action on July 1st will be to post my office hours on my door to and set aside a notice board near SU Reception for publicising welfare services. Only then will I call in the industrial cleaners to tackle Sam's office.

Next week Sam Parham is taking me down to M&S to get a feel for their new jumper collection. On a more serious note, Sam & I are working on the questionnaires which will enable me to produce the long overdue Alternative Course Guide next year.

I look forward to working with Maria Neophytou (newly elected to the Exec) on attempting to set up an LSE radio station. The intention is to broadcast this in the Quad, Cafe and possibly The Brunch Bowl. Both of us are very excited about this idea and I hope many of you will get involved next year.

Finally, without wishing to be too cheesy, I do want to be *your* sabbatical in *your* union.

I need your ideas and comments. Please grab me on Houghton Street or e-mail me at VPotts,Y.

Thanks for all your support. Here's to next year!

It's not difficult to get in touch with any of your sabbatical officers. All have pigeon-holes at SU Reception in the East Building. Alternatively, call them for free on their LSE extension numbers

Gen Sec-7147 Treasurer-7471
Ed & Welfare-6702 Ents-7136

The Honour Roll

Time for a Change

Dev Cropper
Communications Officer

Joe Roberts, the Returning Officer for the elections this term, has resigned. His resignation is a statement only - he had only two quiet weeks of his term to go. But such was his dissatisfaction with the way these elections have been conducted, and with the situation that faces any SU Returning Officer, that he decided to resign to make his point.

We should heed it, and the growing discontent among students with the yearly farce of sabbatical elections descending into recriminatory abuse and accusation. Last year the dispute went to the level of an independent inquiry with a QC, this year, mercifully, things stopped short of that. Something must be done before another disaster strips the LSESU of the last of its legitimacy. Allegations, remember, can almost never be completely refuted no matter how scurrilous - mud sticks.

The problem is not with the Returning Officers past or present, nor, at least in the main part, with the various generations of candidates. Politicians will be the same at the student or any other level - forced by the fear of others doing it to stretch rules to breaking point, to accuse before thinking.

The blame lies with the way we run elections. An overworked Returning Officer with a position so nasty that only the altruistic or the stupid would do it. A Byzantine election code. Candidates whipped up into fervour by an over-serious atmosphere.

The way our elections are run - without proper rules and guidelines, without proper sanctions for transgressions - invites disaster. We seem to have lost touch with the idea of gradual reform of the election rules. Problems are exposed, but even if suggestions for change are made they are lost in the hue and cry of the UGMs.

It is not a case of a need for sweeping reform, or radical change. We just need to get hold of the fact that Returning Officer upon Returning Officer have pointed out inadequacies that have been ignored. It is time to start making the changes. Not doing so serves only the vultures who thrive on controversy, bile and venom.

Who really provides the dynamism for student life at the LSE? Is it just SU sabbaticals and the bar staff in the Tuns? No - most of the elements of communal student life are based around organisations and events organised thanks to the hard work of individual, unpaid students.

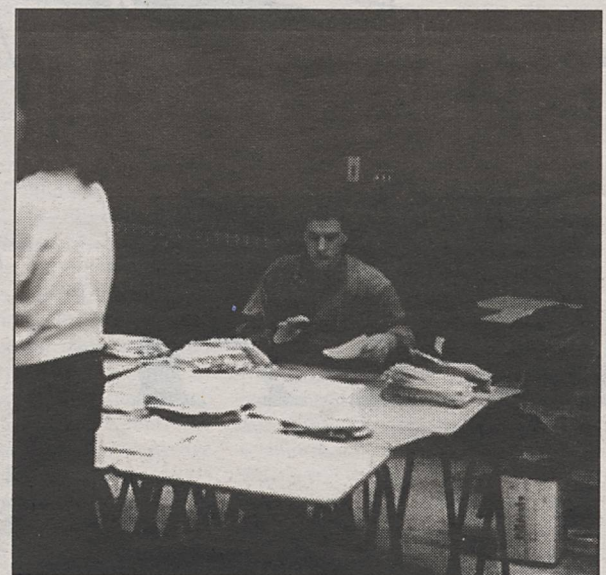
Societies, for example, take a huge amount of effort to run, especially given the number and breadth of events so many of them organise. These labours are not without their own rewards - but too often are without recognition.

So many of the things we passively participate in and take for granted are produced by the voluntary, activity of our fellow students. We have just had the Global Festival and Women's Week. No one who sampled any of their delights, took part in any of their events, could not but have realised the time and energy put into them. And, of course, the Beaver itself is the most familiar monument to the unpaid work of dedicated students.

Thursday's UGM, as always at 1pm in the Old Theatre, provides an opportunity for recognition of these people. A list of Honourary Students will be proposed by the Executive. If the list is accepted by the meeting, those on it will have most of the rights of full SU members, such as the right to speak at UGMs.

More importantly, it will be a recognition of the work done by those on the list to make all the aspects of student life at the LSE possible. The LSESU needs to acknowledge the part played by so many, by people who do not stand in Union elections or speak at the UGMs, in everything it does. The Honourary student status is a way of saying 'thank you' to those who keep our activities, our community, alive.

If you wish a student to be nominated, suggest it to the Exec by handing the name into the SU Reception in the East Building and asking for it to be put in the Treasurer's pigeonhole.



At work on the count ... but it's not as peaceful as it looks

IT COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

The Union's Annual General Meeting
This Thursday

1 pm in the Old Theatre

The Union represents all the students at the LSE. But this representation can only be real through participation.

Lent Term Elections: The Final Chapter

THOSE SU ELECTION RESULTS IN FULL

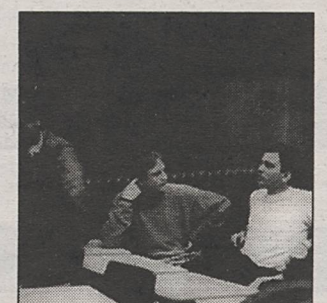
SABBATICALS
General Secretary
Narius Aga
Treasurer
Imogen Bathurst
Education & Welfare
Yuan Potts
Entertainments
Jasper Ward

EXECUTIVE
Equal Opps - Women's Issues
Anita Majumdar
Equal Opps - Mature Students'
Lee Townsend
Equal Opps - Overseas Students'
Matthias Mennel
Executive Slate

Dan Lam
Jacob John
Maria Neophytou
Dev Cropper
Judith Bentall
Members of the Executive Slate will choose specific portfolios

COMMITTEES

Academic Affairs
Menvesh Mumtaz
Hywel Jones
Rob Reed
Finance
Kingsley Kemish
Makis Kaketsis
Malik Ahmed Jalal



Baljit Mahal keeps an eye on things at the count

RESULTS FOR NUS CONFERENCE AND C&S COMMITTEE WERE NOT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF PRESS ... CHECK SU RECEPTION

From One Community To Another

It is with great caution that I proceed to argue the case for the LSESU Aid for Bosnia society; for I am by no means an 'expert' on Bosnia, nor do the events that unfolded in the region in the recent past convey much sense to me. However, I trust that you will bear with me in this article and not be too hasty to dismiss it for its shortcomings.

A few weeks ago the first meeting of LSE Aid for Bosnia took place. Its aim is to raise the awareness of what has happened in recent years in Bosnia and the Balkan states. It also hopes to show solidarity with university communities over there who have struggled during the war and are struggling now in the war-torn and weary communities to provide a fundamental right to education.

It is our belief that paramount to the reconstruction of communities that have been the victims of a brutal, cruel and uncompromising war of expansion and domination on the part of the Serbian state, is the role of a free and unbiased education open to all. It should also be representative of an undivided multi-ethnic population that exists in Bosnia.

In our small and enthusiastic group we have decided to collect those basic materials that university institutions are lacking, from pens, rulers, scissors, chalk and other such essential stationary, to more specific materials such as text-books, journals, overhead projectors, academic video material and even computers. At the same time we shall be fundraising the necessary amount of money that will allow us to take the aid collected. This will enable us to meet, learn from and help our counter-students, scholars and academics over there. In order to make this possible we need to reach an approximate target of around £3'000.

Our hope is to organise an LSE convoy to Tuzla (a town in north-eastern Bosnia) this summer and hand over aid to students at the local university. We are aiming to go

This summer a group of LSE students plan to travel to Bosnia and do charity work.
Patricia Davies and Paris Kaklamanos



Creating a gridlock for a good cause

Photo: Patricia Davies

possibly in collaboration with a larger national and internationally organised summer convoy.

Tuzla University is the only higher education institution to survive the three-year war in Bosnia with its multi-ethnic identity intact. Facing a severe shortage of teaching materials and depressed morale, it has struggled to continue operating against all odds.

Although it survived the war and attempts at ethnic cleansing of teachers and students, resources remain scarce. Top in the list of priorities continue to be books, cassette recorders, typewriters, calculators, slide projectors and blackboards.

Unlike students at Tuzla University, we are in a far more privileged situation. Like them, we

belong to a multi-ethnic academic institution. It is in our hands to do what little we can to help them enjoy a proper education; for such education cannot be reserved for the privileged few of this world.

I hope you all find this a good initiative and that you may support us in our goal. As for all those sceptical and critical people who in the past have

viewed such aid and solidarity groups with cynicism (the type who say that 'charity starts at home'), there is a lot to be said. By showing solidarity, campaigning and helping others in other countries we become more aware and active of what is going on in our societies and in our respective countries.

This was certainly the case for one of us after having been to Bosnia in the summer of 1995 with a national aid for Bosnia organisation.

Bosnia is really only a two day car drive away (obviously when travelling straight across Europe without stopping), and the people and students over there are not like aliens on some far away planet totally different from ours. In fact their way of life, their appearance and concerns are very similar to ours. By saying this we are just trying to break the image of 'Eastern Europe' (which in our view is a term from the Cold War, which should have dropped after 1991) as encompassing a different 'species' of people to which it is impossible, or at least very difficult, to understand or relate to.

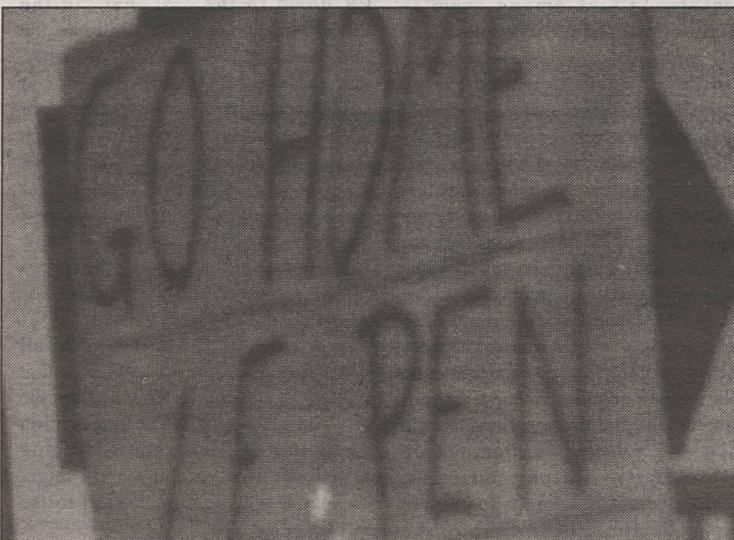
Elie Kedourie once said that 'the impotence of the UN and the European Community in curbing Serbian ambitions in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina may be a foretaste of what is yet to come elsewhere...The perils resulting from Balkanisation are not confined to the Balkans.'

Let it be noted that we are not young idealists with plenty of time and nothing to do. It is our hope that you will join us in our efforts.

LSESU Aid for Bosnia meets every Wednesday at 2pm on the top floor of the Veg Cafe. It will continue to meet during the summer term.

The society can also be contacted through Patricia Davies at 0171-574 4326 or P.S.Davies@lse.ac.uk.

The Truth and The Lies about the Front National



Did I say 'Never Again'?

Photo: Library

Vitrolles. Another city council won by the Front National (FN). It is the fourth town to fall into the hands of the sulphurous party since Jean-Marie Le Pen was first invited to the news broadcast of the third French channel, FR3, fourteen years ago. At the time, Monsieur Le Pen's grouping had just failed to present a presidential candidate. It was a ten-

year old small group of hardline activists. However, by 1986 it had already become the new public enemy of French politics - the devil incarnation of fascist ideology, anti-semitism and xenophobia.

Rather than seeing the rise of the FN as a result of a sole economic crisis, or even a phase of class struggle, I should like to point out some interesting

Following last week's article, Nick Robin suggests that the rise of fascism in France has less to do with economic crises or class struggles. It is more deep rooted than that...

details of a history that is rather uncommon to most.

No, the FN is by no means only the heir to the Nazi and fascist ideologies of the 1930s. Seeing it as such would be a dangerous generalisation. The French far-right tradition is much more deeply rooted than that. Indeed, the FN is a wide church, and should be treated as such.

French political history is one of constant ideological battles. From the Left to the Right, extremist formations have always existed in the French context, and will always exist. From the Ultras to the obviously fascist admirers of the Vichy state, the FN amalgamates all tendencies and strands of authoritarian national ideology. Emphasising at times the role of the Church in French national unity, it lures fringe royalist and traditionalist Catholics. Support for the FN is also found in those former strongholds of communism. Significantly, Le Pen has polled well in the former red suburbs of

Paris. FN voters tend to be either the old guards, with Vichy leanings, or more interestingly, uneducated working class youths, who may see in the fascist party the alternative that the former generation found in the Parti

'Since when does one fight fascism by protecting its interests with so much intensity and care? When you are not fighting it, but using it to rule.'

Communist.

Just as his predecessors, Le Pen has long understood that this was the only road to success. Unions affiliated to the FN have been created within the farmer movement, and more recently in the police. The strategy is clear: the infiltration of the civil service and of education. Bruno Megret himself, Le Pen's closest aide, has pressed upon the success of the battle for language,

forcing political parties to adopt their new lexicon.

Another matter of interest is the marked concern of mainstream right-wing politicians to refuse compromise with the far-right. Meanwhile the Left has been quite eager to grant Le Pen proportional representation, to table those issues on which he is obviously going to do well. But why favour Le Pen by proposing proportional representation in 1995, as Jospin did?

Small parties were no more an issue at the time: they had all disappeared from a game too serious for them. The truth is that it is no game for the so-called capitalist class to sign deals with the devil. It has nothing to gain from it. However, the Parti Socialist might... Not only might. It has been the only solution for its survival, pretending to be the only safeguards against fascism. Since when does one fight fascism by protecting its interests with so much intensity and care? When you are not fighting it, but using it to rule.

