

The BEAVER

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS' UNION

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Nixon dances across the screen



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Seeking asylum from the bill



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Trainspotting finds a new platform

Mahal loses appeal LSE says no 'tar' to smoking

James Brown
News Editor

Baljit Mahal, independent candidate for General Secretary, has had his latest appeal to the Constitution and Steering Committee rejected. The Committee decided that there were no grounds for him to contest the elections as the LSESU constitution does not provide for candidates to appeal against a ruling of the Committee which was itself an appeal.

The decision does not end the controversy surrounding the contest. Mahal told *The Beaver* that he was very unhappy about perceived "anomalies and inconsistencies in the election process" and in particular "the actions of certain individuals including the Returning Officer and the members of the Constitution and Steering Committee".

At the time of going to press Mahal was almost certain to appeal to the School authorities, who have a duty under the 1994

Education Act to ensure that Union elections are run fairly. Returning Officer, Damian Thwaites, felt that although the election process had been "blemished" by the events of the past weeks, nothing had compromised "either the freedom or the fairness with which these elections have been conducted". He later added in defiant tone; "if you cannot accept the decision of the referee, or even the third umpire, then don't play at all".

Most candidates were at pains last week to praise Thwaites for his handling of the elections. There was also a feeling of relief that the campaigning was over; none wished to see the elections run again.

Even if Mahal's appeal to the School succeeds and a re-count of the ballot papers is called it is unlikely that the result will change. Sources closely involved in the count for the position of General Secretary reported that Mahal's votes were insufficient to present a serious threat to the winner.

LSE says no 'tar' to smoking



Pleasure extinguished: The Shaw Library is now a smoke-free zone

Photo: Anastasia Shorter

ELECTION RESULTS

SABBATICAL POSTS

General Secretary

Dan Crowe

Treasurer

Darrell Hare

Education & Welfare

Sam Parham

Entertainments

Chris Cooper

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Slate

Imogen Bathurst

Erik Wernevi

Surya Pathmanathan

Anja Madsen

Zeeshan Azhar

Womens Students Issues

Fatima Msumi

Overseas & EU Students Issues

Narius Aga

Mature Students Issues

Julie Lawrence

OTHER POSTS

Returning Officer

Hector Birchwood

Finance Committee

John Pemberton

Oliver Lewis

Surya Pathmanathan

Academic Affairs Committee

Anita Majumdar

Oliver Lewis

Sumaira Akhtar

Constitution & Steering Cttee

Dev Cropper

Mujtaba Choudary

Evi Hava

Hedvig Ljungerud

Robert Reed

Samantha Means

Guy Burton

NUS Conference

Kate Hampton

Darrell Hare

Claire Lawrie

Anja Soumal

Mankash Jain

Nick Dearden

Toby Krohn

NUS Womens Conference

Claire Lawrie

Anja Soumal

Dev Cropper

Smoking will be banned next year in the few remaining areas of the School in which it is still allowed. The Academic Board passed recommendations designed to limit passive smoking and discourage smoking at its last meeting. The Board is the last body with the power to stop School actions.

The BLPES Lobby and the Shaw Library are set to become nonsmoking zones, and the School is looking at the possibility of partitioning the Brunch Bowl, Beaver's Retreat and Pizzaburger into smoking and nonsmoking areas. If this proves too expensive, the School will ban smoking in them altogether.

"I think it is a good idea to ban smoking in most areas of the School because personal freedom aside, students should not take for granted the privilege of imposing air pollution on

others," says Mayar Subbarao, the president of LSE Green Action.

However, other students are not impressed. "I think it is disgusting" is a common sentiment. One student lamented, "don't be stupid. Come on, half the LSE smokes. How can you possibly ban smoking in the open? No one owns the air!"

The changes are those recommended by a School Working Party on smoking policy which contained one student, Education & Welfare Sabbatical Omer Soomro. The Party's recommendations were first made public in *The Beaver* issue 432.

Student Union policy opposes the new nonsmoking policies. However, only one of the student representatives on the Academic Board attended the meeting; General Secretary Kate Hampton. She said that she was "very disappointed" that the other student members – Tom Smith and Sorrel Osborne – had failed to attend.



At this UGM Damian 'the beast' Thwaites (returning officer) was back in a storm of controversy following the Baljit bashing last week. Not at all sheepish (although a self-confessed clone) about his role in the affair, he and others defended the constitutional and shearing, sorry steering, committee to the hilt. It all got a bit out of order and Jack was particularly concerned about the prolific use of bad language. Tut, tut.

Damian, despite his Satanic reputation, was himself laudably restrained. The nearest his familiar bleating got to expletive was in advice to his successor. "Go away, lie down in a dark room and keep taking the tablets". Strong stuff.

And indeed his and the steering committee's job is a difficult one. Having to decide whether or not to disqualify Baljit Mahal for the transgressions of his linked candidate at the last minute must have been agonising. No, really, think about it.

All sorts of complications were introduced to this 'debate'. The C&S committee were accused of double standards by Omer 'darling' Soomro. Their 'humiliation' of Dan Lam 'of God' (for accusing another candidate of racism) was his particular beef. Claire Lawrie lost her usual accountant's composure in response, "you seem to forget, you wanker, that Dan Lam agreed" - to his alleged flogging.

Tony, the strong arm chair of C&S got his knickers in a complete twist. (Despite having C&S embroidered on them to tell him which way round they go - work it out, it rhymes with lock and fitter). After repeated visits to the podium to tell us that the C&S were democratically elected (six people stood unopposed for seven places) he finally lost it. "If you don't like it then change the fucking constitution," he railed.

Jack was unaware of a 'fucking' constitution. Perhaps that's Baljit Mahal's problem. He missed the clause about lying back, closing his eyes and thinking of England.

"Fuck off!" was Jonathan Bennett's frequent request to more and more speakers who wanted to pronounce on the Baljit question. Only P. 'wee' Doralt responded. Obviously a student of the constitution.

Baljit was there himself, looking a little Fresher faced than his two hard years at the school and recent troubles might lead you to expect. He was angry, very angry.

It was left to big Mike Docherty to cut to the chase as they say, when he offered the belligerents outside. And to the Balcony Boys to keep the atmosphere friendly by stringing up a few punters on the ground floor. (You had to be there).

Things very nearly came to blows, it was very upsetting for Jack. After all, we should all try to be nice to each other shouldn't we? To this end, Kate Hampton has organised training for anyone going to NUS conference. How nice.

By the way, all this was completely academic, pending appeals and all that.

A motion from KH proposing a compromise with the government on Higher Education funding, again, was defeated. But no-one swore at anyone. Her highness also reported the school's decision to ban smoking which she is not happy about but about which, she says, there is nothing we can do. Watch this space.

Jack must insist after this week's debacle, on a level of decorum at our meetings. Oh, and wear a vest if the weather is cold and brush your teeth before you go to bed. NUS training days and counselling will be available if you need it.

Who needs Europe?

Mathieu Robbins

The UK should stay out of any further European integration!" has become the rallying cry of a not negligible section of the Conservative Party over recent years. The man iterating the words on this occasion was Nicholas Budgen, speaking on Wednesday as guest of the European Society.

A Conservative MP since 1974, he was party whip and has consistently opposed Europe in the Commons. He indeed lost the position of Tory whip after dissenting on a vote on the UK's contribution to the EC budget in 1988.

His manner was enjoyable. His tone was light, sprinkled with anecdotes. The Common Agricultural Policy is good, if we like "fat farmers and thin consumers, with high food prices" he quipped. The title of the talk was advertised as "Stop Brussels - Why the UK should say 'No'".

He promptly rechristened it "The UK and the fallacy of Europe". Indeed Europe is, according to him, neither a legitimate reality, nor the simple free trade area which the

Conservatives had joined in 1972. To this extent a federal Europe was an aberration. Europe has, in his opinion, no history of common attitudes and thus lacks popular support. The member states and in particular Britain, he continued, had always been capable of administering to the needs of their population.

The UK had developed an efficient constitution which had served her people democratically until the European Union, in particular the European Court of Justice, began to interfere with Britain's will and interests. The UK should therefore refuse to implement the ECJ's decisions.

Indeed, as the ECJ interprets the rules of the EU differently from the UK Government, Britain has been duped into signing Treaties she had not properly read or understood.

His speech was built around his anecdotal desire for people in other European countries to be entirely free to do as they please without interference from "us in the UK". On this point he questioned, "why should the UK be exposed to orders from them?"

They have different needs, traditions, cultures and, in the light of Britain's glorious

traditions, no legitimate right to intervene. His thought seemed built, as is that of all Eurosceptics, around the legitimacy, competence and historical reality of the nation-state, particularly Britain - which he opposed to Italy, causing a slight reaction from the gruppette italiano in the room.

The UK has always effectively controlled the Pound. The ERM and "White Wednesday", marked the biggest loss of support for the Conservatives. Any Monetary Union would lead to a Eurobank.

This would not be dominated by the Bundesbank as other European countries "would allow its influence no more willingly than they did that of the Wehrmacht". It would be influenced by many countries, including those from Southern Europe which he seemed certain would forcibly take the UK's money for presumably, seeing his adamant disdain for the idea, less than desirable reasons. His rhetoric however seemed to betray a denial of the fact that the UK is also part of Europe and is therefore included in any collective decisions.

Britain has indeed culturally benefitted greatly from Europe. "But this doesn't mean they can rule us," were his final words.

Battle of the Brightest

Chris MacAleely

Four luminaries of the International Relations department competed in an intellectual battle sold as a "Theoretical Extravaganza" by the Grimshaw Club, on Monday March 4.

Each participant began by summarising their particular theoretical perspective and the panel was then opened to grilling by the audience.

Geoffrey Stern kicked off with a breathless (as ever) review of realism, although as Professor Hill noted afterwards, Mr Stern had annexed large chunks of liberalism. Professor Hill was defending Pluralism, with the highly focused observation that "everything in the world is complex".

Dr Rosenberg, speaking third, had been billed to defend Structuralism. He started by admitting that he could not do this since it is too broad a field. Instead, he narrowed in on one area and ended up giving a creditable account of Marxism today.

Finally, Mark Hoffman explained Critical Theory, but given the time constraints could not do justice to it. Even Mr Stern professed to be bemused by his colleague's arguments.

The initial presentations ended abruptly, followed by an embarrassed silence as the audience struggled to think of suitable questions with which to challenge LSE's finest. Professor Hoffman broke the ice by leaving and the question and answer session then began to warm up.

The evening ended with each surviving panellist giving a two minute summary. Dr Rosenberg stressed that the strength of Marxism is that it has a social theory of the state. He warned that we must not close off the future. Many civilisations have believed they were the 'last', and they have all been wrong.

Professor Hill took the opportunity to liven the proceedings, rounding good natured on all three of his co-panellists. He even questioned whether Dr Rosenberg should be in the International Relations department at all! And of course, Mr Stern had the last word, as usual.

Censorship in the Arab press

Beaver Staff

The Jordanian Society organised a seminar on the realities of Arab journalism in Europe and the United States on March 1, chaired by Mr Michael Sheridan, Diplomatic Editor of *The Independent*. The participants were: Mr Jihad Khazen, the Chief Editor of *Al-Hayat* newspaper; Mr Abdel Bari Atwan, the Chief Editor of *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* newspaper and Dr Fahid Al-Tayash, the Deputy Editor of *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspaper.

The President of the LSE Jordanian Society, Lu'ayy Minwer Al-Rimawi, delivered a brief opening speech in which he highlighted the predicaments facing Arab journalists.

Khazen highlighted two important problems facing Arab journalism. The first was its weakness in financial terms. Equipped with recent statistics, he demonstrated that the total revenues of all Arab journalism is \$1.5 billion, which is less than the revenue of the American paper *Los Angeles* which total \$2.6 billion.

The second was excessive and often ridiculous censorship. When asked about the political affiliations of his newspaper, Khazen said that his newspaper started as a private enterprise and that Arab government involvement came later on.

However, with regards to freedom of expression he said that Egypt, Lebanon and Kuwait provided the best existing Arab examples.

Atwan expanded on the negative effects of the limitation of freedom of expression on Arab journalists. He drew a grim picture of the realities facing Arab journalists. In a self-deprecating manner he added that with excessive restrictions on freedom, Arab journalism has become dull and stultifying.

Responding to a question from Nicola Hobday, Executive Editor of *The Beaver*, Atwan said that Palestinian journalists have hugely benefited from the transfer of authority to the Palestinians. He added that they can now write in their own national newspapers, however difficult the adjustment will be. But he optimistically said that the future of Palestinian journalism looked confident.

Dr Al-Tayash's assessment of the cur-

rent situation, though in essence sombre, was generally more optimistic than his colleague's.

He said Arab journalists are either bought off or sidelined. However, he pointed out the growing markets due to the emergence of new Arab middle classes. Equipped with his own book on the issue, Dr Al-Tayash distinguished between Arab journalism in Europe and Arab journalism in the United States.

He considered the former to be pan-Arabist in the sense that it reports events taking place in the Arab world. The latter was described as ethnic journalism because it generally concerns itself with events facing Arab communities inside the USA.

In response to a question from Al-Rimawi on the precision of the term "Arab journalism", Dr Al-Tayash said that the nonexistence of such a term is underscored by the Arabs divided reality. However, he added that if the past and present has eluded genuine Arab cooperation, the future should not providing well-devised strategies are in place.

Sheridan gave an assessment of Arab journalism based on his experience in the Arab world. He was also aware of the dangers facing Arab journalists, who have sacrificed dearly in pursuit of the integrity of their careers.

He said that Western journalists often depend on the news provided by their Arab colleagues. When asked by Al-Rimawi whether British journalism presents a balanced account of regional events, he admitted that the British reader does not get a balanced view of the events taking place in the Middle East.

This he attributed to lack of space devoted by British newspapers to Middle Eastern news and the need for more financial resources in order to fund the dispatching of journalists to cover local stories. *The Sunday Times*, *The Sunday Telegraph* and the *Financial Times* are considered by him as newspapers in which one can read interesting pieces on the Middle East.

What really made the Seminar interesting was the different perspectives offered by the three senior Arab journalists. In addition, Michael Sheridan's contribution provided a Western critique to the conditions of Arab journalism.

Southbank SU Sues University

Ed Saper

Six members of the Southbank University SU Executive have been suspended for alleged misconduct and one has been expelled days before his final exams.

Southbank had cut its grant to the SU by 25 per cent, without consultation with the SU over how it was to meet its legal obligations. Southbank also changed the terms of payment from a block grant at the beginning of the year, to monthly payments, in contravention of the guidelines set down in the 1988 Education Act.

The Executive has now taken Southbank to the High Court over the altered grant arrangements. Southbank responded by initiating an audit into the performance of the suspended Executive, by inviting complaints from students.

The Executive attempted to take out an injunction against the audit, whilst the court case was proceeding. The injunction failed after the SU President, Arshad Bhumoo, provided the University with his affidavit that no decision had been taken to proceed with court action, and that the Executive had been acting on their own initiative.

The minutes of the final Executive meeting recorded Bhumoo's approval of taking the University to court. However, the SU President subsequently alleged that the minutes, which bore his signature, were false, and the Executive was suspended as a result.

Dipen Rajyaguru, the suspended SU Overseas Officer, told *The Beaver* that the SU Executive is a victim of the concerted campaign by London Universities to assert control over their Students' Unions. Rajyaguru is in his final year, but is barred from entering University property unless he withdraws from taking legal action. Simon Hughes MP and the Commission for Racial Equality have now taken up the Executive's case.

Sarky Starkey

Karl Menger

LSE's own Dr David Starkey addressed the emergence of individualism and the struggle to maintain liberal ideals against the encroachment of 'traditional' and 'collective' ideologies, as the guest of a Hayek Society lecture on Friday March 1.

Starkey outlined his speech by referring to Oakshoat's Harvard Lecture Series and by sketching the political and ethical structure of traditional, collective and individualist societies.

Citing MacFarlane's "Origins of English Individualism", Starkey contended that England was an individualist society, at least by

the 17th century, long before feudalism was abolished in Europe.

