

# THE BEAVER

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## Union Drop-Outs

by SARAH BRONZITE

During the last five weeks, four members of the SU Executive have resigned. Not only does this reduce those on the Exec to nine in number (the quorum is eight), but it also means that elections have to be held for four important posts which the newly-elected will fill for under two months.

Various reasons have been given for the resignations. Laura Matthews (Welfare Representative) explained that she felt that "academic pressures" did not enable her to devote enough time to students' welfare. Ron Beadle (NUS Officer) resigned at the end of last term because "the Union has degenerated into a tragi-comedy of major proportions"; Lisa Britten (Press and Publicity Officer) feels that she has "met with a continual barrage of criticism, abusive victimization and basic shit from a number of people", and Deirdre McGuinely (Equal Opportunities) has left the LSE

for personal reasons.

It would seem that the appropriate word to be applied to these ex-Exec members remaining at the LSE is 'apathetic'. Rumours abound that both Matthews and Beadle have resigned due to motives other than those given; but whatever the excuse, it is not acceptable. Students voted on the basis that candidates would represent them to the best of their ability for a full year. The fact that they have vacated their positions, with only ten weeks to go, shows the disregard with which they hold the Student Union.

Lisa Britten, to give her credit, is perfectly prepared to tell students why she resigned from the SU Exec, and exactly what she thinks of it. However, her views do not exactly inspire respect. In a letter printed in the Alternative Circular, she refers to people who take a real interest in the SU as "poor misguided dears" and congratulates all other Exec members who had the courage to get out."

One might well ask whether a person who has done so little to justify her election is entitled to use facilities no longer at her disposal to print this attack on the Student Union as a whole. Furthermore, and more importantly, what entitles her to adopt such a 'high and mighty' tone of voice? What has Britten done as Press and Publicity Officer that would indicate that her criticism is anything more than arrogant hypocrisy?

It was thought last term that it was the pseudo-anarchy of the UGMs led to the resignations of four Exec members. On looking more closely at the issues, however, the situation has been wrongly assessed: it would seem much more logical to conclude that the SU has degenerated due to the apathy, inactivity and pettiness of the Executive. There has been a clear lack of leadership from our officers: they cannot use their own inaction to justify resignation.

## Tony Benn on Diaries?

By ROSS BROADSTOCK

With the current Labour Party's 'purges' on the hard left and a general election looming, the chance to hear Tony Benn speak at the LSE was something not to be missed. This made the topic of "Writing our own history" seem like a real anti-climax. Was the appearance of a leading left-wing political figure to be reduced to no more than a book-review?

This public lecture celebrated the publication of the "Political

Diary of Hugh Dalton, 1918-40 and 1945-60". The audience in the Old Theatre was a very dignified one and the whole event was being treated as one of great importance. It was fascinating to see the warmth Benn created in an audience which was, as he put it, politically "so much against him".

Benn started out by explaining the strong links between Dalton and the LSE and its traditions. He then moved on to give a charming and humorous catalogue of events through the life of 'Big Hugh' ('Little Hugh' was Hugh Gateskill), and conveyed in true style an impression of the great character.

Diaries are, for the writer, a form of therapy. For the historian, they are a far more personal account of events and can reveal many things that would otherwise not surface. They provide a chronological account so that arguments can be more clearly understood by future students.

Secrecy in government was the next point covered. Benn criticised the policy of having MP's documents held by the government and not always revealed. He argued that as much information as possible should be available for the sake of history.

Dalton's diaries, despite some serious omissions such as the General Strike and the development of Trade Unions, did show the Labour Party in all its phases, but on a political rather than a national level.



SEE PAGE 3

## French Socialist at LSE

by ALEX CRAWFORD

For those interested in what is happening on the other side of the Channel, Tuesday's public lecture provided a stimulating and interesting talk by M. Pierre Joxe, the leader of the Socialist group in the French National Assembly and former Minister of the Interior. For a change, the Old Theatre welcomed, not some academic discussing the historical origins of french socialism, but a real, well-seasoned politician. And the contrast was striking.

Joxe's political career started in the dark corridors of obscure sections of the French Adminis-

tration. The unification in 1971 of the highly fragmented moderate Left into the Socialist Party of Francois Mitterrand pushed Joxe into partisan politics. He was elected to the National Assembly in 1973, and quickly became Mitterrand's lieutenant in Parliament during the "Long March to Power" of the Socialists. With the Socialist victory of 1981, he briefly became Minister of Industry for a few months, then returned to parliamentary life when he became leader of the Socialists in the Assembly. In 1984, Joxe was named to the position of to the Cabinet as Minister of the Interior, a post he held up until

the elections of March 1986, when the Right regained power. He has since then returned to his post in Parliament.

The subject of the lecture was "A Changed France or A Changed Socialism? France between 1981 and 1986". However, Joxe quickly made clear that he did not quite agree with this title, as it implied that a period had been closed. The March elections was both a defeat and a victory for the Socialists; a defeat because they were no longer in power, but a victory because their position as the largest single party in France, with a third of the electorate, SEE PAGE 3

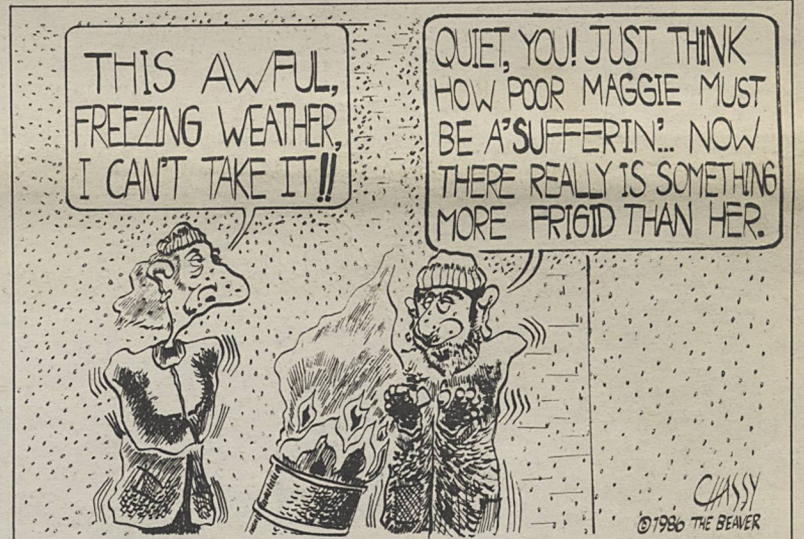


Photo: Sivan

LSE or Murmansk? Returning LSE Students braved the cold last week. Apart from the library closing early and a few classes cancelled, life went as always.

## Less Fat, Less Sugar ... and Less Expensive

by Kate Meyrick

In the past the LSE has earned itself a reputation for innovation, and here again we have captured the market with another first. The Cafe is the only vegetarian restaurant in a university complex in Britain. The manageress, Miss Shirlee Posne, sees the function of The Cafe to be that of offering "All the nutrients you need to build you up for the day" and beyond this, educating students and showing that wholefood and vegetarian diets can be imaginative and delicious.

In the LSE's other food outlets, the vegetarian meals are often uninteresting and unvaried. The general feeling is that although it costs more to eat in The Cafe it is a small price to pay to escape the deluge of cheese sauce and vegetables.

In the choice of dishes, Shirlee has attempted to give students "home style cooking in a bulk environment." To those who have already been converted to the wholefood approach, the success is unqualified. But there are criticisms, chiefly that the

prices are too high and the queues are too long. This term Shirlee hopes to combat the problems of queuing by introducing a new till and a better staffing system. With regard to complaints of high prices, The Cafe uses only fresh produce and wholefoods and, in relation to commercial high street health food restaurants, The Cafe's prices are reasonable. A further reason for the higher prices of cakes and pastries is that at present The Cafe lacks a food mixer, essential to making a large quantity of home-made cakes, and once Shirlee is able to make them herself, the price will hopefully fall. Rory O'Driscoll has already promised to bring the prices of coffee, tea and cocoa down; and so hopefully a quick snack will now cost less.

