

# The Beaver

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## Union deficit slashed by 60%

### Johnson budget places increasing emphasis on commercial services as source of income

By Leo Griffin

Senior Treasurer, Toby Johnson, handled the most important meeting of his sabbatical year last Thursday. This year's budget, the summation of Johnson's plans for the year, passed a packed Union General Meeting with barely an alteration despite its sometimes contentious proposals.

This year the Union has received an increase of 7.15% in its block grant, slightly above the rate of inflation, but £8,000 below the Union's submission to the School. Johnson claims that the Union's costs are rising faster than indexed inflation - this is in part due to the rise in student numbers. The figures support this assertion: the per capita grant has fallen from its 88/89 level of £46.31 to £41.70 this year. Ironically the end of the recession brings gloom to the union - the fall in interest rates will diminish the Union's investment income by some £10,000 this year.

Thus for the second year running the Student's Union will run a deficit. In 1991/92 it is planned that expenditure will exceed income by

£10,958, further reducing the union's reserves. Although the budget remains in deficit it is clear that Johnson has fought to minimise the drain on reserves. This year's deficit is substantially down from last year's figure of £28,405. The possibility exists however that the School will choose to increase the Union's block grant at the forthcoming Standing Committee of the Court of Governors; this would undoubtedly be a triumph for Johnson.

This year's budget is a hybrid of commercial and welfare measures, reflecting the "jack of all trades" nature of the DSG. Hence the thrust is two pronged - Johnson has aimed to increase the revenue and efficiency of Union commercial services to eventually create a surplus, and he has followed his political leanings in continuing to channel more funds into the welfare services.

Three services have received particular attention - the print room has occupied a new room and now has six photocopiers. Previously a major drain on resources, the print room will break even for the first time this year.

Union catering services have also been expanded with the creation of two new venues. "Hackers Bar" will take pressure off the cafe during busy periods and the new bar, "The Underground" will serve as an overflow for The Three Tuns and a venue for ENTS and society functions.

As student poverty increases so an ever larger proportion of the block grant has been allocated to welfare expenditure. Johnson has continued this trend, and in allocating 38% of the block grant to welfare, has managed to give the department its first real increase in two years. Amongst the major beneficiaries in this area are the childcare fund, which will receive a 40% increase on last year, and B.T. which will receive a 90% increase in telephone rentals.

Staff costs have risen by an alarming 33% this year, although this is almost entirely due to the employment of a Union General Manager and a Finance Secretary. Johnson has no doubt that the creation of the two new posts will lead to a more professionally run student union.

In recent years the Stu-



Senior Treasurer Johnson shaves off expenditure Photo: Jon Fenton-fisher

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dent Union Housing Association has been a high profile topic, attracting much sabbatical support. Given the relatively recent launch of the association's first house it is a surprise to see that the DSG seems to have abandoned expansion of the scheme. Although the association is self-funding it relies on Union support for any expansion. Last year the association received £5,000 from the Union. This year

Johnson took the view that the association was not fulfilling its aims of providing low cost housing, and until this problem was resolved no external funding would be provided.

The finance committee this year chose to support cultural societies most heavily, though other societies such as the Lesbian and Gay Society continue to receive strong support. It was the allocation of society budgets

which caused the most debate within the Union - The Left Society has received no funding, in line with the Union's constitutional stance of not funding political societies. Other societies, such as the cycling society felt that they had received inadequate funding. The only successful alteration to the budget proposals was the doubling of the esoteric "Andy Baly" society's budget to £20. The meeting ended after 50 minutes.

# Visions of the future

## Ashworth, Van Hulsten, Zander and Stueuer debate the future of the School

By Julian Sykes

The question as to whether the LSE needs a vision for the future was debated last Monday. The debate, entitled "Does the LSE have a future?", was presented by the Debating Society and the DSG. Speaking for the motion were Dr. Ashworth and General Secretary of the Students' Union, Michiel van Hulsten, while against were Professor Zander of the Law department, and economics reader Max Steuer.

Dr Ashworth argued that since the future was undetermined, it could be affected by action taken now. He suggested that the old strategy of just "muddling through", reacting to events as and when they happened,

could be successful in a generally favourable intellectual climate, and under such circumstances there was little need for a vision. However, he argued that when academics lost control of the policy agenda, during the past five to eight years, the 'muddling through' approach became disastrous and the only course of action was to react to decisions already taken. According to Ashworth, a vision of the future was needed to try and shape future events and regain a degree of influence. Referring to a current revolution in higher education, he stated that higher education should be made more attractive to as yet unrepresented groups, namely minority groups and socio-economic groups C2, D and E,

who were generally not included in the expansion of student numbers witnessed in the 1960's, but are expected to contribute to the doubling of student numbers forecast over the next ten years. In order to achieve this the structure of degree courses methods of access may have to change, Ashworth suggested, and greater support provided since the expansion will occur with no extra money from the government.

Opposing the idea of restructuring LSE and the whole concept of a vision for the future, Professor Zander felt that LSE was fine as it was. He said that in February 1990, Dr Ashworth put forward ideas for a radical

restructuring of the LSE. These proposals included a division of academics into teaching or research, the separation of post and undergraduate sites, an emphasis on interdisciplinary work and turning LSE into a more European institution. These were proposed, said Zander "in a heavy managerial 'Thatcherite' tone". He stressed that there had been no consultation in the formation of Dr Ashworth's proposals. The Vision was announced, he said, and it was declared that there was just a month for responses, constituting an absurdly short period.

As a result of the subsequent furore the process was stopped and working parties have been set up to consider

the proposals in detail over a longer period. Zander stipulated that he was not against ideas for the future, per se, but that Ashworth's ideas amounted to a blueprint, and the "world was littered with failed five and ten year plans."

He suggested that rather than a vision for the future what was needed was organic growth. The second speaker for the motion, Michiel van Hulsten, felt that Ashworth's ideas addressed issues that were at the heart of the LSE. The School, he suggested, needed a radical change in its teaching, and asked whether the best academics were always the best teachers? This was not a Thatcherite position, Van Hulsten argued, but was progressive

as it would lead to a better teaching. There is now a consensus on the need and general direction of change in higher education, according to Van Hulsten, hence supporting many of the proposals for the future was not pandering to the Conservative government.

Rounding up the debate, Max Steuer suggested that managerialist proposals were the most important danger. At the end of the debate the audience was approximately divided on the question as to whether the LSE needs a vision of its future.

## Resurrection of Palestine

By Peter Harrad

The Intifada was a turning point in Middle East politics, the PLO's representative in London claimed last Tuesday. Dr. Aziz Safieh was speaking at the invitation of LSE Friends of Palestine, on the topic "The peace process - what next? A Palestinian Perspective".

Dr. Safieh stated that the prior attempt at talks in 1989 was a result of the Intifada, and it was necessary to study why they failed if the present talks were to succeed. It was, he felt, because America had allowed them "to remain a hostage to the Israeli Domestic Arena", where the process was seen only in terms of intra-Likud politics. America had allowed Israel, the strongest actor, to dominate. Referring to the 1991 summit, Dr. Safieh asserted that the negotiations were tailored to suit Israeli procedural preferences, and that the PLO had been asked to be an invisible player. He also stated that "UK and French involvement was impeded by Israeli intransigence". He claimed that "Madrid will be the political Waterloo of Israel's expansionism."

Dr. Safieh considered what he termed the "diplomatic guerilla warfare that went on in Madrid", describing how, for example, the head of the Palestinian delegation was granted his own car to travel to the summit in, and



Dr. Safieh gives his perspective

how he was granted 22 minutes extra speaking time, against Israeli resistance. He felt these concessions were small but of significant symbolic importance.

He then asked, what was the PLO? He affirmed that it was not only an institution, but also an idea. He felt that Israel had many times attacked the institution to crush the idea; in the process merely making the idea stronger. He stated his opinion that PLO "doesn't have the opposition it deserves", explaining he was a democrat, and that any organisation needs criticism.

He ended by commenting "I personally believe that Palestine is resurrecting; and as you know, we in the holy land have had some experience of resurrection."

Asked about the Palestinian's aims, Dr. Safieh described how the PLO had lowered their expecta-

tions, and now argued only for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to be returned, with a 'corridor' linking the two. He claimed that such a corridor would be on land put down as Palestinian by the 1947 partition plan. He forecast economic success for a Palestinian state, referring to a large body of Palestinian graduates and predicting full employment for these graduates.

Dr. Safieh was then asked about the claim that more Palestinians had been killed by Palestinians in the Intifada than by Israelis. He replied that while earlier on, "there were certain physical eliminations of collaborators", social exclusion was now being adopted as a punishment instead. He admitted that there were "excesses" at first, but stressed his opposition to such acts.