He dismissed Hegel's historical theories because of their lack of factual foundation and their inability to describe the plurality of human civilization. Starkey commented, "if you don't immediately realise Hegel is crap on the social sciences, then wait till you read his ideas on the natural sciences."

True to form, Starkey did not hold back his punches when the opportunity arose, launching a few jabs at Princess Diana to the delight of the crowd.

Starkey also did not fail to add controversy to his lecture by describing socialism as being "the preferred political system of mediocre people who cannot succeed in an individualist society."

No EuroPound please, we're British

Dhara Ranasinghe

The controversial debate on European Monetary Union (EMU) continued at the LSE last week, in a lecture given by the Rt Hon Denzil Davies Labour MP for Llanelli.

Davis outlined his views on the implications of a single European currency. He warned the audience that monetary union would lead to higher unemployment and reduced control over public expenditure, monetary policy and taxation.

Davis criticised "New Labour" for "burying itself in the sand" when it came to the issue of EMU and urged all party leaderships to devise a coherent economic policy and not commit itself to EMU within the lifetime of the next Parliament.

Davis argued that the political implications are considerable and that the emerging European Union, was not a "People's Europe" as the Labour Shadow Foreign Secretary Robin Cook asserts, but one which handed power over to a bureaucracy. Doing this Davis summed up, would be going against the "spirit of the age".

Butlers Wharf Election Results

David Bakstein

The Butler's Wharf committee elections took place earlier in the Lent term.

Due to popular discontent over financial matters and the inaction of the outgoing committee members inactivity, the guarantee of

a place on the committee for members voted-in this year was given a vote of no-confidence. The post of Hall Vice-President has also been abolished.

- President:** Kevin Kachidza
- Treasurer:** Arnold Banerjee
- Social Secretary:** David Bakstein
- Overseas Officer:** Matthias Meyer
- Secretary:** Howell Thomas
- Women's Officer:** vacant

MACHIAVELLI

Machiavelli does not usually venture beyond the grave to offer his opinion on LSESU elections on more than two occasions each year. However, as he has spent the past fortnight spinning in his final resting place, he has agreed to comment on the extraordinary and worrying goings-on of the last week.

A great number of you will have noticed the pretty posters and heard the jolly badinage between candidates in the recent elections. This, dear reader, is but a smoke-screen behind which all kinds of mischief is made.

The mischief this year has had a worrying tint (if you'll pardon the expression): racism. Certain individuals have used the allegation whilst campaigning or, worse still, to defend themselves against charges of irregularities in their own attempts to get elected.

Take for example the case of poor Dan Lam. He told several people that Chris Cooper, subsequent victor in the race for Entertainments Sabbatical, was a racist. He was even alleged to have gone as far as suggesting that Cooper, or members of his family, belonged to the far-right British National Party.

There is no proof of this of course. Lam based his allegations on a satirical column in *The Beaver*, written by Cooper, that was intended to be provocative and eschewed political correctness. After an admission of guilt (Q: Did you call Chris Cooper a racist? A: Yes) he was disqualified. The reaction was as predictable as it was disgusting. Lam's supporters shouted and screamed at the members of the Constitution and Steering Committee and reduced one of its members to tears.

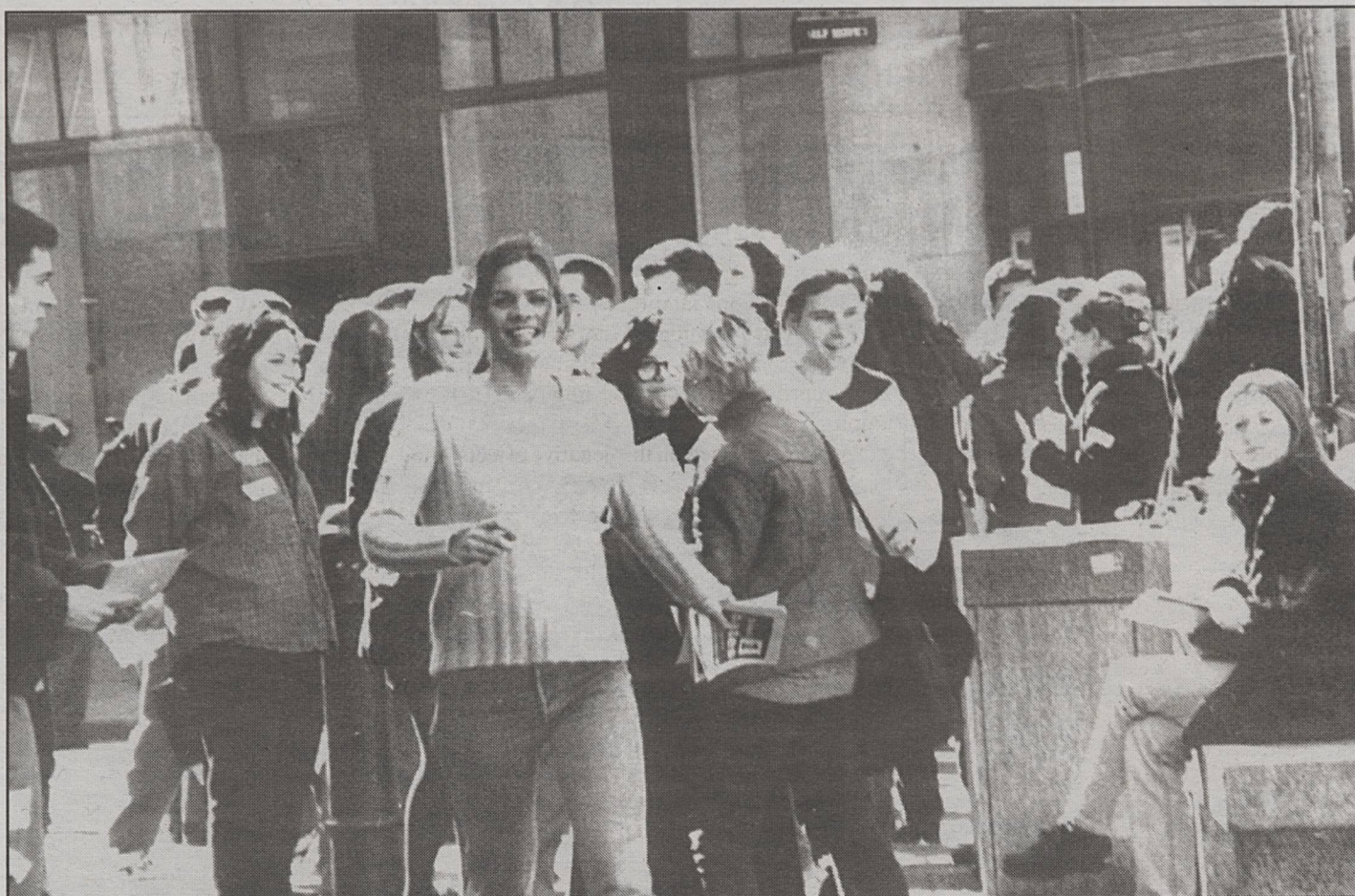
It appeared that the race card had been played by the Asian supporters of Lam. One of them, who should best remain nameless, could be heard to scream "these elections are now a race issue" even after Cooper had been at pains to point out that it was his last desire to make it so. He was merely defending himself against untrue allegations. Cooper withdrew his complaint and Lam was reinstated, on the proviso that he apologised at the hustings in halls.

Machiavelli, and a number of other sane observers, were therefore amazed when Omer Soomro called Lam's forced apology "humiliating" at last week's UGM. Would disqualification and an announcement from the Returning Officer have been less so? Soomro, as Equal Opportunities Sabbatical, is supposed to stand up for all LSE students against all unfair charges (perhaps Chris Cooper should have got his support), not just those who share his skin colour.

His manifest failure to do so in this case is but one of the reasons why he is perceived to have done his job badly. Whilst all other sabbaticals took a days holiday to campaign for their preferred successors, Soomro spent the whole week flapping his arms about in sadly unjustified defence of election rule-breakers at the Union's expense. Machiavelli feels a motion of censure is in order.

As for Baljit Mahal, all Machiavelli can do is quote George Bernard Shaw (a Fabian founder of the LSE): "Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few". Unfortunately for Mahal and Ali Imam (his "non-running-mate" loser) the LSESU "corrupt few" have a vote. A large proportion of the vote, if the figures are to be believed. Mahal is reviled amongst LSESU hacks: he has openly called two sabbaticals and the News Editor of *The Beaver* liars without producing any evidence - because there is none - to back up his claims. The hostility towards him is palpable and the one lesson he can draw from these elections is that the vote of the incompetent many (of which he, along with Dan Lam, is surely one) cannot outweigh the power of the entrenched SU vote.

Unfortunately it would appear that this will not be the last time we see Mahal, as he may turn into another "established student". He has never learned from the lessons given to him at LSE, in the SU or otherwise; therefore expect a repeat performance next year. You can guarantee Machiavelli will be there to watch the action.



Salon Selective?: Kate Hampton struts in Houghton Street in election week

Photo: Anastasia Shorter

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Management Society

"The Business of Economic Consulting – A Perspective on Economic Entrepreneurship"
Mr. Robin Cohen
Ex- LSE Student
&
Director of London Economics Consultancy – Britain's largest independent economic consulting firm

Chair:
Professor Leslie Hannah
Pro-Director of LSE

To be followed by a reception

All Are Welcome!

Tuesday March 12
5.30 pm, C120

Mauritian Society

Independence Day Reception
Mr Jahanger
Deputy High Commissioner
Wednesday March 13
2.30 pm, A144

Grimshaw Club

"The UNDP & Nation – Building with particular reference to the cause of Palestine"

Mr. Edward Watzte
UNDP Resident Representative in Palestine
Thursday March 14
1.00 pm, Vera Anstey Room

Mauritian Society

Trip to Alton Towers
Members: £17
Non-Members: £18
Limited Seats: 50 only!
Tickets Available
Sat. March 16

Media Contacts**Party**

Free!

Organised by Media Colloquium in Birkbeck College

For those interested in the media

Free Refreshments
Mary Wards Centre
Room 12
42 Queens Square
WC1

Just Off Southampton Row
Contact Edwin Shaw
0181 555 1512
Wednesday March 20
7.00 – 9.00 pm

PUBLIC LECTURE

"Japan's Diplomacy... between US & Asia"

Shin' Ichi Kitaoka
Professor of Political Science,
Rikkyo University
Sumitomo Life
Research Institute Lecture
Chairman: Mr Simon Nuttall
5.30 pm, Old Theatre
Thursday March 14

Voluntary Service Overseas

VSO sends men and women to a wide variety of African, Asian & Pacific countries to work alongside local people in a variety of professions – health, education, technical, natural resources, business and social.

For more info... contact:
Jane Mumford
Voluntary Service Overseas
317 Putney Bridge Road
London SW15 2PN
Phone: 0181 780 2266
Fax: 0181 780 1326

RUSSIAN SUMMER CAMPS

To all of you interested in this summer camp, here are some hard facts: The Santa Lingua Youth Camp will welcome up to 12 students of the LSE to go to Izhevsk, the capital of the Udmurt Republic for up to two weeks this summer or fall to teach English to high-school kids in daily three-hour sessions.

Accommodation, food & the Moscow-Izhevsk-Moscow train ticket will be provided free. But, a return flight to Moscow has to be bought by the participants. STA Travel's current rate for a return flight to Moscow is £269. In return for this exceptional opportunity the participants may be expected to invite Russian students to their homes (in England or wherever they live).

For even more information contact

Denis Morozor,
Building 3, 16/4 Bolshaya Ordynka, 113035,
Moscow, Russia
or via e-mail:
morozor@newsbox.msk.su
or through fax:
(7-095) 956-2209.

STUDENT UNION RECEPTION

Open Monday – Friday 10.00 am – 5.00 pm

Entrance, East Building
Young Persons Railcard

– £16 –

Requires 2 photos & LSE i.d. Available to all students at LSE.

ISIC Cards

– £5 –

Requires 1 photo & LSE id

For use in international travel, international and national discounts on equipment hire, some currency exchange, leisure centres, theatres, cinemas and nightclubs (if advertised as available).

Coach Cards (National Express)

– £7 –

Requires 1 photo & LSE id.

Law Ball rumpus

Dear Beaver,

The other week I had the fortune of attending the law society ball at the Waldorf Hotel and in a nutshell it was a fantastic crack, and an experience to remember, and the organisers should be congratulated for laying on a good evening.

However, the event was somewhat ruined after the meal when Dr David Starkey stood up to deliver his speech and the majority of students in the hall found it impossible to sit quietly for five or ten minutes while he spoke. I myself was ashamed at their behaviour and needless to say it was clear from Starkey's face that he was fuming by the end. His last words were something along the lines of "...and as lawyers one of the important lessons that you should learn is to listen while you are being spoken to in court..." and yet unfortunately his comment probably was not understood by most of the loud morons in the room (and you know who you were).

Why do students find it necessary to be as rude as possible and piss off everyone in sight? If Dr Starkey is decent enough to give up his free time to come and talk to us when the likes of the Daily Mail newspaper is willing to pay vast quantities for his opinions shouldn't we at the very least pay attention rather than throw heckles and act as fuckwits?

Yours,
Will Hung

Disqualifications justified?

Dear Beaver,

As the longest serving Assistant Returning Officer the SU has had in recent years, including for the last Lent Term Elections, I am writing in connection to last week's events and the reactions to them.

The 1996 Lent Term Elections hold the unenviable record of having the most disgraceful immediate run up to polling day. This includes the disqualification of one candidate, Baljit Mahal, after his constant infringement of electoral regulations contained in the SU Constitution and Codes of Practice. Any claim by Baljit that 'the infringements were committed in good faith' (see page 2 of the latest edition of *The Beaver*) is far from credible. He has contested elections previously, and thereby should be more than aware of the rules.

Allegations have been made about unfairness and malpractice in the conduct of the Election by the Returning Officer and myself. In the process of enforcing the electoral regulations, tabs were being kept on every candidate contesting the election. Since Baljit kept being caught constantly breaking the most obvious rules and dealt with accordingly, we have received from certain candidates and some of their supporters various verbal accolades such as bigoted, biased and vindictive. Such accusations are unjustified. Had any other candidate behaved in a similar fashion to Baljit, they would have been treated with equal severity.

Damian Thwaites is the fourth Returning Officer I have worked for, and faced with intimidation, harassment the one with the greatest need for patience in order to do

his job. From the perspective of those conducting the Lent Term Election, the run-up to the poll was under the most strained conditions ever recorded. This resulted from one candidate (or perhaps more) thinking they could get away with anything. In any future election, such a deplorable environment in the organisation and running of the ballot should never happen again. There is no guarantee that greedy candidates with disregard for Union procedures will not contest an elections in the future, but a major precedent has now been set in dealing with such people.

Yours,

Bernardo Duggan
Now hopefully retired Assistant Returning Officer

Verbally velvet Velusami

Dear Beaver,

I am just writing to thank a few of the many people who helped me during my campaign for General Secretary. I may not have won but in finishing third, I believe that we showed that Conservatism continues to be a powerful and indeed growing force in student politics. I polled 109 votes, which was a vast improvement over our candidate from last year. This, of course has nothing to do with the fact that we didn't actually stand a candidate last year...

Anyway, thanks to the irrepressible Peter Doralt who as well as acting as my campaign manager worked tirelessly behind the scenes during the UGM hustings, to

transform me into the next Bond. Thanks also to Ivor Davies and Kazuhiro Shimada, my two mean and moody bodyguards. Special thanks to Jon French and Samantha Means, who campaigned tirelessly for me. However I reserve ultimate kudos for the 108 brave souls (not including myself) who dared to dream and voted for me. We ran a good campaign and for me, it was a great end to a glorious three years at the LSE.

Cheers everyone.
Arun Velusami (Nobody does it better)

**Deadline for Letters is
Thursday 12.00**
The Editor reserves the
right to edit all letters

Off the edge ...

Dear Beaver,

I am fed up with the Balcony Boys - yes the ones that sit on the right and ritually humiliate themselves every week.