Shirlee is always willing to receive suggestions and will act on them where feasible. Better feedback will give better food, one customer commented.

But The Cafe has not proved as successful as it was originally hoped it would be, maybe because many students remain unconvinced about the merits of

healthier eating. Every year the highest cause of death is heart-related diseases, and since heart disease is correlated to diet, perhaps we should take advantage of next Wednesday's offer. On Friday 16th Shirlee could be seen outside the Old Theatre, her aim to give out leaflets which demonstrate the importance of diet and healthy food in general. In addition to this, if you collect a ticket from Shirlee and then hand this in on Wednesday, your main meal in The Cafe will only cost you 90p. If you didn't see Shirlee on Friday, a ticket can be obtained from Dana Welsh in the Information Office.

For many students at the LSE, The Cafe has provided a welcome change to institutional food; even if you are unconvinced about the merits of vegetarianism, a 90p lunch is a good bargain so why not give The Cafe a try. Finally if you are a meat eating, caffeine consuming, beer drinking smoker, there are still items that appeal. I am told that the caramel shortcakes can be regarded as the best thing to sliced wholemeal bread.

# The UGM: A Poor Weapon for Student Power

By Rory O'Driscoll

"You won't get me, I'm part of the Union", goes the song. We are all part of the LSE Students Union. Yet the bastards get us all the time. We lose within the LSE, we quarrel among ourselves, we lose on a national level. What has gone wrong with the Union set up "to promote the welfare, the interests and the corporate life of the students of the LSE." Do you feel that your life, your welfare and your interests have been further promoted after every Thursday?

For the Union to be successful, it must first clarify your interests and then it must successfully promote them. The LSESU is failing on both counts! It fails to determine what its members' interests really are, and it fails to win the crucial battles to promote them.

Let us examine each of the stages in turn. Firstly, how does the Union seek to understand the interests and the welfare of its members? It uses a device called the Union General Meeting (UGM). The theory is that the UGM offers every student a chance to express his or her views, a chance to mandate the union officials to rectify any complaint, a chance to make all students aware of the important issues inside and outside the LSE. The reality is different. The UGM is dominated by an oligarchy of those who know how to use the constitutional system. The result is that the UGM is not a place where students can tell officials what they want them to do—it is a place where politicians tell students what they want them to believe.

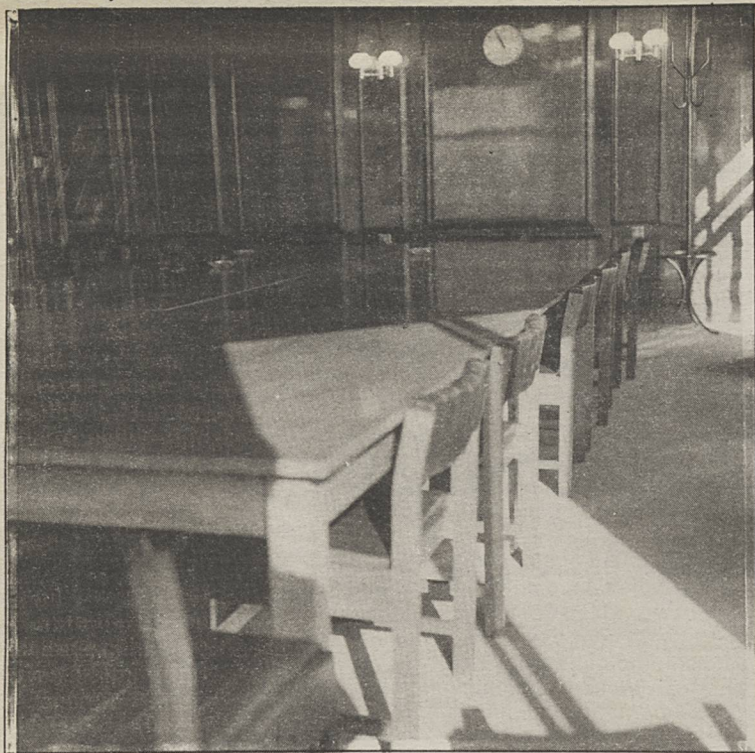


Photo: Sivan

This wouldn't be so bad if the politicians at least understood and worked for the students' interests. But, so often they don't. Students are worried about bad teaching, bad housing, bad grants. Surely students at the UGM don't need to be fed on a diet of the rest of the world's problems. The crux of the problem, however, is not the subject matter of the UGM motions (for it is only right and proper that the students be concerned with events in the world at large) but the vast gap that exists between the motions and reality. To put it bluntly, we love recognising problems, but we hate finding workable solutions to them. That is why our politicians love to discuss outside issues—they are not as responsible for solving the problem of Nicaragua as they are for doing something about the appalling teaching at the LSE, for example.

By the time we come to the second stage—promoting the interests of the students—the prob-

lem has become more complex. The very flaws in our process of understanding and expressing student interests enable those opposing us to dismiss any complaint by saying "irrelevant, undemocratic, not really what all students think". The more our demands are seen to represent the views of all the students, the more difficult it becomes for the school to resist them.

What avenues exist for furthering the interests, welfare and corporate life of the students? There are three: firstly, using those resources which the Union itself controls, secondly, lobbying the school to use its resources to help us, and thirdly, lobbying external organisations (the NUS, the government, the business community, etc.) The first option is invariably limited by the Union's scant resources, while the third, although often vitally important, would necessitate a separate article. Let me concentrate, then, on how the LSESU promotes your interests in the Connaught House bureaucracy.

In the main, we do badly. The committee system is designed to contain and control students, to force them to work within the school framework, without giving them any real power. The student representatives are mollified by meeting with the Director, by sitting on "influential" committees, by being sucked into the system. Soon, instead of representing our demands to the school, they are presenting the administration's problems to us. Another result is the exacerbation of unrealistic student radicalism. Until the school gives us real decision-making power on those

committees that matter, they cannot expect us to show the hand of moderation on those "advisory" (i.e. powerless) committees in which we are included. Until that day comes, we must use the committee system for what it is worth — a device to underline student interests to the school.

That means coordination between committees so that the well known tactic of "referring it back" to another committee cannot be used.

That means coordination between years so that delay does not enable the administration to befuddle students.

That means monitoring our representatives on the committees so that they turn up and argue our side.

That means reporting the committees in *The Beaver* so that students understand the issues and can see what the school is up to.

That means, ultimately, being ready to go outside the committee system if the administration uses

the old "committees are advisory" line to ignore our recommendations.

In conclusion, it is evident that the problem represents a vicious circle. As long as the UGMs continue as they are, it's hard to say that they represent the legitimate interests of all students, and thus we will fail in committee. So long as we sit and fail on powerless committees, we will not give the Union any confidence that it can actually achieve something and thus the irrelevant and ineffective motions will continue. We must reverse this trend, by gradually winning in committees and gradually reforming at the Union. It is a slow process perhaps, but it is quite attainable, since there are quite enough problems which are both solvable and a cause for unity among all students.



Photo: Sivan

## Student Powerlessness Or One-Party System?

By PAUL KLEBNIKOV

Julius Nyerere has said that the reason so many developing countries have one party systems is that they are too weak to be able to show any internal divisions before the more powerful nations. The LSE student body finds itself in much the same situation.

For a subordinated mass like the student body, facing a powerful administration, the best models for bargaining strategy are invariably socialist, whether the various dependency theories propagated in developing countries, or the principles of non-compliance and collective unity favoured by labour unions. Yet, the LSE Students' Union has failed to digest even these basic concepts.

Master of power politics and tactics, V. I. Lenin, wrote that when the proletariat takes over power from the bourgeoisie, the proletarian state must be a cosh with which to beat the ruling class. Is the UGM such a cosh? It is more like a dirty sock, to be thrown occasionally at the administration to the vague displeasure of the latter and the general amusement of the students. The problem is that we are not conscious of our collective strength or our common interests.