## Old Theatre occupied

By Emma Bearcroft

A motion to occupy Connaught House was discussed at an Emergency General Meeting, following last Thursday's UGM. The emergency motion, proposed by Birinder Kang, called for immediate occupation of Connaught House, country-wide occupations instigated by the NUS, and improvements in student facilities. It came as the result of "severe student poverty" and increasing numbers in Higher Education by the Government. However, a 23-point amendment, submitted by Bob Gross, was voted

in. The amendments included the belief that the administration of the LSE would negotiate, the proposal to establish a task force, and occupation of the Old Theatre instead, until a signed agreement from the Director was forthcoming. The agreement was signed by Dr Ashworth and General Secretary of the Students' Union, Michiel van Hulsten. It read: "In accordance with the motion passed today by a properly constituted Emergency General Meeting of the LSE Students' Union, we the Director of the LSE and the General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union agree to

establish a task force to act swiftly towards remedies of student grievances. We pledge our unstinting efforts to work towards the alleviation of student hardship and the improvement of conditions in higher education both at the LSE and nationally." Delegates to the task force are to be elected at Thursday's UGM. Dominique De-Light of the Left Society said "Though the outcome was not what we wanted, it still showed that even a threat of occupation can get results, therefore we haven't given up yet." The occupation of the Old Theatre lasted for four minutes.

## Bag-rack return considered

By Adrian May

Plans are under consideration to return the bag-rack to the Library, following the inconvenience caused to students by its removal. Michiel van Hulsten, General Secretary of the Students' Union, has discussed with the acting Librarian, Howard Nicholson, plans to place the bag-rack in the basement cloakroom.

The discussions with the Library, which include the School administration, are wide ranging and cover such issues as opening hours, book

damage, and the cloakroom service. The School is planning a time-and-motion study to establish when the cloakroom is in peak demand, and this may lead to extra staffing at these times.

Van Hulsten, who was approached and asked to act by student claims that they want the right to take their bags into the library, and he intends to suggest that metal strips be placed in all books so that theft can be detected. Such a move would reduce pressure on the cloakroom, and Van Hulsten believes that the school should meet the

considerable cost of this measure, as he says they would be the chief beneficiary.

The library are concerned about mutilation of books, and are to run a campaign from 3rd March for two weeks next term, educating students about the costs of book mutilation. The Union has also suggested that the library change its Saturday opening hours to between 12 and 7pm, as library staff report that there are very few users between 10am and 12pm on Saturdays.

# Protestors interrupt N. Ireland Minister

By Hans Gutbrod

A group of Irish nationalists stormed the Old Theatre last Friday afternoon as Peter Brooke, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland was about to address an audience of about 150 LSE students. The lecture which had been organised by the Conservative Association, was on the issue of British policy in Northern Ireland. The six men entered via the balcony, shouted slogans and threw leaflets down to the ground floor. After two minutes the last of the men was forced out by a police officer. Mr Brooke appeared unperturbed by the interruption.

The lecture had been surrounded by strict security measures, including the use of sniffer dogs before anyone was let into the room.

Brooke began by defining the present goal of British policy in Northern Ireland, which consists of bringing terrorism on both sides to an

end. In order to achieve this, he maintained, the terrorists had to be convinced that violence was not a means to achieving their aims. Brooke insisted that this could only be done under the rule of law, as any other measures would mean surrendering to terrorism. The aim of all British measures, according to Brooke, was to ensure that the population in Northern Ireland could live a normal life, but it had to be accepted that there some abnormality would remain.

He admitted that he held a 'spectacular' post in the British Government, something which, in his opinion, was due to several reasons: for him it was important that he liked the people in Northern Ireland; that there was considerable responsibility involved, and that it was a post involving little interference from anyone else in the government.

Three levels of government policy were defined by

Brooke. At the level of security one of the main issues was to prevent the terrorists from raising money for their terrorist activities.

On the economic level much effort had to be undertaken. Unemployment was at 14%, but these statistics did not genuinely reflect the demand for work, Brooke explained, since many jobless women did not register. He said that tough anti-discrimination laws had been introduced in the last year and the first results could already be seen. The minister saw the investment effort undertaken mainly by the EC and the United States as very important, since terrorists found it difficult to react to money incoming in a 'benign' way.

On a social level, he stressed, it was important to address the many needs in various sectors. Education was still segregated to a large extent but 'co-educational' schools were established and

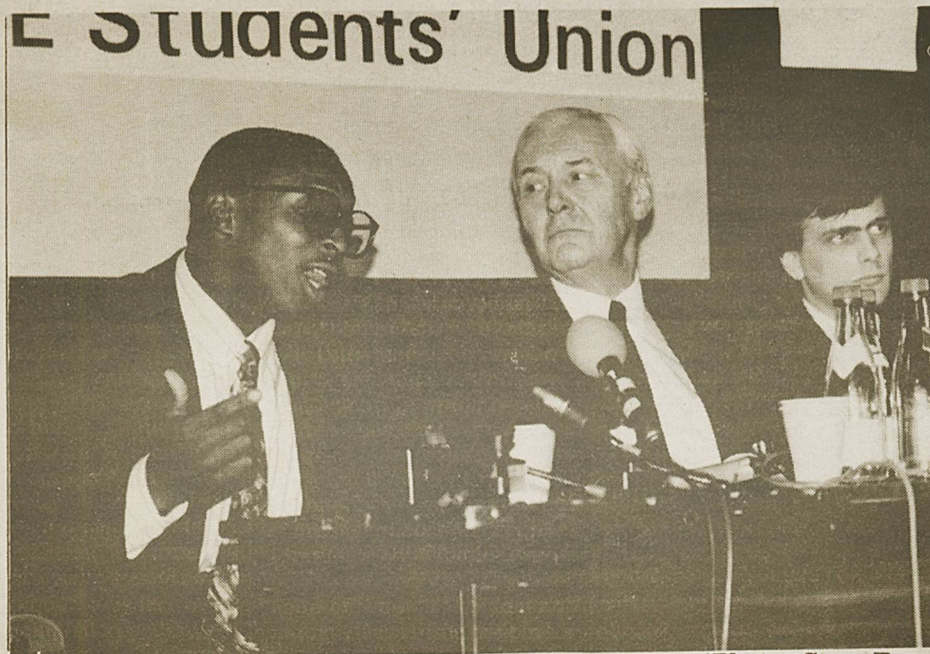
funded so long as there was interest on the side of the parents. Brooke said that political developments were making progress, and that all parties had agreed to talks, and important ground rules having been established, which he considered a promising sign. Talks had been postponed indefinitely in the summer but now it looked as if the negotiations were going to be resumed before the upcoming election campaign started.

He concluded by saying that there had to be a "deal which everyone accepted" otherwise no agreement would work. He himself had an "open agenda and no blueprint" for the future. He admitted that he had ideas but said that he had to be invited by the negotiating parties in Northern Ireland to put them forward.

# Raghip and Braithwaite acquitted

By Emma Bearcroft

The press conference for Mark Braithwaite and Engin Raghip, was heard on Thursday at LSE, following their acquittal. The conference, held in C018, lasted one hour, and was chaired by the Right Honourable Tony Benn MP. He opened the conference by suggesting that "what we are now discussing is a gross miscarriage of justice and the conduct of the mass media." The two men, who had been acquitted for the murder of PC Keith Blakelock just prior to the conference, were according to Mr Benn, victims of a system that is "not concerned with justice but ... with conviction." There were calls from Braithwaite's solicitor to begin criminal proceedings against Detectives Melvin and Dingle. George Silcott, brother of Winston, said that the apologies from the judges could mean nothing to men who had been "crucified" in this way. The



Left to Right: Braithwaite, Benn, and Raghip

Photo: Steve East

media, he said, "should get their stories straight before they start telling lies about people." According to Braithwaite the media should have direction and morals. The press were accused of jumping on the band-

wagon, and, Raghip said, "it was the press that got us there, now it's the press that wants the glory." The two men explained how their families had suffered, and that this was "not a day for jubilation." On the question of com-

pensation, Raghip said "they couldn't print enough money for the suffering we've done." Silcott's father thanked LSE students who "helped him a lot in this struggle."

Commentary

# Union Jack

The world's press waited anxiously; the room was silent with expectation. Rumours of the release had been circulating for some time, but were they true? Finally the hostage emerged, a shadow of his former self - pale, nervous, shaven. Toby Johnson was free!

Kidnapping furry union mascots and ransoming them for Rag is, of course, nothing new. But Jack suspects that with Toby, the Balcony Boys made a serious error. There was always the risk that they might have to keep him, and Jack has already received complaints from the people who had to carry him to the Old Theatre. Suggestions that it would have been easier to elect a new Senior Treasurer have, however, been frowned upon by the powers that be.