Throwing paper is understandable to an extent, but then came the missiles that sent three people to the Health Centre over the last year and damaged the Old Theatre screen at a huge cost to the Union.

This week the Balcony Boys reached new heights of stupidity, spraying 'silly string' everywhere.

So what's the problem? The school cleaners have to clean up after their mess. It isn't up to them to clean up after spoilt little rich kids.

Yours in disgust,
Kate Hampton

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Chips in Pitta	1.20

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Buchanan:
in shape
for defeat

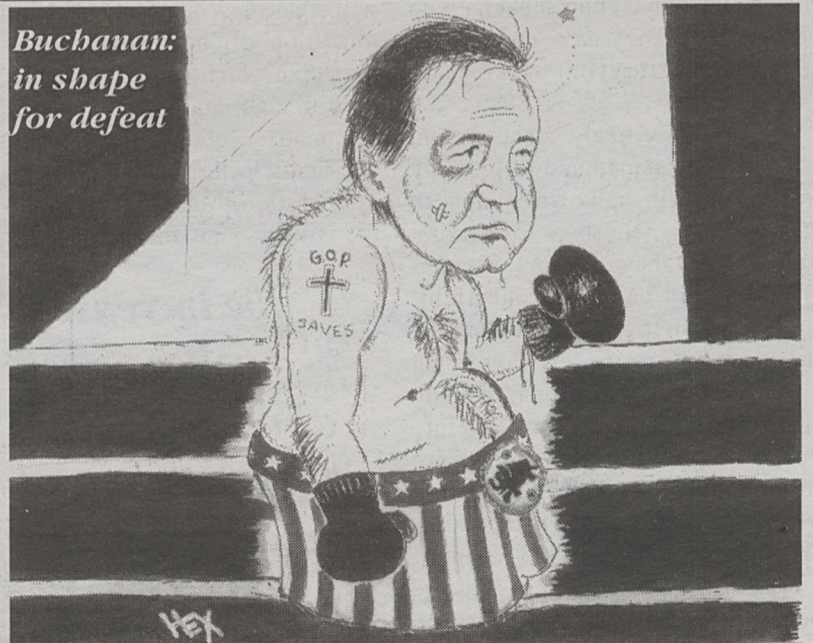


Photo of the Week

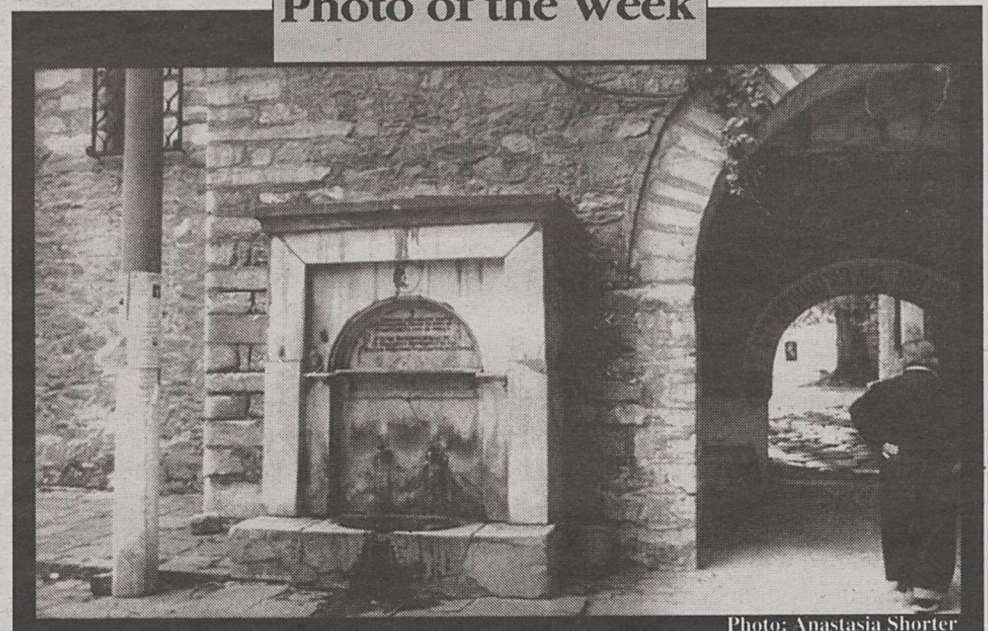


Photo: Anastasia Shorter

Playing the race card

What are the implications of the Asylum Bill? Kingsly Kemish tells all

The Immigration and Asylum Bill is simply a racist attempt by a desperate Tory government to gain votes by appealing to an alarmingly racist element in people. It is no better than the Nazi's anti-Semitic legislation in the 30s. For the government, as the Nazis did, are using a vulnerable group of people with little or no voice in the country, as the scapegoats for all of the country's problems: unemployment, benefit fraud and housing shortages. So playing on the human nature element of wanting to blame someone else for our problems. Then by bringing in legislation which strips any rights that asylum seekers and immigrants ever had, they think that people will forget the last 17 years and see them as the party of action!

One of the impressive elements of the campaign against the Immigration and Asylum Bill is the array of people supporting it. At a recent public meeting of the campaign speakers ranged from Emma Nicholson, until recently a Tory MP, to Dr Kenneth Kaunda, the ex-president of Zambia, to the Right Reverend Robert Hardy, Bishop of Lincoln. This shows the wide spread opposition to this bill and that it is not just the usual campaigners, like Chris Smith, Labour social security spokesman, Lee Jasper, National Black Alliance, and various other Asylum campaign groups, fighting to stop the bill.

The main reason for this variety is that the Bill is fundamentally wrong because it is not humane to treat human beings in the way suggested by the Bill. Even before the Bill has come into effect the government on February 5, took the right to benefits away from asylum seekers, who do not as soon as they have entered the country declare their asylum seeking status.

Now it is hardly likely for a person, who has been persecuted and tortured by anyone in uniform in their own country, to suddenly confess their story to the first uniformed person they meet in this country. They will still be scared and frightened and will want to actually get into the country and maybe wait a few days to get the confidence to declare their asylum intentions. Many will have travelled into the country on false passports or on false pretences and will be worried about being sent straight back if they talk to the immigration officers at the airport or sea port. There is also the problem that with the European internal market leading to no border checks at the sea ports, that there is no chance to declare your asylum seeking intentions on entry anyway, even if you want to. This also expects all asylum seekers to be fluent in English and so be able to get across to the immigration officer what they want. For I am sure that not many immigration officers will be able to understand, let alone speak, more than one or two languages.

Now onto the problems with the actual Bill itself which are many and varied. One of the main elements of the Bill is the drawing up of a list of so called safe countries from where people will not be able to claim asylum. This list includes Algeria and Sri Lanka and included Nigeria until the government were forced to take it off. These countries are hardly "safe" and this will lead to many people with genuine asylum credentials not be-

ing allowed to even try to claim asylum here.

Then there is the cutting of all welfare provisions and housing rights to most asylum seekers, part of which, as stated above has already been implemented. This has been justified by the government as saving the country money, but this is simply wrong, regardless of the inhumane nature of the measure. By throwing asylum seekers onto the street to starve, you also throw out their families. But under the Child Support Act all of these children must be taken into care, at a cost to the tax payer of £45000 per child, per year. This cost will far outweigh the cost savings of not giving asylum seekers welfare provisions and housing benefits.

Another part of the proposed bill will be to introduce a new legal category of 'Immigrant', which will include many of those who have been here a long time, may be even 20-30 years, and are legally resident in this country. The consequences of this definition could be far-reaching in terms of obtaining and retaining a job, access to housing and eligibility for child benefits for the people brought into the category.

The next part of the Bill will create new categories of criminal 'immigration' offences, which will effect lots of people who help asylum seekers to succeed in claiming asylum. The Bill would criminalise, solicitors, barristers and even university lectures who help students with immigration problems. With this part of the Bill it seems that the Government are

the increase in police powers when looking for illegal immigrants, leading us nearer and nearer to a police controlled state

trying to give asylum seekers, genuine or not, no chance to succeed in a claim because there will be nobody able to help them in this country.

One of the last major parts of the Bill (also one of the most disgusting) is the advent of penalties on employers who do not check the immigration status of all their employees. This might seem relatively harmless on the surface but when you look at the consequences they are horrific. For employers will not send the passports of potential employees off to the home office, they will just look at the people and if they are black, or 'look' foreign, or have foreign sounding names,

then it will be 'sorry but we don't want you', regardless of whether they are allowed to work or not. This will lead to a grave exacerbation of race discrimination in employment, as employers are not willing to take the risk of being fined: not acceptable in the 1990s.

These are only a few parts of the Bill – there are many others with equally grave consequences, like the increase in police powers when looking for illegal immi-

grants, leading us nearer and nearer to a police controlled state if taken in conjunction with other recent legislation, eg The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act.

A huge campaign is needed, as there was against the Poll Tax, to tell the Government that we are fair people and that we believe in giving everybody a fair chance in life wherever they come from and that this racist Bill will not help their desperate bid to win the next election.



Britain and Ireland: Brave or brash?

Hafsa Ghauri examines their relationship and the peace process

Although not everyone could have claimed an understanding or a knowledge of the diplomatic developments in Ireland a few months ago, no one who has had anyone contact with any form of the British media in the past few days could have failed to notice the rising tensions in the supposed "peace process". The current wave of violence besieging the capital would undoubtedly paint a fastidious picture of the IRA in the minds of many Londoners. But just what is the IRA's game? Are they just a bunch of cynical terrorists, or are they more cunning than the British press would have us believe?

The decision of the IRA – the military wing of Sinn Fein – to withdraw its ceasefire shows only too clearly the havoc it can cause in Britain, both socially and politically as existing relations between the two countries are quickly re-examined.

Whether the politicians in Westminster admit it or not, John Major's forced revision of the Irish issue has introduced a critical mien to the seeming success of John Major's heroic quest for peace.

No one would disagree that the days of exerting influence through heavy-handed tactics are no longer the norm in (apparently) civilised societies – bar a

few exceptions – but nor can we deny that, to some extent, "might is still right". Force means power and as long as the IRA refuse to give up arms, they are not the passive pawns of British politics. The problem of political control in Northern Ireland is not so much a battle for peace and consensus, but rather a shoot-out for control of weapons in policing Ireland. We know only too well that behind the facade, Britain's true interest in arms do not coincide with its pretty image as a world peacemaker. After all, even to this day Sadaam Hussein continues to be portrayed as the cruel, aggressive dictator of the Gulf, yet who was guilty of supplying him with arms?

The point is that the images of Britain as a brave mastermind of peace are sometimes just a cover up for its real need to remain the "Empire" that it once regarded itself. The desire for controlling the land of others makes our own PM no different from Sadaam, or indeed no different from many world leaders.

It is hardly surprisingly then, that although many in Britain want closer relations with Ireland, the Irish continue to be treated as an 'ethnic minority'. For if it can't win the physical battle it can still resort to emotional intimidation.

Salute the fighters of Newbury

Bluesky

The evocative images of spirited protesters being torn down from trees caused barely a ripple of interest in the media. A slot in the 9 o'clock news to register that the Newbury bypass had been met with some opposition. An absurd number of police sent to the scene soon put an end to that. Row upon row of well padded defenders of law and order descended upon our brave road resistors, making it seem like a battle from an English Civil War that never happened. They had no chance really, like their fellow anti-road protestors in Wanstead and Leytonstone last year. Soon those trees that they chained themselves to will be struck down with no respect to their years or beauty.

How much more brutal destruction in the name of development and progress can this green and pleasant land take? How many more roads, multiplex cinemas and leisure centres will it take before the apathetic masses decide to defend nature and justice until it is they who grossly outnumber police and politicians? Or is the force of capital and consumerism just too strong and too embedded to be overcome by a desire to preserve our precious surroundings?

Do we take our lead from a state corrupted and sleaze-ridden (see enquiries Nolan and Scott) or those who instituted the free state of Wanstonia last year with three

laws only; peace, love and No Roads? With hope in their hearts and griled determination they battled to save their homes from being knocked down and paved over by ugly motorways. One vivid image from Wanstead stayed in my mind; partly because I was so surprised to see it on the news (London Tonight incidently and not the BBC) and partly because I had always been oblivious to the strong undercurrent of resistance in our society. One man, quite young, had been pushed to the floor and was being held down by four or so police officers. He lifted his head from the rough concrete of the road he had been pinned to and cried at the camera "This is the face of British democracy", before having his head pushed back to the ground by a sergeant's muddy boot.

A democracy that allows us to protest so that we can be crushed and ignored. But it doesn't have to be that way. We can't afford to let the Newbury bypass obstructers be an isolated group, another loony minority to be ridiculed at the next Conservative Party Conference. If the sight of the bulldozers sickened you too, if you prefer grassy hillsides to bricks and mortar, bird lullabies to city noise, fresh dew scented air to smog, then join the fight to build a better world. It's not just another idealistic cliché beyond our reach. We all have the power to change things—just like the suffragettes or the American Civil Rights movement. And let's not forget the Newbury protestors. We salute you and wish you well.

Shattering the peace

Moshe Merdler reports on the state of Israel after the bombings

The last two weeks have been a nightmare to the citizens of Israel. 60 have died and more than 200 have been injured in four suicidal bomb attacks committed by the 'Hamas'. The consequences of these acts do not only have a serious effect on the deceased's families or the morale of the Israeli people, but the whole peace process in the Middle East has come to a complete halt.

To us, as Israelis, there is no way to describe the anguish, sorrow, despair and deep feeling of revenge that exist in our hearts. But trying to analyse the situation from an objective point of view does not provide us with any magical solutions. It is quite obvious that peace should be achieved not only for us but especially for our future children. However, this week has shifted that goal thousands of miles away. The Israeli man on the street profoundly states: 'This peace is killing us'. The Israeli Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, and the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat are both cornered by Islamic Fundamentalist terrorism and by their own people. Peres has to restore the Israelis' personal security, and prove that Israel can adequately defend itself and retaliate. Furthermore, Peres, standing for elections in three months time, cannot afford to ignore the wishes of the Israeli people for revenge, which, naturally, are not rational.

Mr Arafat, on the other hand confronts an even more complicated situation. If he

fails to answer the Israeli demand to fulfil his Oslo obligations, and fight against Hamas terrorism in a serious manner, he will see the destruction of his sovereignty. Israel has explicitly expressed its intentions to act within Palestinian territory, should Arafat fail in his actions. However, acting in this way, Arafat will seriously turn a substantial number of Palestinians against him, threatening both his life and leadership. An additional factor is the fact that the Palestinians are prevented from entering Israel, in which most of them work and to which they export their produce. This unemployment and hardship leads to anger that only serves to feed Palestinian terrorism. Yet, it is necessary to give the Israeli people some sense of security.

These acts of terror should be understood in a wider framework. The actions of Hamas are strategically planned to destroy both the peace process and the state of Israel. Instructions, funding, equipment and training are given by countries which are decidedly hostile to the peace process. The USA has alleged that Iran is directly connected with the suicidal bombings. Syria is also known to be a country which plays host to a number of terror organisations.


The success of these acts bring the peace process to the brink of collapse. Whilst writing this article I hope that the oncoming events will provide some hope, though the situation today does not promise any scope for optimism.

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Indefinite Article

Accountants speak of 'seized assets', web-crews talk of 'grey matter', politicians constantly 'beg the question' and the conservative English snigger when booking a holiday to Lesbos or Phuket. Implications and word uses have been distorted to create an entirely new vocabulary. Words such as 'dosh' and 'tab' (E-tablet) become common euphemisms in our everyday speak. Freudian slips such as 'handling one's tackle with ease', with reference to fishing, takes on new meanings when said down at the pub. Some words and phrases give entirely different impressions from what they actually mean. As Jean Aitchison pointed out in her final Reith lecture this week, the 'nuclear umbrella' implies that nuclear devices are safe and protective which we know they are not. Or 'taking the biscuit' (quite different from 'taking the piss'), implies something far nicer than what it means; going too far.