If we cut through the multitude of squabbles, curiosities, and irrelevancies that dominate the UGMs each Thursday, we can identify at least five major issues which are of top priority to the Students Union. These are: Student housing, student grants, teaching standards, LSE divestment from South Africa, and recently, the Nursery. On all these issues we are both morally right and united as a body.

Yet, invariably the UGM chooses to downplay these issues in favour of questions

which are irrelevant, though perhaps more entertaining: Nicaragua, Cyprus, the miners, the Middle-East, etc. The continuing domination of these subjects over student issues is unsatisfactory for all those who care about student union business, since they are divisive and detract attention from the work immediately at hand. The acrimonious division between left and right that inevitably results from these political debates cannot but affect the collective unity that we must show on School issues.

Furthermore, this state of affairs should be unsatisfactory to the genuine proponents of these political causes. First of all, such Union actions as the passing around of a collection bucket or the mandating of the General Secretary to send a letter to some embassy are hardly effective contributions to political progress. Success in the divestment issue alone would be more influential than all the letters and contributions combined. Secondly, a ten minute debate and a quick show of hands can hardly be said to raise political consciousness or to move anyone from their initial prejudice. All too often, the UGM political debates are simply a display of political allegiance or an exercise of debating skill. If so, they should be relegated either to the various political clubs or to the debating society.

If the students union is at all concerned with student interests, then it must address the causes of its current weakness, for the students face an uphill struggle on all the most important issues. We are weak and the administration is strong. We are only passing through the LSE, while the administration is staffed with veteran bureaucrats who have long experience of fudging student demands.

In order to redress the bargaining weakness of the UGM several options seem im-

mediately apparent. The minimal option would be to introduce a constitutional clause stating that all student issues must be discussed first, with larger political issues only discussed afterwards. Alternatively, discussion of the larger political issues could be eliminated from the UGM altogether, so as to force the UGM to concentrate on student affairs. Finally, the maximalist solution would be to incorporate all of the above and make the student elections non-partisan. Phenomena such as the non-aligned movement, if they arise within a party context, invariably lose sight of their original goals and become political parties in themselves.

If student issues are seen to be the only *raison d'être* of alignments within the UGM, then we would quickly find that there would be no fundamental reasons for lasting divisions within the student body.

On virtually all student issues, we are united - it is on wider political issues that we are divided. The acrimonious divisions that currently pervade the union are both demoralising to collective student morale and discrediting to our legitimacy in relation to the administration or the world outside.

**The LSE Nursery has vacancies available NOW for children aged between 2-5 years. Please contact the Matron on Ext. 2865 or pop in to the Parish Hall, St. Clement's Lane.**

# letters...

## Working Party on Future Financing of the Nursery

Dear Editor:

The negative tone of your recent article on the School Nursery (Nursery Go-Slow, 8 December 1986) does not reflect the real progress being made by the Working Party to find a secure financial future for the nursery; that is, after all, the objective towards which we are all working, and I hope we can do so in a constructive spirit.

When the first meeting of the Working Party convened to advise on policy for future financing of the nursery, it was noted that progress would be reported to the Nursery Sub-Committee at its meeting on 11 December 1986, and this has perhaps given rise to a misunderstanding concerning the time at which the Working Party would make its recommendations. Whatever peoples' views about the introductions of the new fee structure last September and the Special Grants made to those who would have otherwise faced real hardship, the issue for this session alone is settled. The task is now to find a proper long term basis for funding the nursery. This means the Working Party's remit is to complete its work in time for the agreed future arrangements to be available for prospective students with young children who are considering making applications for the 1987-88 session, i.e. by Easter 1987.

The Working Party is investigating certain key areas:

- (1) The fee structure of the nursery, particularly the option of having an income-related fee structure or a flat-rate fee structure in conjunction with revised or amended student support arrangements;
- (2) The welfare of student parents, both to ensure that parents will not be put in the position of having to abandon courses of study and that access generally to the nursery facility would be maintained;
- (3) Ways in which the nursery's running costs can be reduced;
- (4) Means of increasing income by raising the overall level of occupancy.

Thorough research into these matters is an essential but time-consuming business. For example, information is being sought from all other UK universities on how their nurseries are funded, their income and expenditure positions, fee structure support arrangements (replies received are currently being analysed). To rush matters now will not result in sound solutions to the serious financial problems which have developed over the last two or three years. But the Working Party is very well aware that a report must be made soon so that it can be fully discussed in the School.

Finally, I would emphasize that so long as there are parents who need its services, there is no threat to the nursery.

Yours sincerely,  
Robert Pinker  
Pro-Director

## Anti-Elitist

Dear Beaver:

I am a member of the Socialist Workers Student Society for the same reason that people join the Labour Club. Society is inequitable, inefficient, discriminatory, etc, and I want to do something about it. When Ron "careerist" Beadle accuses us of using "any issue to gain more comrades", he is absolutely correct. Wherever disputes occur, SWSS will be there, supporting struggle and attempting to build a fighting alternative to passive, reformist politics.

Our tradition is based around activity - the way real gains are made, not around bureaucracy and electioneering, where socialist principles have so often been compromised.

So to the smear over denying women the right of self-organisation. In fact, we defend all oppressed groups' right to self-organisation, and within the SWP women, blacks and gays all meet separately to discuss issues important to them. However, rather than ghettoising these issues, they are presented to the whole Party. This term at LSE, the SWSS group has organised meetings on "Women and the Russian Revolution", "Racism and how to fight it", AIDS and "Violence against women". These are issues important to all SWSS members, not just women, blacks or gays.

At the heart of our attack on Pete Wilcock and other members of the Labour Club, we have placed our continued support for anti-sexist struggles wherever they arise and criticism for those who fail to support them.

By failing to discuss the real issues behind our criticism, it is Beadle who reveals himself as the real sectarian.

Yours,  
Pete Kelly  
Socialist Worker Student Society

## Academic Wasteland

Dear Beaver:

*Whilst I am extremely pleased that last term "The Beaver" became a forum for an "Academic Wasteland" debate and A. Hall's article (Beaver 252) was a fine and succinct piece on the subject, I feel the conclusions that we seem to be coming to are too pessimistic.*

*Perhaps also among the many reasons for poor attendance at events (given the dubious wisdom of booking artists like Ruby Turner who seem to demand vast payments) the issue of student apathy looms large again.*

*But for those who do care, what might be done? Some further suggestions: Get a group of students together (you only need a few) and hold "teacher"-less classes - "self-help groups" - rooms are bookable; challenge the content of courses, speak to the organisers of courses and stress that your motivations are positive; for instance, a desire to increase intellectual stimulation only at the expense of an emphasis on mental regurgitation which limits creative thinking and can leave students uninspired; argue that the system of examinations used by most courses is an inflexible way of (de)grading a person; question the need for an emphasis on examinations; encourage a circular chair/table layout wherever possible in rooms - it's surprising what a difference that can make; convene staff student meetings in your department and get some fresh ideas onto the agenda, those meetings send representatives to the "Committee on Undergraduate Studies".*

*In addition, we should all develop methods for rationalizing the noticeboard advertising around the School. The present "system" is a disgrace in terms of wasted time and wasted paper and does nothing to encourage people to develop an interest in what's happening around them.*

*I would argue that if you do want to get something more than a degree from your course, then you can start today. The School will not change for a long time; it is entangled in "traditional" approaches to education and is under many pressures itself to maintain the old standards still*

*perceived to be valuable. But in a School the size of the LSE, it should be possible to find enough interest in each department to develop the courses and make use of the undoubtably good resources that the School can provide. Though the tasks are enormous, the rewards are enormous - for everyone.*

Michael Townsend  
Social Anthropology

*P.S. May I suggest that contributors state their department so that contact with them can be made easier.*

## Academic Remedies

Dear Editor:

I would be interested to know what the "readily available remedies" are to which you refer in your recent article "LSE: The Slide into Mediocrity". Contrary to the inference you wish us to draw from your eulogy to "those halcyon days" they will not be found in a vague and sentimental reminiscence which draws a picture of little accuracy and less relevance.