Noticably, Mr. Johnson was not the only absentee from the meeting. Stuck for a target, the Balcony wanted to know where Michiel was. All they received was the enigmatic answer, "He's working on something". Jack personally suspects he was embarrassed to show his face after being seen in the Tuns dressed as Richard I, and shouting that he had molested the heathens with his sword.

The budget itself held very few surprises for a seasoned cynic like Jack. Toby did come up with the idea of giving Fiona control of her phone bill, which to judge from previous Busy Beavers should make costs plummet. After all, Jack hears that Fiona's usually too busy herself to use the phone.

But no budget meeting is ever complete without a spot of budget-mugging. For those unacquainted with this charming folk custom, it means that after the budget is presented, a collection of weird societies that no-one has ever heard of come up and ask for more money (what does the Hugging Society use its £50 for? Jack intends to investigate). This year's performer was the sad and strange Andy Baly. He declared that "I have a really bad drugs habit". This was obviously true, because he forgot to ask for any money; he was eventually brought close enough to Planet Earth to eloquently state, "Seriously, right, I'd like an extra £10".

Ending on this unhinged note, we went on to have an Emergency General Meeting. The Left Society were bored and wanted to occupy Connaught House, because prices were too high in the LSE restaurants. The chances of this being successful are about as high as that of Claire Rayner taking acid, but who cares, it gives 'em something to do...

They'd reckoned without Bob Gross however. Bob, being lazy, proposed a four-volume amendment that said we should occupy our seats instead. The debate that followed could never be called fascinating, though a pleasingly surreal touch was lent by the speaker who felt that the world was being taken over by freemasons, so there wasn't any point anyway. Unswayed by these arguments, the meeting dutifully voted for an occupation of the Old Theatre. The LSE responded by sending in their crack lecturer, Professor Higgins, who enlivened the proceedings by an explanation of Public International Law. The occupation lasted for four minutes.

# Should the homeless be responsible for themselves?

By Sarah Owen

On Wednesday the LSE Debating Society debated the resolution, "This House Believes That the Homeless Should be Responsible for Themselves". The debaters for the motion were Darren Crook, Gareth Owen and James Houghton. Arguing against were Doug Ainslie, Marc Hack and Andrew Coogan.

Acting as N. Tebbit, the first speaker opened by suggesting that the homeless should "get on their bikes and never bother us again". Getting out of a destitute situation, he predicted, would be all the more fulfilling for the "homeless", if there is a sense of self-accomplishment which accompanies the achievement.

The first speaker for the opposition opened by commenting that the homeless have gotten into such a situation precisely because they are incapable of taking responsibility for themselves. He tried to wrest some of the blame from the Conservative government and their "beautiful free market system". According to this speaker, we must take re-

sponsibility for them, by building homes, institutions and shelters where they can "live out their days in peace".

The second speaker in favour argued that it is result of the capitalist system that there will be an unequal distribution of wealth and income within society. He suggested that the more affluent members of society would be selfish in advocating a more equal distribution of wealth. These were the people who have failed to take advantages of the opportunities offered to them; they should remain on our streets as a motivation for future generations to achieve.

The second oppositional speaker repeated the point that the homeless would like to be responsible for themselves but are unable to be. He reprimanded society for walking past the homeless every day without effecting any action, "this is not the way for a decent society to behave."

The closing speaker in favour of the motion wondered why the homeless aren't saving the money they beg towards the purchase of a luxury home. He described



Houghton makes his case

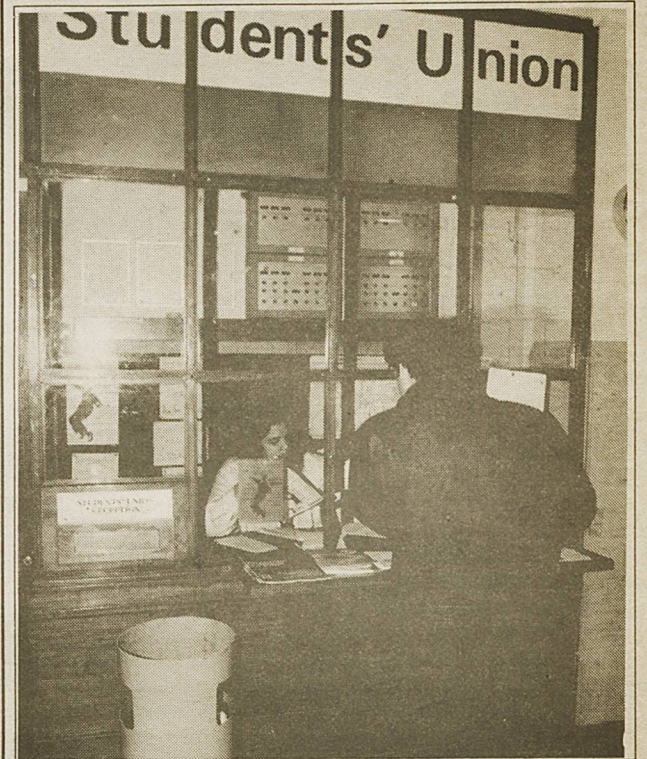
them as the true "Thatcher's Children", suggesting that they really are a members of the fastest-growing free enterprise in the country. Because they are leading uncommitted and tax-free lives, the homeless are in no need of the help of society.

The last speaker generalized the idea of homeless to include the "hidden homeless". Defining the home as an "area of control in our lives", the hidden homeless included those people who have a roof over their heads, but live in physical or emotional conditions of destitution. "It would be cruel and

simplicistic to say that in all cases, the homeless are responsible for themselves; we are all responsible for each other."

Following the conclusion of the official speeches, a vote on debate performance was taken; the proposition speakers were voted as having won the debate.

# SU reception opens



A student casual mans the new reception

# What future for unions?

By Julian Sykes

The future looks bleak for unions following a decade of declining union membership, according to Professor Richard Freeman of Harvard University. The professor, who is from the Centre for Economic Performance, was speaking at a public lecture last Tuesday on "The Future of Unions." He said that the issue has particular relevance in Britain given the past twelve years of Conservative governments union reforms, and the recent agreement on consultation and negotiation with employers at a European level.

Freeman described how the 1980's were tough for trade unions world-wide. Union density declined and there were many concessions to management. In the 1980's, United States trade unions in the private sector had declined by 12 per cent - a disaster for unions, according to Professor Freeman. This decline in unions has been explained the advent of substitute organisations such as the Welfare state, and anti-discrimination laws, making unions, which previously supplied these services, redundant. The 1980's, however, witnessed both the weakening of trade unions and a reduction in the welfare state. Strong unions meant a strong welfare state and vice versa.

He contended that the decline of unions in the U.S.



Prof. Freeman - whither the Unions? Photo: Steve East

and elsewhere, was a result of trade unions not organising at new plants, as opposed to union 'busting', or non-recognition by employers. In the U.S employers viewed unions as being a drain on profits, and had extensive legislative backing in attempts to exclude unions from the workplace. Professor Freeman was more optimistic on the situation in Britain, and he cited a recent article which reported that there was very little enthusiasm among managers for further union restric-

tions. It is expected that Britain will not follow the U.S. trend due to the lower level of anti-union feeling and the exemplary contribution that unions make in Europe. Commenting on the lecture, John Edmunds of the GMB, suggested that what is needed is a change of attitudes towards unions. In Japan and Europe, unions are regarded as part of the companies' corporate structure and community, rather than being seen in a hostile light.

# Le Pen visit provokes outrage



Photo: Paul Nugent

By Zaffar Rashid

Students and non-students gathered at the Sheraton Park Hotel last Wednesday to demonstrate against Jean Marie le Pen, the French right-wing politician. Le Pen was there to address a meeting of the European Right, and will go on to address a

series of meetings with Conservative MPs and activists. Demonstrators expressed their concern that Le Pen has been attempting to acquire a new image and present himself as the inspiration of a new, non-violent, suit-wearing right. "Why have they chosen Britain?" asked Seve

Myers of the Committee to stop Le Pen, "Because they see Britain as the weak link in the Euro-fascist network." It was also stressed that continued opposition and continued demonstration of that opposition had to follow if underground Fascist organisations were not to resurface as has happened elsewhere in Europe.

## For:

Many students at the LSE are angry about the lack of educational resources. Lectures and classes are overcrowded.

The library is short staffed and under-stocked. Students themselves face hardship with increased rents, high food prices and minimal grants.

These points are not disputed as is evident from 750 students signatures on the petition to occupy against these conditions.