Words themselves are rooted in something far deeper than they appear. The expression 'eake-walk' (strutting aimlessly) originates from the popular dances from the tunes of Scott-Joplin earlier this century. The word 'Queen' (Her Majesty), was originally used as an expression of flattery; someone who was refined and beautiful (early 1920s again). However, the word 'Quean' traditionally means 'barren cow' (a negative concept) but is now most commonly used positively in the gay community as a label for a homosexual man who is flamboyant, stylish and effeminate; a cross between Queen and Quean. The nineteenth century saw the banning of the word 'conin' (female rabbit) as it was nicknamed cunny, and thus synonymous with c**t. We've dropped the conin part and kept the latter term as a crude label; odd when female rabbits are seemingly cute and gentle. We still speak of vicars donning 'dog-collars', whilst dogs were in medieval times associated with evil and used to detect witches.

The example of a 'thing' becoming a label (eg cunny to c**t) can also be turned the other way around; a descriptive word can also be turned into a 'thing'. In the world of web-sites and internets, ambiguous 'grey matter', originally used to describe indeterminate and irrelevant information on the system, is now applied to the 'old' people (35yrs+) who have jumped onto the youthful bandwagon of 'packaging' and 'surfing'. Or the 1980s expression 'Generation-X' to describe the young twenty-somethings with 'high spending power' who were living in the 'fast lane', has also been turned into a 'thing'; Vex-Generation is a clothing company promoting garments based around riot and anti-criminaljustice gear for young twenty-somethings 'vexed' by nineties turmoil. Particular groups in nineties culture are labelled the Vex-Generation.

Some expressions are distinctly onomatopoeic in their structure; 'gobbledygook' implies exactly what it means (speaking nonsense), as does making a 'mish-mash' of a situation (mucking a situation up). Newsreaders talk of 'warring warlords' to emphasise the destructive guerillas and politicians 'beg the question' which is impossible as the 'Question' is doing the begging in the first place. Overplay of words and expression kills the meaning; 'how are you?' means nothing more than 'hello' and the expression 'feeling stressed' has grown an overly familiar phrase of having too much to do.

So as the ego of the vex-generation that's writing this snippet, who's running on empty and stressed by high-overheads, I think that this jumble of gobbledygook that we encounter is a sign of the times and reflective of our increasingly diverse society.

Don't junk the old

Oliver Lewis questions the lack of respect in which we hold our old people

Growing old is one of the great mysteries of life. We don't know what it will be like, and we don't really want to find out, yet we're nearer to it all the time. Anyway, we might never be old, so there's no point in being morbid.

We can all agree that the prospect of growing old is not a glamorous one. Our body will become weak; physically and mentally. At the extreme, old people lose the full potential of their hearing, eyesight, speech, mobility, and therefore independence. They cannot feed, dress or wash themselves without help. They dribble onto their clothes and urinate involuntarily. They become so pathetically frail that it seems much easier to give in to the corpse that they have become, than struggle on pretending that they actually exist.

People who have reached their eighties and nineties have, on the whole, decided that they have made their contribution to society, and now someone else should try to change the world. So it's our turn. The shape of the world in 50 years' time is up to us to mess with. Conversely, the world we live in today has been made possible by the efforts of our grandparents. Indeed, might not there be some truth in the oft recited cliché that "I fought in the war for you to be here".

But the saddest thing that we are all guilty of is dismissing elderly people's views the same way as we dismiss the elderly body as being unable to function. After being an active member of society who has paid tax and brought up children, an old person is dumped by society, and more alarmingly, by their own family: either into a nursing home, or to get on with life where few take the initiative to help, or at least listen.

Here at the LSE we should know that once the population have served their economic purpose of bringing the beans in for the State, they suddenly and mysteriously turn into a social "problem", and become the battle-ground of politicians, who tax domestic fuel and refuse fully to support old people's nursing costs. After all, we just don't have the time or money to look after crinklies with strange quirks, who don't recognise us (damn them) and who can't tell one day from the next.

Seemingly by growing old, one buys shares in a huge growth industry that most cannot avoid. Entrepreneurs all around the country are making huge sums of money for doing what families ought to do: look after their parents. Old people are having to give away their life savings by financing their

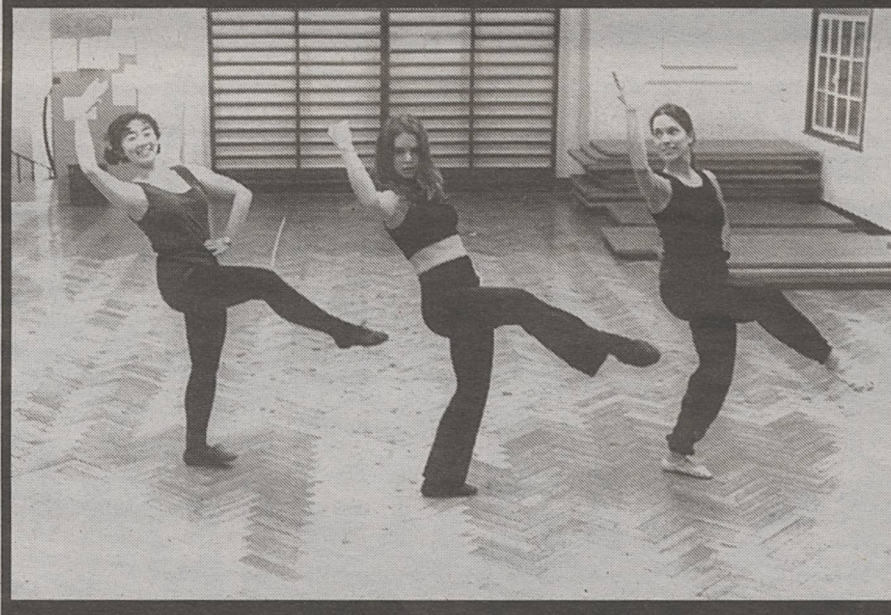
existence in privately-owned homes, which can cost up to £400 per week. People's lives are controlled by shameless accountants who charge by the incontinency bag.

We also have a problem with relating to the elderly. Just like the young parents who behave disgracefully to their own children, and try to reason with a three year old to "Stop crying, or I'll smack you, you little sod", we do not know how to treat our elders. They might be talking utter nonsense, but we'll never be as bad as them. In fact, we'll never grow old. However, scientific data suggests that over 9 out of 10 old people said they were once young.

As is the case with much of society's wrongs, this is a problem about lack of respect. We do not respect elderly people for who they are. We do not value them and spend time with them while we still have the chance. Old people are inarticulate, stubborn, dirty and embarrassing. As Shakespeare put it, they are living through the nightmare of a 'second childhood'.

So maybe next time you take the decision not to offer your seat to an old person on the bus, remember that we are merely the "youth of today", and that one day even we will be as old as them.

Dance, dance wherever you may be ...



Anastasia Shorter

The dance society's show promises to be an extravaganza of cleverly crafted contortions, fascinating funky rhythms and titillating traditional dance. Relax whilst the cavorting crew whisk you to far flung corners of the world, from Spain, to Thailand, to the Bronx!

"This year we actually auditioned the dancers," said one choreographer, and the selection procedure, more rigorous than a grilling at Goldman Sachs, has produced an exhilarating evening's entertainment, well worth the price of a ticket whatever it costs.

The dance crew can be seen in action in the Old Theatre on Tuesday, March 12, till Thursday March 14. Tickets are on sale now.



TRAVEL



Ha'va explosive time in Israel

Moshe Merdler

Israel, known to some as the holy land, is surely heaven for a tourist. Famous for its beautiful women and lovely weather it never fails to supply more than your average share of excitement. Attractions are available to both the city slicker and the rough adventurer.

Tel-aviv, the "non-stop" city, is only second to New York in its rich and interesting night life. There is no root beer, fortunately, but pubs are numerous and nightlife continues well into the morning. Clubs as 'Corruption', 'Lemon' and 'Shanbo' are

few of an endless list of night-clubs guaranteed to funk you up in a way that the ordinary London club gurus are not familiar with. Many restaurants and snack bars make sure you are never hungry, and it is especially recommended to try the Israeli version of the Turkish doner, which can be delicious even when sober.

The northern part of Israel, better known as little Switzerland, offers beautiful countryside. During the winter, it is possible to ski on the slopes of the Hermon mountain (the eyes of the state), and during the summer a variety of water-sports are available in the sea of Galilee and the River Jordan. For the religious, Jerusalem is the answer for all your needs, whether Jewish, Muslim or

Christian - there are sites for everyone. If you wish to spent time on the beach Eilat is the best place for sunbathing and search for boys and babes.

The Red Sea also offers a variety of diving sites and water-sports. If you wish to 'get salty' go to the lowest point on earth; 412 meters below sea level leads you to the Dead Sea. You needn't know how to swim - you just float in the salty water. Mud baths are also very popular and some suggest that they are also quite healthy, apart from providing everyone with a great laugh. It is quite difficult to persuade people to come to Israel, especially after the recent events. However, those who do come will have a great time.

Present Laughter

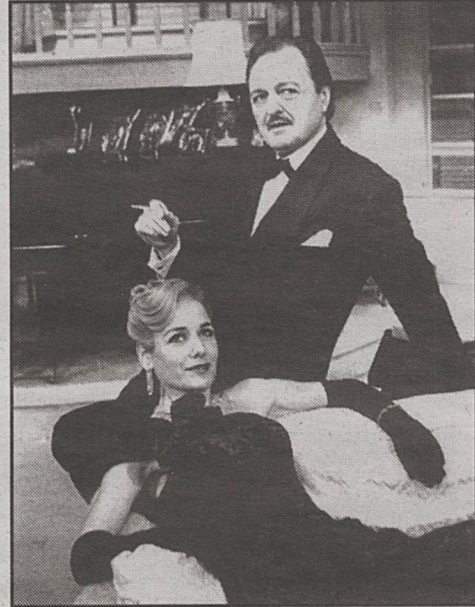
Louisa Loong laughs

With the reputation of being the most talked about, multi-talented figure (actor, director, writer) in the English speaking theatre, with a *talent to amuse* what less can you expect of Noel Coward but brilliance? His play *Present Laughter* does not disappoint. Peter Bowles gives an excellent performance as Garry Essendine, an actor who's life revolves around the glamour and trappings success brings. Behind the scenes, we see the real Garry whose life is run collectively by his ex-wife, secretary, manager and best friend. He is clearly dependent on them for ego boosters but we also see how their lives are dependent on him. Throw in the inter-play of affairs between his best friend's beautiful wife, his manager and himself and you get the most hilarious situations. Eventually, though, Garry and everyone around him realise that they have to face up to reality as all the world is *not* a stage.

What was a shame was that the theatre was not even half full. Perhaps the good clean humour of the 1940s is not everyone's cup of tea or

perhaps the Aldwych theatre is just jinxed after the *Fields of Ambrosia*. Whatever, I still found this a very enjoyable, light hearted play.

Venue: Aldwych Theatre
Until: April 20



Upper class culture at its best Photo: Sheila Burnett

The Ends of the Earth

James MacAonghus takes a trip

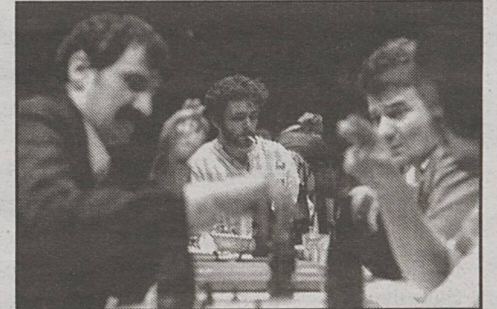
There are two ways to see a Hollywood star face to face. One: Buy a return ticket to LA and spend a week outside your idol's home trying to catch a glimpse of them. Cost £500. Two: go to any production at the Cottesloe: *Stanley* boasted a *Four Wedding's* beauty. And *The Ends of the Earth* boasts members of the casts of *Goldeneye* and *The Last Crusade*. Cost £6.50. *The Ends of the Earth* is also a brilliant play with a message relevant to any of us.

Daniel seeks someone to take his moral guilt off him – something he feels is responsible for his daughter's fatal illness. His pre-tenure that he has found true freedom only drives him and his wife further apart, and his refusal to face the real world results in the loss of his daughter, wife and livelihood – whilst his dam construction project instigates a civil war into the bargain. Through all this, Daniel also has to work out whether he is following his free will or someone else's.

This is a thought provoking play bound

to strike a chord with the experiences of most of us. Moreover, it is incredibly real, thanks in no small part to some of the most genuine acting I have yet seen. The Bosnian peasants speak Bosnian, the old man (Karl Johnson) and the captain (Tom Mannion) are magnificently portrayed and I am still convinced that I've met the hotelier (Kevork Malikyan) in Greece. Save yourself the flights to LA and the Balkans and go see *The Ends of the Earth* – you won't notice the difference.

Venue: National Theatre (Cottesloe)
Until: May 27



The 'stars' have a quiet drink Photo: Ivan Kyncl

Trainspotting

James Crabtree hops on

Seen the movie, read the book, bought the screen play, listened to the sound track, believed the hype, told your friends, bored your enemies, injected your fantasies, lived your dreams, sold your soul?

Yup, Its *Trainspotting* time. Again.

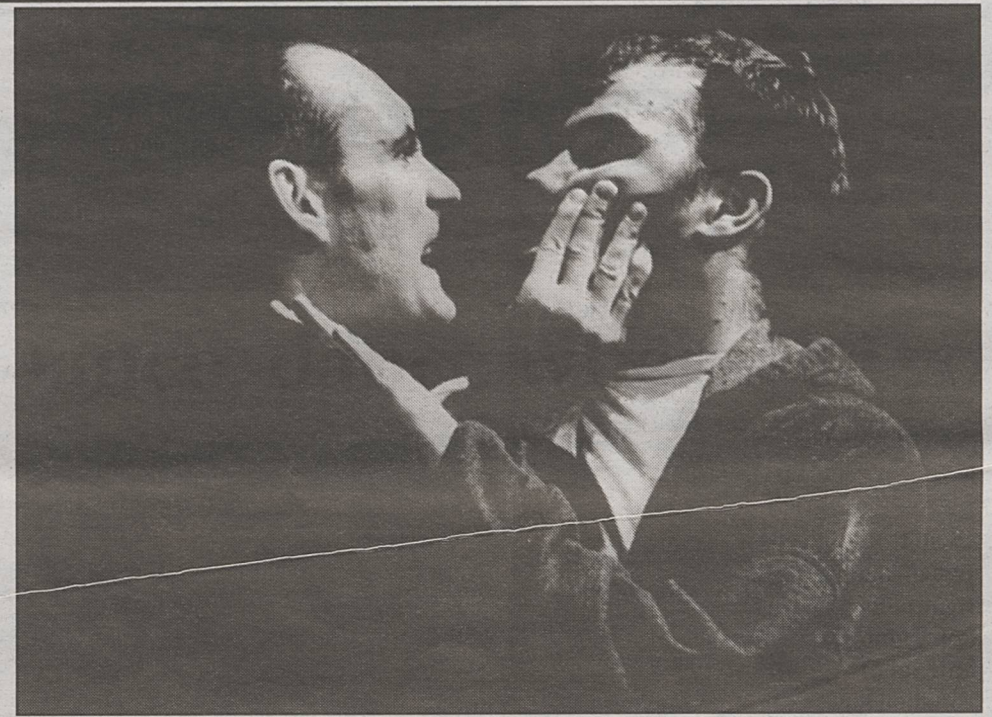
Seen the film? Thought so. Using hard drugs yet? No? But, it was *oh-so glamorous*, n'est-ce pas? Yet, despair not dearest luvvies: if you have not yet had an elegant sufficiency of Irvine Welsh's cult-to-end-all-cults, the play is now arriving at a West End theatre near you.

A series of short, dark vignettes about drugs, death, friendship and bed sheets filled with excretia, the stage play is thought provoking and compelling. Essentially minimalist, with a mere four actors fulfilling various genders at various times, the audience is confronted with a stark and uncomfortable reality. At one point, two of the characters even seem to urinate on stage; realism in the realest sense.