If it is possible to trace the effects of the current politico-cultural atmosphere through the squeeze on educational budgets and the increased career awareness of academics to a disinterestness on their part and a mediocrity on the part of students (as your article suggests) surely it is also possible to identify the more direct effects it has had on student consciousness at LSE.

It is a real characteristic of the place and a distinct aspect of its pedagogy that the inspiration for students is generated dynamically from the external politico-cultural atmosphere through the students themselves, rather than being passively contained within the insularity of a campus, the ignorance of the promises or the dogma of tradition. This renders it more sensitive to variations in the prevailing politico-cultural wind and may put a strain on it during prolonged periods of strong and persistent change (as at present). Cynicism and Mediocrity at LSE as a reflection of current political climate is thus an education in itself, the reality of which should not be ignored or obscured by dim and misty eyed ideas about how the place ought to be.

Whilst the constructive and positive aspects to student life may therefore be something not necessarily within our control, the situation does expose the element upon which too great a reliance has been placed which is now distorting under the strain, the element which is odious to and obstructs development; namely, the grotesque and clumsy writings of student politics, the reverberations of which permeate every level and aspect of LSE. In its frenzied mimic of media-politics it not only demonstrates a total lack of self-awareness which is the antithesis of "rerum cognoscere causas" but it corrupts the hub of LSE student consciousness, alienating students and condemning them to interact and eventually think in a non-communicative and deeply cynical jibberish.

This is the Frankenstein of sixties student politics and we must put it out of its misery. There is no room for revitalisation. There can be no compromise. What we need now are vandals and barbarians, anarchistic iconoclasts and mindless desecrators. What we need now is blood!

James Frett

# Pierre Joxe

FROM PAGE 1



Photo: Sumil Shah

was enhanced. And, most importantly, the attitudes had changed; Socialism was no longer synonymous with opposition, power and reforms were possible.

The extent and depth of the reforms introduced by the Socialist government, Joxe

argued, could be seen through the difficulties that the Right-wing government were now facing in reversing them. Recent social unrest in France has forced the Chirac government to step on the breaks in their urge of reaction. On these issues, it can be said that M. Joxe's presentation was more suited for an electoral meeting than a pseudo-academic lecture.

Much more interesting were his views on the Socialist Party itself. Between 1971 and 1981, it gradually transformed itself into a president-making machine. It succeeded, but had to change again into a majority party. Today, however, it must become once again a power-grabbing apparatus and eventually, once again, a president-making machine.

The prevailing note of the presentation can best be summed up by the word pragmatism, as Joxe's views on the implementation of policies are those of someone who wishes to govern efficiently. Anecdotes and personal experience, which M. Joxe certainly does not lack, cohabited nicely with an organised presentation on Socialism in post-Gaullist France. And the general tone of M. Joxe was not that of someone prepared for another twenty years in opposition.

## TONY BENN AT THE LSE

FROM PAGE 1

Benn then actually left his purely academic tract and did start politicising over his views on democracy and on how socialism and communism could (or could not) work in Britain. The Establishment must be broken down from outside parliament and from a broad alliance concerned with social justice. During the question-time, he was to explain how this might have to involve breaking the law which only adjusts to things it cannot stop anyway. Populism in itself is insufficient.

The question-time was indeed very lively and Tony Benn showed his 36 years of political experience in his handling of the points. He moved through some of his favourite themes, such as class in the UK; he argued that class structure is in fact now stronger than ever. He managed to cover a great deal of points concerning the overthrow of conservatism by 'harder' men than himself, and he remains convinced in the eventual victory of socialism.

## Hardship Fund Money

Are you a self-financing student and in financial difficulty? If YES, you may apply to this fund which offers small amounts of money (average #50, maximum £150). Collect an application

form from the Welfare Office, Room E294, NOW. Interviews will start on Monday 2 February - all completed applications MUST be in by Friday 30 January.

# THE BEAVER

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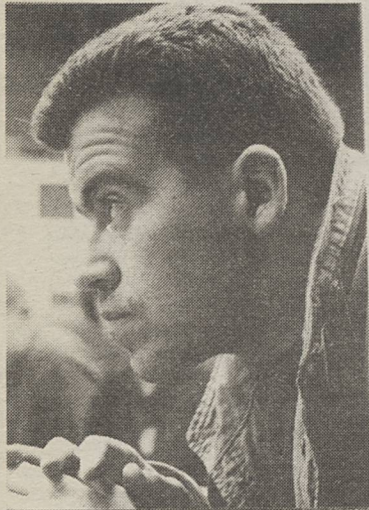
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# SOCIETIES CORNER

by Stavros Makris



A new society has been formed. This new society is led by Nizam Baichariand and Angelo Kiros, the two central figures of the controversy following the schism in the last **Investment Forum** AGM. This new society is to be known as the **Financial Forum** hand is to have an associate society status, which resolves the questions raised in *The Beaver* on December 8th, 1986, as to whether the new society would claim new funds and compete with another LSE society.

According to Nizam, "It is official. The former Investment Forum team deposed at last term's elections is still together and back, with a vengeance and with a brand new society. Our goal is to turn the LSE into the premier forum for the opinions of Wall Street and the City's major newsmakers and trend-setters."

The first talk is to be given by the leading City analyst Robin Griffiths from stockbroker James Capel on "How and Where to Make Money in the World's Stockmarkets in 1987". Memberships are on sale for £1 in the Old Building Monday to Wednesday. Future speakers include Sir Kenneth Berrill, Hitashi Tanaka, Mark Weiberg, Jacob Rothschild. The competition goes

The **Malaysian Singapore Society** his holding a social gathering on Wednesday 21st January at 3 pm in the Graham Wallace Room. All members are expected, and free food and drink will be available. The MSS also invites all members

and non-members to join them in welcoming the New Year of the Rabbit, on Tuesday 11th February at the Empire Banquet Hall (Tottenham Court Road). There will be a Lion Dance, lots of booze, a martial arts performance and a disco after dinner!

The **Hellenic Society** welcomes back all its members and wishes them a Happy New Year. In particular, the return of Manolis Alexakis is noted. His long absence has done very little to change him... It is also rumoured that another "old boy" is back. The prominent figure of Manolis Kefabyannis has been reportedly seen in the *Beaver's* Retreat. The activities of the society will carry on normally, and the person to see for any queries is the industrious president, Haris Lambropoulos. Is another party being planned even as we go to print? Keep your ears to the ground, or to be exact, the Greek table in the Brunch Bowl.

The **Cypriot Society** wishes to remind its members of its weekly meetings on Wednesday afternoons.

There was a time when the **LSE Debating Society** was the real forum for discussion of important issues. Nowadays, it seems as though the UGM has taken up the role; maybe this is a symptom of our times. However, the LSE Debating Society is making a bid to come back and reclaim its due. On Tuesday 20th January in A86, the Old Building, the debate is on the motion, This House would "Support the Contras and not the Sandinistas". Proposing: David Hoile - author of 'Nicaragua for Beginners', recently returned from visiting Contra units, opposing the "good looking" (if you believe the posters) editor of *The Beaver*, Paul Klebnikov.

The **Drama Society** is busy rehearsing for its next production, under its autocratic director, Martin Newson. The play, "The Assassin" by Jean-Paul Sartre, will be staged in the Old Theatre on 26th, 27th, 28th January. According to one of the ten-strong cast, "It promises to be a truly professional production because the cast, even Shehryar Sarwar, are exercising their thespian abilities to previously unscaled and unimaginable heights."

# Passfield Hall Report

Last week saw everyone returning with all sorts of new belongings - sandwich toasters, coffee makers, leather jackets, scarves, coats, but the most obvious ones are the new haircuts, with Matt to the fore. Descriptions have ranged from "Greaseball" to "Roll-Matt Rat". Given the weather, all these haircuts seem to be a very bad idea with many suffering from glowing ears. It's not even as though we can seek refuge inside with at least one toilet being frozen over, and lots of cold rooms. This raises a new question - severe weather payments for students. After all, if we're forced to spend extra time in the bar to keep warm, the money must come from somewhere!