What is under debate is the effectiveness of occupation. Occupation is the most hard-hitting form of action that students can take. It has the capacity to give students power in relation to management. Its advantage is that it disrupts the normal running of the college.

As such, occupation can allow us to put pressure on management. By taking over the administrative block, Connaught House, we take control. By taking effective action, we can inspire more students to act collectively for what we need.

Asking bureaucrats to negotiate is accepting that most students have no power, no speaking rights and no effect. Negotiations are a continual feature of LSE life as are the current conditions. It is argued that we have to act "responsibly". However, our responsibility is to ourselves to demand better conditions.

An occupation is a serious measure. To be effective, it requires involving a large number of students. This means hard work and conviction; it means putting forward

## Against:

At Thursday's Emergency General Meeting I spoke against occupation. This is not to say that I disagreed with the demands that were put forward or with the prin-

of losing them should only have been taken as a last resort.

The occupation would have affected other issues as well. The motion demanded that overcrowding should be reduced and improved facilities should be offered. These problems are facing all colleges, but they are exacerbated at the LSE through the chronic shortage of space.

The obvious answer to these problems is to acquire more space — namely County Hall. It is ironic to consider that those who have proposed the motion have constantly deemed this irrelevant to the interests of students, when the acquisition would be the solution to many of their demands. Considering that Lambeth County Council met the day after the EGM to consider LSE's proposition, the occupation would have clearly been contrary to the interest of the student body. It would have ruined the LSE's case.

Ultimately, The occupation was pushed by those who did not want to represent the students at the LSE but had a desire to bring attention to themselves and their politics. Undoubtedly, many students are becoming increasingly impoverished, but this is the fault of the present Government and not the fault of the School administration.

At a time when all institutions in the education sector are facing a range of cut-backs, we should be campaigning collectively to ensure that higher education remains a viable and affordable option open to all.

**Toby Johnson**  
Senior Treasurer.

# To Occupy or Not to Occupy

ward a coherent political argument to students explaining why occupation is the best way of challenging the status quo.

The bureaucrats would find their life easier if we went home. But we cannot gain our objectives by staying away and avoiding these issues. If we are to be effective, we have to trust students, not bureaucrats.

Most students are cynical and disillusioned. People do not believe in committees such as the SU executive. Collectively organised students can challenge cuts in resources, by being clear and coherent about their aims and by taking matters into their own hands.

We invite you all to come to the march to the DES called by students at Kings College, to be held on the 11th December at 11am. We will be meeting on the Old Building steps at 10.30am.

**Those in Favour of Occupation**

principal of occupation as being a legitimate form of pressure brought to bear upon the School authorities. What I do disagree with, however, is the timing of the occupation motion and the fact that no other channels were tried to air their grievances.

The timing of the move towards occupation was all wrong. This is one of the busiest periods of the year for both the School and the students. An occupation of Connaught House would have resulted in the loss of several services, all of which are vital to students well-being.

If this occupation had taken place, The Health Service would have become inaccessible, Access funds applications would have been delayed, no transcripts, registration forms or poll tax exemption certificates would have been issued. The loss of such services would have been disastrous to many students welfare and the risk

one thing took deep root in me — the conviction that morality is the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality ... A Gujaratti didactic stanza likewise gripped my mind and heart. Its precept — return good for evil — became my guiding principle."

Racism is a vile evil but it should not fool us into responding "by any means necessary". I would urge Daniel to look again at the lives of people he seems to admire.

**David James Sauage**

## Action as a reaction

**Dear Beaver,**

The reply to Daniel Trump's letter in last week's "Beaver" was both naive and complacent.

It is all very well to advocate "co-operation through integration of all cultural and racial sectors of society" — indeed this is what Daniel himself proposed in suggesting social change as the way to eliminate racism. However as long as the racist is set on confrontation, we must be prepared to challenge directly both him and his views.

It was necessary to use force to stop Hitler. As a Jew I am thankful that people were prepared to take that step, or I would not be here to write this letter today. Equally, it was necessary to use force to stop Mosely at

Cable St in 1936. Ordinary people — the Jews and workers of the East End — defeated the fascists only because they were prepared to use "any means necessary" to defend themselves and their beliefs.

Such behavior does not "lower you to the level of the racist"; as anti-racists I believe we have right on our side come what may. Yes, this is a subjective view; but I am prepared to stand up for this view against the malice and hatred of racism, and I will not stop short of this in favor of holding the moral high ground in my actions.

**Dave Rich**

## Students Unite

**Dear Beaver,**

One thing was clear from Thursday's UGM: there is widespread anger in the LSE over the issue of student poverty and the only real dispute is over the most effective way to fight back.

Who are we trying to fight? Firstly, the government's policy of cut-backs in general spending on education, cuts in grants, and the removal of housing benefit for students. There will be fights with the School over high rents, high fees for creche facilities, high prices in the canteens and the lack of books in the library.

We have to address the

political issue that education should be a right for all. For those that are able to struggle through, overcrowding in lectures, classes and the library mean a major erosion in educational standards. The national and local issues can be taken on together.

At this week's EGM, the DSG argued that the only solution to students poverty is through the channels of negotiation with John Ashworth. Negotiating with the management never works. The only way to get our demands is through student action — occupation.

At the moment, Bristol, Brighton, Newcastle and Middlesex Polys, PNL, Liverpool Poly, Luton College, City Poly and Goldsmiths are all in occupation. Thames Poly, after just three days, won several demands: an increase of £330,000 in library funds; a reduction in Hall fees of £6.50 per week; and the Students Union received an extra £10,000.

At LSE, occupation can also win significant victories. The petition calling for occupation here was signed by over 750 students. We need to do something now, not four weeks into the second term. Let's make sure that we, as students, take things into our own hands.

**Socialist Worker Student Society**

# The Beaver

The press conference held at the LSE last Thursday by the Tottenham Three showed the level of discontent that many feel about the British judicial system at the moment. As Mark Braithwaite clearly stated "It is no longer that you are innocent until proven guilty but you are now guilty until proven innocent and the resources available to prove that innocence are inadequate." Such a stirring speech obviously had more than a tinge of bitterness about it, and rightly so.

The judicial system needs some element of reform, but the whole issue is a difficult one. Too great a reform and this country may find that it is letting people go free who are actually guilty. However, too little reform and many more innocent people will join the ranks of those wrongly convicted prisoners at the moment serving at Her Majesty's pleasure. We all know about the Tottenham Three, the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four and the Maguire Seven. There are still many more like them who may not be guilty but who remain behind bars.

Many points were raised during the conference and many needed to be. Billy Powers, a member of the Birmingham Six who has supported the cause of the Tottenham Three since his release, raised the matter of compensation. Many more raised the issue of the police approach to convictions and it seemed ironic when Braithwaite stated that the police who were originally involved had been Detectives and when the case came up for appeal, had been promoted to Detective Sergeant. Amusing as this comment was at the time, education in the ways and means of convictions needs to be resolved.

George Silcott, brother of Winston, will be talking in the Underground (C018) on Tuesday about the British justice system. Anybody who is interested in this or even in the whole LSE involvement in the affair should go and educate themselves on the issues of the many more languishing in British Jails.

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## Post Haste

Letters due to E197, by hand or internal mail, by 4 p.m. Thursday

## Peace for Racism

**Dear Beaver,**

It is regrettable and ironic that Daniel Trump should state "the challenge to racism must beat all levels because turning the other cheek has never, and will never, work" and in the same letter he commends Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King to us.

I would be surprised if even a political lightweight such as Trump has never read any writings of the aforementioned gentlemen. In King's "Letter from a Birmingham City Jail" he tells us, "Over the last few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. So I have tried to make it clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends."

Likewise, Mahatma Gandhi in his autobiography, "My Experiments with Truth" writes, "But

# Busy Beaver

It's big, it's bad, and it bites... Busy Beaver, The Gossip Column

Seasons greetings everybody. Busy Beaver promises that there will be absolutely no goodwill to all men in this Christmas Slander Special. Another person who doesn't seem to be practising peace on earth is our Unsocial Secretary McMuffin. Terminator MacDonald was seen fighting at Tequila with the ex-UGM Chair. He described her as, "...quite strong, actually." Fearless Fiona also put another poor bloke (Tom) in hospital after whacking him with a wooden plank. What is more intriguing is why were the ex-UGM Chair, the present UGM Chair, and Mad McMuffin seen running out of the women's toilets, together?!

McMuffin would like it to be known that she did not in fact "sleep" with

seven men. She was (and I use her own words) "fondled by seven people". She added to this that there was also "mutual fondling". Presumably, those men who are not up to the mutual fondling get clouted by a plank of wood.