Yet, this all matters not a bit. There is no point in entering into a worthy discussion of characterisation, plot, or theme; it's inconceivable that any resident of planet earth could

be ignorant of the concept that is *Trainspotting*. But the vital question is whether or not it's better than the film. Well the experiences are similarly distinct, each borrows a set of overlapping stories from Welsh's novel, (under age sex, messing the bed, etc) but the perspectives are mercifully different. Indeed, the play is at its strongest when differing from the film; *Trainspotting* is more considered and circumspect than its celluloid sister. Although superficially constraining, the stage seems to offer greater scope for basic developments of character and ideas. The draining emotion of certain scenes (dead baby, Begbie's violence to his girlfriend) seem to translate with greater power to the intimacy of theatre. Moreover, it does hit the concept from a different direction; there appears to have been a conscious effort to be depressing (with fun bits), rather than fun (with depressing bits).

What it fails to produce is the cartoon charm and toilet immersion which cinema magic has duly been able to provide. Ultimately, despite having a strong case for atheistic superiority, the play is not as enjoyable as



Renton (Paul Ireland) and Begbie (Gavin Marshall) get personal

Photo: Library

the film: the gags aren't as funny, the scope isn't as big, the production isn't so challenging, and the pain isn't so real. It is perhaps a subtler reincarnation of the same beast, but it's not as special. *Trainspotting* is a good play yet it is neither sufficiently different, nor sufficiently superior to the ubiquitous film to make it essen-

tial viewing. But, if you are determined, there are many less worthy plays to spend your hard earned grant upon. To get the real *Trainspotting* experience you could always read the book – how about that for radicalism?

Venue: Whitehall Theatre
From: March 12

Breaking Bread Together

Yong-Mi Schibel on God and garden gnomes in Bonhey

It is quite amazing how much fun you can get out of a play whose main themes are absolutely irrelevant to your life. There's Christianity, for one and there's also marriage, which may have entered some of your minds, but only as a very distant possibility (one hopes).

The story of *Breaking Bread Together* unfolds as two couples in the sleepy village of Bonhey are suddenly confronted with a surprise guest: it's God on a fishing holiday. This being a modern play by the fringe writer Robert Shearman, God isn't almighty in the least but acts as a catalyst in bringing out his hosts' mistakes and hidden qualities. One of them, a publican who has the impressive faculty of scientifically determining anyone's optimum alcoholic beverage

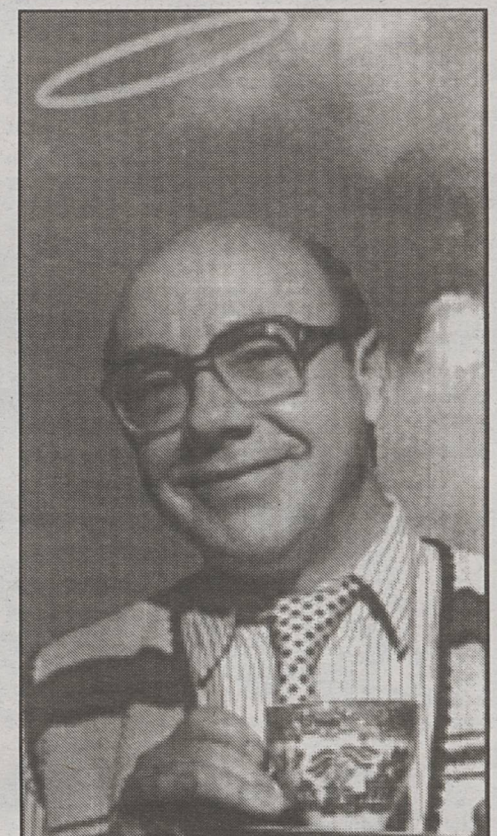
(strangely, it always ends up being Real Ale), loses his wife to her new found identity.

The second couple consist of Trevor, a burnt-out poetry teacher, and Maria, who is on a missionary trip for Christianity. She distributes leaflets to the audience and actually manages to sustain a fanatic glow in her eyes throughout the whole play. God is positively annoyed by her devotion and loses copious amounts of sweat over de-Christianizing her for her own good. This includes the reawakening of her and Trevor's sex life, so maybe the play's issues aren't that removed from our reality after all.

Robert Shearman writes with a comic edge that has already brought him several awards, including the Guinness Award

for Ingenuity. Although tickets cost an abominable £6, it doesn't really matter considering the amounts that you are going to spend on drinks afterwards. The venue, is conveniently situated above the Oxford Arms on 265 Camden High Street. In fact, the entrance is through a back door of the pub that looks like it's leading to the Gents but that gets you to a nice little stage and a few rows of benches for the ultimate fringe feeling. Accordingly, there isn't much decoration, but the essential ingredients of British comfort are there: the pub counter, home couch, TV, and a fishing pond in the garden where God relaxes from his drudging work as... well, God.

Venue: Etcetera Theatre, Camden
Until: March 24



The smiling face of God?

Photo: Library

Nixon

Alexis Derby checks out another Presidential film

Oliver Stone, a Vietnam veteran, seems to have a surprisingly high respect for Richard Nixon. He assured the film-making world that this is not just because telling the usual Watergate scandal wouldn't make an interesting film, but I couldn't help feeling that it was the over-riding factor. The plot of *Nixon* is sadly familiar; a dis-honoured and humiliated public figure is controversially revealed to be a nice guy; he was just a little misunderstood (by the entire American nation). Saying that Oliver Stone has managed to produce a film that is on the whole less paranoid and conspiratorial than *JFK* (save the idea that Nixon felt responsible for Kennedy's death) that tells an interesting story.

Anthony Hopkins trades his Welsh ancestry for pseudo-American nationality and takes on the presidential role with finesse. Don't be put off by the fact that he looks or sounds nothing like Nixon because his attention to mannerisms and gestures is fantastic. Joan Allen is also superb as the strong Pat Nixon. Oliver Stone should be grateful because the pair carry his film at points when the plot and dialogue are deficient. In fact he was so keen

to get Hopkins for the movie, that he flew over to London to convince him when Hopkins initially declined.

Nevertheless *Nixon* miraculously holds your attention for its three hour entirety because it is not just about Watergate but also about Nixon's character, his internal conflicts and his personal sense of duty.

Many critics feel that Stone's old formula of making movies about American presidents and the Vietnam war are wearing a little thin but that is what he's good at; we couldn't face another *Natural Born Killers*.

Director: Oliver Stone

Released on: March 15

☆☆☆☆

COMPETITION

We have three copies of the screenplay of *Nixon* for anyone who can name three of Oliver Stone's other films

Answers to the Beaver office by March 14



Anthony Hopkins as Nixon

Get Shorty

Gotz Mohindra predicts success

John Travolta leads this star-studded cast as a Miami loan shark whose hidden ambition of entering the glamorous world of movies is brought to the surface when he is sent to recover a loan from a gambling B-movie director (Gene Hackman). As the plot unfolds, Travolta, as Chili Palmer, compromises his profession and all it stands for by keeping a recovered loan and loaning it to Harry Zimm, the desperate director. From thereon, the duo set out to make the perfect film persuading Martin Weir (Danny DeVito) a 'great star' to jump on the band wagon.

Gene Hackman is arguably the figure that cuts most in this wacky and fairly humorous film. He holds his character brilliantly as a believable yet hilarious figure in the escapade. Aided and abetted by Dennis Farina as Ray 'Bones' Barboni the film is a helium light study of Hollywood. John Travolta's comical lack of expression during most of the film adds to his image of the hard man in the film teased by his surroundings for the benefit of the audience. Rene Russo is, as usual, bril-

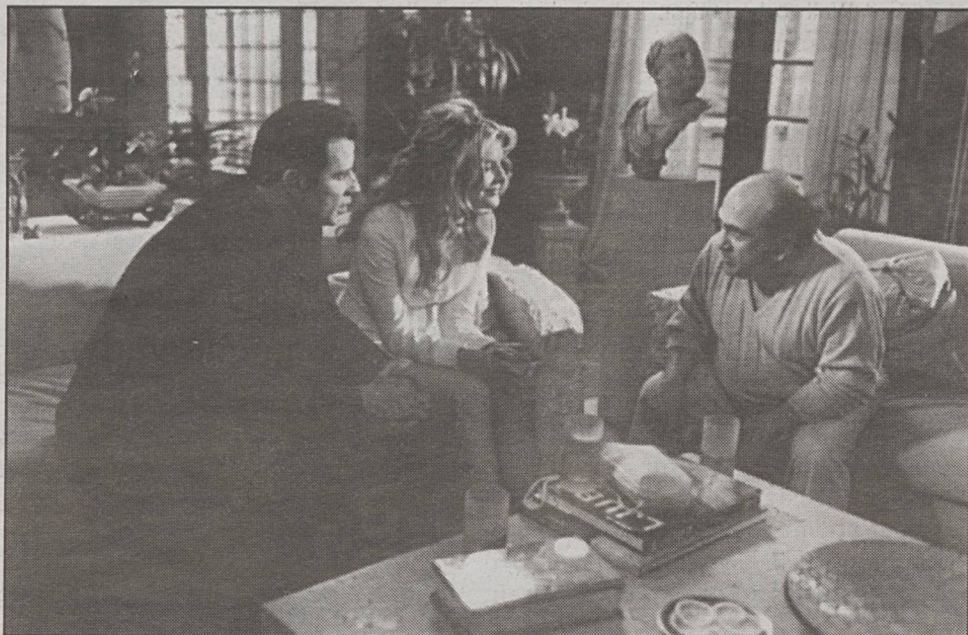
liant carrying off her role as the ex-wife of Martin Weir, girlfriend of Harry Zimm and the one being serenaded by the man himself, Chili. Danny DeVito in this movie is the same old DeVito one met in such hits as *Twins* and *Romance in the Stone* with only meager alterations. Yet, that is the role he plays best; a humorous character that seems a little detached from 'reality'. Arguably then, he was a natural choice for the part.

The plot and sub-plot are simple, to the point that the 15 certificate rating is the IQ required to understand the film. The colourful characters is reminiscent of an old Batman episode while the entire film being directed in some neo-classical Tarantino style. It is clearly not meant to leave you with some profound thoughts on the meaning of life. Although some jokes fall short, most pull off with some quite excellent acting and a thought-provoking twist. As a light-hearted comedy it works well and it should do well.

Director:

Released on: March 15

☆☆☆☆



John Travolta hanging in there

Restoration

Liz Bougerol's mental faculties are insulted



Meg Ryan although in her forties did not need Restoration

Hollywood is lucky video cameras weren't around in the 17th century – a minute-by-minute account of all twenty-eight odd years of the Restoration would've been shorter and more entertaining than the new version. *Restoration* heralds itself as a history lesson about the period between Charles II's opulent return to the throne and the devastation of the Plague, and although it tries exceedingly hard to paint some Grand Theme about the perseverance of the soul in a world oozing with corruption, perhaps its strongest message is that nobody's career is safe in the movies.

Indeed, sloshing through a plot that would be ludicrous if there actually was one is some fine acting talent. As Merivel, a doctor who tips into decadence after he's hired as veterinary to the Court, and then tips back after losing pretty much everything, Robert Downey Jr. – complete with his trademark puppy-blink – struggles admirably with what has to be one of the most vapid, inconsistent, and downright embarrassing roles in recent film history. Ditching her cotton candy demeanour (in the name of what someone presumably told her was Art) and rival-

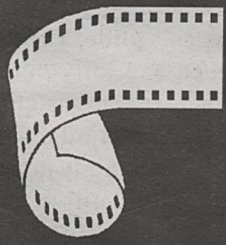
ling Downey in the painfully-affected accent department is Meg Ryan, frolicking about as a poetic Irish headcase who seduces Merivel (for no plausible reason whatsoever) in some Quaker retreat-clinic. Surprisingly, the one who loses least is the one who stood the least to lose: Hugh Grant seems to genuinely relish his cameo (not to mention his really high wig) as the sniffy, effeminate court portrait artist – and he's actually rather good.

It's amazing you can find poor Meg, Robert and Hugh at all amidst the sheer monument to Hollywood wasteculture that forms the film's backdrop. The onslaught of extras, sets, props et al gives it a "*Gone with the Wind* does Las Vegas" feeling that slightly overpowers everything else – everything, I'm afraid, but the dialogue. Still, director Hoffman shouldn't despair: *Restoration* would work nicely – with about 163 minutes edited out and some funky face-morphing effects – as an early 90s Michael Jackson video.

Director: Michael Hoffman

Released on: March 15

☆☆



Beaver Golden Oldies



N° 8: The Blues Brothers (1980)

They hold up gas stations, they have no respect for traffic laws and they play the Blues, they are Jake and Elwood Blues, the Blues Brothers.

Dan Ackroyd and John Belushi used to run a sketch at the end of Friday Night Live during the seventies and it was there that the brothers were born. In fact it proved so successful that they put together a band of top musicians and went on to play gigs all over the world as well as make this film. The plot is thin, but the music is great and the script hilarious. Jake is released from prison to find that his brother Elwood has sold their car, broken up the band and that the orphanage where they grew up is about to be demolished by property developers unless they can come up with enough money to pay the outstanding debts. Even more shocking is that the nun who runs the orphanage refuses to accept dirty money, their only hope is to put the band back together and hold one last enormous gig. However they are hampered by the fact that all the guys who were in the band now have steady jobs and that Jake and Elwood are being chased by the police for

a list of speeding offences. Cue: car chases galore with the police, the band, a country and western band and the Nazi party.

There is little more to say than any film which has Cab Calloway, James Brown and Aretha Franklin appearing in cameo parts must be worth a gander.

Most Likely to love it: Music fans, Naked Gun fans (although it is much more stylish than Naked Gun) and students.

Most likely to hate it: any politically correct organisation (it rubbishes them all).

Best bit: John Belushi removing his sunglasses for the only time in the movie, kissing Carrie Fischer and then dropping her in the mud.

Most likely to own a copy: students, along side their Withnail and I video, and Quentin Tarantino (oh those so familiar suits).

Best Line: "It's one hundred and ten miles to Chicago, we've got a full tank of gas, it's dark and we wearing sunglasses. Hit it."

SAS

Available from any disreputable video retailer at a ridiculously low price.



Jake and Elwood Blues

Photo: Library

Sheer drop Ash on ULU

James Crabtree exposes paedophile ring

Those were the days my friend, I though they'd never end. Oh, and what it is to be young! Because, I went out tonight, and there were people who were young and alive. In fact, there were far too many people who were far too young and just a touch too lively for comfort. Were these people on drugs? Not likely. These people are too young to be old (?), cynical and twisted. They smiled. Ahhh.

And why? These young, the beautiful and the brave are out in force to see Ash; purveyors of youth, beauty and nice little cross over chart ditties. Ash, understand, are very young too. Younger than most of you decrepit students, that is to say. And two months OLDER than me. So, stop complaining, Grandad.

First, the audience is treated to **Scheer**. Until such time as My Bloody Valentine can be bothered to make a song or two, there is still a need for people who can do that which MBV used to do. Garbage nearly pulled it off, but not quite. Scheer, on the other hand, could be just the ticket. That is, if they ditch their lead singer, who insists on accompanying interestingly shimmering guitar with a caterwaul worthy only of the most pained feline. **Ash** suffer no such problems. Indeed, their recent output has begun to look a little too sugary, with a superfluity of melody verging on the trite. Yet, this evening, their hearts don't look quite in it. Of course, their mad bass player (now with short, orange hair) wobbles violently around the stage in a decidedly energetic fashion. And they play all of their good songs. And the crowd go absolutely ape shit. But, there remains a sad lack of sparkle to the performance: no *joie de vivre*. The audience still gets to revel in the unadulterated energy of the old stuff; *Jack*

Names the Planets and *Kung Fu* have lost none of their raw power. It is the new material, though, which seem to be left looking kind of toothless.