The end of last term saw the election of Kate as Honorary Empress, as well as Michelle, the new President. Michelle has a tough act to follow, but the writers of this report feel sure she will live up to expectations.

Also on the agenda is the forthcoming American Football match against Carr-Saunders. Passfield is going the whole hog - we've even got cheerleaders,

and Jeanine's advert for girls with short ra-ra skirts is sure to attract a good crowd. Even as we go to press, secret plans are being hatched for midnight practice sessions to prevent the Carr-Saunders spies from realising the truly massive strength of our team - let them quake with fear at the coming onslaught!

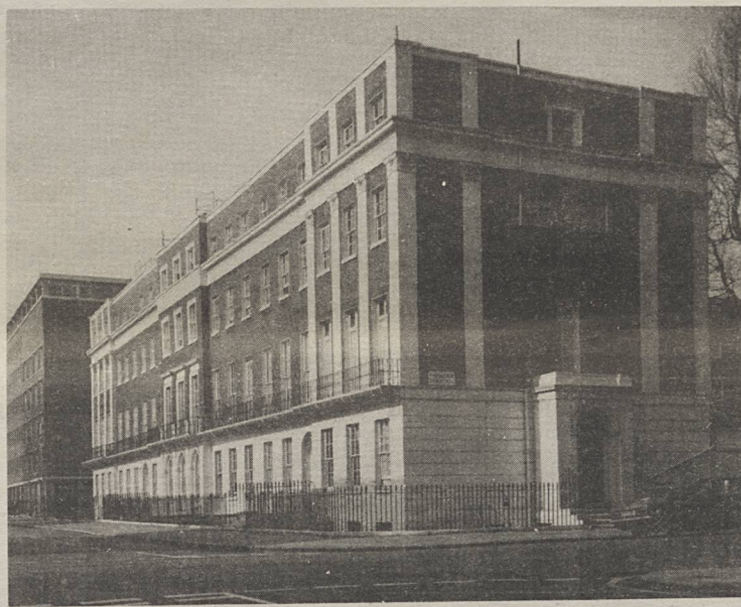
Other tidbits: Kilby has made a New Year's Resolution to wash his feet from time to time (to the delight of room-mate Aaron); Ron, the cook, is snowed in in Southend, will the food get better? Why did the DER man come to re-possess our video? What have Stavros and Benji been doing with the money?

Well, that's it for this week. Even as the finishing touches are put to this literary masterpiece, many are stumbling to bed in a drunken stupor - that includes us - so things are looking up again. James is back from the concert to fulfill his nightly role; Mark the Welshman is at the bar, and Tony would be drinking Guinness if he

wasn't behind the bar. Everything is back to normal.

I had a dream - of Passfield sober, working hard and quiet. I suppose we all go through these stages, intensely frightening as they are. On our return to the beloved home of drunken LSE students, we were hit by rumours such as these - Mark, the Welshman, is working for his Law exam; a New Year's resolution from Tony that he will be looking for real cuts in Guinness consumption; Cathy has a night without enjoying James when he goes to the Frankie concert. All true, I'm afraid. Any hopes that we might have of a Christmas recovery that will allow Passfield to build on its achievements of 1986 seem to be dashed in this odious atmosphere of diligence, and we fondly look back to the end of last term - to the groovy Passfield disco - with the exclusive world premiere of Cathy's fascinating video. The late night showing saw numerous personalities glued to the TV - preliminary enquiries have revealed that nose-marks on the screen belong to none other than the quiet and friendly Neville. But you don't want to hear about last term: this one has seen at least one dramatic event - the Prince Edward syndrome has come to Passfield. Buzz, the blond bombshell, has left London after just 22 hours to "consider his future". Will he return? We hope so, but in the meantime, F26 has only one resident (hint, hint, Arabella). Then, there is the news of Greasy and Anne, who had secret meetings during the holidays, on two occasions if you ask her, four if you ask him. Isn't it lovely to see a new romance in the Hall? On a different note, Greasy reports that Justin, the poison lefty, brought back a bottle of cider which left him hallucinating about blonds and camel-saddles. We'll leave this one to your imagination!

Dougal and Dixie (?)



# Around The L.S.E.

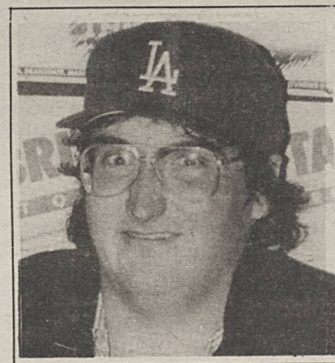
By J.J.

The Big News since last we met is, of course, the mass resignations by Executive Officers. Ron, Laura Matthews and Dreary have all called it a day; and Lisa Brittan is rumoured (and that's good enough for me!) to be on the way too. She probably doesn't know how to announce the fact, after all she is only Publicity Officer.

Ron bowed out last term to concentrate on his career as a clown. This, of course, will be nothing new to Rono the Clown as anyone who knows what N.U.S. means will tell you. The demise of Laura Matthews can be described as the greatest mishap to befall the Labour Club since Ingrid Chipsandbeans took up public speaking. By the way, how's the brunchbowl of the picket going? Why Laura resigned isn't known, a career as a beanbag was mentioned, as was her continued annoyance at no one taking seriously her liberal stance.

But what of poor little Dreary who has quit the LSE altogether. Pundits all week have voiced their reasons why, and here are the poll results:

1. In sympathy with Prince Edward.
2. To fill HRH's vacancy with the Marines.
3. To escape sexual harassment



by Rono the Clown.

4. She is pregnant by Rono.
5. She really has no 'A' levels and was only here in the first place because she got lost.
6. To join the "Muppet Show" cast.
7. Rono is pregnant by her.

Alas, we shall never know. Still, the vacancy for Equal Opportunities Officer has to be filled, so, if there are any black, single-parent, gay earth-mothers dying of ignorance out there, see the General Secretary.

Of the S.U. officers that remain, activities over Christmas are slowly coming to light. Tory O'Ladbroke ran a book at the World Debates and is, I can reveal, planning to sell-off the Nursery to Libya. Cathy Bruce spent a very socialist Christmas on the piste and in "the lodge" - look out for assertiveness-skiing this term! Chas, though in-

spired by Rono's speech about finding "socialism on the cold meat counter", worked in Sainsbury's and was quickly promoted to head trolley-pusher-sabbatical material if ever I saw it.

Speaking of which, anyone who knows Nick Randall should take heed; he is rumoured to be the Labour Club General Secretary candidate and therefore will be glad to lend you money, buy you a drink, take your exams and save you toilet paper whenever you want. And remember Nick - no chinese meals till April.

In closing, just to prove how socially aware I am, a word on AIDS. This term will, I feel, be one where AIDS will hold a justifiably high profile with TV adverts and the like. Yet, what do we have already, but LSE students scoffing about the use of volcanoes in the commercials. You don't think volcanoes are a threat? What about Pompeii then? They may "erupt" infrequently, but when they do, look out. So remember, if you must sleep with a volcano, use a condom!

And talking of those rubbery things... sources tell me the Union Shop now stock an all new super tough condom. Out goes the trusty (?) Durex and in comes the contraceptive equivalent to a tractor inner tube!!! P.S. Peter Dawson doesn't like the snow as it reminds him of Stalingrad in 1943.

YOUR BEAVER

NEEDS YOU

## On the Piste

Welcome to 1986, designated by the U.N. (University of Neasden) as the year of Sport. With Europe being currently by 6 feet of snow, the sport of the moment seems to be skiing. Skiing, as everybody



knows, is an artificial pastime participated in mainly by poseurs who are thus supplied with something to talk about until well into summer. And as universities go, LSE has more than its fair share of piste poseurs (or should it be pissed?) They can now be found in the Beaver's Retreat Bar and Brunch Bowl telling their friends, Judith and John, that it was "frightfully good" in Val D'Isere this year. They mean as much to skiing as Rory O'Driscoll does to being financially solvent.