New Labour. New Hope for Britain?

Education is at the top of the political agenda, but would Labour really change the system?

Jonathan Black interviews Bryan Davies, Labour's Education Spokesman.

Education is one of the key battlegrounds in the pre-election war as the two main parties battle it out over Britain's schools and universities. Bryan Davies, Labour's Spokesman on Further and Higher Education, is as a result difficult to track down. He spoke to *The Beaver*, between television interviews and increasingly vital votes in House of Commons.

Since Tony Blair won the leadership of the Labour party, it has been education more than any other field which has seen a radical policy shift. The pledge to abolish Grant Maintained Schools was watered down and Grammar Schools are also here to stay. Harriet Harman, the controversial Shadow Social Security Secretary, managed to keep her job, despite sending her child to a selective school. Increasingly, it appears that Labour is moving closer to the Tory position, to the point where it could be questioned whether or not Labour would make a difference. Bryan Davies, flatly rejected any such suggestion.

New Labour would promise a "fresh approach to policy" with a "fair and equitable system" of funding in higher education. Only one in eight people went on into higher education in 1979, the figure is now one in three. Mr Davies criticised the governments cap on further expansion, saying Labour wanted more people in the system - "expansion without damaging quality." He also rejected suggestions that as more and more people went to university, a degree from a poorer institution may devalue a comparable one from a "top" college such as LSE, or Oxbridge.

The question of how to pay for a

**Davies admits
he "can't
produce
solutions
overnight."**

better education system remains a thorny one. The Liberal Democrats have promised to raise income tax by one pence if they considered it necessary in their quest to raise standards. Although Labour has made no such commitment, Mr Davies told the conference at LSE that Education would be at the top agenda in the General Election campaign and a "key priority" for a Labour government in office. Class sizes for five, six and seven year olds would be limited to thirty, by transferring money from the Assisted Places Scheme, which would be abolished. The government's Nursery School vouchers would also be replaced. Labour would also hope to transfer money from the burgeoning social security budget to education, as unemployment falls, assuming of course it does.

The continuing debate over Top-Up Fees was brought to the Commons

via an early Day Motion from Ken Livingston (Labour MP for Brent East). Front Benchers as a rule don't sign such motions, but Mr Davies commented that, although he didn't always see eye to eye with his colleague on all matters, on this occasion they were in agreement and the motion was "evidence of concern across the party about Top-Up Fees." He stressed his party's total opposition to fees, which would "exacerbate differences in education that already exist" and hoped LSE would not take "premature or pre-emptive action." However, were LSE to take such action would this affect a Labour government's decision when it came to the annual handout of funds from the central government pot to institutions? Labour, he said, would "not be penal towards institutions."

The Dearing Report on Higher Education is due to publish its findings after the General Election and has the full support of Labour and Mr Davies expressed his view that it was "long overdue and that it was a pity it did not precede the mid-eighties expansion." Labour has submitted what he described as a "courageous" document outlining Labour's plans and vision to Dearing. But, one solution to funding being considered by Dearing is the across the board implementation of tuition fees and although Mr Davies said he was against them, he did not give a categorical assurance to the NUS conference at LSE that they were not a possibility.

Possibly the most radical policy change in the university sector confirmed by Labour would be the abolition of the existing grants and loans scheme, and replacing it with a loan which could be repaid over twenty years, depending on the person's income. The plan whereby "students invest in their future, with the support of the state" has the full support of the NUS, but not of LSE General Secretary Dan Crowe. Mr Davies stressed that he believed the income contingent loan would not deter people on low incomes to enter higher education - pointing to evidence from Australia - as it would "defeat the object" if it did. The complexity of the scheme would mean it would take two years to implement.

Mr Davies admitted himself that he "can't produce solutions overnight", yet quite what those solutions will be is still uncertain - much depends on the findings of Dearing. Continuing pressures on funds will continue and a high profile for education now, does not guarantee a high level of increased expenditure later on, regardless of whether it is Labour or Tories who hold the keys to 10 Downing Street in May. Although Labour's position is far closer to the Tories than it was at the last election, the abolition of the assisted places scheme and the restructuring of student loans does indicate some clear blue water between the parties, even if it is not very much.

Reforming The Way We Are Governed



Robin Cook: devolving power will not be easy.

Politics Editor Simon Retallack interviews Robin Cook, Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary and ardent campaigner for constitutional reform

Constitutional reform is undoubtedly an area in which the Labour Party both distinguishes itself most starkly from the Tories and in which it could deliver change of potentially epochal importance. Change to our antiquated and grossly undemocratic system of governance is undoubtedly needed and the Conservative opposition to such change is incoherent. For them all manner of changes in our economic lives are 'natural and inevitable', but when it comes to changes in the way we are governed this is suddenly somehow unnatural, even dangerous, and to be resisted to the last ditch. In truth, Tory opposition is little more than a defence of their own vested interests.

Of all the leaders of the present Labour Party, Robin Cook is undeniably the most committed to ensuring that change in the way we are governed takes place. "This," he says, "is an area where the Centre-Left should think big." It is an issue which provides "some sense of ambition, some aspiration, some excitement, which is something we miss too often on the Centre-Left." Labour, he believes must tackle what he calls "the grotesque imperfections of our constitution." It is these imperfections, or more accurately systemic faults, which he thinks "allowed the Tory decades and the slide towards a one-party state to happen." Above all, he says, "We are too centralised, secretive and unrepresentative."

Labour proposes to deal with the over-centralisation of the British state by devolving power to the regions. There is a firm commitment in the first year of a Labour Government to provide an elected tax-raising Parliament for Scotland, subject to two referenda. Robin Cook sees Scottish devolution "as the battering ram that can breach the central ramparts of our centralised constitution and release decentralisation all round the rest of Great Britain." Assemblies for Wales, and for any English region that so wishes, together with an elected authority for London, will follow, subject again to approval by referenda. There are, however, few specific plans for devolving autonomy and powers back to local government. Indeed, Gordon Brown's commitment to abide by Tory local authority budget capping decisions for 1997-1998 (which is designed to deny the

Tory propaganda machine a little fuel by keeping Labour council tax rises as low as possible), are deeply centralising and allow no room for local financial discretion. Even if this is viewed as a short-term measure, the danger still clearly exists that Labour will so enjoy the centralised levers of power that they won't want to give them up. In an extremely frank admission, Robin Cook admitted that "there are various dangers of that happening. Once you have all that centralised power," he explained, "it is difficult to give it up. It is much easier to centralise power than give it out again." In an even more ominous admission he added, "I would say that modernisers in the party have not been noted by their willingness to devolve power."

If real decentralisation to localities is less certain, Labour at least proposes to ensure that Britain is no longer, in Cook's words, "one of the most secretive states in Europe," by promising to introduce a Freedom of Information Act and to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into British Law.

Labour plans to tackle the unrepresentative nature of British governance through a number of measures. Chief among them is reform of the House of Lords which still operates on the hereditary principle. "There is absolutely no reason," Cook says, "why we should carry this lumber from the middle ages into the Twenty-First Century." The alternative which Labour proposes, however, is far from being clear. There is currently talk of appointing life peers to replace the abolished hereditary peers, but Cook stresses that this "would only be the interim stage, which would probably last throughout the next parliament." It is in the second term of a Labour Government that he says they "would wish to achieve a democratic representative second chamber, because there is absolutely no point in keeping the House of Lords there as a quango on stilts. It would have to be made accountable."

The Labour Party are also committed to reforms of the working methods of the House of Commons, although it is the method of elections to that House which needs most urgent change. For as Cook states, "there is something profoundly wrong with a system that for twenty years locks out of any access to power the representatives of sixty per cent of

public opinion." Unfortunately, his preference for a system of Proportional Representation is not Party policy, which only goes so far as promising a referendum on a choice between first-past-the-post and a genuinely proportional alternative (to be decided by a commission which will report its findings within twelve months of a Labour Government coming to power). Encouragingly, Cook gave a categorical assurance that a referendum will be held "in the first term of a Labour Government, which means a full parliament of four or five years." But if Tony Blair

**"Modernisers in
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maintained his current scepticism about PR during a referendum campaign the status quo would be bound to prevail. Robin Cook puts Tony Blair's lack of commitment on PR down to the fact that "in the present parliament, a majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party, probably, are against PR, and any leader is going to find it difficult to come out with a commitment to change which they would find so radical." But Cook believes that "may well change after the next election," which will witness the entry into Parliament of many new MPs, amongst whom he believes "there is much wider support for proportional systems." As far as where Tony Blair himself goes, all Cook would tell me was, "I think that will partly depend on how he sees the election after next." The implication being that if Blair thinks winning again under the current system might be very tough, he may convert to the virtues of PR...

Hope springs eternal. If this and the other changes which Labour propose to restore healthy democracy to Britain are fulfilled, it would be one of the greatest achievements of any government this century. If, on the other hand, Labour fails to grasp the opportunity that is being presented, in the words of Robin Cook, "fifty years from now, the judgement of historians will be severe."

Will New Labour Make A Difference?



Joyce Quin: Labour will whistle a new tune in Europe.

Changing Britain's Attitude in Europe.

Joyce Quin, Labour's Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, explains Labour's policy on the development of the European Union.

What is the Labour Party's vision for Europe?

We believe the single market is important and that it should be completed. But we also believe that the European Union is not just about being a market. It has always had a strong social dimension. The Prime Minister's disgraceful statements about millions of jobs being lost through the Social Chapter when there are only two modest directives under it is ludicrous. We are also very keen on environmental cooperation in Europe. We want to see the European countries cooperate more in tackling unemployment, and so unlike the Government we are in favour of an employment chapter being added to the treaty which is at present being negotiated. The Labour Party is also keen to try to promote a code of conduct of arms sales across the EU. We believe too that the EU is a union of nation states and regions as well and we are happy to see that regional dimension develop in Europe as well.

How far will your Party go towards political union?

We don't believe that a centralised European super-state is on the cards and we don't think that would fit in very well with the decentralised model of government that most European countries have, or with the decentralised agenda which Labour has for the UK. But we do believe that the EU countries can work closer together in specific areas. We are very keen on enlargement of the EU as a moral, political and economic imperative.

In which areas are you prepared to give up Britain's veto?

We believe that there are areas of the EU which should continue to be decided by unanimity. Those are the Second and Third Pillars; the common Foreign and Security Policy and Justice and Home Affairs. The areas where we have said we would be prepared to look at increasing qualified majority voting, are social, environmental,

regional and industrial policy. But in practice, there isn't going to be any huge increase in Qualified Majority Voting.

Is the EU democratic enough, if not what changes would you like to see made?

We don't believe it is democratic enough. We would like to see greater openness in the way that the Council of Ministers do their business. To do that behind closed doors is unacceptable. We want to see a more effective system of scrutiny by both national parliaments and the European Parliament. We are quite prepared to see an increase in influence of the European Parliament. For example, we think it should have uniform budgetary control mechanism, and also, in circumstances where a clear majority of its members voting want legislation to be proposed, then that should be allowed, so that they would share the power of initiative to a certain extent with the European Commission. At the end of the day however, when it comes to deciding, then we still feel that the Council of Ministers of the Member Governments should have the last word. We don't foresee an increase in power for the Commission.

What reforms would Labour like to see made to the CAP?

We want to see it give help to the agricultural sectors which need help rather than throwing money at already well-off big farmers across the EU. We want to see much tighter control so that nothing is siphoned off in fraud. We also want to see it give a boost to environmentally friendly forms of agriculture, and operate in a way which is fairer to developing countries and world trade.

Why is Labour in favour, in principle, of monetary union?

We see advantages in the likely effects on interest rates, which would be lower, we see an advantage in reduction and elimination of exchange rate costs. We feel that if the Euro goes ahead and if it is successful, they are rather big 'ifs' of course, then businesses

in a stable economic environment would have a better chance to plan for the future. Also, one of the most important advantages is the ability of a strong Euro to withstand speculation in a way which is very difficult for national currencies to do. However, there are also a lot of things that need to be taken into account before we could say that we would join: real convergence, what the effects are likely to be on growth, on competitiveness and on employment levels; those are really the key economic criteria by which we would judge it. We don't have the same objection as Tory Euro-sceptics which is that this is a great threat to our independence. We don't see it in those ways because we know that countries' theoretical independence is already very severely circumscribed by international economic pressures, speculation, and trade.

How will you deal with the unaccountability of an EU Central Bank?

Our proposals are that there should be political accountability to the finance ministers in the ECOFIN. The Central Bank, although independent on a day-to-day basis, has got to work within the broad economic guidelines which have been set by the Council of Ministers.

Do you have any genuine concerns about the drawbacks of joining a single currency?

Of course. There are advantages and disadvantages, and these have got to be weighed up very carefully, and that is why we have taken both a cautious and a pragmatic view of it. But as well as looking at the costs of being in, we also have to look at the costs of being out. If it goes ahead and if it is successful, then we might find that we are being dictated to by the strong economic currents surrounding the Euro but not able to influence the decisions. But it is too soon to make a final calculation. We have also said that since we are having a referendum, at the end of the day, the people will decide.

Interview: Simon Retallack.

Social problems persist, but does Labour provide an adequate economic alternative to the Conservatives to deal with them?

Simon Retallack

One of the chief criticisms levelled against New Labour is that its broad economic policy hardly differs from that of the Conservatives. Some Labour front-benchers have to swallow hard first, but they all now commit themselves to the economics of the market and are just as keen to share a platform with big business as any Tory. Many of the policy commitments which have been made are also those which mimic the Tories'. Chief among these are Labour's twin pledges not to raise income tax during the first term of a Labour Government, nor to alter the Tories' spending limits during the first two years in office. Thus at a stroke, the Shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown, has discarded two of the chief instruments available to any social democratic government - progressive taxation of incomes and public expenditure on social security and the welfare state. The justification given for this is that the electorate would accept nothing less; successive election defeats for Labour prove, they believe, that people don't vote for a party which says it will put up taxes. Some seasoned observers, such as Will Hutton, disagree, arguing that the 1992 election defeat skewed Labour's heart, and as a result its leaders are greatly underestimating what is electorally feasible, preferring to imitate their opposition's apparently popular policies in a desperate attempt to win power.