It would be a sad state of affairs if the chaps, who have not yet even made one album, have been struck down with rock cynicism so young in their career. I mean, it took the Beatles several false starts before they started to make really good albums. Most truly great bands achieve such a title through longevity; they hang around just long enough, and no more. What hope is their for their front man Tim Wheeler? He has, after all, spent a mere 19 years on our fair planet. Will he have turned into Leonard Cohen by his mid twenties? And by 30? I personally can forgive any band who walks on stage to the backing tune from Star Wars. Long live nihilism.

Now, more than ever seems it sweet to die. And those were the days my friend. We thought they'd never end. **James Crabtree**

Artist: Foo Fighters

Single: Big Me

Foo Fighters. Dave Grohl. Nirvana? 1992. Say no more. Enough said, wise words. For all the cows? Nice ditty, oh yes. **Big Me**—small song. Short? Indeed. Sweet? Oh no, no. They talk of a resemblance—The Byrds, but no. No Byrds. Here we be track numero uno, ooooo spirally linear. Sounds? Purchasing blue cheese from a supermarket. You *will* buy more. Elevator. Dull. Pleasant. Amiable. My friend. Touring they be. Asia they are. 'Nam. 10 GI dollar—sucky fucky. 10 clicks to checkpoint

Dosed Up

Exclusive interview with D.O.S.E.

"I caaannt seem to pluug myself in ..."drawls Mark E Smith from The Fall as only Mark E Smith can, to the techno backing supplied by a group of Manchester lads calling themselves D.O.S.E.

I spoke to Simon Spencer from D.O.S.E. last week in a live audio link-up all the way from Manchester to *The Beaver* office (in other words, on the phone) so what does D.O.S.E. stand for? Is it Death On Spiked Es? "Well, it could be, sometimes, it's just a drugs related sort of name". Mmmm clearly. Does this show up in the music? Well to be honest, I don't think there's any type of music that you couldn't say was drugs related in some kind of way. Except perhaps Barry Manilow... mind you what sort of



Guess who farted

Photo: Coliseum

person would actually listen to Barry? Makes you think doesn't it?

I digress; *Plug Myself in* is actually a really great tune; the clanking, screaming, techno sound of overhead projectors falling from a great height and squashing unsuspecting androids (Or whatever Alan Mustafa would say!) over

which Mark E Smith does his stuff, and it all fits together surprisingly well. But what the hell was it like to work with Mark E Smith? Is he as much of a miserable old git as he sounds and looks "Well no, actually he was quite a nice bloke" admitted Simon, "everyone told us that he would be a nightmare to work with, but actually he was really cool". So he did what you told him to then? "Well, um, no. He just sort of did what he wanted to do, and we did the rest." So looks like he might be a miserable old git despite what they say! "But it all seemed to work out quite well". All credit to them, it certainly did.

One little gripe is that this is a two part CD and there's just the one track remixed about 300 times! Still, Simon tells me that this was the record company's idea, so I suppose we can let them off. Look out for this one, it could be big, and if not, look out for there future singles, provisional plans for which have already started, and include a proposed guest vocal from Robbie Williams! Don't forget to wear your Parker with a fluffy hood, Robbie, you don't want to be left out like Mark was!

Tom Stone

Charlie. Gook at 10 o'clock. Incoming! Beastie Boys and Sonic youth = Friendlies. China. Hot and Sour. South Korea I Belgium 0. Kurt thinks it's all over. It is now. Numero duo tracko—cacko. Stagnant waters. River Beam. Sticklebacks? Finito. Iain Haxton? Ginger peroxide? Twat. Popular? Mmmm. Numero tres. Harvest festival. Grain. Reep what you sow. Seeds? No. Old folk? Tins of soup and rice pudding? I think you all know what I mean. Mmmm? Numero quatro. Jesus. Messiah. Beard. Virgin? Sandals, ah! Fish. Bread. Leprosy. Cross? You will be. Horses for courses. Tea for two. Freeeeee-time. Kum ba yah my lord, mines a pint. Conclusion: The musical equivalent of a glass of water. **WR**

Psyched up, miked up

Psyched Up Janis support Superchunk and Seam at The Garage

Roll up! Roll up! The American Band fair has hit town! Calling all those with a love of semi-obscure yank-indie-rock, and aren't afraid to show it. Are you ready, y'all?

It has been said that American bands have neither concepts of irony, nor subtlety. When Eddie Vedder makes a statement it is teen angst, and not real. When Morrissey sings about how miserable he is, it is real and genuine. Not true sir, not true at all. Tonight, the (surprisingly) large audience is treated to all that is good in American music, and all that we must be thankful for.



Chewy on a bad hair day, but which one? Photo: Steve Gullick

Tonight, the image of Hootie, Phish, STP, Pearl Jam et al, is banished. Let the celebration begin.

That is, with the exception of Psyched up Janis. Despite having a lead singer who manages to pull off a decent impression of Chewbacca on a bad hair day, they begin with promise. This, however, quickly dissipates into tedium; we are treated to a lesson in how not to

make innovative music. Fair enough, some of the tunes were passable; it's just a shame Kurt had thought of them already.

James Crabtree

Artist: Dar Williams

Album: Mortal City

Suzanne Vega I like, Joni Mitchell's pretty damn hot too, so when I actually got sent an album by an up and coming female singer/songwriter instead of the usual pile of desperate-to-make-it indie bands I actually got quite excited. This being my type of thing I listened to it with what must be the kindest of ears it would've found here at *The Beaver*, and I really wanted to like it, and to a certain extent I suppose I do.

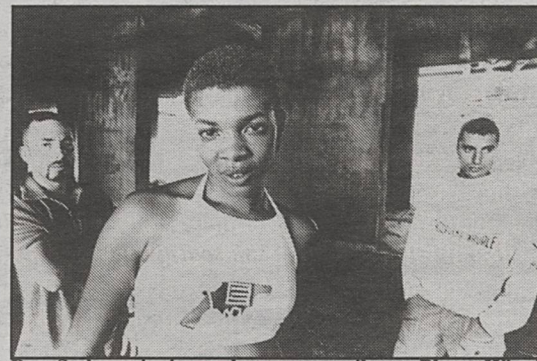
The limited edition package out at the

moment contains her first album and the new *Mortal City*, for the price of one. There's not much difference between the two, both have some very Joni Mitchell type ballads, which are absolutely exquisite, Dar has true talent for capturing a mood. Unfortunately both albums also have a fair splattering of overproduced, rushed, unpoetic, and down right nauseating songs about such things as baby-sitters and eating lunch with some hippies. Dar tries to turn these, through the use of appalling poetry, into deep and meaningful topics, the result being that you are left cringing, and the genius which she displays on the other tracks is overshadowed by these huge piles of turd. **TS**

Artist: Raw Stylus

Album: Pushing Against The Flow

Behind the naff cover there's some serious funk going down here. This mixes 70s soul and disco with 90s Acid jazz grooves. The band successfully harness a range of instruments and sounds including saxophone, guitar, harmonica, piano, drum, flute, scratching and samples. This is all used to create a deep sassy, jazzy funk



Raw Stylus swinging to that summer vibe. Photo: Wired

over which confident, smooth, soaring and soulful vocals glide. The lyrics seem slightly clichéd and jolly but it matters not in this context. This is cheerful and uplifting music very similar to the Brand new heavies. It's certainly not my kind of thing and seems repetitive and grating

after 11 tracks.

However while no songs really stood out or were particularly memorable it's all good swish quality stuff. Recommended, especially if you like this kind of thing. The first real sniff of a

swinging summer. Groovy man! **AM**

In the end there's always Oasis

Artist: Einsturzende Neubauten

Album: Faustmusik

Boom! CLANG! Please note that Mike Flowers Pop will never cover this. It's more industrial music although this time it's experimental and alternative deriving from the original industrial sonic ethos. More sonic architects than songwriters, the German band on albums such as *Five on the open ended Richter scale* and *Strategies against architecture* sought to subvert and expand traditional norms in sound, instruments and presentation. Lead by Blixa Bargeld (guitarist for Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds) (if you bloody mention them one more time I'll cut it out! - *Music Ed*). The band have always been innovative and uncompromising; from trying to destroy the London ICA at one performance with drills through to miking up Blixa's ribs to record the sound of themselves beating up a fellow band member; no price is too much for a good new sound.

The last album *Tabula rasa* and accompanying releases was more varied, strange, arty, lush and layered. The live performance at Clapham Grand was the weirdest, most original, unconventional and interesting one I've ever been to. Sand poured on sheets of metal makes a lovely sound you know!

As ever with the band this is anything but a standard release. It's the music from

the play *Faust: mein brustkorb: mein helm* (*Faust: my thorax: my helmet*) by Werner Sewab. Apparently he's one of the most important and popular contemporary German authors. The play features 'renowned' actors like Kurt Naumann, Hans Peter Minetti and Jenifer Minetti. I hope this all means something to someone.

With everything in German and unaware of the play or its themes all significance was lost on me. All I could do was listen. It's really hard to describe what I heard. There's no tracks in the normal sense. There's excerpts of text linked and accompanied by a wide range of sounds. All the instruments were especially made with props (tables, chairs and books etc.) from the set of Faust's study. It all starts with a low throbbing noise like a broken plane engine or blowing down a pipe. What follows is a mass of creepy discordant thumps and crashes, haunting and gentle twangs and much more. The text is talked, sung, shouted, gibbered and screamed. It's all very weird and avant garde.

To be honest this is all needs to be approached with an open mind. It's not easy listening or party music but does art always need to be fun? It's a million miles in form, content and style from anything supposedly alternative today. A timely reminder of the tribal, unique and human creation that is music. Try it and you might be pleasantly surprised. If not ... well it'll make a change from Oasis. **AM**

Artist: Tripping Daisy

Album: i am an ELASTIC FIRECRACKER

The title of Tripping Daisy's new album "i am an ELASTIC FIRECRACKER" amazes the casual observer with its highly amusing and original use of capitals and lower case letters which are echoed in the song titles "PriCK", "baNg"!!? The music carries on in a similar vein, although without the dubious wit.

Slightly disorientating, the obligatory sea of guitars underpinned by an almost neolithic bass and drum combination sets an atmospheric background for the unusual and surprisingly subtle lyrics ... Tim Delaughter's voice, razor

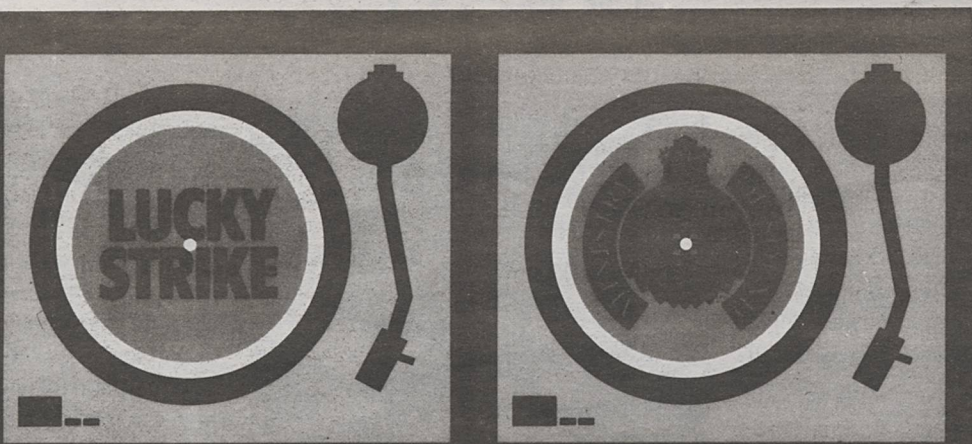
sharp and arcing across the guitar heavy soundscape brings to mind almost immediately the likes of Jane's Addiction and Porno for Pyros ... so much so that you almost expect him to break into a chorus of *Been caught stealing ...* and often wish that he would. Other noticeable influences are Smashing Pumpkins, Pavement and Dinosaur Jr. The album is generally turgid and homogeneous in nature however, only one or two tracks standing out; notably *Raindrop* and *Step Behind*.

This album is an interesting insight into the derivative nature of the American alternative scene that makes you glad for the Brit-pop likes of Blur (and to a lesser extent Oasis!).

Fred Scorfe



Feelin' lazy like Tripping Daisy Photo: John Falls



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**Spirited
away**

Artist: Sacred Spirit

Single: Winter Ceremony

Take one measure of *Pan Pipe Moods*, add two spoons of *Enigma*, stir well and out comes *Winter Ceremony* (Tor-Cheney-Nahana, actually) – the new single taken from the Sacred Spirit album. As originally haunting as the rest of the album, this is another magical piece of music. Sung by genuine native Americans, the rhythm is irresistible (I've played it for the last five hours). It will transport your soul to the vast expanses of North America, and fly you over them at a smooth pace. No translation of the lyrics is provided, but they are emotionally moving nonetheless. Listen to *Winter Ceremony* and let your deepest feelings overcome you.

James MacAonghus

Artist: Hum

Single: Stars

American indie bands that I have encountered recently generally seem to have a total lack of originality, and simply seem to do second rate impressions of Pearl Jam or Nirvana. Don't they understand that what we need is something new? Well these guys certainly do. *Stars* has a spark of genius, there's something completely brilliant about the sea of distorted guitar, which makes no concessions to commerciality, this is pure unrestrained post-grunge heaven. The vocals are awe inspiring: "... she's missed the train to Mars. She's out there counting stars". Also check out the album: *You'd Prefer An Astronaut*, it'll take you to another planet!

Tom Stone

Artist: Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds with PJ Harvey

Single: Henry Lee

More murder and woe courtesy of 'Nasty Old Nick'. This is the second single from the stunning *Murder Ballads* album. It's another duet, this time with Polly Harvey. The roles are also switched: whereas before Kylie Minogue was the victim here Nick swallows his own medicine. In the song Polly's advances are rejected by Nick who is smitten with another and he pays the price. It makes perfect sense that Polly sings this one as she's often described as the female Nick Cave. Her smoky, croony tones are the perfect match for Caves. The song is a beautiful, catchy and sweeping piano based ballad that offsets the horror of the content. Dramatic, memorable and very, very good.

The second track is a raucous bastardized version of the traditional song *Froggie Went a Courting* (whatever that is!). It's a strange contrast which highlights Nick's diversity. This violent folk explosion with it's noisy crescendo is recalls Cave's last band The Birthday Party. The last track *Knoxville Girl* is less immediate and a bit of a let down. It's a pleasant country and western type track with twanging acoustic guitar courtesy of James Johnson of Gallon Drunk.

This is a good single but the b-sides are disposable but interesting nevertheless. To be honest you'd be better off buying the album. Murder never sounded so pleasant on the ears. Shocking.

Alan Mustafa

Hard hitting Holmes

Alan Mustafa's Gone for this one

Artist: David Holmes

Single: Gone

OH ... this is lovely. Taken from his nicely titled and much acclaimed album *This film's crap let's slash the seats* is this new single. The original and edit versions utilise the luscious vocal talents of Sarah Cracknell (from St Etienne, whose single *Like a motorway* Holmes remixed). It's got a deep trip hop beat and is awash with the ghostly and layered vocals. Dramatic, emotional and timeless.

For once the remixes really do something for the song. The best is by Lord



Dishy David ducks deluge Photo: James Fry

Sabre himself, Andy Wetherall. It's very Sabres of paradise; all haunted dancehall menace. It draws the song out adding a harder beat, discordant organ pulses and unsettling bursts of trumpet that recall the Sabre's classic *Wilmot*. The other mixes are good too and make the song even sparser, spookier and more mellow.

Such sublime beauty reminds me of the Cranes, Bark Psychosis and that post-rock movement of a few years back. Holmes utilises the best of this and adds more dynamic beats. Don't slash the seats but sit in them for a gentle aural massage. This is music to smoke, make love, dream and even listen to. Stunning.

AM

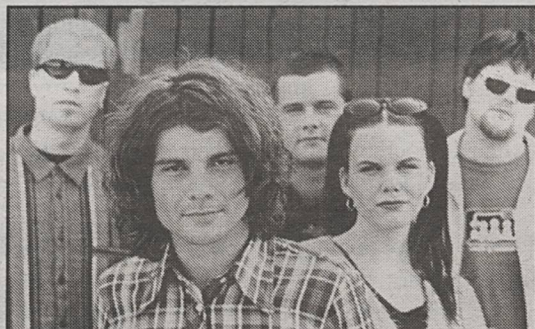
Artist: The Wannadies

Single: How Does It Feel?