No, the real dedicated skiers of the world are an elusive bunch, currently grafting away like mad so they can go skiing again at Easter. They don't live in flats in Chelsea and, in general, their parents are not tax exiles in Bermuda. So where do you find them? Until a few years ago they made an annual pilgrimage to

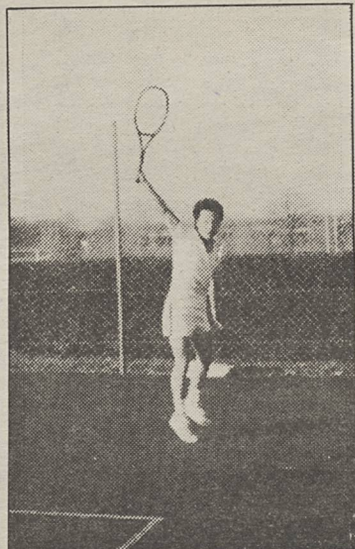
Aviemore in Scotland where the slopes were good and accommodation cheap. Actually seeing another skier, let alone bumping into him, was a hard enough task. Not any more. Inexperienced skiers now hurtle down the slopes in droves, making survival the foremost priority. Instead, the real skier now jets off to Europe - not the fancy resorts of Switzerland and Italy mind you, but the as yet undiscovered slopes of the Pyrenees, Romania and Yugoslavia. To them, apres-ski is a cheap aftershave. They get up at the crack of dawn, ski all day long and are thus too knocked out to join in the artificial celebrations afterwards.



If you really want to ski, then I suggest Aviemore for a trial and then Mount Everest the year after, preferably from the top, blindfolded. Me, I prefer to watch Ski Sunday with a crate of Skol lager waiting for the bit at the end where the English skiers collide with trees, people, etc. in a suicidal attempt not to finish last out of 200 starters. Pip Pip for now - BASIL

## Tennis

LSE 15 - 3 Surrey



## Basket ball

The basketball team continued the dominance it has displayed throughout the 1986-87 season by trouncing Bristol in the opening round of the 16-team Challenge Round Tournament. LSE, the Southeast Tournament champion, scored a 31-point victory over Bristol, the Southwest winner, on December 3rd. LSE next faces Swansea, the South Wales representative, on January 30th.

By Eriko Togo

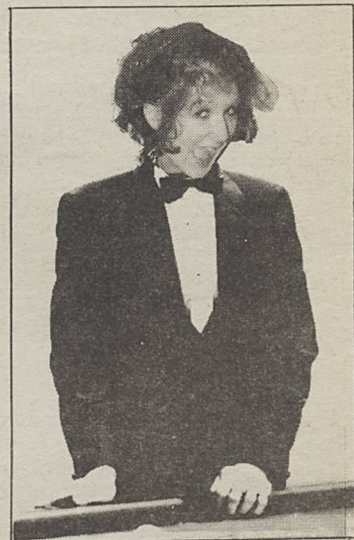
LSE Tennis enjoyed a smashing victory over Surrey Univ. at the end of term last year.

Blessed with the sunny weather at Guildford, the 1st and 2nd teams all cleared the first round unchallenged. The first round is the most important of all matches psychologically and point-wise because one plays against the equivalent on the opponent's team (the LSE No. 1 pair plays the Surrey No. 1 pair).

Our No. 1 Pascal and Henry had an easy day 6-4, 6-0, 6-2; so did No. 2 Mark and Kwa (later Mark and R.S. Deol) 6-3, 5-7, 6-2, 6-3. Harold and Michael did a very good job 6-4, 5-7, 7-6, and John and Dov's combination worked beautifully with a score of 6-2, 7-5, 4-6. The girls did fine too with Estelle and Marina scoring 6-4, Estelle and Juliet 5-7. The mix doubles went undefeated with Juliet and R.S. Deol 6-4, Eriko and Kwa 6-2, 6-2.

## LSE GENIUS

ALEX  
Jon Goddard!  
HIGGINS



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# British Art in the Twentieth Century: The Modern Movement

## A Motley Collection or Defiantly Individualistic?

### Royal Academy

#### British Art in the Twentieth Century

is this season's major exhibition at the Royal Academy and the second in the series of twentieth century exhibitions which began last autumn with German art. Major is an apt word to describe an event which is both exhaustive — over 300 British modernist works are exhibited — and exhausting — they span the wall-space of sixteen galleries. The contrast with last season's small scale and subtly lit introspective **The Sketch books of Picasso** is enormous; there is a contrast, too, with the German art and its bombastic images of pre-war politics painted in hard black lines, with flashes of harsh yellows, blues and reds.

Covering the seventy year period since 1910, this exhibition sets out to "challenge the stereotyped view of the shortcomings of twentieth century British Art, which for too long has been bedevilled by a reputation for politeness, even



timidity and provincialism." Comparing the Second World War paintings of Official War Artist, Paul Nash with those in the German collection last year does nothing to dispel the stereotyped image as his colours are quietly and politely muted, almost muddy. But where he does score is with his caustic wit and bitter por-

trayal of the subject; for example, "Totes Meer (Dead Sea)", haunting and brilliantly evocative in spite of, or because of, its dull colours, a watery moon sheds light on a sea of metal carcasses, wrecked Messerschmidt bombers on the dunes of North Africa.

If the exhibition fails to deny British politeness and timidity in Art — the absence of large monumental canvases depicting impressions of social issues and concerns speaks for itself, as do the comparatively minute and prettily watercoloured works "Opium Den" and "Saturday Market" by Edward Burra — it does at least open the eye to the strongly individualist nature of our Art. This character trait meant that all groupings and movements formed amongst artists this century were condemned to be shortlived and incohesive, producing what could be described as a motley collection of pictures and sculpture.

The groupings created around the time of the First World War are a good example. On returning to London in 1905, W.R. Sickert gathered a circle of artists around him known as the Camden Town group. Nudes and heavy Edwardian colours were prominent, as in Sickert's "Mornington Crescent Nude". But each artist was drawn away from the group as they felt the separate influences of the First World War, realism and Post-Impressionism from France. The fate of the Bloomsbury group was similar. In 1914 the poet, Ezra Pound, invented the word "vorticism" and artist, Percy Wyndham



"The Two Sisters" by Stanley Spenser.

Lewis advocated a new art, with the Vorticist standing at the quiet centre of a whirlpool. However, war and his commission as an Official War Artist meant Lewis' flirtation with Vorticism was brief.

Despite being hailed as one of the most imaginative gestures of official patronage anywhere in the twentieth cen-

ting intensity, it gives a good idea of the director's style of work. One thing that makes Tarkovsky's film style unique is the pace of the film-making. His films do not assault the audience with fast action and short takes, but present an evolving panorama. If most movies are like travelling through a landscape by train, Tarkovsky's films are like a trip on a river boat, the scenery lingering and flowing by. It adds up to some extraordinarily strong impressions that linger long after the film ends.

Tarkovsky's lyrical pace and long takes are for a thinking audience, for they permit the audience to explore the picture for themselves (it is not pushed upon them) and to discover the imagery in every scene. And fascinating imagery it is — a horse slowly rolling in the dust, pitchers of milk shattering on the floor, wretchedly clad soldiers wading through a swamp towards an invisible horizon, a wooden cottage on a hillside set amidst the ruins of a huge Gothic cathedral.

The fact that several of Tarkovsky's themes recur in many of his movies reinforces the impression that these are an individual artist's statement and not merely a commercial product for the market. Similar images crop up again and again: darkened rooms with sunsplashed thresholds, curtains like veils over a window, flowing water, wind tumbling over a field of wheat, urban wastelands and

group of artists called Unit One, influenced by Surrealism and Constructivism, prior to his commission) necessarily had to adapt their style and make their art acceptable consumption for a wide public. But the scheme also provided exposure for some lesser known artists like Henry Moore, now internationally famous for his sculpture. As a War Artist he produced a series of charcoal and crayon drawings of Londoners sleeping out the Blitz in air raid shelters and tube stations.