Even supposing that this analysis is wrong and that the Labour leadership is right, we are still left with a problem. The Labour Party may have changed, broadly adopting free market economics and fiscal conservatism, and maybe it has had to, but the old problems wreaked upon society by free-market capitalism have not; they are still with us. Moreover, many would argue that they have become worse, living now as we do in an increasingly globalised free market. Poverty and inequality in Britain continue to increase, unemployment remains much too high, job and wage insecurity persists, and the consequences this has on the fabric of society is clear for all to see in the breakdown of communities and families and the increase in crime. By ditching the old (and probably failed) instruments of socialist policy which the Labour Party used to employ to attempt to humanise capitalism, it may well have made itself more electorally attractive, but unless it comes up with a coherent alternative the social problems themselves will remain and a Labour Government

will soon find itself as unpopular as the present Tory one is.

This is not to say that the Labour Party has *nothing* different to offer than the Tories, they do, but the adequacy of their alternatives remains very much in doubt. The Labour Party, for example, proposes to introduce a minimum wage to deal with poverty and prevent cow-boy employers from paying a pittance and expecting the state to make up the shortfall. But Labour have not said what rate it would be set at and are rumoured to be under pressure to set it so low that it would make very little difference. To tackle unemployment, Labour propose to introduce a windfall tax on the privatised utilities in order to finance training schemes for 250,000 young people without work. Setting aside the problem that they have not said how much would be raised by such a tax, it is far from being certain that training in itself will be adequate. If there are no jobs, if jobs are disappearing to low wage economies and to new technology, how useful will training be in competition with countries such as Vietnam, India and China, where fifty increasingly skilled people can be employed for the price of one here?

Some commentators believe that Labour has gone too far in accepting globalisation and its consequences. It remains to be seen whether Labour leaders are as pious believers in the religion of free trade as the Tories or whether they will campaign to construct an international structure which will control the principal beneficiaries of globalisation, Multi-National Corporations, many of whom pursue very environmentally and socially destructive activities and which are completely unaccountable to the local communities which are affected.

We should, however, be under no illusions. The Labour Party in power will face some very difficult problems, some of which, such as climate change and the demographic time bomb, are relatively new. The status quo is not good enough and Labour knows this. It is very critical of the breakdown of society, of the running down of our public services, the failings of rail, bus, and water privatisations, and of the destruction of the natural environment. But Labour lacks a clear philosophy to do much about it. It refuses to raise any new money, and relying on the market and the prospect of increased economic growth is not the answer, it fact it makes things positively worse. We need an alternative, and the worry is that New Labour does not yet provide it.

The View From the Back Bench

Tony Banks has been Labour MP for Newham North West for 15 years. Educated at York and at the LSE, he was an opposition spokesperson from 1990-1993. He now sits on the backbenches.

Asked how he rates New Labour's chances of winning the coming election Tony Banks urges against complacency, stating, "It's an election that only Labour can lose since the Conservatives have got nothing left to lose." He has already admitted that he is "not a particular admirer of New Labour" but is in fundamental agreement with the rhetoric of a stakeholder society in the

sense that there must be an opportunity for every individual to have a stake in society to get an education, a job and a house, "that is what I call a stake - not a bunch of privatised shares". It is perhaps not merely ironic that these are the very issues that Newham always votes on.

When pressed for his understanding of New Labour Tony Banks is clear what is involved in the concept - winning. It has become almost de rigeur to bash on about the utility of polls and Tony Banks is aware that opinions can change almost overnight. Many a Labour MP is haunted by 1992

Randip Panesar asks Tony Banks MP about his opinion of New

- indeed one of the memories commonly evoked is of the successful campaign on the part of the Tory Press like *The Sun* headline on the eve of the election; 'Last One Out Shut The Lights.'

To what extent have changes been concerned with a media spin?

Tony Banks emphasises that change is more than cosmetic and that the party is more right-wing than it has been in the last 40 years. But isn't this what worries backbenchers like himself

who sway more to the left? He prefers to emphasise change as encompassing fiscal conservatism (1992 does indeed cast a long shadow) and the endurance of which will be "tested by how well the policy can cope with 18 years of Tory misrule." Tony Banks is of the opinion that none of the parties is likely to form a majority government, seeing a Labour Government placing electoral change high on the agenda. "Ironically, a Labour Government will probably be

radical regarding constitutional change, but conservative in the areas of social and economic policy", he says.

Tony Banks is probably right when he says that if Labour said it was going to privatise all national industries without compensation it would still win in a stronghold constituency like Newham, but it would have to contend hard with opinion elsewhere that Labour is the party of tax and spend. My question now is that if the party cannot convince it's own backbenchers how can it convince an electorate it cannot whip?

Challenging History?

Hattie Sellick spends an evening at The Barbican, watching 'The General from America', a play that questions the story that history hands us down. Benedict Arnold, traitor or betrayed?

The General from America is an evening of serious entertainment. It begins quite literally with a bang and much drama, and maintains a fast and furious pace throughout the performance.

The play is set in Philadelphia, British occupied New York and the American Fort at West Point during twelve months in the years 1779-80. It takes as its subject, the character Benedict Arnold, a General in the US army. His is a name that is synonymous with evil, treason and treachery in the States. History hands down the story that Arnold tried to sell his country to the British during the American War of Independence (or Civil War, as we call it in Britain), but failed due to ill-fate and God's justice. Happily for the Americans, his treachery was



Corin Redgrave

discovered thanks to a series of mishaps. Arnold himself did not receive his promised £20,000 fee and died in penury in London, known as a traitor the world over. As Horace wrote in his 'Odes', "What exile from his country ever escaped from himself?" Well, this question is directly applicable to the final years of General Arnold whose actions caused the death of a noble and brave English gentleman, the Major John Andre. Arnold was unable to escape

this fact, and at his death, was a man without a country: he was neither accepted in Britain nor in the States. This fact alone would be enough to kill a man such as he: proud, loyal and full of nationalist sentiment until he himself was betrayed. Betrayal pushed

and faced with this, he finally succumbed to his weakness - greed. Although Arnold hotly defends himself throughout the play, it becomes clear that he is a wronged man, but he is also quite clearly dishonest, and later, a traitor. As the author, Richard Nelson intended, this play presents us with a multiplicity of questions and answers: who really was in the right? Who did the betraying and who was betrayed? This is for you to decide. One thing is clear: this is a challenging play and to really get the most from it you must clear your mind and concentrate, as there is much food for thought. Moreover, it is strongly acted with powerful and convincing performances from James Laurenson (Arnold), Adam Godley (Major Andre), Corin Redgrave (General Washington) and Rachel Joyce (Hannah, Arnold's sister).

The Pit, although extremely small, is used brilliantly and the play seems to fill the whole theatre, breaking the bounds that so often restrict audiences and actors from genuine collaboration. As the author has said, "A play is very much the audience", and the audience on the night that I was there was thoughtful, amused and full of extravagant praise. Your loss if you miss this production. It is important to ask for seats in the centre block or central sides as much of the action is set back behind the plane of the stage, making it difficult to see from the sides.

In rep. at the Barbican on March 21, 22, 24, 25, 31, to April 5 1997. Tel: 0171 638 8891 for bookings.

him in turn, to betray. The story, you see, is not quite as simple as history would make it seem.

Arnold had a glowing military record and was given the position of Military Governor of Philadelphia. Jealousy and ambition lead to his undermining, by the President of Philadelphia, Joseph Reed; a man, small of mind and stature in this production. Arnold was further betrayed by George Washington, the Commander-in-Chief of the US army,

Off the deep end

Doug Lucie's play was in-your-face, funny, full of great one liners, and an enjoyable evening. This was unless you payed too much attention to the underlying message of the play, which seemed a bit forced, obvious and a little too one-sided view of the world of media today.

We are at what seems to be a lavish wedding, however behind the scenes, a recently taken over newspaper is re-establishing its direction. Bringing in new inspiration and almost forcefully getting rid of any outmoded points of view of how the world functions.

Four scenes represent different angles on this theme. The young, loose-tongued, unashamed writer, flirting with the editor, replacing the

old-guard, conventional features editor, who had previously critically destroyed her writings. She slaughters him: it's quite funny. Yet, when she is offered the position, she turns around and asks if she has to give anyone a blow-job!! Next the football correspondent is given the choice of taking a less serious side to football or resigning. Again, the young journalists are represented as unscrupulous, cocaine snorting, bastards. This is too extreme? The old political editor is told he is demoted to sketch writer and he resigns. Finally, the funny foreign correspondent is fired, amidst his claims that he has been investigating the firm.

One can choose, to sit back and enjoy Lucie's continuously amusing play on words, or become sceptical about his idea of a global conspiracy that satellite television is taking over. Newspapers are dying, taking the old style newspaper reporters with them and replacing them with something less serious. It seems a bit alarmist, however something can be said about the lowering of quality of certain newspapers to accommodate to less intellectual readerships. All these ideas are well handled admirably by an energetic cast.

Diana Rochford

The Shallow End is currently at the Royal Court St. Martins Lane and will

Rape and Incest in a church

by Nick Morandi

Rome, 1599. Count Cenci throws a lavish banquet to celebrate the deaths of his eldest sons. In the night, he violates his daughter, Beatrice. Ignored by the law, forsaken by the Church, she then takes her mother, brother and lover as accomplices and plots her father's murder.

London, 1997. The 'production of a fiend, calculated for the entertainment of devils in hell' is repeated in St. Matthew's Church, Westminster. It is London's third post-war staging of the classic masterpiece, written in exile in 1819, by England's greatest Romantic poet, the revolutionary outcast, Percy Bysshe Shelley. Deemed by Wordsworth as the 'the greatest tragedy of the age' it is a cathartic and absorbingly sinister unravelling of family disorder - a family cursed with a father of inherent evil. It is not so much Count Cenci's (played by Richard Goffon) shockingly cruel mischief which is disturbing. It is the enjoyment he reaps from it.

Wilier and more decisive than Macbeth, more ruthless and lecherous than Claudius, more plotting and scheming than Iago, Cenci is, in principle, as persuasive a villain as can be found anywhere. It is a shame, therefore, that Shelley's own talents do not match the dramatic mastery of

Shakespeare. 'The Cenci' does not possess the wit, changes in tempo or feverish adrenaline which it so obviously requires - a slightly hollow and shell-like equivalent to the Bard's pedastalled creations.

Nevertheless, it is a rendition worthy of praise, not least for Karen Hayley's commanding performance as Beatrice (despite obvious drama school induced arm flapping). The inspired choice of venue brings with it a few acoustic problems, but the sheer irony and effectiveness of murderers and lunatics surrounded by crucifixes and altars more than compensates for this. Goffon would also do well to leave the tap-dancing to Michael Flatley, but the production is on the whole a courageous and successful attempt to grapple with and transform what is obviously a very difficult and demanding work.

The play is savage, unpredictable and provocative; Beatrice's subtly gradual transformation from innocent victim to a woman of intelligence, and channelled hate, is unnerving. She approaches her father's proportions, even though her motives are far more honourable, and by the appropriately crude and perhaps inevitable ending you will find yourself absorbed by the fates of the conspirators.

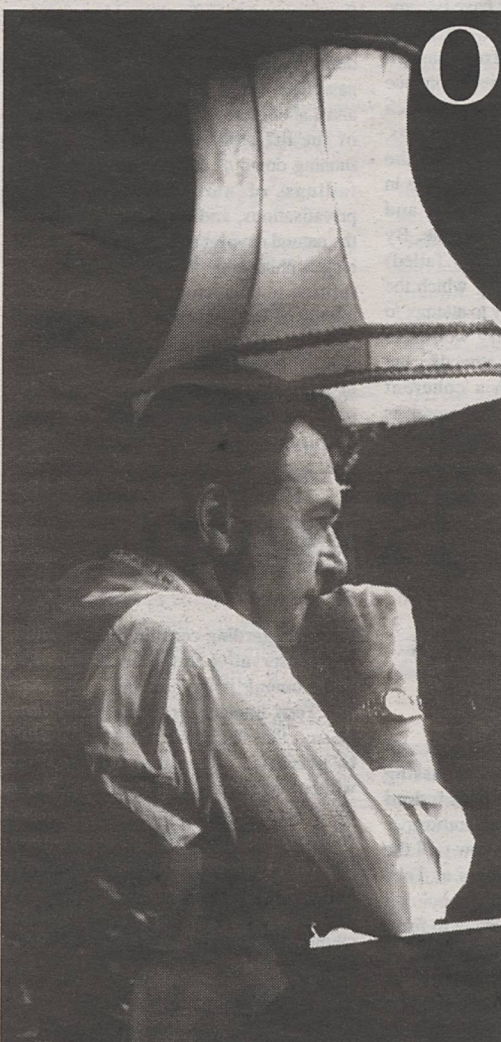
If flashy, pricey West End theatre drives you absolutely crazy, here's the perfect antidote: St. Nicholas, a one-man show by Conor McPherson at the Bush Theatre gives you a chance to witness superlative acting at very close range, devoid of the usual distractions. It is rivetting in a way that bigger productions can't possibly be. The Bush Theatre is a tiny, black-painted room over a pub, where being seated means clambering ungracefully up onto risers. If you're late, you sit with your head amongst pipes and ceiling fixtures. It's the sort of venue that certain theatre types would romanticise as a 'space'; not somewhere you can easily escape from if the show happens to be terrible. Luckily, actor Brian Cox is a master storyteller, and leaving will be the last thing on your mind. Cox boasts an impressive stage career and feature film credits including Rob Roy and Braveheart, and writer and director McPherson is an award-winning twenty-five year-old playwright with talent to spare. Not too many people could pull off the tale they're about to tell you.