Reliable sources revealed that Mr. Dennis '91/2 Weeks' K\*\*\*\*\*'s attempts to reconstruct the piano scene from 'The Fabulous Baker Boys' in the Shaw Library one Saturday evening went tragically astray. The tempo quickened but his performance suffered an early curtain call due to a routine security check. "It was horrible—there were bum notes all over the place," said the porter, who for fear of reprisal wishes to remain anonymous. Mr. K. was unavailable for comment, but is reputed to be pursuing his musical career elsewhere.

Watch this space for details.

Goings on at Passfield recently include Charles "The Gentle Giant" climbing the drain pipes, falling off, and leaving his glasses on the roof; the Mad Queen Beaver running round the garden T-shirt-less during the Passfield party; a Duncan Twin running round Passfield completely naked (is this The New Round the Block Club?); and a "wicked" food fight. Busy Beaver has been informed that the latest societies at Passfield are the Real Ale Society, The Leaf Man Appreciation Society, and the Faggot Society (for those that appreciate the taste of faggots). Yes, Passfield is definitely trying to catch Roseberry up as the saddest hall in London. If you think your hall is sadder, let Busy Beaver know.

On the subject of halls, how come the IRA managed to

miss Carr-Saunders?! Never mind, anyway here's a message Busy Beaver received from "the other side" directed at all first years in this illustrious hall, "Carr-Saunders Clare, who 'Nicked' your hair", cryptic, huh?

The Beaver's Mad Millwall Music Man would like to get in touch with the girl who came up to him at the Passfield party and said, "I love you but I hate all men" and promptly walked off.

Tequila brought the usual general silliness. One student and his friend decided to climb onto the roof of a Lincoln's Inn building. They then embarked on a drunken expedition from roof to roof. Their explorations were rudely cut short by the appearance of the Met who accused them of attempted burglary. The intrepid explorers spent the rest of the night discovering the local

police cells. Other "crimes" that night include MQB allegedly sexually assaulting a Tequila security guard. She was spotted grabbing at his most tender and vulnerable spot: know what I mean.

Following Tequila weekend a mysterious message was left on Rip van Winkle's door. Written on the Gen. Sec's board was, "I want your member" and two used condoms were tacked up below it. Now, does this indicate that Rip didn't do much snoozing over the weekend or was somebody trying to frame him? Busy Beaver set out to investigate this and unearth the truth behind this dastardly attack on His Highness' membership. This case will not be closed until the truth is discovered...stay tuned.

Meanwhile, if any of you sporting fellows ventured near the AU barrel last Fri-

day you might have spotted some strange goings on. A venerable man from that conservative establishment "The Sunday Sport" was there to view the sex, drugs and rock and roll. Say no more. BB is running a book on how many of the tabloids will pick up on this and turn us into a bigger den of iniquity than this column makes you believe we already are.

As another term draws to a close, Busy Beaver would like to wish everybody a happy holiday. Be warned party animals, BB has spies in many places, and you could be reading about your alcoholic antics this holiday in the next bubbly Beaver. Remember, in 1992 all the barriers are coming down!

B.B.

## "... spank me quietly with a shammy leather"

Jon Bradburn gives us a first-hand insight into a day in the life of the Athletics Union President.

Following the "...we're crap at sport" sports headline in the last Beaver, I feel it would have been a little rude not to reply in full to this blatant example of gutter journalism by including in this issue an insight into how the hard-working and enthusiastic AU Committee spend their money...er...I mean time. So, for all those of you who want to know how a typical day is passed, here it is.

7.30 am. Alarm clock rings and Simon Mayo with his voluptuous side-kick Sybil Roscoe appear on the radio. Contemplate going for a beer and curry, realise both pubs and curry houses are shut, contemplate going into college, finally take a vote and reach a unanimous decision to go back to sleep — who says democracy doesn't exist in the AU.

10.30 am. Wake up in time for "This Morning" with Richard 'He That is Light of Finger' Madeley and Judy Finnegan. Hear again about Richard's vasectomy and note that Judy bought her top from Marks & Spencer.

10.50 am. Extremely interesting article in the Daily Sport this morning, Liza Goddard, Felicity Kendall,

and Keith Chegwin in "3-in-a-Bed, Love Child Sex Scandal" — make a note in file-ox to ring The Sport later and check its validity.

11.15 am. Mild vindaloo (from fridge, heated up on gas mark 4) for breakfast.

11.30 am. Shower, think lovingly of Sarah Greene — she's so good with children.

11.50 am. Already dressed and groomed, embark on the long walk to college.

11.52 am. Hop into taxi and decide how best to fiddle the cost of it in the AU Accounts — probably best to put it under 'stationery'.

11.57 am. Arrive at college, pick up mail, note with interest that Aberystwyth University rugby team have recently acquired another sheep to add to their collection — oh well, boys will play I suppose.

11.59 am. Contemplate making very important phone-calls to arrange fixtures, book coaches, reserve tables at a local Indian restaurant.

12.00pm. Realise Tuns is open — enlightenment, hal-lalujah, and spank me quietly with a shammy leather if it isn't so.

3.00 pm. Tuns closes, and not a moment too soon, because the library beckons for

copious amounts of literary studies and intellectual thought.

3.01pm. Quick detour en-route to the library and pop into the George IV for a quickie.

5.00pm. Tuns opens — enlightenment, etc. Promise myself only to have one drink.

8.15pm. Realise I have a very important engagement with somebody, can't remember if it's Armitage Shanks or Royal Doulton — can't decide so yodel into a pint-pot and dare someone a tenner they won't drink it. They do. Go to the cash point!

11.15pm. Thrown out of the Tuns — two choices, home to bed or go for a curry.

11.25pm. Order a vindaloo and more beer than they've got. Drink curry and eat beer — playful banter with the waiter obviously goes down a treat because he brings me a dish of little green and red things which taste quite hot.

11.45pm. Don't feel too well, get a taxi home and to bed, luckily manage to set alarm clock for 7.30 so I can do some work.

As you can see the AU is a very necessary and integral part of student life, a-hem.

## Put your luv in!

Martin Lewis, Rag week Chairman, on LSE Rag '92

Yes, this is our first article about rag week, it'll be starting on 10th February and you've guessed it, it'll be over on the 17th. This year's chosen theme is luv, and charity not chastity is the name of the game.

For the first time in a long while, the majority of London Universities will be holding their rags at the same time and five joint events will be taking place through that paragon of virtue, the ULU. There will be a party to end all parties (as is its tradition), a ULU hosted monster raving tequila party, on 16th February. Spurious amounts of drink and serious music, 2,000 people — a night to be written in your diary, pinned on your wall and tattooed across your chest!

The winners of the LSE 24-hour rag treasure hunt will enter (with others who also want to join) ULU Mission Impossible, five tasks each so difficult that they make checking a book out of the library seem easy.

That infinitely moderate and unbiased newspaper the London Student will be issuing a special collated rag mag, with the best bits of all the college's mags plagiarized. There will also be a Graduates' soccer competition and a really interesting (as in Steve Davis!) production of the Wizard of Oz, by the Royal Vets.

This year, ULU have also drawn up and agreed to officiate over the rules to one of the more seriously competitive events of recent rag times, at which LSE's contribution has been sadly lacking. Mascotry is a game of pride, violence and cunningly outwitting the opponent; we

need warriors and tacticians of ultimate standing to thrust forth the name of LSE and make the other colleges quake in our wake!

Enough of ULU, now to the real 'meat' of luv week, the events held at our own LSE. The highlight of our week will be on St. Valentines day. The sun will slowly rise up into the clear blue sky, the birds will tweet and all will be well. Your hall committee will serve anyone (as long as they pay) breakfast in bed, with a smile and some polite conversation. Deliveries of red roses will run rife throughout the school and everyone (barring the poor sods from Carr-Saunders) will look starry eyed at their partners. In the evening a famous celeb (Jonathan Ross, Vic Reeves, Stephen Fry, or anyone as long as they're pretty damn famous and cheap) will be presenting the first annual London School of Luv-in Blind Date Competition and following party, with the winners receiving free tickets to the rag ball.

Yes the rag ball, held somewhere illustrious (although we're not quite sure where yet) the week after rag. This is the one time you get to socialize with your friends in your dinner suits, eating expensive food and drinking decent wine all in the name of Charity.

Can there be more to rag week I hear you ask; well frankly, yes there can! As with all good things there must be instructions, these will be contained in 'The LSE guide to Luv!' this year's rag mag, as yet unwritten, but I'm sure some of you talented scribes and comedians will want to give it a go. Other

merchandising involved in the week will be the issuing and sales of this year's exclusively designed rag T-shirt; when you first see this, the words style, grace and class will flood together with a venom.