Post World War Two British Art continued in its strongly individualistic vein drawing from American Abstract Expressionism and, in the late 1950's, from popular art — films, magazines and advertising brochures. Richard Hamilton was instrumental in inspiring the Pop Art movement, with its interest in the bold imagery and bright colours of urban life, consumer products and advertising in such works as "Adonis in 4-Fronts". After the statutory Hockney's the exhibitions continues with the more interesting works in realism by Luciani Freud and huge steel sculptures by Caro, especially "Prairie" done in yellow steel. Closing the exhibition in a section entitled "The Seventies and After" are four huge Photopieces by Gilbert & George — witty controversial depictions of East London based on graffiti and images of violence. They are titled "Wanker", "Smash the Reds", "Price Ass" and "Bummed".

The sponsors of this exhibition, British Petroleum, should be proud of the collection of imaginative, controversial and very individual works which the Royal Academy have drawn together.

Fiona Chester

## Tarkovsky's Magic Opens up the Hidden Side of Life



"The issue I raise in this film is one that to my mind is most crucial: the absence in our culture of room for a spiritual existence." It is with these words that Andrei Tarkowski introduces his latest film, **The Sacrifice**, the tale of a man sacrificing all that is dear to him in a pact with God to save the world from nuclear holocaust. It won four prizes at the 1986 Cannes Film Festival and is now finally being shown in London.

The film opens with a long parable, where the main character, a retired intellectual, is standing on a beach with his son, under a thin dead tree. He tells the story of a Russian monk who, many centuries ago, struck a branch in the ground; he told his novice to water it every day of his life. Years later, when the older monk died, the novice went to

water the dead branch. It was covered with blossoms.

As is probably obvious by now, this is not an easy film, where you just sit back and enjoy the show. It is a "film d'auteur", and like other artistic masterpieces, it cannot appeal to a passive audience. This is why "The Sacrifice" is a difficult film to recommend. But with a bit of concentration and forgetting the hectic speed of city life for a few hours, you will be haunted for a long time by this work of art, miles and miles above the mainstream cinema production.

"Tarkowski is the greatest, the one who invented a new language, true to the nature of film, as it captures life as a reflection, life as a dream." Ingemar Bergman.

Alexander Crawford

Too much of twentieth century art aims either to shock or to be easily digestible. Film, as the twentieth century medium par excellence, is even more sunk in superficiality and irrelevance than other forms. In the past sixty years, all too few film-makers have developed the grandeur or the visionary quality we would associate with the great artists of previous epochs.

Last month, Andrei Tarkovsky's death closed the career of one of the outstanding film directors of our time. Tarkovsky's work, generally disapproved of in the USSR and little known to commercial audiences in the West, has nonetheless left an indelible mark on the film world.

While so much of contemporary cinema is concerned with packaging life into an artificial order with a simple course of events, Tarkovsky's films reflect and enhance life's richness and mystery. His films are wonderfully enigmatic, portraying events in dream-like fashion, and conveying a sense of deep spiritual importance.

Tarkovsky's last film, "The Sacrifice", is currently on release in London. It presents a wonderfully vision of a misguided and doomed world, and one man's realisation that he is willing to sacrifice everything he owns in order to save it from extinction. "The Sacrifice" is far from the best of Tarkovsky's films but, characteristically ambitious in its subject matter and at times coalescing into scenes of stun-

ning intensity, it gives a good idea of the director's style of work.

One thing that makes Tarkovsky's film style unique is the pace of the film-making. His films do not assault the audience with fast action and short takes, but present an evolving panorama. If most movies are like travelling through a landscape by train, Tarkovsky's films are like a trip on a river boat, the scenery lingering and flowing by. It adds up to some extraordinarily strong impressions that linger long after the film ends.

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rural beauty — even many of the cultural references, like Leonardo, J. S. Bach, and Dostoyevsky, are the same.

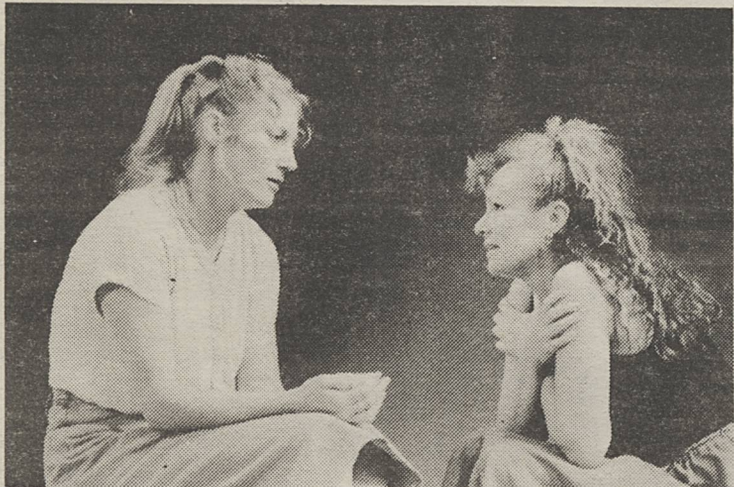
One of the most satisfying films is "Andrei Rublev" (1966), a picture about the celebrated icon painter and an epic portrayal of medieval Russia. Rublev wanders about the land trying to reconcile his visions of beauty and spiritual harmony with a world torn apart by terror, greed and betrayal. Among other things, the film boasts a Felliniesque array of eccentric characters — a rich variety of human character that Hollywood talent scouts could never match. Essentially a narrative set amidst the horror of the Tartar invasions, persecution of pagan sects, and life in the orthodox monasteries of Russia, this is perhaps the most easily approachable of Tarkovsky's works.

Tarkovsky's masterpiece, however, is "Mirror" (1972). This magical piece is based on a man's recollections of his mother and his wife against the background of larger events such as the Stalinist paranoia of the 1930's, World War II, and the threat of war with Maoist China in the 1960's.

Based on a series of almost hallucinatory visions without dramatic logic or chronological order, the film is almost a study of human memory itself. "Mirror" is also a film of astounding beauty and poetry.

Paul Klebnikov

## WHEN I WAS A GIRL I Used To Scream And Shout



### Whitehall Theatre

**When I Was A Girl . . .** is a comedy about expectations. It is about what we expect from life, from our friends, from our parents, and what they, in turn, expect from us.

Fiona (Julie Walters) and her mother, Morag (Sheila Read), are spending a weekend in the small Scottish town where Fiona spent her childhood. Her mother feels there is some distance between them and wants to use the weekend to make amends and to try to understand her daughter and the choices she has made in her life. Fiona's closest childhood friend, Vari (Geraldine James), has stayed in the town, married a young doctor and had children. She has done exactly what was expected of her. The two women go back over incidents in their childhood, a time when Fiona was full of questions and Vari had all the answers. Vari patiently, and sometimes graphically, offers explanations about life, Fiona's parents' divorce and, most notably, sex, often leaving the hapless Fiona feeling even more confused.

This first effort from Scot-

tish playwright, Sharman MacDonald, offers a caustically funny and irreverent look at the painful process of growing up through the use of sharp and witty dialogue. Interspersed with the present-day action of the play are a series of "flashbacks", during which we see characters going through the process of discovery of life and how the expectations of others can greatly influence our own decisions. The playwright offers well-developed and credible characters in situations to which we can all, on some level, relate.

The cast headed by Julie Walters ("Educating Rita") and Geraldine James ("The Jewel in the Crown") is excellent, with a notable performance by John Gordon Sinclair ("Gregory's Girl") as the unsuspecting young man whom Fiona encounters one spring.

One final mention should be given to an extremely inventive set, designed by Robin Don, which turns a small space into an amazing number of indoor and outdoor locations through the use of small platforms and ledges in combination with bright colours and good lighting.