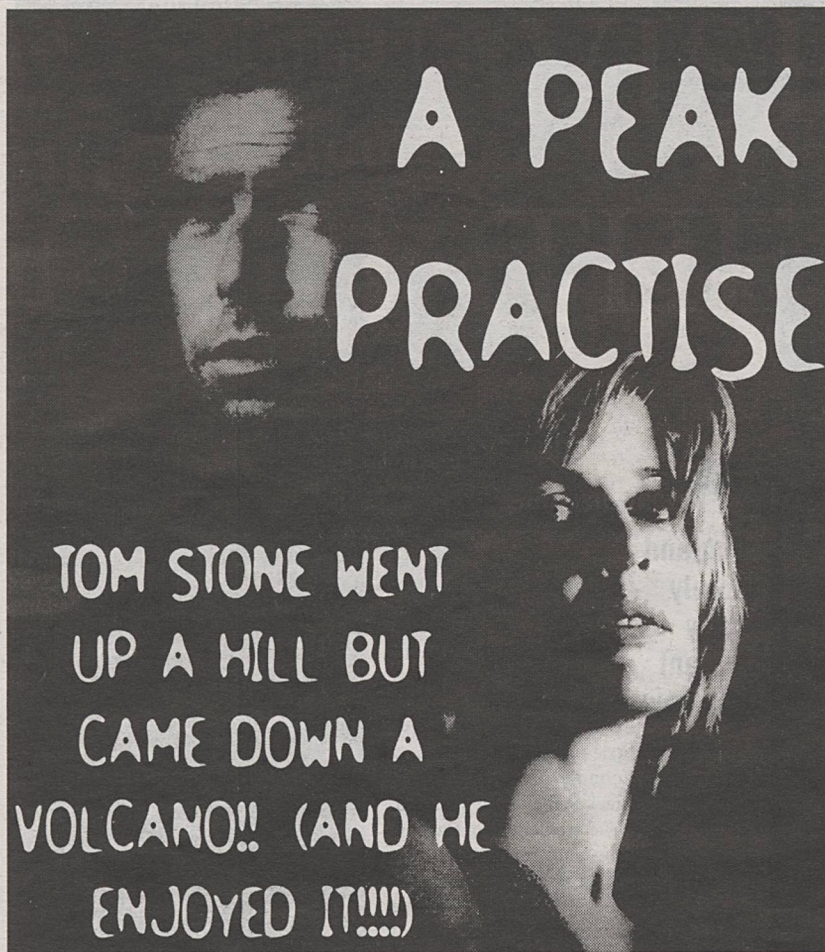
Cox plays an arrogant drunk of a journalist named Nicholas, a famous theatre critic for a Dublin paper who quite frankly adores the power his position gives him. In a series of anecdotes guaranteed to make any reviewer blush, he describes how he likes to write reviews before plays are over, lord it over other hacks daily in a variety of bars, and generally terrorise the theatre community of Dublin. He eventually goes too far when he tries to use his influence to win over a certain leading lady; he makes a complete ass of himself, and ends up passed out on London park bench, too mortified to return to Ireland. So far, the play is heartbreakingly

Devilish Antics

by Jen Prittie

realistic. But the second act concerns...well, how Nicholas becomes employed by a household of vampires in a deserted London suburb, and how he must make nightly trips to Soho nightclubs to procure beautiful young things for his unearthly friends. If it sounds a bit camp, it's not at all, and it's to Cox's credit that this part of the tale is even more harrowing than the first. St. Nicholas, you realise, is no saint at all; he's an uncaring vampire of a man who has happened to meet the real thing, and he slowly discovers that he doesn't like himself or his routine after all. How Nicholas gains a conscience, and possibly a soul as well, is not exactly predictable and revolves around a very helpful tip for warding off the undead. Cox ends his story with some thoughts on love which are all the more devastating because of what you've just witnessed. Adventures in theatre can be risky, but St. Nicholas pays off with an experience that is ultimately far more soul-stirring and human than any four-star show."





In some films you can take a good guess at what's going to happen, in others it's completely obvious so you don't even need to bother guessing. Dante's Peak falls into the second of these categories. The moment you see the small village intelligently situated on the side of a 'dormant' volcano, there is just a sneaking suspicion that it is going to get covered in molten lava. Likewise, the moment Pierce Brosnan, who plays Harry Dalton, a hot-shot 'volcanologist' meets Linda Hamilton, who plays Rachel Wando the mayor of the small town of Dante's Peak, you just know that they're going to end up together. Furthermore the moment you see Rachel's step-mother Ruth (Elizabeth Hoffman) in her little wooden shack even more conveniently placed than the town for enjoying the sights afforded by the natural path of lava flow, you just know that she's going to end up snuffing it, in a molten rock sort of way. So that is basically the plot in a nutshell, such as it is.

The plot is not so hot (apart from the lava) on top of that it contains rather too much American cheese for my liking, which is dished up in true American cheese style by cheesy American kids (no offense Hank)(NONE TAKEN).

But it is at this point that I run out of things to slag off about this film, because it has to be said that apart from the hot molten plot with cheese, the rest of this film is really quite good. After a bit of a slow first forty-five minutes, the remaining hour of the film has action that comes thick and fast. Pierce's character seems to owe something to that of James Bond, or maybe it's just that Pierce is a natural smoothy. Whatever the explanation it seems that playing Mr. Bond endows the actor with incredible driving skills. Pierce arrives at Dante's Peak in a BIG red truck, and I mean big. During the course of the film he dives this truck over trees, through avalanches-in-progress, and on a short cut through a river, at which point I half expected him to press a button on the dash-board to turn it into a miniature sub. But no this is not, we must remember, a Bond film. No, all Harry Dalton, volcanologist, needs is an extra long pipe! (exhaust that is) although how this extra long pipe enables his big red truck to run under water even when the engine is fully immersed is never fully explained. Anyway all this takes place, before

Pierce switches to a big blue truck for his driving finale, yes you guessed it, driving over molten lava! Pierce Brosnan's acting is pretty good in a smooth action hero way, and if he can repeat this sort of performance in the new Bond movie, he will be well on his way to becoming the best Bond since Sean Connery.

Linda Hamilton, of Terminator fame takes on a different role to what she is famous for, taking a back seat as far as action is concerned, but managing to carry off the character of Rachel, the harassed, single, mayoress who runs the local coffee shop, pretty well. She also has the unenviable job of looking after two of the aforementioned pieces of cheese.

Finally, what would a film about volcanoes be without special effects? Dante's Peak has certainly got them. If it's a visual feast of exploding buildings, exploding cars, exploding trees, exploding rivers and most importantly exploding volcanoes, that you're after then this is the place to go. Throughout the film the effects are slick and convincing, and convey with force the sheer power of a natural disaster such as this. Basically there is no way that this film is likely to pose any real threat of making you think, but if it's action and excitement with a slight whiff of cheese that you're after then you could do a lot worse. **B**

The Holocaust is an extremely touchy subject. It is immensely difficult to mention it and not get bogged down by its entangling arguments about the inhumanity of or end up apologising for it. For that reason, Mother Night, starring Nick Nolte and directed by Keith Gordon from novel written by Kurt Vonnegut, comes along as welcome as a breath of fresh air in the Tuns on a Friday night.

Howard Campbell (Nolte) is an American living in pre-war Germany who, because of his contacts, is pressed into service by the American military to act as a Nazi radio propaganda spokesman whose broadcasts will include coded information that will help the allies win the war. Years later, in the 60's, after living under a false name his true identity is discovered and things get a little hairy, when Israelis, the FBI and the KGB go after him.

Vonnegut's novels are extremely complex things themselves and transcribing them onto the big screen is minor miracle. Robert B. Weide has done an admirable, but not the brilliant working over that the book deserves.

His screen play feels condensed and cramped. Trying to fit the span of thirty years is very hard. For the first hour the movie is speeding along at tremendous pace, not because of the action required but because there is so much ground work need to get out-of the way.

This is not helped by an equally lacklustre directing. The whole movie chugs along without clear focus. Scenes come and end with no connection between them. The lack of a brilliant script could have been supplemented by brilliant directing. The directing was markedly tame for what on paper is very daring film. The finish look and feel does not seem like it has anything to do with a heavy drama.

The acting in Mother Night should have been wonderful. Nick Nolte, Alan Arkin, John Goodman are all very accomplished actors. However, the acting lacks any edge. The events that happen and the characters' reactions and responses seem out of step. The events do not hold their real weight. Nolte's character seemingly feels bad about events but he is a lot

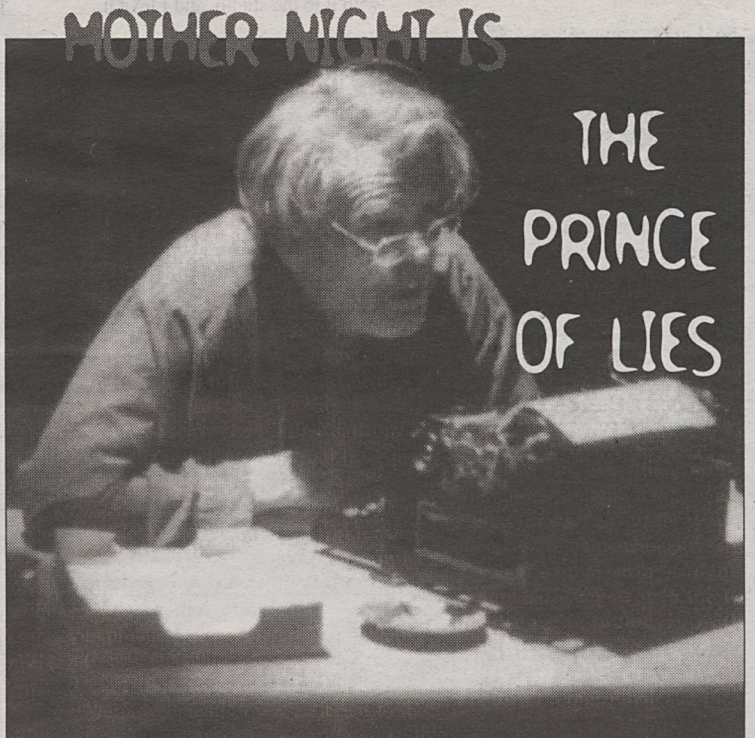
NICK NOLTE

less emotional and even believable than he has been and he should be

The only redeeming feature is the remnants of Vonnegut's original idea, which thank God has not been lost in the attempt to condense the book into two hours. Vonnegut's central theme is about reality and perceived reality. Howard Campbell, pretended to be something he was not. He pretended for so long that everyone knew him as that lie. The truth became unimportant because it did not affect reality, it is just the pretence that influences reality and thus is reality. Campbell though working for the US, was still helping the Nazis. He attacked the Jews and further added to the climate of anti-semitism, even if it was under pretence, and for that he should suffer.

This could have been a great and powerful film but it does go that extra nine-yards in the execution of its idea to make it great. **B-**

Hank W. Baines



BEYOND THE BOUNDS

It seemed so simple. In the 1950s if you wanted to make a film noir movie you needed certain key things. All the best noir flicks were based on very simple and flexible principles. They usually included: a dark and dangerous man, usually a washed drunken cop with an unhealthy yet professional preference for violence or a washed and drunken private eye with an unhealthy yet professional preference for violence; one leggy long-haired female type that is either seeking revenge on or trying to hide from the mafia; one crime boss of said mafia; and several, usually the more the merrier, vile henchmen with a habit of dying quickly. These though important, were as crucial as style and mood. Everything about those movies was cool and slick. They captured the feeling of the era.

Film noir in the 1990's, and things are a bit different. Every key ingredient of a good noir flick has changed with the development of more liberal cinema. Noir was good at hinting. Hinting is not needed to hide monstrosities because they can now be shown. This raises the question, as to whether film noir can still be made? That is where this article settles nicely into a review of the movie Bound.

Bound's plot is very basic. It

revolves around two characters Violet and Corky. Violet is the 'doll' of tuff-guy mobster Caesar. She stays at home all day drinking tall Manhattans and wearing as little as possible. Corky, is a quirky out-of-closet ex-con who is trying her level best to stay on the right side of the law. When Corky is hired to paint and decorate the pad across the hall from Violet, more than just the walls get a good lick of paint. The two slowly become entangled in a passionate tryst. Their physical attraction for each other then changes rather dramatically into love when they decide to steal the money which Caesar has been laundering for the big chief. What then ensues is a rather clumsily constructed thriller that centres around the descent from reason and commitment into deception and double dealing.

The supposed trigger for their actions is their undying love for each other. Nothing else could be so strong as to make Corky throw away the promise she made to be straight. This of course is quite logical on paper but when it comes down to execution on film of such contrived motives, things are not as clear. Neither woman shows passion for the other. They continually find themselves having to ask the other whether she trusts her. This does seem

strange for two people with such an eternal love.

Back on the question of noir for the nineties. Yes, there can still be noir now, the soon to be released Near Room (starring Adrian Dunbar) proves that. The point to be made is that Bound is not noir, but a by the numbers movie on underground cinema by Hollywood. The script has no subtlety, the acting has no style and the directing is devoid of the slickness that all noir films are famous for. The two young brothers who made this film have a long way to go before achieving their aim of a noir film. This film has no mood. Its actors do not ooze cool. Tilly and Gershon are totally pathetic. They capture none of the essential larger than life characteristics that are part and parcel of noir films. Their exchanges are plastic, their actions contrived.

Bound is stunningly less than impressive. The only thing that makes this film different to all the other Hollywood takes on alternative movies is that instead of having a 'ultra cool' soundtrack, it has dyke power. If the selling power of this film is its lesbian central characters then that ain't so special. Plenty of other films have lesbian characters and do a better job of it. **C**

David Balfour



A Number one album, James Bond, lots of great press, and a lead singer who wears dresses. Mansun talk to 'The Beaver'

Some people won't have heard of Mansun; pick 5 adjectives which best describe your band.

Um, bloody hell. The one question I didn't want you to ask. (pause) Exciting loud ... mad (long pause), autistic, and (even longer pause) er, quiet. That OK?

Lovely. So, You got to number one. Do you get a lot of money for that?

I haven't. I don't think things like that come in for months. I have to say it hasn't sunk in much. We just have the tour, and don't have time to think about it.

Was this success thing expected? I get the feeling a lot of British bands live for fame.

Not really, but I hear we outsold the nearest rival by a hefty margin. Especially, 'cos the nearest rival was the smurfs or somit shit like that. We never really wanted to be big for its own sake. Its just nice that people like us.

So, I guess you are just making music for yourselves, and if anyone else likes it its a bonus, right?

You could say that, if you fancy.

The album: not exactly your average indie fair.....?

Yeah. First - we didn't have a proper producer. We were all quite naive about how things were done. We just went up to



the Studio guy and said 'how the fuck do you do this, then'. It was just four lads who didn't have a clue what they were doing, doing something good. I reckon the guy in the studio loved it too; he was having a great time.

The Album: your song names are pretty cool.

Yeah, I guess so. Most of them just come from conversations we used to have in the pub. Like, Chad used to say 'take it easy chicken' when shooting off, so we thought it would be cool for a title. Other ones are just like that.

And the best song on the album is.....

No doubt: 'Child who loved me'. It sounds so Bond. We messed around with it in the studio, and I love it.

Your favourite Bond?
There is only one Bond. Sean is the man.

And who influences you apart from 007?

Ah, that's only one track. We listen to loads of different stuff. There is no music that we all listen to; keep it diverse. People say we sound like this, or we sound like that, but its not really a conscious thing.

What do you say to people who say the album smacks of early Floyd?

Well, I suppose its kinda healthy. There not a bad band to be compared to.