The Wannadies are f*cking brilliant, they deserve to be very very big, although in the uncertain music industry who knows?

How Does It Feel is yet another piece of blistering indie pop perfection from their stunning album *Be A Girl*, buy it now and prepare to be happy. This single is released in the middle of their UK tour; I managed to catch up with them

a couple of times, once when they supported Frank Black at the Astoria, and a second time at The Garage where they headlined, and put on a stunning show. At the Astoria I managed to get



Wonderful Wannadies Photo: Steve Double

a few words with Fredrick, the bassist, before they went on. I asked him whether he thought that they fitted in with the Brit Pop scene over here (They are from Sweden) "Not really, we're different, we're a lot better!". Okay, nothing like a bit of self promotion! But for once I actually agree, the Wannadies are a breath of fresh air, and a taste of summer.

Before I left Fred to prepare for the gig, I couldn't resist asking him whether the song on their album *Dying For More*

was about wanting a new drug, Fred was quick to deny this however: "Our drugs are *Hooch* and love!" Well if that's what creates music like this who's complaining?

TS

Spaced Out Neighbourhood Madness

Artist: Space

Single: Neighbourhood

Four scouse lads who appear to have taken a large swig from a bottle marked "Vintage Specials", and ska-ed their way into the stratosphere. Not a million million miles from Madness's *Our House*, this, but kind of extended to cover the whole street viz "in number 69 there lives a transvestite he's a man by day and a woman by night" Very suburban, and all that. It bounces along happily enough, with the kind of densely-packed drawing which means you notice a new couplet with every listen eg rhyming "local



Who lives in a Space like this? Photo: Gut Records

vi-car" with "serial kill-er" is pretty typical. There's also a weird trance-ish remix on the b-side. God, I've just heard a spanish guitar and castanets.

Nevertheless, it's pretty accessible really – the chorus does tend to stick in your head after a couple of listens. Neo-ska revival? It must be fun being the vanguard of a movement that hasn't even been created yet. You really have to hear it to believe it, and even then maybe you won't be quite convinced. If you're a boring git, give it some Space.

After 15 listens, I conclude that there is a definite Egyptian influence.

TM

Artist: Hooker

Single: The Fear

Hey, kids. Look how cool this band are. "They live in North East London," swaggers the press release. As if we give a shit. "They sound like the Beatles in a ruck with Slade, or Elvis crossed with The Small Faces, and their hobbies include betting shops, making tank tops look cool, and sleaze." Hmmm. So everyone, Hooker are cool, alright?



"Look No Fans!" Photo: Martyn Goodacre

Then there's the cover, which is an unnecessarily drowned naked man face down in a bath, alongside a crap (but ace) seventies radio, some old school trainers and an Etcha-Sketch (remember them?).

Clearly these are all carefully orchestrated credentials of cool, but even if it is a wee bit artificial, so is Camden. And this is still quite a passable, fairly neutral indie punk-pop chug along. Nice and peripheral really. But, the one genuine element of cool is that the swooning B-side, "Lilly is a Drifter" pisses all over the title track, which is always a good sign. They're probably going far. Make way for the next Blutones. IH

Artist: Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and Michael Brook

Single: Night Song

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and Michael Brook have produced a westernised version of Pakistan's Qawwali music (the traditional non-stop vocals would be too tedious to our ears) and it ain't bad. It still retains its definite Eastern flavour over a Western rhythm that makes it easy-to-listen and thought-provoking at the same time. The other tracks on the single seem to drone on forever, but *Night Song* itself is (dare I say it) quite a catchy tune. If you want something soft and ambient (albeit vocal), this single will enhance your apparent culture level no end.

JM

Artist: T.S.S.

Single: Lust For Life

Most people will be aware of the original of this song by Iggy pop. Fewer will know US/German industrialists T.S.S. Unlike other recent industrial reviews here we have the worst style of this genre: industrial metal. To be fair to them here they've taken the song and given it a competent thumping tribal industrial vocals and suitably manic vocals. But on the whole it's a pretty tame and straight cover. It all begs the question "What's the point?". Sadly things don't improve on their own material. The naffly titled *'Metalurgy'* starts more promisingly, all slow clanking and menacing. However it fails to build on the tension and ends up in crap metal territory. It reminds me of the sad decline of the once glorious Die Krupps into metal; a tragic waste. Industrial music's day may be long gone but there's still a lot that can be done with the formula (see Front 242). Unfortunately too many bands seem to want to follow the metal path. Rock music is dead, why are so many talented people dancing with it's corpse. AM

The Secret Election Diary of Lan Dam (Aged 11)

Lan the man and his election plan

This week our secret diarist has managed to acquire the secret diary of a prominent first year and human rights campaigner, ever popular resident of High Holborn, Lan Dam. This extract comes from the election week when tensions were high and accusations flew. He, however, remained calm and objective. Read on for a unique insight into the life and psyche of a political heavyweight.

Sunday February 25

My mission to become the head of the whole world is going extremely well. I have told everyone at High Holborn that Cooper is a racist and that Tom Smith dyes his hair ginger. They are both fakes. I am the only true representative candidate in all of the elections.

I was sitting in the bar at Rosebery with my good friend Anal 'smiler' Sanderatne discussing Harry Houghton aka Chris Cooper. Does no one understand that this is just an alias? When Christine Wright approached me for some election advice (as does everyone), I told her that he was a member of the Norman Tebbit fan club and no one should be voted in with those views.

Cooper and Smith attacked me next to the lifts with their minder, Howard 'five bellies' Wilkinson. Luckily my intellectual sharp mind defeated them all. It is just so underhand to get Howard's girlfriend to attempt to trap me.

Monday February 26

Awoke at 3am when Baljit called, "Lan, quick put flyers under every door, there will be someone round at 9am to discuss them with the residents". I immediately went all around the rooms. I stopped only a few times to draw swastikas on Chris Coopers posters and tell all of my friends that he is a racist. I am just so popular around this residence, Anna Taylor loves me the most and I think that she has pretty nice bum.

8am: Aggression is my middle name. I have been practising my bowing technique. I am sure now that I will be able to put my stickers on peoples shoes all day.

Today there was a meeting to discuss the fact that Chris Cooper has life membership to the BNP. Apparently he's concerned that I warned the electorate of this fact. Admittedly, I have no proof of his racism, but my self help book 'Winning is Everything' says that you have to slag off someone to prove that you are a man of the people. Cooper got all of his British friends to disqualify me. I handled the committee brilliantly, they asked me, "Did you say Chris was a racist", I carefully ducked the question and said "yes". All my mates beat Cooper up and he withdrew his complaint.

The hustings at High Holborn were held today. Baljit's outline of his five year plan for the demolition of the union was sublime. I had to apologise to the nasty racist Chris Cooper. I said 'I'm sorry to Chris because I said he was a racist, but now I know that he's not, so it's cool'. My self help book 'Being in Control' says that I did the right thing, apologising just the right amount to get away with it, but not enough to clear his name. I truly am the rightful successor to Baljit's throne.

Tuesday February 27

Soon I will be a powerful person. Baljit told me that if I worked hard enough I could take over LSE by 1997 (just in time for when the Chinese take over Hong Kong). Not sure what working hard means though it's easier just to beg for votes. It's true, I'm an electoral gigolo, just like people think! Spoke to someone today. I know I got their 4th preference because I promised to give them a blow job, but I think I'll get their third because I'm going to swallow. It's great, in some ways I'm even worse than Baljit!!!

Wednesday February 28

Ali Imam is really under pressure now, so I licked the

sweat off his forehead and then he felt much better. Ali is going to win. With Baljit's guidance, he, James and I cannot fail. People voted in the halls today. There was confusion over who I was. I can't believe it. It's all because that left wing scum party put up posters saying 'Lan the man who can'. At least they didn't steal my other slogan that I used in hall elections 'Lan Dam: rent boy'.

Elections are such fun. I should have stood for hall president before. Now I have to stand in union elections because otherwise my two favourite people, Barbara and Chris Parry won't notice me. They were both presidents of halls, and now everyone loves them. Barbara and I are destined to be together - she's from Sardinia and I love sardines. As for Chris, I love anything that sounds like his name, crisps for example. I only wish that Cooper wasn't a racist so that I could love him too.

Thursday February 29

Woke up this morning with blisters on my tongue. God knows where they came from. Today is the final day of voting I must try my hardest to win. I practiced my persuasive tactics in front of the mirror this morning. Bowing and saying please at a rate of three times a second can become extremely difficult unless you're a hardened expert like me. I know I shall be victorious, especially as if I am not Baljit and Ali might kick me out of their gang.

4 pm: This is an emergency entry. My mentor is gone. Who will tell Ali and I what our policies are now that Baljit is gone? No one can ever replace him in my heart. Enough of this, ok? Now I must win, ok? I can't let the others down. Baljit came to my rescue so well when I said that Cooper was racist, that I feel I must repay his selflessness. Maybe I can lick the sweat off his forehead too once my blisters have gone down. I can't wait for the count tonight. It will prove that democracy still lives when Ali wins. If they count Baljit's votes I know that he will have won too.

11:30 pm: Break out the black espadrilles! Ali lost and Baljit would not have won anyway. I know that their sadness will be erased though, when I emerge victorious. I have done everything that my self-help book 'Success his in the mind' said. I have bowed, I have begged, I have offered sexual favours and really been the rent boy. I cannot fail.

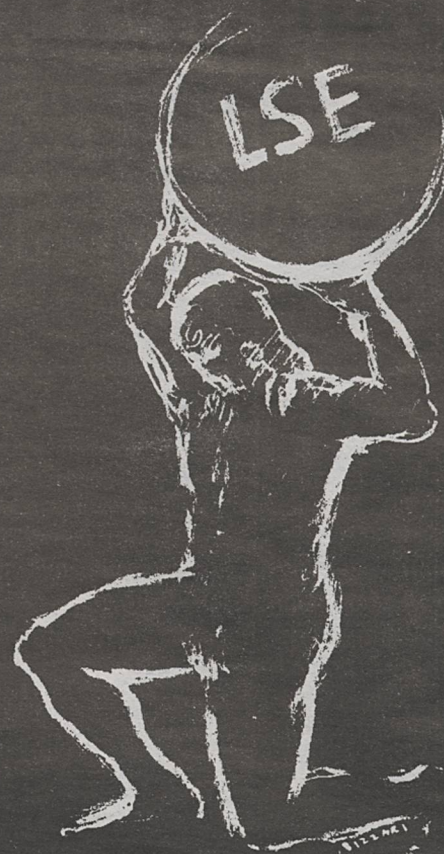
Now I am going to the Law ball. I have bought a new waistcoat for the occasion. Baljit says that a potential emperor of the world must make a statement in what he wears. Going to the Law ball is my way of saying thank you to the people who voted for me. Usually I don't like to be seen amongst the masses unless I'm begging for votes, but I do think that my loyal supporters deserve a great reward. Had a shower tonight as Anna Taylor has promised me a shag if I win.

Friday March 1

My God - what is happening to me. I have made such a huge mistake, standing with Baljit and Ali has lost me such respect. I now realise that in fact they were both relying on me to get them elected. I didn't even come in the top six as Ed Saper would have beaten me anyway. There must be constitutional change. The LSESU needs a 'Slander Officer' or at the very least a commissioner for begging for votes.

Saturday March 2

Went to the Chuckle Club tonight, I didn't understand any of the jokes - so they must be racist. However I did pick up some useful tips for when I meet Anna later. Apparently girls take it on the chin and I should masturbate three times before I go out (so I'm half way there already). Good old Martin Lewis not only did he completely misjudge the elections but also his audience. Little does he know that I am in the Barbara queue before he is.



Expose yourself

Fatim Bizzari says
culture schmulture

"When I hear anyone talk of Culture. I reach for my revolver" - Hermann.

So let's just hope the LSE has a slightly better attitude towards the word than our friend Hermann (don't know who he is either).

With the LSE standing at the heart of this metropolis, our university is one of the finest examples of race, ethnicity, values and cultures all boiled into one melting pot. Simmering and bubbling, we represent the finest stew there is. But before I appeal to our culinary cravings there's just this other thought, nagging away at me. Culture schmulture, what I really want to know is: WHO ARE WE? It's a bit of a sad question but you know what I mean.. who are we in the larger sense; on that "macro-level", what is it we can draw from all that each and everyone of us has to offer?

You see, I have a vision, it's this desire to grasp on to something solid, bring what each one of us, from all our humble origins, have to offer. Okay, okay maybe "we" is a bit excessive here; perhaps I am a lone rider in my quest to feel that there is a peak to this potential mountain of ideas, thoughts and visions. In trying to achieve a pinnacle that dreaded word "culture" springs to mind again.. and I think of all the successful ways we could represent this - through the members of the LSE, the vast range of societies, *The Beaver*... and then I think of one more... of the creative, imaginative aspects of students out there... random, fleeting thoughts and ideas that come to life through mediums such as art, photography, music and creative writing.

And what of heavier, nagging, conflicting views that hold just as much weight in this form? What of those? How much opportunity do we have to randomly drop this form of expression.. are the infinite murmurs each of us wish to say to be channelled, surveyed, kept simmering in that cauldron. Or should we allow them to overboil once in a while? Could each one of us contribute a feeling, an emotion, a view, a criticism; in doing so, in attempting this simple act of hearing and respecting what each one of us has to say, will we be able to get closer to the overall picture?

Who knows... all I can say is, given a chance to EXPOSE yourself, would you dare? And if each one of us took the time to offer even a simple thought or image, how much closer would we be to exposing that huge power, relentless yet evasive, LSE culture?

Rowing boys triumph with their small cox

Kok Lye

The signs were bad on Saturday. Murky weather seemed ready to cloud our prospects as much as our amateurish rowing. Waiting 2 hours for the essential 8th man (who never turned up; luckily he was replaced by a nordic strongman) was unnerving. Maxim energy bars were handed out, silly dogs were given sticks to chase after, The Economist was read and reread while heartless banter was undertaken – anything to calm the nerves, to put THAT thought out of our mind: “What if we finished last?”

We shouldn't have worried. Even though we started out on our practice run 2 hours late, we rowed better than normal. As usual our fearless cox, Sir “SET-IT-UP!”-Bob was at his ear splitting best, his perfectly orchestrated commands sending us into raptures of synchronised obedience. Of course our wonderfully underused boat was still pitching like a drunken rugby player in heat, but somehow we managed to keep calm and

SEND THE BOAT (ie increase speed without capsizing)

After a slight screwup at the starting line, we were on our way. The glorious cheers that emanated from our hearts (“No pasaran!”, “Ils ne passeront pas!” and “Toda por la puta patria”) seemed to convey upon us an uncharacteristic LSE-transcendent energy, an intoxicating vigour that is lacking in the sad self-important lives of our colleagues in the BLPES. Then a horrible truth began to dawn upon us: Was that boat catching up on us? Was that the boat that started 20 seconds after us? Was it really coming closer? My God, were those women?

They passed us effortlessly, without even a smirk or smile to rub in the embarrassment. No worries, mate – this was after all only our 2nd race, and the 6th or seventh time in the boat. And these women were strong – christ's sake, half of them were bigger than me (according to Nick, who seemed to have an intimate knowledge of the UL Women's Team). So we carried on rowing – for about 14 more minutes. Before we knew it, it was over.

Well, not really – Magnus had to go

fishing, and he caught a crab. Not his fault, really. All of us, being young and full of social justice ideas, had decided to adopt a leftist tendency that placed the boat well away from the centre. As a consequence, many of us (especially me) found it rather difficult to translate our testosterone-charged frustration into something approximating a 1'50" stroke-rate. Next time we'll get a good dose of Blair before we get into the boat.