Ann Henry

## Down by Law

Photo: Gilbert Ortiz



It is a sad and beautiful world that provides the setting for

**Down by Law**, Jim Jarmusch's third feature. Avoiding a specific time period, the story is set, abstractly in New Orleans and the dense, surrounding swamps of Louisiana. This is the land of the old B-movies, rhythm and blues, paperback novels, and popular mythology.

Jack (John Lurie of Lounge Lizards fame), a small-time pimp, and Zack (Tom Waits of smoke and bourbon fame), an unemployed DJ, are thrown together in a prison cell. The big-talking, foolish Jack and the sullen, daydreaming Zack are mutually repellent. Their misery is disrupted by a small Italian poet, Roberto, an Italian Woody Allen in his first American film.

The action is dominated by absurd and delightful comedy

and visual allegory. Along the way, it catalogues life under the changing light of dawn, dark alleys, grey prison, twilight swamp, and finally the soft glow of the open road. And all was filmed in moody black and white, with John June's capricious score providing the colour.

"Down By Law" is a street term meaning, roughly, "in control", though it might mean the opposite. As the credits roll, Tom Waits sings "Let me fall out the window with confetti in my hair Deal out the jacks or better better on a blanket by the stairs I'll tell you all my secrets but I'll lie about my past And send me off to bed forever more", while the band plays a melody with the wistful craziness of a jazz funeral.

Sivan Lewin  
Stavros Makris

## Editions EG Queen Elizabeth Hall

Editions EG set out to publish music which, according to Nick Stewart at EG, "has its roots in jazz and rock, but which is outside typical charts-based music."

The label is profit making, despite the semi-obscurity of some of the recording artists in the UK, because of high international sales and low recording costs - "typically £15,000 per album", compared with £100,000+ for even a marginal charts band. Sales of the last Penguin Cafe Orchestra album were over 100,000 worldwide, a level of sales which is very high for "obscure" bands.

Some of the catalogue has been described as 'New Age Music', for want of a better name; and though some of the catalogue (perhaps the Ambient series in particular) fits the description, others (most obviously, the Penguin Cafe Orchestra) do not. There are arguments for and against this 'New Age Music'; that it is just a name under which records can be classified in record shops on the one hand; or that it is the name being given to a new innovation in music.

The week at the Queen Elizabeth Hall was a showpiece for Editions EG artists. The series attracted a lot of attention, ranging from a report on 'Whistle Test' through to reviews in The Guardian. The QEHL was sold out virtually every night.

On Monday, Bill Bruford's Earthworks and Micheal Nyman played. Bill Bruford suffered from bad sound; the QEHL isn't well suited to loud music. It's fine for quiet performances, but on Monday it became something of a barn. The double-bassist was inaudible, and although the saxophonist and the keyboard player worked well together, the music did not fit the description in the programme: "This jazz is hot, too hot to hold down, sizzling with soul and sex: pop music".



Man Jumping, however, were the only band who failed to live up to the standard of the week. I have a theory that they were put on Friday because the promoters knew that they would find it difficult to fill the Hall. They played a very boring first set, sounding like an uninspired Level 42. They improved radically in the second half of the performance (by which time a lot of people had left), playing more of the systems/funk we had all hoped for, with a little improvisation thrown in for good measure. Their technical skill was also in doubt; the music was complex, but that is no excuse for making mistakes - bands should not attempt complex music if they cannot play it perfectly. Unfortunately, despite their improvement, the fear that they would resort to their straight funk haunted me throughout, preventing me from really enjoying it. I gather others felt likewise; the overall opinion was that Man Jumping are absolutely nothing special.

Andy Blakeman

## Jazz Column

Welcome back. Included in this term's programme are articles on: women in jazz; the blues; Duke Ellington; great sax players; the London Jazz Guide (a beginner's kit guaranteed to put you in the picture); the Wire magazine; Jazz North of the border; and rethinking the role of drums and bass.

For now, we kick off with a look at three very different

the kind shown in the classic 1963 album, "Our Man in Paris" (at a time when other people were merely generating streams of rubbish). The tempo for this 1986 album is strictly and deliberately cool (in the sense of calm). The track "As Time Goes By" illustrates the point well. There seems to be less emphasis on the romance and more on re-



Blue Note record releases: George Russel's "So What" (BT-85132), Dexter Gordon's "The Other Side of Round Midnight" (BT-85135), and Duke Ellington's "Money Jungle" (BT-85129).

Russel is a jazz composer/arranger who came to prominence in the mid to late '50's as one of the pioneers of "free jazz" (i.e. music that tends to break with tonality and strict meter). In part, he set the scene for the likes of John Coltrane and Miles Davis in the '60's, and was a close collaborator with the singer, Sheila Jordan. Side one is a rearrangement of other people's compositions (e.g. Miles Davis and Carla Bley), so I'll concentrate on side two which is a Russel composition - "Time Spiral".

In many ways it reminds me of Mingus' "Me Myself and Eye" in scale apart from anything else. Like Mingus, Russel conducts some twenty musicians, but unlike him the music has a distinctly punchy-funky feel to it due to the presence of keyboards, bass guitar and synthesizer (doubtless this was due to the elapse of six years). The net result is undoubtedly satisfying and very accessible to the ear, but this may also account for its failure to achieve as much drama and tension as the Mingus album despite their very similar percussive build ups and releases.

Although stylistically different, Gordon is very much a contemporary of Russel. Described by many as THE bebop tenor many and in the late 1970's, he helped to revive the music's fortunes. Given Dexter's famous tenor battles with Wardell Gray - in 1947 they performed "The Chase", viewed by some as one of the most exciting musical contests in the history of recorded music - it's not surprising that by 1987 he should be holding back his puff a little. Neither does he generate endless ideas under high pressure - a stream of consciousness - of

flection in this version, almost to the point of melancholy, but it remains beautiful throughout. As for the track, "Society Red", this has a lovely trumpet solo from Freddie Hubbard, and demonstrates well the album's desire to show the talents of other musicians - most notably Herbie Hancock, Bobby Hutcherson (vibes), Ron Carter (bass), and Bobby McFerrin (vocals).

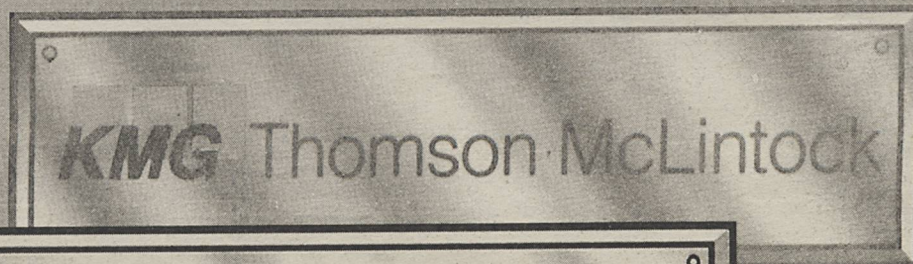
When it comes to the last album, Duke Ellington's "Mone Jungle" (which also features Charlie Mingus (bass) and Max Roach (drums)), it's difficult to know where to start. Let's just say that Ellington was this century's true jazz genius and save the rest for my later article. As far as the album is concerned, it provides a fascinating mix of styles (specifically those of Ellington and Mingus) which on the opening title track almost seem to collide as if oil and water just can't mix. However, "Fleurette Africaine" provides the perfect contrast, a magically powerful, restive - nearly hypnotic number that exhibits the structures and colours one normally expects of this great composer. "Very Special" (the third track) shows just how the Ellington quality of swing was, and what a splendid outfit of musicians had been assembled for this 1962 date. Roach's drumming binds the proceedings together magnificently. And in the final track, "Solitude", we get just a glimpse of Ellington's past brilliance, and, I somehow feel, the awe and admiration which his collaborators felt for him. All that said, if pushed I would say that those in search of the definitive Ellington should look towards his big band rather than small group days.

Giorgio Meszaros

Anyone willing to take the column over in July, and committed to its weekly appearance, please get in touch with me at the Beaver and I'll be happy to show you the ropes.

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