All very sane so far, I agree. This is why gnoming (following people around in Gnome costumes), hit-squadding (the custard pie shops are already smiling with glee), and hug-squadding (the Hugging Soc's infamous contribution to rag week), will be occurring simultaneously throughout the week, wreaking havoc on all those we've been paid to torment.

Our superlative Sabbaticals have all volunteered to contribute their paltry effort for the luv of rag. Michiel will have his head shaved in the UGM if we can raise £500 specifically for this task, (auctions will be held for who actually get the pleasure of the depilation.) Toby will be sending around forms for a sponsored shave and diet, a pound a pound seems a fair sum. And finally, Fiona, the Social Sec. has volunteered to be especially social. She will be partaking in a sponsored shag-a-thon in her orifice (or should that be office), the 'entrance' is free but it will cost £5 not to partake.

These schemes are all well and good, the charities (who are still to be decided) should benefit heavily; but it can't be done without more help. If you want to join the rag committee, help with Mascotry or just simply put your name down to appear on Blind date, then come to the rag meeting in E207 at 5 pm on Thursdays or see Fiona MacDonald (E206).

# Sex, Sex, Sex

LSE students reveal all in The Great LSE Sex Survey. By Jerome Harris with the help of Rhiannon Hordley, Sharon Gregory, Emma Hopwood, Catherine Walsh and The Beaver Staff.

More than 350 confidential sex surveys were distributed at various points around LSE and in Hall bars. We received more than 100, despite not including the man who had slept with 1 million people, another who had done it an infinite number of times in one day, and several others who, if they were telling the truth, would no longer have any genitalia at all due to general wear and tear.

So, let's get down to the bare facts of what we found out about your secret lives, you never know — you might actually learn something. (I know I did.)

Did you know that the average person in LSE has slept with 19.6 people. This struck me as high and you get a much better picture when you split it up into male/female averages. Males average 27.9 while females score 5.7.

This shows two things. Firstly more men than women replied, and secondly that most of the men were talking crap. (A trend which seemed remarkably consistent throughout all the questions.)

The stories about Carr-Saunders seem to hold up however; the average bloke there has slept with less than one third the overall male average. When it comes to the most number of times in 24 hours then the men average 14.3, compared to 5 for all women. Are women simply better at maths, or are the men including actions that we didn't intend them to...

Group sex gave some interesting answers as well. Only 2.5% of women have been involved in group sex, while 25% of men believe they have. That suggests that there are a lot of women out there who will have to go and visit the 'ear, nose and throat' specialist if they have that many men on them at once. It also came out that 68% of men would like to be involved in group sex, while only 23% of women share that desire.

Now, when did we all lose our virginity? By far the most common age was the 16-18 range with 52% of us falling into that category, although just under 30% of us claim to have broken the law by 'nodding one in' before the age of 16. Of the 7% who filled in ASAP, more of them were men than women. Nearly half of all men said that they enjoyed losing their virginity, while only 20% said that they did not. Of the women, nearly twice as many didn't enjoy their first effort.

When it comes to getting the right amount of sex, the women far outscored the

men. 61% said they got the right amount, while it is only 19% for the blokes. No women at all complained of having too much sex, while 14% of men cited that as a problem — not surprisingly, more men also complained of not getting

enough — it seems that the men just can't be satisfied. The most significant statistic from this section was that a huge 71% of Postgrads complained of not getting enough sex; never mind, if you all get together then you should be able to ease each other's problems.

About 50% of both men



Orgy photo courtesy of Beaver archives

say she's definitely got the wrong end of the stick; anyway he probably wasn't telling the truth — it all sounds

## When asked if he practiced safe sex he wrote "Safe, have you seen the size of the teeth on an Alsatian?"

and women sustained injuries, but more of them later as some of them just have to be heard. The question about whether or not you would ever be paid for sex, 36% of women ruled it out no matter how much they got paid, while only 12% of men did.

"What about faking orgasms?" I hear you moan. Around 5% of women said that they do often, while 56% said never. Just out of interest, more women than men say that they never fake, which quite apart from being against all known surveys, I simply can't believe. Just to show how accurate statistics can be, 19% of men didn't know what an orgasm was, while only 8% of them claimed to be virgins. I can't work that out, so send answers on a postcard to the Campus section.

Enough of statistics; there are a lot of people who included comments which it would be a crime not to print. For starters, there is a 1st year bloke in Carr-Saunders who told us that a girl he knows uses her makeup brush for actions other than the good Lord intended. I won't include the diagram that he drew, but let's just

a bit fishy to me. We didn't get many people who claimed to be virgins, but of the 7% who did, I'll give a quick word. One 2nd year in Passfield had a survey which made out that he'd never been anywhere near a woman, and yet he still managed to list the Mad Queen Beaver as someone he would like to warn everyone about. A Butler's Wharf Postgrad also seemed a bit unfortunate in that he'd never slept with anyone at all, although he still managed to sustain an injury in the form of a sprained wrist!

Congratulations are in order to the man who claimed to be a Welsh member of staff, for getting the biggest cringe out of the survey team. When asked if he practiced safe sex he wrote "Safe, have you seen the size of the teeth on an Alsatian?"

Now on to those injuries, which will probably get you wondering just how some people managed to get what they did. A 3rd year female complained of a collapsed lung — that's certainly one to tell the grandchildren. Several men listed their main complaint as being a burnt and/or bruised "pride",

while a male lawyer seemed to think that one of his testicles had fallen out. Mind you, he also claimed to have slept with 250,000 women this year, so his maths probably isn't what it should be.

Other injuries include a broken pelvis, a burst spot and someone who claims that his "dick exploded (almost)". One gentleman recommends that if you can get your girlfriend to eat ice-cream and she doesn't mind it extra creamy, then it is unbeatable.

Time to go now but I'll just give you one or two hints as to who won the sexiest/most warned about competitions. The toughest competition was in the women who must be warned about competition. The Mad Queen Beaver was a close second, but I was very disappointed with the overall winner. It wasn't a person at all but a well known traditional British take-away fast food which is often eaten with salt and vinegar. Strange that.

The sexiest woman award went to Miss Sarah Eglin, with Amy Baker a close second. Perhaps Miss Baker would have benefitted if the survey had taken place after the LSE 'sleep in' that I hear she is involved with. There were no overall winners in the corresponding male categories as lots and lots of men got one or two votes in each.

I hope that this survey has whet your appetites (and not your underwear) for a merry Christmas. My only word of advice is to improve on the 33% who said that they always practice safe sex (although as one person pointed out, practice makes perfect). Anyway, have a great New Year, stay safe, stay happy and don't believe anything that you read in newspapers.

# diary

I can't believe it's the Monday before Christmas Holiday and I haven't even decided where to go! Maybe doing this Diary will help me out...

Well, on **Monday the 9th** — today — there is a Beaver party on the top floor of the Cafe at 7pm. (After all, self-promotion usually pays off, so we might as well mention ourselves first). Rumour has it (maybe it's in BB?) that there is a contest of sorts that night... hear it has something to do with a rather unconventional use of the office (unless the office is E206). That gives me an idea — I could go to Canada and shack up with *areal* Beaver, or maybe some cute Eskimo. Let's see what else I could do.

**Tuesday the 10th** sees the ENTS putting on yet another film, "The Last Temptation of Christ," a flick which I recall garnered a bit of controversy (though not as much as that Beaver Party will...). Don't know whether it was actually filmed in Israel, or on some Hollywood back lot, but either place would be a nice break from the cold London weather we've been getting. Maybe I'll call up one of those numbers I see on the walls in the Tube stations and fly over to Eilat or Tel Aviv. Could do.

But before I do that, maybe I'll gate crash the History Soc party on **Wednesday the 11th** I believe it's at 7 pm in the History Department Common Room, somewhere on the fifth floor of the East Building. Also that night is the Anthropology Soc party in A698, but I don't know when. No one ever tells me these things! Instead of that history gig, maybe I'll just rent some Monty Python video and actually learn something about the methods of torture used during the Spanish Inquisition. I don't know. But that Anthro party gives me an idea — I could take a trip to Africa and look at some indigenous peoples. What fun.

Oh yes, but here's an even better idea. Seems earlier on Wednesday, at 1 pm in the Vera Anstey Room, the Debating Soc is having its AGM and discussing: "THB that lime jelly is the ultimate sexual fantasy." After that I just know the next stop on my Holiday will be Amsterdam. Heck, I'd even skip my classes for that one.

Or maybe I'll just channel all that repressed sexual energy and go to the ULU Christmas Ball that night. The tickets are only (only!?) £15 and are available at the ULU ticket office, if nowhere else. Partying begins at 8 pm and lasts until 3 am, presumably at ULU but I haven't bought my ticket yet so who knows? Anyway, a buffet dinner is included, and there is also a champagne bar, so opportunities to get wrecked and find that Mr. or Ms. Right Now are plentiful.