I read that Chad said we can't go back to the sixties and that music must always go forward.

I think the 60s thing - lots of people have done it. There are always bands around who sing about love and stuff like that. That's why we did 'Mansun's only love song' - as a piss take. Now we have another track called 'Mansun's Only Other Love Song'. Its like, well, fuck your expectations.

Who are your peers?
Manics - brilliant from the start.

"In England the only really important thing is how you cut your hair" - Mansun do the press

Radiohead. Supergrass. Some of us are really into more American stuff, like Soundgarden or the Red Hot Chillie Peppers.

Where do you fit in to the scheme of modern British music.

Oh well, the Press have tried to pidgeon hole us a couple of times. I don't reckon they have managed. The problem is, in England the only really important thing is how you dress, or how your hair is cut. We

mess around with that a bit, but don't like to do any one thing for too long. The reviews of the album have been good, but its possible for them to spend 500 words talkin' about how we dress, and then say 'oh, by the way, I didn't like it much'. It is a bit lame. Just listen to the music, y'know? I mean, Chad often comes on stage in a dress, or sommit like that - just to mess around. We're not really making statements, just music.

Mansun are touring the UK now. They play in London soon. Their rather natty debut long player is out NOW! on Parlophone. The new Bond movie 'Tomorrow Never Dies' is out at the end of the year.

"There is only one Bond. Sean is the man" - Mansun do cinema

Do you reckon you could do the song for the next movie?

Yeah, wouldn't mind. We had the track in the studio, and just tried to make it bondish. We just thought of a scarlet background with women jumping about, like, and slapped a bold beginning with a nice orchestra. Perhaps you could have a word with that Broccoli guy or something.

ALBUMS

Morphine 'Like Swimming'

Deep in the backwaters of alternative music are Morphine. Their sound is akin to slow jab in the right arm of that numbing drug. Most other bands are energetic or maniacal and want desperately to make it big. Unlike most of these companions in that murky soup Morphine want to be where they are. They have had success and critical fame, indeed they still have. They have been featured in NME and had their appearance on Later... It has not phased them in the slightest, there sound is true and over the course of the last couple of albums has progressed quite logically.

The important thing about Morphine is that with a simple concept they continually sound fresh. On 'Like Swimming', they don't exactly try branching into new territory, instead they have let their sound grow fuller. This new approach can jar the expectations, and is seen most obviously on songs like Empty Box and Hanging on a Curtain. At first this new approach jars ones expectations. Slowly, however, ones ear returns to it, and Like Swimming does become a enjoyable aural experience. It is like a sombre float on a peaceful summers eve in a lake where the water on the surface is like crushed velvet.

Also for the first time on 'Like Swimming', Morphine conspicuously acknowledge the legacy of jazz. This album is full of more jazz influences than a Harry Connick Jr. album. Especially enjoyable was the Thelonius Monkesque sax refrains and bridges that occur in the middle of Wishing Well. Further there are some strange other music references. The positively early eighties style Early to Bed needs an explanation. But Morphine are not the

kind of band to reveal any thing. Their music is shrouded in a vial of ambiguity and coolness. Morphine albums are like soundtracks film noire movies. It is easy to visualise a man in gabardine Mack strutting down a busy street hot on the tale of some mob henchman who killed the lady with long legs. As an album Like Swimming is moody and slightly unsettled, just like any good film noire hero. But like all film noire, 'Like Swimming' is just damn cool. **DB**

Lucious Jackson 'Fever In Fever out'



While Lucious Jackson has had their excellent songs, with 'Daughters of the Chaos' being one example. The songs on 'Fever In Fever Out' are largely a disappointment because they fail to provoke emotion. The first song 'Naked Eye', is vaguely pop and stereotypically girlish. Men, rain, and desire all figure into the song, with a slight dose of sophisticated lyrics but bland music and vocals. One charming song is 'Water on Your Garden', which is along the lines of great female vocalist Sam Phillips. Deep, resonant vocals and haunting melodies intertwine and combine with trance-like rhythms to make mellow tune. Taken as a whole, however, the album is blemished by the fact that the songs generally lack the outward spunkiness of earlier Lucious Jackson songs. Songs like 'Soothe Yourself' are a clear example of this loss: the chorus of sugary sweet vocals at odd intervals belong more to the world of easy listening than to innovative female artists. Let us hope LJ don't stray too much further from their true routes. **Anar Virji**

Mr C 'Cheesy Shit Collection vol. III'

You can imagine my excitement when I was approached with a house CD and asked if I wanted to put my knowledge of the dance scene onto paper and write an article for the infamous *Beaver*.

However, my initial excitement was soon dampened when I realised that the *Beaver's* fire-mopped music editor had completely shafted me. Mr C's 'Back to Old School' DJ Collection Vol 3, is probably the worst collection of house tracks that I've ever heard. It's hard to imagine how so much cheese could be found outside of his soiled, kid's sized jock strap.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Mr C, he was the front man for the Shamen. Since they have split he has spent his time mixing house sets for various clubs and pirate radio stations around the country. Sadly, this change is hardly made of the stuff to that will 'Move, move, move any mountain' in my life: decent house mixes are out clearly out of his league.

The CD starts with 'Let Me Love You For Tonight', by Kariya, slow, dull, completely uninspiring. Like all of the proceeding tracks, it could be more comfortably described as handbag garage than hard playing house. You have to reach track 7 to hear a promising tune in 'Calypso of House', but like the rest of the CD, the good opening sequence just doesn't go anywhere. Hardly the stuff to inspire memories of the 'Old School' beat, and relive their white glove, whistle blowing, drug induced past.

So, in case you're a complete fuck-wit, here is a quick resume. Do not buy this! Do not listen to this! In every way, this is a truly crap collection!

King-Dong-Big-Schlong Kuchany

Allister Whitehead & Tall Paul 'The House Collection Vol. 5'

Yesterday's tame attempt to uplift that is house music, is revamped for a FIFTH (?) volume of the House Collection. The two at your service: Allister Whitehead and Tall Paul. Whitehead certainly serves weakest; he hasn't moved on from his Hacienda days of the early 90s and here has delved into such deep commerciality that it will be a dogfight for Cheese of The Year between himself and Jeremy Healey. Many of the tracks he has chosen - Simonelli's mix of 'Do You Feel Me' by NY's Finest initially springs to mind - seem to apply a method for mixing house songs: the standard house offbeat, the standard sixteen beat fill-in, the standard cheese. In other words, SOS - Same Old Shit.

Tall Paul however, takes us on a different experience altogether. The tracks contain some excellent trance sampling, that includes stylish and varying car alarms, which of course were the roots of this nonsensical 'kulcha?! But seriously, such sampling was, until the last few months, unheard of amongst the house 'establishment'. His greatest asset remains the ability to raise his mixes to orgasmic climax, and then a gradual come-down, such that the whole CD is actually an experience; and though this is a simple (but often forgotten) technique, it proves just how effective simplicity can be.

Overall, the British House scene is now either funky beats or incorporating the Euro-sound. In this collection Whitehead has gone backwards, while the Euro thang don't do it for me: however, with a mix such as Tall Paul's Forerunner by Natural Born Groovers, the deep funk house that is Tall Paul convinces me that house may well survive into the 21st Century..which probably means that Jon French will like it. **ZaK**

DJ Kool 'Let Me Clear My Throat'

The old skool's in the house! DJ's just gotta ta be one of the phattest maxi singles - ever! With hits like dis, DJ Kool can rock any party, on any coast, any day of da muthafuckin' week! It's live and it's direct from Philly (and Baltimore) and it's Go-Go at its freaky best.

DJ Kool may not be the greatest lyricist on wax (hey! it's only Go-Go), but that muthafucka be rockin' a crowd like a fishing boat in a thunderstorm! Being the hip-hop purist that I is, I ain't supposed to be givin' this Go-Go boy no props, but it can't be helped y'all - this is da bomb! If you like yo' boombox blastin' out da shit so all yo' neighbours be buggin', dis is tha one fo' ya.

This isn't the most original piece of work out there, the songs contain loops from 45 King, Kool & The Gang and Naughty By Nature - dis homeboy shoulda called himself DJ Loop. Fo' those of y'all who be reminiscin' 'bout the old skool dayz, Let Me Clear My Throat (Old School Reunion Remix '96) will have you buggin' out like crazy stupid! DJ Kool teams up with two of the greatest hip hoppers to ever wreck da mic (wuz up, Kadare!): Doug E. Fresh and Biz Markie. Together, this dope-ass trio rock da mic like there's no tomorrow... old skool steelo! The legendary Doug E. Fresh even drops some of da wicked beatboxin' that made him a household name in da industry way back when yo' moms and yo' pops wuz still breakdancin'.

If you ain't heard this on the charts yet, don't worry 'cuz me, Da Roach, will be touring all LSE Halls wit' my boombox for special midnight concerts, startin' tomorrow at Rosebery. And if Juicy tries to stop me, homeboy better be packin' some steel! **Da Roach**

Wilco 'Being There' (Reprise)

The first really good album I've had from *The Beaver* this year is here. No press release, but if memory serves me right, Jeff Tweedy, Wilco's singer-songwriter used to be in Uncle Tupelo, and much of 'being there' sounds like a more focused Tupelo, with better songs. It's a fairly long double album, but unlike many doubles, it doesn't sound as if it's straining to fill out the time. The album has an authentic air to it - lots of real piano runs recorded warts-and-all. The atmosphere is closest to the Rolling Stones' 'Sticky Fingers' - from Brown Sugar to Dead Flowers, it's roughly the same feeling. The songs are largely understated, but heartfelt. Tweedy's voice switches from quavering vulnerability to Jaggeresque drawl with effortless ease. Plaintive songs like '(was I) in your dreams' and 'red-eyed and blue' are moving without being trite. Perhaps the most heart-breaking song is 'the lonely I' - the song of a devoted fan ignored by his idol, whom he comes to see as lonely too. Elsewhere, when Wilco decide to rawk, they do it properly. 'Monday', and 'outtassite (outta mind)' get the full treatment - brass and all. There is a strong country element to the album, especially on the second disc, but it hangs together remarkably well. Overall a great collection of songs, mixing the poignant with an upfront honesty. **Toby Mason**

Various 'Romeo & Juliet Soundtrack'



More Soundtracks - this time for the brave new re-working of R&J. An interesting mish-mash of post-grunge yank rock (Everclear, Butt Hole Surfers), soul (Desree) and Smiley Pop (The Wannadies, Mundy). As with so many things, Radiohead rise above the herd with the achingly beautiful 'Talk Show Host'. Excellent effort.

So, like soundtrack, like film - brash, confident, and instantly forgettable. Doubtless it will be a very palpable hit, but verily it is not

SINGLES

single of the week

Dinosaur Jr. 'Take a Run at the Sun'

When I was younger and more impressionable, Dinosaur Jr. were always revered as a band that people who worshiped 'Nirvana' listened to when their ears were near the point of 'Nevermind exhaustion'. The point is that I did associate them with sweaty bodies, lots of moshing and the whole 'grunge' scene. This single has however smashed my notions of what Dinosaur Jr. are all about. This is all sweet and melodic and full of parts that make it sound like it could be pulled from a Tarantino film soundtrack. Mellow and lifting but with an aggressive musical edge behind the sappy edge this sounds just cool as the sun shines down on Carr-Saunders for the first time this year. **J. Cooper**

Redd Kross 'Mess Around'

Whereas "Kross Kross'll make ya' jump, jump, jump!", Redd Kross'll make ya' sing along and tap your foot to their cool three-minute pop ditties. 'Mess Around' is a nice classic verse-chorus-bridge song reminiscent of early Beatles tunes like 'Ticket To Ride'. Their lead singer's throaty voice sounds amazingly like John Lennon's, as do their jangly guitars. The other songs, 'Sick Love' and 'Popular Cult' are slightly faster and more modern sounding, but still in the same naive teen-pop genre. Redd Kross's sixties sound is quite refreshing, like a cool mountain breeze. It's basically happy music, making you forget your worries. Like the Red Cross, Redd Kross patch up your wounds. **Sunny Sunil**

Speedy J 'Ni go snix'

Zap! Ker-pow! Crunch! No, it's not Batman, it's Speedy J's so-called music. It is weird, although I expect you gathered that from its title. It's basically a random arrangement of tinny computer game sound effects like in Space Invaders or Pac Man. Some might consider it ingenious and inventive. I consider it pointless and pathetic. It might have been OK if they had added a stomping backing track, but there is no sign of any drums, or bass, let alone any melody. To add insult to injury they give six different mixes of it! Is it someone's sick idea of a joke? If you want to hear computer game sound effects, go play a computer game. Anyone who likes this needs their head examined. **Sardonic Sunil**

Spring Heel Jack 'Bank Of America'

Spring Heel Jack say this track was inspired by the American economic situation. If by that they mean it sounds bad, they are right. Bank Of America is a typically shabby drum 'n' bass song without any lyrics or melody. It is not "hard" jungle: the beats are played at a far too sedate pace (almost humanly possible), and it does not evoke an image of gangsters or guns. The drum beats are layered with trance-like effects, giving it an ambient feel. Hi-hats are used to full effect and the bass glues it all together. The second track on the single, Sunburst, actually has a tune, and has a distinctly dreamy quality about it. It is like having a happy dream where you are flying like Superman to the Sun, and then you suddenly realise you are being blinded by it and are burning to death. For real. **SS**

Cast: breaking old ground once again



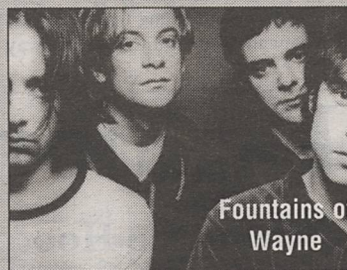
Cast 'Free me'

It sounds very familiar. Nothing new. Melodies you heard before. Of course, brit pop again. Like Oasis back in the days of 'Definitely Maybe' (oh, if they could just reach these heights again...). But then, it's only Cast. Could have been worse, obviously. And even more obviously - could have been better.

Cast's new single 'Free me' makes no difference to the rest of their material. Basically rock music. Somewhere between Ocean Colour Scene and Oasis, but nowhere near their class. Cast are one of these bands who surely like what they do and are surely passionate about it. But they're still just riding the fading wave of brit pop/rock. A few guitars and even less chords, if possible. Songs about love and fate. Not quite original but after all not really bad, either. The single is backed by 'Come on everybody' (nothing to do with the rock n' roll classic) and 'Release my soul', a low level version of Led Zeppelin style. Give it a try if this kind of part-time retro rock is your favourite. You cannot go wrong. Or try to catch Cast on their tour this March, playing all over Britain. Surprisingly enough, it's nearly completely sold out. That's something, at least.