The End. Glum faces all around. People left immediately after the pep-talk. Those who stayed (Neil, Magnus, Fernando and myself) spun prayer wheels and recited the modified Lotus Sutra “I hope we were not last, I hope we were not last...” We waited, we watched England beat Wales, and then we waited some more. M. and F. left. 5 mins. passed, then 10. At 5.03 pm, the results were released. I managed to capitalise on the flexibility of my torso to wriggle myself to the front of the crowd. Lo and behold, what do I see with my incredulous eyes:

No.	College	Time	Position
30	LSE	14'46"	1

35 UMDS 14'46" 2

After screaming and shouting like a madman (Neil probably thought I was just being myself), I managed to convey the message to Neil. We rejoiced and said our sincere, silent sorrys to UMDS (who, I think, by virtue of their later position in the alphabetical order ended up in second place) and then Neil said, “Let's go. There are no prizes”.

Well, of course Lye has to be materialistic and so he turns back outside the boat-house and rushes in just in time to see them giving out prizes. I drag Neil back in — “Men's open eights, in 1st place we have the U L t e a m ! ” W H O A R ! ! , HURRAARRRGHHH!!! (Men roaring). “In the women's open eights we have UCL!” AAAAAhhh! EEEEEHhh!(women screaming). “In the men's novice eights, the winner is LSE!”

SILENCE.

Enter Lye and Neil.

Exeunt all the dickheads who said they could beat us.

NO PASARAN.

José's girlfriend snaps BUSA title from LSE Hoopsters

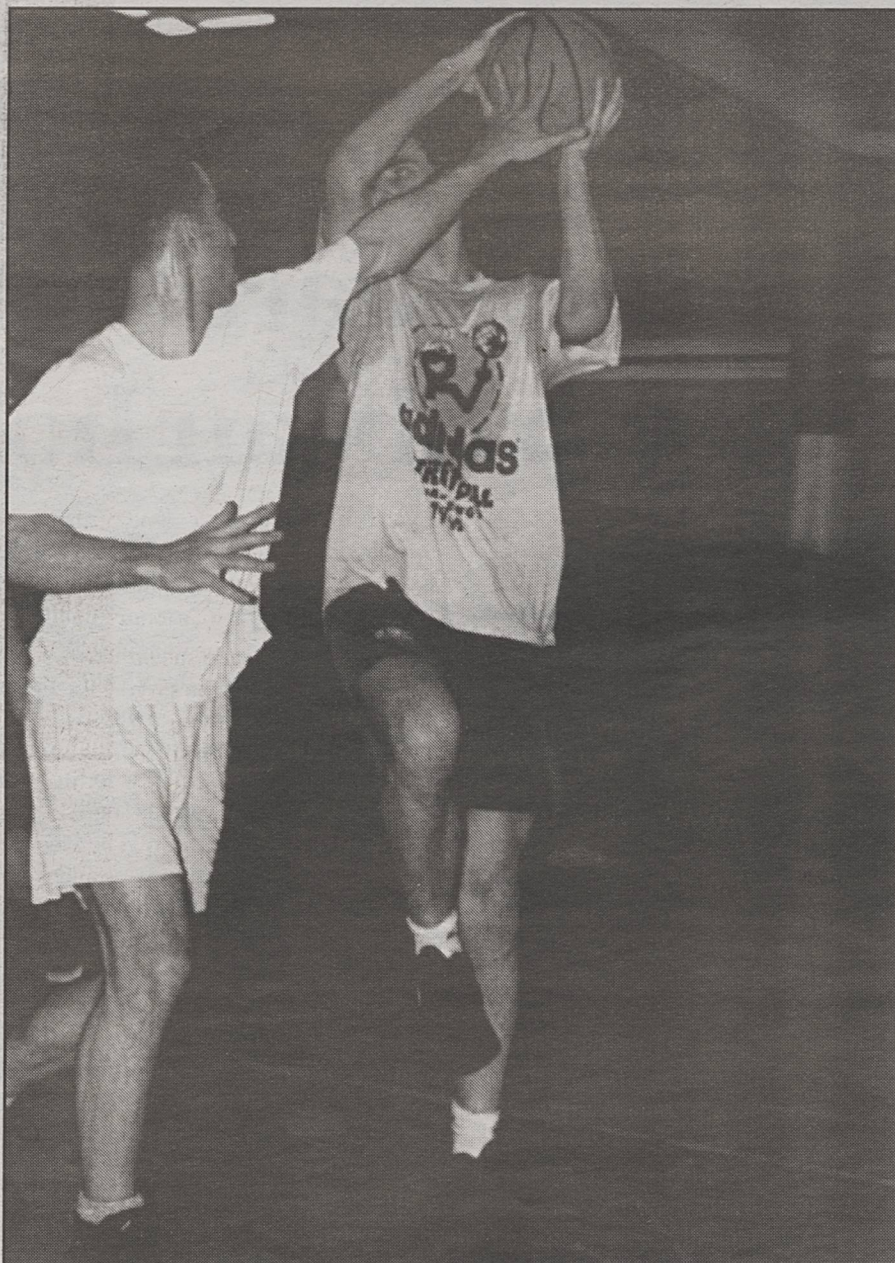
Pre-marital pressure prevented forward José Fernandez from playing at the BUSA tourney finals. Despite being promised a private suite at the team's five star accomodation and a first class seat (with Leo von Bredow) on the train to Newcastle, Fernandez opted for a weekend of intimate tranquility, bidding to become the fourth member of the LSE squad to be engaged. Just one word from your teammates: SHE HAD BETTER BE HOT.

That said, spirits were still highly positive. The first game in pool play was an 82-78 overtime loss to Crewe. LSE (the first half champions of the tourney) took a 44-34 halftime lead, but Crewe rallied at the start of the second half, as LSE took a well deserved nap after halftime. LSE Coach Andy Staab commented on the disappointing loss, “No one ever beats me on strategy”. The Athenian duo of Andrea Vourloumis and Paris Yeros combined for 49 points to lead LSE, while Andy Robb added 11 points.

After the loss, the team went out to sample some of the local sights of Newcastle. Leo “More Pints than Points” von Bredow was the ringleader for the night – ‘I want to eat’, he eloquently stated, leading the Beaver 12 on a sample of Geordie nightlife. This was despite Bret Rosen's attempts to ruin the night, by wearing trainers.

Bright and early the next morning, after a healthy ‘fry-up’, LSE took on Surrey; the Beavers won this one, 54-53, after blowing an eight point halftime lead. Vourloumis scored a lot; the effects of the night before were evident on von Bredow's and Jay “No Toler-

ance” Bernstein's faces. This set up an elimination game between Swansea and



The winning team ... not

Photo: Erik Wenevi

LSE, with the winner getting a berth in the championship round, and a chance to play for the championship of Great Britain. Once again LSE jumped out to a comfortable halftime lead, 42-35. But in the end, the Beavers ran out of gas (as sheep chasing seemed to give the Welsh side a distinct fitness advantage). This was especially evident at the free throw line...nice airball, Legend. Bret Rosen led LSE with 20 points, and Christoph Raatz provided a spark in the second half, but it wasn't enough. LSE fell 84-75.

All things considered, it was still considered a good showing – as various Beavers pondered the season over a pint of bitter and 10p bagels at their favourite Brick Lane watering hole. LSE placed fifth in the country, even without the services of point guards Bill Sanford and David Leibowitz, who suffered a sprained ankle in the first half of the Crewe game (and then cuddled up in bed for the rest of the night). Jay Bernstein only forced his teammates to be late for one train... “I had to take a shower, guys”. Von Bredow was selected to the all-England collegiate team (We saw the little bribe you slipped the coach, Leo), while Vourloumis was among the top scorers in the tournament.

LSE is still competing for the London League championships. Last Tuesday, the Beavers trounced UCLMS by a tally of 120-40. Oliver Rey scored a bundle, as did Staab and Ahmet Mesinoglu. UCLMS did manage to limit Vourloumis to just 7 points. The Beavers played for the London League title, last Friday, and were clear favourites to take the trophy, especially considering that the second team looked to be the main opposition.



As the term draws rapidly to a close and we all look forward to over a month of freedom from LSE, Harry can't help but anticipate the shit-fest that approaches in June in the shape of the exam period. Five weeks await us that offer us a reasonable facsimile of hell on earth, punctuated only by needless Friday night open-air piss ups, where everyone gets needlessly rendered and chucks lumps over everyone else in order to provide some kind of release from oligopoly and game theory.

The exam period really is ridiculously annoying, starting about now as most students decide to photocopy whatever literature they can possibly lay their hands on in the library, regardless of whether it's relevant or not.

This caused me great problems last year, as I tried to revise for a Stats exam with the help of a lengthy journal on "Cultural and religious change in North Yemen farming communities". Trying to copy past exam papers is useless though, as some smart arse inevitably decides to hide every important paper in circulation, save for a solitary copy of the 1987 "Witchcraft in the 18th century" paper. This is no doubt useful to the LSE druids and sorcery society, but offers scant comfort to anyone else.

And the worst thing about exams is that everyone seems intent on convincing you of how little work they've done. Whilst the honest few admit to shitting themselves and working like dogs, the majority choose to be sly in attempting to preserve their images. It's easy to tell who they are, as they inevitably overdose on Prozac and Proplus whilst working deep into the night, leaving them with eyes the size of golf balls for a month, and making them explode with vitriolic rage if anyone so much as farts in their company.

Pity also the LSE male community. Alas, menstrual cycles don't fit in brilliantly with exam timetables. Ordinarily, the female solution to stress would be to go shopping and eat several thousand chocolate doughnuts. But while waistlines continue to expand, wallets inevitably contract towards the end of the academic year, and so trips to Oxford Street are out of bounds. This means that everything is now blamed on men, from the destruction of the Ozone layer to the splitting up of Take That.

The one saving grace is that no-one properly checks your identity in LSE exams. As a result, I've thought up a cunning plan, whereby a Chinese PhD-possessing statistical genius sits my Econometrics exam, putting me on the road to a 1st and definite head-hunting from top city firms!

And life just wouldn't be the same if I didn't mention our American friends in closing. Whilst everyone else panics over Easter, our Stateside buddies decide to set off on voyages of self discovery across Eastern Europe, backpacking to various exotic foreign climes.

It's all right though, because the LSE system really is fair; You can be as thick as pigshit, do no work, wander off travelling and still get 2.1s providing that you fulfil certain criteria. It's amazing what a cheque for ten grand can do...

Rimmers reach the playoffs

Yianni can't reach the top shelf

Yianni Hadoulis

With the season almost over, the Seconds can afford to sit back for a while and admire their work. Given the humble beginnings of the team in October, nobody expected them to reach the playoffs. Not only that, but with two victories in the next two matches, the Seconds will join the Firsts in an all-LSE ULU final, a rare achievement indeed (and then we'll see how good the Firsts really are, won't we?). But what do the players themselves have to say about...well, themselves? *The Beaver* correspondent visited the Seconds' training pit, the Jubilee Sports Centre, to find out.

We first ran into Joe 'Captain America' Shwartz, the eldest of the bunch, who, in the absence of an appointed coach, has emerged from the ranks to lead the team. "Being an American, I was naturally qualified to call the shots around here. I mean, who invented basketball anyway?" said Joe, briefly interrupting his push-ups to talk with us. He was quickly backed by a fellow countryman, Teague 'Strangers in the' McKnight, who, together with Joe, is the only Yankee among a horde of Europeans. When asked about why he cut his famous ginger locks, Teague retorted "It makes me a whole lot more aerodynamic, baby!"

A bit further down the court, we caught David 'Vote for me' Ferrin and Christian 'Playboy' Wurst looking at themselves in

the large mirror on the wall. "We're practicing for the Fashion Show," said David. "Personally, I also need to work on my campaign-winning smile." Christian, in the meantime, looked depressed. "I'll have to move around really slowly," he said, "otherwise I might tear those expensive clothes if

ping at the same time." Damir, aka The Bosnian Bomber, seemed quite willing to help Moshe out. "This is all about team spirit," he said. "Not even I can dunk the ball unless someone passes it to me in the first place".

Finally, we came up to the remaining three Greeks, who were arguing amongst themselves in typical fashion. Ilias 'Lenin' Skannelos seemed to be winning the argument. "Face it, comrades, the ULU tournament is definitely a sorry example of a materialistic organisation exploiting the initiative of impoverished students. But then again, sport is good for you. As for me, I get to sell issues of the *Socialist Worker* in the changing rooms, you can't imagine how much people enjoy reading them after a good workout." By this stage, Andreas and Yianni had



Gónna make you sweat

Photo: Erik Wenevi

I flex my muscles too suddenly." That's when 'Nordic' Nick Latham joined the conversation. "Look, normally I don't give interviews to people who don't come from qualified TV channels, but I'll make an exception in your case." When asked about how he felt after his appearance on BBC2, Nick replied "Actually, it's been hell. Have you tried going to a lecture with a screaming throng of fans following you?"

Moving on, we bumped into 'Killer' Moshe Merdler, who was busy balancing the team's two big guys, Damir and Felix, on each hand. "This is the best exercise I've had since I came back from Israel," he said. "It's hard to stay in shape in a soft country like England. I mean, look at Joe over there. I bet he can't do those push-ups while clap-

given up on Ilias, and had started a basketball game of one-on-one. Andreas soon got the upper hand, and we asked Yianni whether this puts his famous defensive abilities into question: "Well," he said, "Andreas won't evolve into the offensive weapon of the team unless we give him a bit of encouragement, and so I'm letting him win. Plus I prefer to save my energy for where it's needed most." And what about Chris 'No Miss' Anayiotos? "Oh," we were told, "he's at an interview, as usual. Besides, he doesn't need to practice, he's beyond that."

And so ended our day among the Second team. It's nice to see that success hasn't gone to THIS team's head, despite their spectacular results in and out of court; modesty truly is a rare quality these days.

Kenyan safari is better than Caribbean holiday

Abbas Merali

Yes, it's happened. My beloved Kenya have created World Cup history by humiliating the West Indies. Not a fluke, but a sensational 73 run beating. The likes of Odumbe, Tikolo, Karim and Rajib Ali outclassed the little-known Lara, Richardson, Ambrose and Walsh. Kenya have won their World Cup while the rest are still fighting for it. I'm sure the post-match celebrations will not be matched by the eventual winners.

While our boys were celebrating in Poona, India, Houghton Street was buzzing with rejoicing Kenyans - singing, dancing, embracing - making the most of this rare opportunity. The unbelievable had happened and the party was on. With Pakistan losing on the same day, it made it all the more merry for some.

For me personally, it has been a strange feeling watching the heroes on the box. I've

played with and against some of these history-makers. Asif Karim the vice-captain used to be my neighbour and was always considered to be more of a tennis player than a cricketer. I had never imagined that they would one day play in the World Cup, let alone conquer the mighty Windies.

Moving on to the World Cup as a whole, it has certainly added a sparkle to life at the LSE. It has united the various societies, and the debates in the Brunch Bowl between the Pakistanis, Indians, Sri Lankans and sometimes even the local boys (they don't have much to sing about) have been well-contested to say the least. High Holborn these days can be as dangerous as the bomb-threatened underground stations. Wait until the crunch game - India v Pakistan - that should be quite a battle, and no, I don't mean the battle between Tendulkar and Akram or Miandad and Kumble.

The World Cup also brings about an interesting dilemma for some about who to support. Take, for example, a person who was born and grew up in Kenya, has Indian

origin and now resides in England. To add to that, being a Muslim might bring supporting Pakistan into the equation.

Therefore this competition has more than just an entertainment value, it helps one to think about their identity. As Norman Tebbit, the former Tory minister once pointed out, the real 'Test' is not the Test Match, but whether Asians living in England support England or India? Surprisingly it is interesting to notice that a large proportion of the so-called BBCD's (British Born Confused Desis) are supporting India, Pakistan or Kenya rather than England. Perhaps they are 'British Born Cultured Desis' for the duration of this World Cup.

Anyway, don't let World Cup fever affect your exam performance, and when you plan your summer holidays, remember that a Kenyan Safari beats a Caribbean vacation. By the way, the Kenyan society are organising a trip to Alton Towers on the March 16. A great way to celebrate a truly remarkable victory.