For all those aeronautical engineers out there, **Thursday the 12th** is the last UGM of the term at 1 pm, and there should be some partying and holiday festivities that hour (as if there aren't usually?). So bring your red and green or blue and white paper and prepare for a bumpy ride. Might even prepare you for your flights from London to all those exotic locales.

**Friday the 13th** might be unlucky for some but it will hopefully be lucky for those participating in the Nightmare on Houghton Street, otherwise known as the End of Term Disco in the Three Tuns. Only problem is, if I go to that I'll probably be too pissed and miss my plane to wherever I decide to go.

But maybe that won't be so bad; I could always stick around and go to the Overseas Students Party in C018 on **Friday, December 20th**. It's open to all those students who are unable to go home (or miss their planes) for the Holiday. There will be food, drinks (no plane to miss this time) and a disco, but I don't know how much it costs. If you end up sticking around the area, you'll have a week to find out anyway.

Well, don't get too drunk and miss *your* plane home. See you next term, and maybe by that time you'll be sober enough to read this page.

# A Syrian Colony by Default

Paul Bou Habib examines the Lebanese situation and finds the different communities have been unable to agree to an equitable division of power.

Somehow, the sun would always rise. At dawn, young and innocent, resting on the backs of the mountains in the east, it would warmly embrace the Cedar trees, cast its rays upon the sparkling sea and burn gold into the hair of Lebanese children.

At twilight, it would give them a message, crashing into the Mediterranean, its boiling fire would melt into water, as if to prove that no matter how diametrically opposed, two entities could unite, find a common ground and tolerate each other. It never worked.

The night would fall and the Lebanese would sleep to forget the nightmare- sounds of missiles, shells and bombs, an orchestration completed by the screaming of babies, yelling of young men and the murmur of discontent voiced by the elders of Lebanon.

Now the nightmare sounds are over. Shells are no longer launched blindly into the night and street battles have ended. Militias, be it the Shi'ite Amal, the Palestinian Fatah, the Christian Phalange, the Druze or the Iranian-supported Hizbollah, have stopped fighting for power, as power no longer is attainable.

The Syrians, who first entered Lebanon in 1976, have extended their control following the removal of their main opponent: General Michel Aoun. Throughout Beirut, Syrian soldiers man Syrian checkpoints, displaying large Syrian posters of the Syrian dictator Hafez al-Assad. Lebanese drivers are asked to stop, present Lebanese identification and then proceed to their Lebanese destination in a supposedly Lebanese Lebanon. It's obvious. It's no secret. Lebanon is under Syrian occupation.

As if to rub salt into the wound, the Israelis occupy the so-called "Security Zone" in Southern Lebanon. A Lebanese, carrying a Lebanese passport, wanting to visit Lebanese friends in Southern Lebanon, requires permission from the Israeli authorities.

This scenario seems grotesque, causing immense frustration among Lebanese, who wonder why there are foreign troops in Lebanon. The Israelis might justify their occupation of Southern Lebanon by referring to countless occasions on which Amal or Hizbollah gunmen carried out attacks on Israeli territory. As for the Syrian occupation of Lebanon, it is a different issue altogether.

A shooting incident took place on April 13, 1975 in Christian East-Beirut between Christian gunmen and Palestinians, each blaming the other for having started. Following the incident, exchanges of fire continued and

spread to other parts of the country where other militias became involved.

Christian militias, comprising the Phalange and the National Liberal Party, began fighting

November 1976 on behalf of the Christians. Over the years their numbers were to increase from 6000 to 40,000 troops.

Over the years the Syrians would shift their support from side to side, militia to militia so that no one group could establish itself, become strong and expell the Syrians from Lebanon.

The Syrians could thereby always justify their occupation of Lebanon, by claiming that the militias would go fighting unless Syrian presence was maintained. Through occupation the Syrians could effectively promote

their vital interests. These were both military and economic.

Essentially, Syria aimed to change Lebanon from being an auxiliary front, whose practical involvement in the Arab-Israeli dispute was limited to spheres of politics and propaganda, into a direct front with Israel. The Syrians hoped to surround the

impose taxes and restrictions on the transit-trade so as to earn profits. Furthermore, the Lebanese employed some 300,000 Syrian workers in low-grade jobs at miserable salaries and generally in sub-standard conditions. Syria demanded that these workers be recognised as legal residents and made subjects of the Lebanese Labour Law. Lebanon refused this, adding to the tension between the two nations.

One man who understood Syria's interests and recognised the weaknesses of the militia-organisation was General Michel Aoun. Fed-up with the rightist Christian militia, which played an economically exploitative role in the name of resistance against Syria, Aoun created a grass-roots protest movement. On 22 September 1988 Aoun was appointed premier by the outgoing President Amine Gemayel, thereby giving him a constitutional mandate.

Having considerable support from the Muslims not to mention the Christians, Aoun established a movement incorporating diverse elements of Lebanese society.

In the spring of 1989 General Aoun declared a "War of Liberation" from Syrian domination in the hope of uniting all Lebanese communities. This incident was unique: Aoun did not represent a militia led by an unrecognised warlord but rather the Lebanese Army under his auspices as the constitutional leader.

The emerging strife between the two sides exacted a terrible price in dead and wounded and in the destruction of the infrastructure of Beirut. The hostilities led to a convening of the



Amal Fighters

Photo: Hannes Wallrafen

Palestinians and Muslim leftist militias under Kamal Jumblatt. Kamal Jumblatt and his militia had become involved because of their aspirations to create a new constitution by which Muslims would be represented on a fairer basis.

Whereas before, power lay primarily in the hands of the Christians, the idea was for it to be divided equally between the Christians and the Muslims. Jumblatt, therefore, was not fighting on behalf of the Palestinians, but was using the Palestinians to fight a war for him.

The war continued throughout 1975. The following year, violence escalated as Christian militias mounted attacks on Palestinian refugee camps including the massacre at Tel al Za'tar camp in Beirut. The aim of the Christians was to create the false impression that the war was being fought between Lebanese and Palestinians rather than between Lebanese and Lebanese.

In response to the attacks, the Muslim leftists, together with the Palestinians, attacked and massacred civilians in the Christian village of Damour. When, in the summer of 1976, the Muslim camp looked set to win, the Syrians persuaded the Lebanese President Suleiman Franjeh to request their help. The Syrians thus came in on



Michel Aoun

Photo: Luc Delahaye

latter by controlling the Lebanon and Jordan.

Economically, the interests of Lebanon and Syria have always been opposed: Syria's economy being socialist-centrally planned and Lebanon's economy relying on private enterprise and commerce. Lebanon sought free movement of its trade through Syria while the latter wished to

Arab Tripartite Committee (Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Algeria) who requested the presence of the Lebanese parliament at Taif in Saudi Arabia on September 30, 1989.

The Taif agreement, between the Syrians and the Lebanese parliament (which Aoun did not recognise as the constitutional representative of Lebanon),

The Madrid focused on Israeli placing disputes ground. looks "other"

contained two parts. The power-sharing part is a reasonable reallocation so that Muslims and Christians have 50-50 share of power. No-one, including Aoun, has objected to this. It is, however, the other part, the question of the withdrawal of Syrian troops, that has caused problems.

The Taif agreement does not assert the principal of total withdrawal of Syrian troops allowing the latter to remain in the vital Beqa' valley in Lebanon. It was against this Aoun fought until his demise following the Syrians military escalation against him.

It was his aspirations of regaining independence and territorial integrity for Lebanon that made him popular. From the start he had made it clear that he was not just another warlord leading just another militia: he presented himself as a Lebanese soldier whose only enemies were the foreign troops on Lebanese soil, whose only religion was his devotion to his country but whose only weakness was honesty.

Sadly, his abilities could not meet his aspirations. Devoid of a double-language he spoke what he thought. This was obviously a mistake as he thought of complex situations in moral terms.

Morality, with 70 per cent of Lebanese territory under occupation of Syrian troops, unfortunately has no place in international politics. Morality, with a Lebanese government no longer able to take independent decisions, unavoidably has no place in international politics either. Perhaps Lebanon should drill for oil, then morality will once again gain a place in international politics. The US might then consider waging a war against Syria.

The Lebanese never understood the message from the sun. Melting into the sea it would show them that finding common ground between extremes is just as necessary as for the night to follow the day:

"It was midnight and we could see the crescent moon rising from behind Mt.Sunnin, and it looked, in the midst of the stars, like the face of a corpse, in a coffin surrounded by the dim lights of candles. And Lebanon looked like an old man whose eyes were a haven for insomnia, watching the dark waiting for the dawn, like a king sitting on the ashes of his throne in the debris of his palace."