Supergrass 'Richard III'

New, improved Supergrass washes whiter than white. New shorter hair-cuts mean even better music. Hmm, less of the superlatives I think. Yes, we all know 'Alright' with the funny video and all the teen-bopper girls screaming with excitement a few summers ago. But look this is new, serious Supergrass making serious rocking music. Rougher than the polished gems of 'I should Coco' and adding fuel to the 'Supergrass play punk' fire. For a band whose favourite album is Pink Floyd's psychedelic classic 'Relics' this single packs a terrific punch and may prove just too much for the 'Alright' brigade. It grows on you though and maintains Supergrass's irrelevant streak with a cool theremin riff. PS - Theremin is an instrument, not a Class 'A' controlled drug. **J. Cooper**



Fountains of Wayne 'Radiation Vibe' 'Laguna Meth' 'Nuclear Snowcone'

Two atomic-based singles here, by relatively new bands - one of which has a future, the other (hopefully) has not. Fountains of Wayne go for the obvious route: chuggy guitars, and a nasty 'baby, baby, baby' chorus. Couple that with the name from hell, and you've got an unappealing package indeed. Seriously, when this band of no-hopers were sitting around trying to think up a name, can you really see one getting a flash of inspiration - F. of W. and the others actually thinking this was a good idea? The mind boggles. 250,000 FLOCK TO SEE "FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE" AT KNEB WORTH - I think not, somehow.

Laguna Meth, on the other hand, have a far cooler name, a far cooler song, and are American, which should guarantee some market penetration (ooer). 'Nuclear Snowcone' is a lot more interesting because it doesn't rely on a riff to drive it along. What the hell is actually pushing it along, I can't tell - it does sound genuinely new to my ears. I'd have to hear the album to make a final judgement, but definitely one to watch. **TM**

Boyzone 'Can't Remember'

Now, These boy band Take That fall-out teeny-bopper combos. I've had my reservations about them in the past. Tedious, syrupy goo made for crap girls and their even crapper mums. I'd always thought.

But, this time I was pleasantly surprised. This was not the usual corporate cock-sucking nonsense I had expected, but, instead, a pleasing arrangement of strings, piano, swingbeat and winsome harmonies that near brings tear to the eye.

No, not really. This is arse. Saccharine daytime Pebble Mill credit-rolling flange. It is truly, profoundly disgusting in the most disturbing sense of the word. Long live the Spice Girls. They'd kick the living shit out of Boyzone, and it'd be a good fight to watch. **Iain Haxton**

Republica 'Drop Dead Gorgeous'

When I first saw the title, I thought it would be a song more like 'Drop Dead Beautiful': a romantic song with good lyrics. Then ... Prodigy like beats? Guitars with an oasys style then entered. I then thought to myself, "What is this?" The vocalist, a lady with a strong voice, then sang with lots of power, "Shut up, I'm talking". Well OK, romantic songs differ from people to people. I could tell though that the vocalist finds it very romantic. Overall, a very talented band with a unique style but with bad choice of song titles. They mislead the listener with what they are expecting to hear!!! **Amir Absoud**

Perfume 'You and I'

Tell me more, tell me more, please tell me more, are the few famous words from the classic 'Grease'. Perfume, very ingeniously replaced these words with, 'You and I, you and I, addicted to lying in bed', hoping that no one would realise. They completely spoil the Grease song. Artists these days, just take a few songs, mix their tunes and lyrics together resulting in total disastrous sounds which would be unfair to call music! It is like taking a ferrari body and putting a shite engine in it. Looking good from the outside; inside it is a big lie! **AA**

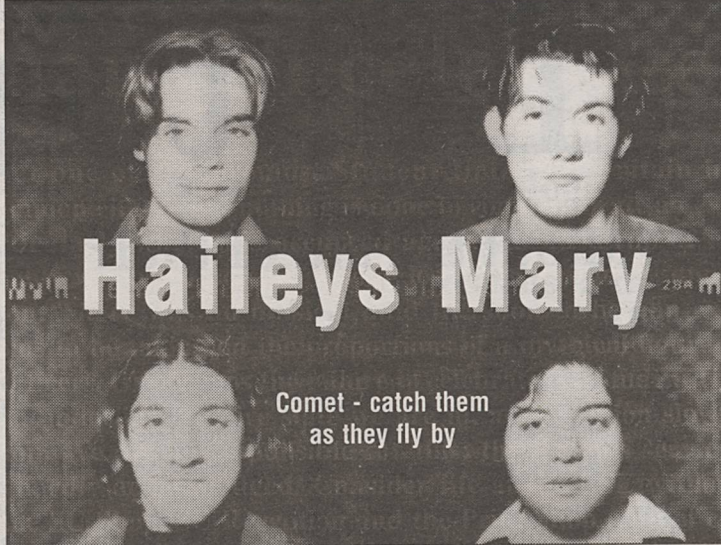
Brian Kennedy 'Put the message in a box'

Put the message in a box, put the box into a car, drive the car around the world, until you get heard... Wow! Stunning poetry! Rock lyrics at its best - not. Still it's one of these songs you immediately know but could never figure out who it is from. At least in the Beaver Office no one could. Even though it's written by Karl Wallinger. Very helpful. If you know the answer drop a message in the Beaver office.

Brian Kennedy is an Irish folk singer: smooth, soft, never in danger of scaring your mom or driving your dad crazy. In other words: For Cliff fans - great. For everybody else - boring. This single, however, is released as a two CD set and as unreleased tracks contains the musical poem 'My blackhaired love' (very similar to U2's 'MLK') and two more cover songs. As if Cliff Richard does Oasis. Bah. Put this CD in a box, put the box into a car - and drive the car down a cliff. **MG**



Brian Kennedy



Haileys Mary

Comet - catch them as they fly by

Comet 'Chandelier Musings'

Alternating is the key here - track by track. Beginning with a bang, Comet launch 'Rocket Flare' replete with overwhelmingly fierce layers of feedback drenched distortion and a wistful overdub vocal. Sometimes wearing your influences is not cool: but if your sleeve reads My Bloody Valentine you can't go far wrong. Then, slow it down. Immerse yourself in the beauty of slower acoustics, and - hey - why not even chuck in a little string section here to wind it off? For a band hailing from the Lone Star State, Comet do a nice

line in condensing a big sound into small portions. But, and I don't want to get all indie-obscure on you, their American roots shine brightly. British bands can do cool, but the can't do genuine. Equal parts Mercury Rev and Palace (with the merest hint of late Sonic Youth), this is an album full of appreciation for the melancholy side of life. Never whining, but always aware that dusk is more meaningful than the half light of morning. But, then again, this could be a perfect club come-down. Drink Whisky with it, whatever you do.

Overall, if you liked the Spice Girls, you'll hate this. Those expecting Pizzazz!! should walk away as Comet fly by. But, as you trundle away, ask: why have cotton, when you can have Comet? **James Crabtree**

The Bathers 'Kelvingrove Baby'

Album covers do have an effect. Who, upon seeing the splendidly be-doodled cover of Screamedelica, didn't think 'that would look pretty cool on a T-shirt'? Or, equally, upon seeing the Spice Girls eponymous debut didn't think 'hmmmm, don't like that one in the trainers much'?

Cast your eyes right, and you will see what I mean. Knocking all five spines into a cocked CD cover. The Bather's newest offering has a cover which should be proudly bedecked upon any and all living room walls. Gillian Anderson's sexiest older sister, she stares at you, and says 'this is gonna be good'.

And, yes, it is. Heralding from North of the Border, this does not fit into any pre-existing categorise of workmanlike hoots-mon Scottish folk. Although the cover seems to hint at a

Mazzy Star kind of affair, what the Bathers actually produced is more akin to Tom Waits or (dare I say it?) Nick Cave. Slow, but with a fine sense of melody, they sing of having loved and lost, or never having loved at all. Titles such as 'if love could last forever' or 'lost certainties' give false superficiality to otherwise deep and interesting ideas. Not much irony, and certainly not too knowing, but straight and true enough to get away with it. If all irony gives to music is 'Pop' and circumstance, it is a device which can be lived without. As the album progresses, the affair does become just a little too sensible for its own good, but this ought not detract from the overall effect.

Think The Tindersticks without the tortured posturing. Think Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds without the gruesome obsessions. Think Tom Petty without the lingering smell of Cheesy pop. Think Leonard Cohen on his Wedding Day. Think nice things. OK, it's pretty, and I like it. So, sue me. I'll be dreaming the cover girl tonight - and you? **Jeremy Mills**

Big Mouth Misses Again

Gene 'Drawn to the Deep End'

Yup, they still sound like the Smiths. Cheap, I know, but just in case you were wondering. Gene are what the Smiths would have sounded like if, instead of having a line up of Morrissey, Marr, Joyce, and Rourke, they had had a line up of Joyce, Joyce, Joyce, and Rourke. They lack creativity, and spark. For all of his fey protestations, and tales of depression, the pastiche Rozza is never more than a cartoon beside Morrissey's portrait. But, then who could measure up to the great man?

'Drawn to the Deep End' is, unfortunately, no particular advance. Although the first single, 'fighting fit', seems to advertise a rebirth of self confidence and brash musical verve, the rest of the offering merely trawls over the waters of 'Olympian'. However, the real trouble does not lie with the limp wristed front man. Rossiter still pens a rhyming couplet with far more skill than his peers, and has a touch of lyrical invention which does a great deal to keep his band remarkable. The best here moments ('The Accidental' & 'I Love

You, what are you?') are, one suspects, largely influenced by Rossiter's touch. Shouldering the blame for Gene's lack of invention must be guitarist Steve Mason. Rossiter said of 'Drawn to the Deep End' that he was glad it didn't have two sing-a-long singles and ten fillers. Correction, it has one sing-a-long single, and 11 fillers. But, he has to work with a musical accompaniment which lacks imagination to the extent that it mercilessly rips off ... the last Gene album. Both 'Where are they Now' and 'We Could be Kings' display riffs unerringly similar to previous material. Overall, Mason seems to be mismatching his Paul Weller wannabe style of blues-noodling with something which aims altogether higher. As he graunches through the umpteenth searing solo, you have to wonder what exactly he is doing in a set up which manifestly demands more than his meagre talents. I hear Johnny Marr isn't up to much these days.

So, overall, hang the axe-man and try harder. Failing that, take an autumn re-sit of 'Strangeways here we come' and we may yet be able to say that rumours of the Queen's death have been greatly exaggerated. As of now, Gene are more treading water than fighting fit. **James Crabtree**

Lost in Soho

Without the aid of their trusty hockey sticks, Kevin and Emma ventured out on a mission into the depths of Soho

After a hard game of hockey, Sam, Joy, Emma and me were sat in a pub when that big question came up again... 'Where are we going for our Hockey Dinner?'

Joy originally suggested somewhere nice and Emma nodded her head in agreement. The next crucial question to be asked was 'what type of food shall we go for?'. Joy once again spoke up with 'something everybody likes, chips are good' and Emma once again nodded her head in agreement.

As the discussion continued, Sam and me wondered at the amazing similarities between the successful Taylor/ Neal 'Do I not like orange' partnership and the Emma/ Joy 'Do I not like anything without chips' alliance.

The result of this 'fruitful' exchange was that me and Emma with nothing better to do went to book a table for around 30 drunken hockey players, in a restaurant within staggering distance of the Tuns and Planet Earth at the Limelight.

Our first stop on the list was Latino's, Soho. The restaurant was modern in its decor serving Latin American food and looked smart and trendy; the food was even cheap. In sporting terminology, we had had a result and would be finished in half an hour. No f**king chance.

The trouble was the size of the private function room, it was a bit on the small side for 30 people. We would have had to dispose of all the furniture and even then some people would have to be sitting on top of each other. (Not a pleasant thought when the women's hockey team is involved). No, it was probably for the best that we went elsewhere, following the manager's

recommendation to try Madame Jo Jo's. His last words were, 'You'll have a great time there'...

I had a faint idea (non-existent according to Emma) of where Madame Jo Jo's was, so a leisurely stroll through Soho was in order. To people who don't know the area, the name Soho conjures up images of prostitutes, peep shows, XXX video shops and businessmen walking out of 'book stores' carrying brown

would do it a grave injustice. The start of many a good night out was bustling with trade as we walked into the Stockpot, reputed regular haunt of Princess Di.

The place could take a group booking for 30 people even though that was around half their capacity. A type of up market Wright's Bar, it was probably too cheap and nasty for our purposes but something to bear in mind if you were going out with

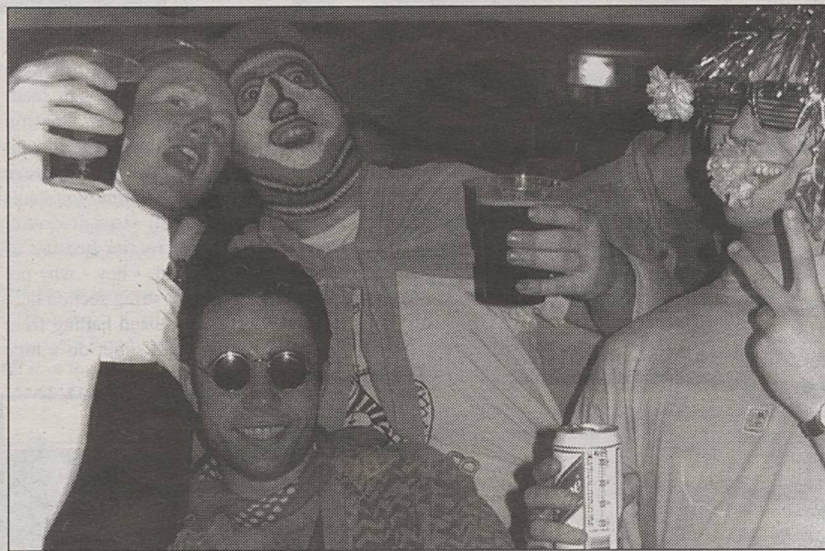
as well.

The manageress of Madame Jo Jo's was very helpful. She informed us that unfortunately Wednesday nights weren't 'drag cabaret' nights and that they didn't serve food. Emma was disappointed that they didn't serve food but I'm sure that some of the hockey players would have been disappointed that it wasn't a 'drag cabaret'. The manageress recommended we try 'Red', an up

and coming Hungarian/Russian restaurant. We still had loads of time on our hands and went to investigate.

The place was much like Latino's, smart, trendy and very cheap. Unlike Latino's it was large and relatively palatial. The only problem was the choice of food. When trying to cater for 30 people there is always going to be someone who doesn't like the food. With all the avenues of possibilities closing quickly to us it looked increasingly likely that the Hockey dinner would be held in the Brunch Bowl (at least they serve chips).

When by chance Emma stumbled upon the Boardwalk: an American style restaurant that rather surprisingly served American style food. Emma, with a bartering ability more accustomed to the back streets of Nairobi, quickly struck a deal with the manager. We were done. We'd had fun and had wasted a whole day discovering Soho inside out, the places to go, the places to stay away from, unless of course you like a bit of drag cabaret.



The hockey team's dinner!

paper bags, which is a fair reflection of the place. Apart from the fact that Soho is also developing a cafe culture akin to the likes of Chelsea and Hampstead.

The presence of the peep shows gives Soho a refreshing down to earth feel and an unmistakable coolness, perhaps explaining why people have been saying that London is the place to be.

However, to call Soho trendy

someone cheap and nasty.

Madame Jo Jo's office was located on the fourth floor of the O bar, along with the Intrepid Fox, two very happening watering holes in Soho. What happens in them one can only speculate. The staircase going up the O bar was dark and narrow. We also couldn't fail to notice the large number of rooms on each floor, chains and whips hung up. What was on the walls were a bit of a giveaway

Food For Thought

Good pizza is a handy thing to have. My apartment in Chicago was a mere two minute walk from three of the best places to have pizza in the city, my friends and I having quickly discovered that pizza is one of the best things to eat when you are truly starved. I have to admit that pizza in London is not quite up to par with Chicago pizza. Eco Pizzeria is, however, the best place to eat pizza that I've been to in London, and easily satiated my appetite for pizza.

My fellow Chicagoan and I were impressed by the ambiance of Eco: twisted pieces of wrought iron hang from mellow yellow walls, dance beats fill the air, and the no smoking section (at the back), is there. The arrival of the menus made us a bit perplexed about what to order because there were so many choices. My friend decided upon a rocket and mozzarella salad for her appetiser; I chose the candidly titled avocado crab (both £4.50). Her salad was tasty but a bit hard to eat without looking like a fool because of the large strips of rocket; my avocado crab was a bit too creamy for my taste and rather rich. The crusty garlic bread we shared (£ 1.90) was covered with

Eco Pizzeria
162 Clapham High Street
London, SW4
0171-978-1108

Anar Virji

bits of garlic and perfect for garlic lovers like me. My friend tried the mushroom pizza, ordering olives as her extra topping; I ordered the Four Seasons pizza (£4.90 for the mushroom, £6.20 for mine, extra toppings range from £.50-1.50). After a bit of confusion as to which pizza I had ordered (the staff brought me the wrong pizza - twice), we finally got down to the business of tasting the pizza. The ingredients were fresh, not like the dubious canned mushrooms some restaurants use, the cheese was plentiful, and the crust was delicious, all of which combined with a nice house red wine to make us happy. For dessert we split the tiramisu: excellent but slightly too creamy for my taste. My friend, who swears to be a tiramisu expert, pronounced it to be 'really good'.

While Eco is a bit on the pricey side, if you order everything you decide is delicious which would constitute a full meal, eating pizza there is really reasonable. The ambiance makes it a nice place for an impressive date, and the friendly service and little perks like a salad that comes with the pizza make Eco very pleasant.

Fashion Victim

Caroline Hooton's moaning now extends to the Fashion Industry

Probably one of the most unpleasant things a woman, (well OK this woman) can be subjected to, is clothes shopping. Men have it easy - jeans and a shirt and you're sorted. But with women it's different. Do we go for skirts, jeans, a dress, or leggings? Fortunately there is something available to help us make a decision on such life or death issues - the fact that the items offered by the majority of shops are manufactured for the bodies of super-waifs and specifically catering to women with no hips. This would seem to be an oversight on the part of many designers. After all, all women have hips. We need them. If we didn't, we'd be ripped apart from the waist down during labour.

Designers argue (at least they do in the Daily Express) that they have to design for the boney, hipless minority on the grounds that to do otherwise would be to ruin the line of the clothes. Bollocks. The truth is they can't be arsed to design for real human beings they have to design for fantasies. This is not only fundamentally unfair, it's also bloody embarrassing.

Especially when, in attempting to struggle into the chosen garment, you hear the dreaded rip along the seam and have to try and hand it back to the assistant without them seeing the huge tear in one side. What adds insult to this

injury is the fact that when a designer does try to incorporate a degree of realism into their work, they end up producing something akin to the jodhpur effect, i.e. not only does it make our thighs resemble those of a Ukrainian male body-builder, but it also succeeds in giving our waists the appearance of being in a vice. And it's guaranteed to be highly resistant to simple actions such as sitting down and walking.

There are two solutions to this problem. The first is to petition the stores to buy and sell in 'real' clothes. Stand up for your rights - make a size 12 mean a size 12. Give us back our right to breathe! The alternative is a simple, good-old fashioned boycott. Refuse to use your Top Shop student discount card! Steadfastly ignore the sale at French Connection. Laugh in the face of 50 per cent off at Jigsaw!

Of course this is easier said than done, especially if the discount is on that adorable little black strapless dress which didn't make you look too fat. In the right light. In fact, perhaps I'm being too hasty in condemning the fashion industry. After all £40.00 is perfectly reasonable, given that the material, and black is so serviceable. So I say vive la différence and see ya'll at the nearest outlet.



Houghton Street Harry

Fellas move over - Harry has decided to don a dress and become Harriette this week (and oh, do those stilettos feel good!?!). So, who shall I kick my heels into this week? Men - the only good ones are either dead or gay. Now for a more topical subject: those poxy elections... (oh no - not again I hear you cry). Conspiracy, controversy, tears, rage and laughter - in total compliance with typical non-interesting LSE life. There is no escape, and did the candidates really think that we would vote for them if they trusted leaflets in our face and harassed us all day long (in the library, at lunch, even in the loo!)?

So, let's take a look at the new Sabs - and what a sexy bunch they are too. Do we dare compare them to a Wright's Bar mixed grill (yum yum)?

Our attention now falls on the new Gen Sec (sorry - definitely no Gen 'Sex' this year I'm afraid), Mr Narius 'excitement' Aga, reportedly like his name sake: solid, reliable and ever burning. But the question remains, can he hold the microphone in that oh-so-sexy manner whilst simultaneously telling impromptu jokes at UGMs, as exhibited by his predecessor?

As for Sam (we love you really) move over, Yuan Potts has arrived. The post of E&W will never be the same, and Harriette really looks forward to his extensive survey and full external audit. Harriette's heard a rumour - bookies are offering 2-1 odds on next year's intake consisting of below 0.1 per cent females, after they are all put off by seeing pictures of the LSE men in Yuan's 'alternative course guide' (in an attempt to remain 'honest' and true to his word, Yuan has unfortunately declined the offer of substitute males from Models One).

Next it's Jasper 'sexy sperm' Ward who has finally succeeded in fertilising the social egg. How did he do it? Was it pure charisma, charm or just due to hitting the opposition over the head with his crutches? A nice excuse to sit on his arse, leaving his followers to promote his cause - but then again, who cares? We love him anyway (well the Biscuit Lady does...). Personally, I thought all that hobbling about was rather endearing and I just wish that I could get as close as that vending machine (although preferably not to his foot!). I await the LSE ball with eager anticipation, if it ever materialises, but then again a man who claims to be a sperm should know a lot about what's involved in the arrangements of balls!

And finally, leaving the best to last, our future Treasurer, Imogen 'Yes! It's a woman' Bathurst. Clearly highly competent, and a lady worthy of her new Sab position, and a whole lot more.

So what will become of our current Sabs? Sam P is on a mission to become a Sab at ULU, claiming to have worked 'tirelessly' during his reign at the LSE. Dan Crowe and Chris Cooper have reportedly signed a contract with the BBC to take over from Grant and Phil in Eastenders, what with their success as tough men with matching haircuts in 'Bouncers'. And I'm sure the Beaver will keep you updated with Darrell Hare's search to find a job where the working day begins sometime in the hours following lunch (and finishes early enough to give him time to style his hair for his big nights out).

Harry is currently becoming quite accustomed to this handbag lark and is considering investing in full drag gear. (Can someone please pass the make-up remover?)

Uno, Dos, Tres...

Rim Boys shake the house in Barcelona

Yianni Hadoulis

LSE has always had a proud tradition of taking Europe by storm; the only difference these days is that we have moved from the field of politics to the more noble (?) field of sports. Last year, the Football Firsts shocked the French by running around the streets of Paris, Union Jack on their shoulders, while the basketball lads shocked them further by running off with their women. No wonder they poisoned our water...

This time, it was Barcelona's turn, and a real shame too, for it was such a nice and peaceful place before we got there. Normally, the Catalan capital seems subdued under the bright Mediterranean sun, a city where even the traffic is quiet. At night, the streets are even more empty, the sole domain of the lonely taxi driver. The Spanish version of this species has the main characteristics of its counterpart in other major cities, as comparisons with London, Athens and New York demonstrated. Your average Barcelona cabbie knows the city like the back of his grimy hand (either that, or Hotel Rubens just happens to be the most well-known place in Catalonia, which is really useful when you're pissed out of your brains and can speak no Spanish. Actually, this really makes no difference, as most people in Catalonia also no speak Spanish.) Unlike in Paris,

Barcelona cabs can be hailed anywhere, unless you're in a group of drunken louts after midnight, in which case they never stop. If you're feeling inventive,

veteran of inter-university tournaments (i.e. unlike us), you'll avoid the well-advertised parties; to give an example, what is sold as a 'hot' Norwegian party



"Hmmm....No decent girls here, just like a Friday night down the Tuns"

you can always kneel by the side of the road and beg them to take you; although this is an innovative technique apparently widely practiced in Bosnia, it doesn't always work in Spain, as Damir found out to his great chagrin. You'll have more luck if you just stand in the cold and wait for an hour like a normal person.

But enough about the cabs, and a bit more about the nightlife. If you're a

is probably more likely to be just a bunch of sad bastards wearing plastic Viking helmets, and not your own little idea of heaven. Your best bet is to try Porto Olimpico instead; a long line of bars and discos by the harbour, it recently won the 1997 LSE Basketball Club Certificate of Approval. Only here can you observe Mike's intimate technique of trying to pull by drinking himself into oblivion; it is also the only

place where you can see Aaron and Blake bending backwards over a bottle of Spanish cerveza, Yianni taking off his clothes, or Moshe actually smiling. Most of the places stay open until five in the morning, and if one bar closes you just move on somewhere else. Do not be surprised if the bouncers at the door look familiar, for they also move on from bar to bar. So it would not be advisable to do anything stupid, like piss them off by pulling their hair or something equally idiotic along those lines. But then again, it's up to you.

Finally, never forget why you were invited in the first place. The tournament has to be a success, but for the organisers this means that they have to win it. Be a good guest, and let them win. If you do, you'll get more free food and less free swearing in Catalan. You'll then have more time to do your sightseeing, and you'll have fun observing just how many ways the local have of making you part with your money. We followed these rules to the letter, and were the better for it. And we even had time to give the French of Lyon a good thrashing, just to prove how good we are and satisfy the fans back home. Who could ask for more from a trip? Just ask Andrew; he loved the place so much that he couldn't bear leaving. It just shows how much fun you can have abroad, even if you find yourself abandoned at the hotel lobby...

The Beaver and the Beaver's Sports Editors would like to apologise for any grief we may have caused due to offensive remarks made in "Dan Pickering Apologises", published in last week's Beaver Sports pages, Issue 461. The article was insensitive and failed to account for the feelings of the parties concerned.

Sports Eds' Message

For many sports at the LSE the season has ended. I am sure all concerned would like to thank all the captains of teams this year for their efforts. We would also like to thank everyone who has written for us this year, and appeal for new (and preferably funny) writers for next season.

I know you will all miss the *Beaver* Sports pages over Easter (just like Dirty Cooper misses his Herpes).

Men Behaving Badly in Barcelona

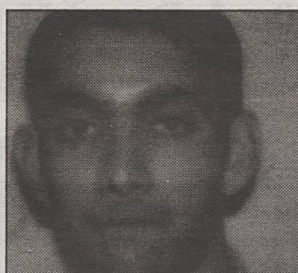
LSE football club finds out it is a mistake to let pissheads represent them in an international competition

Shyam Sankar

After a night of indulgence with Geordy Tory, Theepan led his troops Heathrow bound, well we would have been Heathrow bound if 'stopper' Kuchanny huge arse hadn't got stuck in the ticket barriers whilst running from an irate inspector. Several tubes of vaseline later, we finally managed to free the eyesore and boarded the plane for Barcelona. On arrival in Barcelona, we realised our nightmare that we actually came to play football and had been entered into an official FIFA European 5 - a - side competition starting at eight the next morning. On the way to our welcoming party, wretched Gideon managed to annoy about four 10 year olds and their older stick wielding brothers. After Kuchanny pulled a moonie they realised what they were up against and hastily retreated. The welcoming party was characterised by the shittiest food imaginable, however Pickering, the deprived boy from Blackburn thought that the cheese sarnies were 'magic' and proceeded to go on about them all night. The 5ths went home at eleven o'clock in preparation for the big game whilst the hardcore boys strolled confidently into the discotheque. Theepan's pathetic dance managed to attract a bird so ugly that she might as well be considered a bloke. Camp tried it on with everyone in the place. After he got rejected by the 428th bird he tried it on with the blokes in the place. When they rejected him as well he resorted to trying to pull himself

and even then he failed. Back in the hotel, Theepan and Camp narrowly avoided being arrested for their lairy behaviour in trying to break down Charma's door.

The next day, the team somehow managed to make it to the Olympic arena only a quarter of an hour late. However Charma the lazy fat shit



'The Charmer': Lairy pisshead

couldn't be arsed to get out of bed thus letting the side down. The first match London A vs London B was a lazy affair. Dan 'hard man' Pickering nearly beat 10 shades of shit out of fifth team captain Jon Webb. Theepan and Camp could barely stand up, so in the end, a 7 - 1 defeat was a great result. Theepan passed out on the chairs when he awoke he looked so wretched that he resembled a little street urchin from the streets of Sao Paolo. He looked so bad that a local greengrocer who felt sorry for him gave him an apple. We didn't stand a chance at the football. The Turin side were sporting players in a league with Maldini and Zola and they simply danced round the sprawling street

urchin and the stopper. However, it must be understood that Kuchanny was blatantly the best player on the pitch. We did beat the Belgians though, thanks to Ginger Porter's outstanding saves, but like everything else from Belgium they were hardly worth a mention.

That night in a student bar, Gideon discovered that they were showing a porno on the big screen. We witnessed Champagne bottles put to somewhat alternative uses. Someone naively asked Kuchanny whether he had ever indulged in such practices to which he aggressively replied "of course I have", and proceeded to tell us how he had done it in every conceivable position and would write a manual on those that he himself had invented. Since we had obviously not qualified for the next round, Saturday took on a more cultured note. We went sightseeing, ate shit paella, Gideon stacked up on his pornos and Theepan managed to get shat on five times by the same bird which somewhat typified his week.

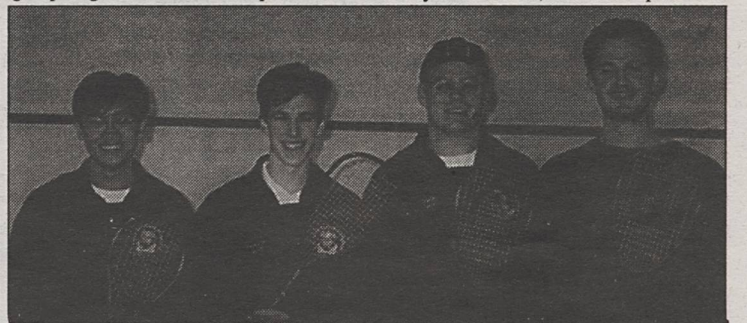
Whilst out on the town we were accosted by a hoard of 14 year old screaming local girls. 24 yr old 'hard' Rob got hold of one of them and disappeared off somewhere. Gideon left early grasping 20 porno mags in his left hand. Rob came charging into the hotel a second before we had to leave, all he could say was "The head was a lot better than than the paella."

We may not have won anything, but we did get 3000 fags, 5 bottles of champagne and litres of Jack Daniels.

LSE Squash fifths thoroughly dominate league

This article is not about the best squash players at LSE. Rather, this article is about an average group of squash players that simply exhibit dedication and teamwork, and the result has been winning their division in the Michaelmas term, and looking set to repeat the performance this term. This group of gentlemen is LSE Squash Team

backhand as well. Fergus Hicks is the team's captain, primarily because he is the most psychologically stable member of Team 5. Fergus is the glue that has held this motley crew together. David Rice, while lacking the most basic of squash fundamentals (proper grip, feet placement, shot selection, endurance, ability to focus etc.) has made up for it in



The Usual Suspects (from left to right): Au, Hicks (captain), Rice, Behrman

5. Who are they? LSE Squash Team 5 spans four continents; Paul Behrman (South Africa), Jimmy Au (Hong Kong), Fergus Hicks (England) and David Rice (United States) with sporadic substitutions from Rajiv Ball, Sanjeev Shah and Tej Sood. These fearless men not only won the Michaelmas term Div 5 league, but after moving up to Div 4 this past Lent term, they look set to win that division as well. Nothing seems to stop them.

Each of the four primary players on the team has brought a necessary ingredient to the team's most thorough domination of its recent opponents. Paul Behrman brings a tremendously powerful serve and forehand to all his matches, coupled with his easygoing Cape Townish attitude about life in general. Jimmy Au has not only the quickest feet of Team 5, but also has the most reliable

his enthusiasm, dedication and intimidation of Team 5 opponents; for example, have you seen those scary goggles?

In short, these gentlemen may not be the best squash players in the School, but they are arguably one of the most successful teams that LSE has. So next time you pass the squash courts and see a brash, yet somewhat awkward group of guys playing squash, do not laugh, you may be seeing the most successful sports team that LSE has to offer.

LSE squash in general is also thriving, with LSE 1 retaining its place in prestigious Division 1 last term, finishing third. Meanwhile LSE 2 moved up a staggering two divisions from Division 3 to Division 1. Both LSE 3 and LSE4 moved up one division from Division 4 to Division 3. All in all an excellent year!

BeaverSport BeaverSport BeaverSport

Cup final choker for brave First team

LSE cruelly denied London Cup victory by freak Goldsmith's strike

LSE 1st XI 0 - 1 Goldsmiths 1st XI

Ben Newton

When it comes to reporting on the biggest game in the LSE football club's season nobody wants to write about it. Steve Euroboy' Curtis was away fretting over his colouring pencils as the deadline for his geography dissertation approaches, and Dirty Cooper™ was up in front of the LSE director Anthony Giddens being officially reprimanded for changing Giddens answering machine message to the sort of filth that we associate with Dirty Cooper™. So it was left to me to try and report on a match that I missed half of during trips to the bar and missed the other half whilst singing rhymes so rude that they would have made Billy Connolly blush. After the disappointment of the 2nd team's defeat cum slaughter hours earlier LSE were looking for some joy from the day (other than the simple joy of getting very pissed).

The first half was very promising for the LSE. It was 45 minutes of almost constant pressure with Levine, Chang and Cooper all threatening the Goldsmith's goal, and Svein Michelsen threatening the Goldsmith's centre forward (à la Schmeichel V Wright). Goldsmith's were being totally out sung off the pitch, as well as totally outclassed on it. Next year's Entertainments Sabbatical Jasper Ward and his travelling army were producing rhymes and insults of the finest calibre, including such gems as "gypsy, gypsy" to a long haired player, and "slaphead, slaphead" to the bald linesman.

The first half ended in style with the LSE players responding brilliantly to the crowd's encouragement (although the Goldsmith's players sadly didn't respond to our cries of "f**k off you polytechnic wa*kers").

The LSE well deserved a half time lead, but it wasn't to be. I don't know what 'the gaffer' said at half time but it transformed the match as Goldsmith's began to dick all over our LSE heroes. About 10 minutes into the second half what we had all been fearing, happened. No, the bar didn't run out of beer, but it was almost as bad as Goldshits scored the opening (and ultimately decisive) goal. From this point on the game opened up and both teams had chances to score the all important goal. The LSE defence was weakened(?) when both Fielding and Curtis had to leave the pitch half way through the half to bring on the fresh legs of Nader Fatemi and Gareth Arthur. A further change was made when Filippo Venini replaced Crump minutes later. But the LSE couldn't find a way through an opposition defence which looked tighter than a nat's chuff. Chang again came close with a sublime long-range volley, but it was not to be LSE's day. Miller and Goodman put in solid displays, 'Super Kev' displayed a great work rate, and in goal Svein produced a string of fine saves to continually let LSE (and their technical director in particular) off the hook. The match ended at 1-0 to shrieks from Goldsmith's woefully quiet bunch of fans. The second half may not have been vintage LSE but the loyal fans were too pissed to care as they carried on with their unique brand of singing. It was worth the coach fare on its own when Curtis responded to

calls from the terraces by mooning at the crowd, much to the delight of Dirty Cooper's parents™. It's a sad end to Curtis' LSE career that a year that promised so much ended with him achieving nothing, and the same could be said about his football season too.



The LSE 1st XI 1996/7- Back row (L-R): Goodman, Fatemi, Venini, DJ Chang, Michelsen, Miller (v.capt), Levine, Husby. Front row (L-R): Crump, Sharpe, Arthur, Curtis (capt), Fielding (technical director), Cooper(filth).

Steve Curtis and Danny Fielding give you a run down of the 1st team squad who came so close to a league and cup double during the 1996/1997 season.

1) Svein 'Svein' Michelsen:

The big Norwegian has now returned to the best form of his career. What he lacks in aggression he makes up for with height and shot stopping ability. A legendary penalty saver.

2) Steve 'the gaffer' Curtis:

LSE's small but perfectly formed leader of men has made a miraculous return to form after a career threatening injury. Capable of saying something stupid in tight situations. His right foot is a magic wand, spelling trouble for Goldsmiths.

3) Dirty Cooper™:

Often found playing up front, Cooper's only clearances are made down at the clinic. Possessor of the best left foot in London, he could teach Southgate a thing or two about taking penalties. A real ice man.

4) Andy 'Peter Andre' Goodman:

First year Andreas stepped straight off the catwalk and into the 1st XI. His strongest performances were witnessed at Limelight. Watch out for his shooting, especially those of you in row Z. Fitter than a butcher's dog, only more skillful.

5) Danny 'Yardage' Fielding:

Possessor of the longest kick in the Northern hemisphere. This LSE stalwart is on first name terms with the ball, but gets dis-oriented in unfamiliar surroundings (the opposition's half). A fine man and an even finer player.

6) 'Filthy' Matt Miller:

This hard living, hard loving, hard drinking, hard fighting centre half has won more aerial battles than Douglas Barder. Pelé described him as "the hardest opponent I have ever played against".

7) Roar 'The Assassin' Husby:

Roy doesn't know where his talent comes from. Nobody does. It's just there. The hard man of midfield has a deft touch, an explosive shot and an eye for goal. A fine competitor.

8) Derek 'Forrest' Crump:

Derek came to us this year upon release from the WWF where he perfected his special move of 'the yelping dive'. To Derek life is a box of nutmegs - he never knows how many he's gonna get.

9) Filippo 'Fonz' Venini:

Has had more joy scoring off the field than on it this year, but has found better

form of late. The ball sticks to his foot like a mafia contract, and he is worthy of a place in the team as long as his car remains road worthy.

10) DJ Marc 'Hot Steppa' Chang:

The lovable scouse, the king of cool, is at his best going down the line. He

questions this season which opposition defenses have found impossible to answer. He holds the key to unlock the door to cup glory.

14) Ben Levine BA (Cantab) MSc Econometrics:

When you're in the dressing room pulling on your shirt and you look up and see Ben's face you know you've always got a chance. A man of wise words and sublime touch. Intelligent, intuitive and instinctive.

15) Gareth 'G' Arthur:

Our very own 'Ralph Malph'. Defensively he is tighter and fiercer than his own ginger curls. A victim of his own versatility, when he has played one hat-trick and numerous other strikes are testimony to Gareth's talent.

16) 'Silky' Mandie:

Continually injured, this ex-South England public school representative has had his season hampered by pinging hamstrings and a pampering girlfriend. A star of the future who hasn't had the chance to shine - yet.

Message to Supporters

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the people who came to support the LSE football teams at the finals. Although we lost both games the support that you gave us was greatly appreciated. I hoped that enjoyed the games, as we certainly enjoyed having you there on the day.

Brendan McGraw
LSE Football Club Captain.

The whole LSE football club would like to thank Brendan for all his efforts this year.

Player Profile



Name: Jo Bowen

Age: 20

Nickname: Pootle

Date of Birth: 18/6/76

Height: 5ft. 6in.

Weight: Lots of lard

Team: Rower, Assistant General Secretary (dogsboddy)

Previous School: Haberdashers Aske's School for Girls

Favourite Position: On top

Favourite Team: Couldn't give a shit.

Favourite Drink: Orgasm, Wright's Bar Tea

Favourite Food: Indian

Favourite Colour: Yellow

Sporting Idols: Redgrave/Pinsent, Jeans/Nick the 'Hare'

How do you like your eggs: Fried

Best sporting achievement: Played lacrosse for Wales, rowed for Wales, went down Wales.

Favourite CD: U2, James Bond soundtracks

Favourite T.V. Programme: Wallace and Grommit

Favourite Film: Debbie does Dallas, Misery

Favourite Read: Beaver sports pages, Euroboy

Cadbury's Creme egg, how do you eat your's: Deep Throat

Most like to be stuck in a lift with: Lift repair man

Favourite Chat-up line: As long as I've got a face you've always got a seat.

Favourite Joke: What's the definition of Blu-tac? Smurf - shit

Next Week - It's the Easter Holidays.

Cup Specialists Crash

Second team's ageing veterans find Royal Holloway to hot to handle in London cup disaster

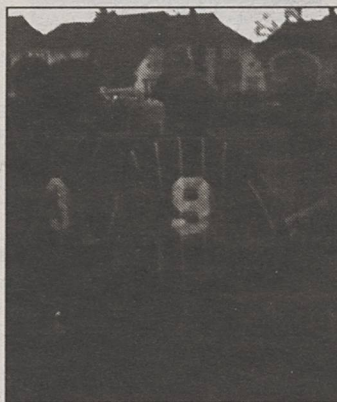
LSE 2nd XI 0 - 5 Royal Holloway 2nd XI

'Diesal' Erickson

The LSE 2nd team, led by the tenacious and inspirational William Hague began its long journey to Motspur Park, that mecca of sporting dreams, way back in January with a 6-1 win over UCL. It continued into February with a victory (on penalties) over Goldsmiths. It ended on March 10 with a crushing defeat against arch rivals Royal Holloway, but at least we got there (which is more than I can say for the third team, who quite literally, have done f**k all this season. Ha Ha Ha!)

As they'd conceded the league title the previous weekend with a shocking 2-1 defeat against Charing Cross, the final represented the last chance for glory in an LSE shirt for seven great players: Tattersall, Grace, Colango, Mortellini, Young, Thorne and Achim have been huge influences this season and will be sorely missed. The game kicked off at 12.30 and by 12.32 the 2nds were 1-0 down. Heads started to drop, but a rousing performance by the LSE supporters who did the university proud lifted the team immeasurably. The

next 40 minutes were very tight with both sides coming close on numerous



Hague fails to inspire his troops at half time

occasions. Then disaster struck. In the last five minutes of the half Holloway scored twice. 3-0 at half-time the 2nds had 45 minutes to score 4 goals against a team who had conceded that many in over 1,000 minutes of football this season. It was an impossible task. Two early goals in the second half and it

really was all over. It was a strange feeling. After all the seconds have worked for this season some of them felt somewhat cheated that it was all going to end with nothing but a big 5-0 slap in the face. But they missed the point. The season hadn't ended with nothing. Second in the league, runners-up in the cup and a team spirit to be proud of. On every occasion this season, when someone has been down, there has been someone to pick them up. They'd played as a team, not as individuals, for each other not for themselves and that is something regardless of success or failure that they should all be proud of.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our captain William Hague, vice-captain Danny Walker, goalkeepers Tibble and Achim, defenders Naveen, Tatts, Matty Rouff, Kung Young and Simon Aussie, ringers Super Kev Sharpe and Nadeer Fahémi, midfielders Lyndon Psycho, Tom 'the' Grace, Old Man Werner and Tom Thorne and forwards Aryn Sajan and Dr Matteo. Cheers. Diesal. Thanks also to Brendan McGraw and all our supporters.