— Khalil Gibran.



Conference  
the Arab-  
conflict,  
inter-Arab  
in the back-  
The Beaver  
at two  
issues.

# Ba'athism: A Non-Discriminatory Form of Repression

Looking at the Iraqi and the Syrian regimes, **Selman Al-Ahmad** notes the high degree of similarity of two dictatorships that bitterly oppose each other in the Middle East.

As the Khomeini regime consolidated its grip over Iran in 1979 to 1981 the West found itself, once more, on the opposite side of a popular revolution. The west faced the ultimate dilemma: a revolutionary regime that was highly popular in Iran yet profoundly anti-democratic in most political respects. The propaganda war was turned on Iran.

A minor distaste of the new regime soon turned to full scale hostility when the Revolutionary administration began a massive attack on human rights and International Law. More importantly, in the scope of this article, the two most brutal violators of human rights and International Law in the region quietly continued their barbarism.

The Middle East is no stranger to regimes ignorant to the concepts of liberty but even by the low standards of the region Iraq and Syria outshine their neighbours including the long list of repressive atrocities often attributed to Israel and Iran by the enemies of those countries (including President Assad of Syria, although he is less critical of Iran, and President Hussein of Iraq).

In a world where Amnesty International can produce a yearly catalogue of criminal acts perpetrated against people by their own governments, Iraq and Syria are unique in their Orwellian terror structures. Although Hafez Assad and Saddam Hussein used the opportunity of the Iranian spectacle of misery to hide their own circle of fear at home the new government in Iran would provide a very real threat to them both.

Saddam Hussein had already sensed the threat posed to Ba'athism by revolutionary Muslim militancy in 1978 when, as Vice President of Iraq, he had expelled the Ayatollah Khomeini from his Iraqi place of exile. As Khomeini scuttled off to Paris to direct the revolution in Iran, Saddam completed his long march to power.

In 1979 Saddam Hussein 'emerged' as President succeeding Iraq's previous Ba'athist dictator, Bakr. And today if one visits Baghdad the portraits of the President cannot fail to be noticed. The portraits are not simply part of a crude publicity trip by the party. In the absence of elections to legitimise their regime the Iraqi Ruling Party is continually attacking the senses and sensibility of the Iraqi

people.

Every morning Iraq wakes up to their newspaper front page portrait of Saddam Hussein and every evening the news on television is preceded with hours of Saddam's activities that day. More frightening is the elaborate tower of lies (with Ba'ath philosophy acting as a framework) that accompanies the visual propaganda offensive. Saddam Hussein is portrayed as the future of the Arab nation, he is compared to the great Arab warrior Saladin.

The war against Iran was the historic crusade of the Arab people against the non-Arab Persians. The line is the same as Nazi propaganda concerning the Slav "Untermenschen" in the east. The cult of Saddam is also reminiscent of the cult of manly personality around Mussolini. Rumours of Saddam's mistresses are encouraged, it is felt these rumours confirm Hussein's Arab masculinity.

Arab masculinity is a dominant theme in the remarkably similar propaganda attack aimed at the Syrian people by the Hafez Assad regime. Assad comes from the same philosophi-

cal strain of Ba'athism. He proudly recounts learning about Arab nationalism from his father in French mandated Syria.

Originally a senior officer in the air force, Assad is today a shadow of his former past. Despite the murals of this seventy-year old man in army fatigues brandishing Soviet assault rifles, Assad's 22 years of totalitarianism are showing the strains on him as much as the Syrian people. Assad has twice suffered a heart attack during which bitter power struggles erupted well before the severity of the attacks were even established. Assad responded to this spontaneous show of fragile loyalty with an increase in the carnage.

As with Iraq, Syria does not merely pursue a policy of repression but a policy of complete smothering of descent. No one in Syria or Iraq can be, or admit to being, anything but a Ba'athist. The consequences of dissent are clear to see. Political opponents have their families kidnapped in an attempt at suppression or as a means of gaining information. This policy in particular has resulted in a specific request from Amnesty International to Iraq and Syria to desist from torturing children as young as ten or eleven.

The creed that drives these murder machines is that of pan-Arab Ba'ath Socialism. This philosophy bears much resemblance to the Fascist movement in Italy. During the Second World War, Iraq had, for a considerable period, a pro-Nazi government while Syria was governed by the collaborationist Vichy regime. These were great times for pan-Arab socialists in whom the Nazis found an ideological ally particularly with regard to the Zionist issue.

In 1942 the pan-Arabist Anwar Sadat (later to become President Sadat of Egypt) was arrested by British colonial authorities for plotting a Nazi coup in Egypt. Saddam Hussein would later become an exile in Egypt. The point at which Saddam went into exile in Egypt, in the fifties, Ba'athism was taking root in the Arab world. Egypt, Iraq and

Syria were particularly taken by pan-Arab teaching — Egypt and Syria were even briefly united in the United Arab Republic.

The philosophy was the coming together of two great Arab minds, the d'Annunzio type figure of Michel Afleq and the

clearing out members of his regime who were not quite as loyal as he required but the story thrown out to the Iraqi people was that the heroic arbiter of Arab destiny had foiled a Syrian coup attempt.

For their part the Syrians were the only Arab regime to support Iran during the Iran-Iraq war. Both Syria and Iraq use the PLO in a similar vein to Stalin's use of the Comintern as an arm of Soviet domestic policy. The PLO factions operating from Baghdad and Damascus follow the whip given to them in those cities and those cities rarely consider the plight of the Palestinians.

In supporting Iraq against Iran and making Iran the "bogeyman" of the Middle East the west committed a blunder of some magnitude. Muslim nationalism in Iran is dying and with it dies the greatest threat to the true terrorist states of Syria and Iraq. In 1979 the Shia population of Iraq was largely apathetic to the Iranian revolution which they saw as a backward Persian revolt. Today, Iraq, as a result of the Gulf War, has been blasted back into the stone age and the more moderate rhetoric of Hashemi Rafsanjani in Iran begins to make sense.

In the wider Arab arena the seemingly irretractable monarchies and dukedoms of such countries as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates came under heavy threat from Muslim nationalism. Saddam Hussein was willing to abandon Ba'ath socialist demagoguery and appealed to the considerable Islamic sentiment of the Arab masses. In Algeria, as the socialist regime broke up the Islamic Nationalist FIS movement gathered momentum. This could well be the scenario for change in Iraq and Syria. This is obviously an unpleasant prospect for Saddam and Assad.

Recently ex-hostage Brian Keenan appeared on television to appeal for the release of an elderly Iraqi cleric who had been kidnapped and incarcerated in a cell without any light (natural or electric) for some years. The man's family had been slaughtered prior to his imprisonment. This illustrates that Iraq is still at war with Iran four years after the ceasefire.

Ba'athism is in a state of eternal war and whilst the present dictatorships survive in Iraq and Syria the Iraqis and the Syrians will continue to live in their perpetual winter.

**As with Iraq, Syria does not merely pursue a policy of repression but a policy of complete smothering of descent. No one in Syria or Iraq can be, or admit to being, anything but a Ba'athist.**

Socialist Akram Hourani. The synthesis of nationalism and socialism, as seen before in even more unfortunate circumstances, made for a left wing ideology which was fiercely anti communist and replaced the role of dialectical materialism with the concept of national racial destiny.

The Ba'ath has exploited the profound grievances of the Arab peoples against Zionism and the state of Israel to great effect. In reality the Syrian and Iraqi regime have been guilty of the worst sort of manipulation of PLO factions and Syria has even turned its guns on the PLO.

This has been the greatest irony of Ba'ath power, namely their great ability to divide. For a party that professes it is aiming for Arab unity, the Ba'ath has done much to divide the Arab world. Iraq and Syria continue to this day the Cold War that has been raging between the two neighbours since the end of the mandates.

Despite being factions of the same party and having many common interests the feud between the two countries survives and will continue to survive. For a feud, especially one that sheds no blood, is both rare and serves as another legitimizing claim for the respective leadership's authority. Saddam Hussein came to power and promptly butchered some five hundred Ba'athists in a recreation of Hitler's "night of the long knives". Saddam was actually

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In 1982 the Syrian town of

# Rich Man's Blues

## 'It's Ralph' at the Comedy Theatre

Damp patches really aren't too good for your health, especially when they are on bathroom ceilings of sixteenth century country cottages and your name is Ralph. This is the ultimate message to be drawn from Hugh Whitmore's new play at the Comedy Theatre. The theatre is at least as cosy as the set, so it's a crying shame that only a handful of people showed up, but there you can see that intelligent theater shouldn't really be placed in the West End...

Enter Connie Booth as Claire (quite an improvement from her Fawlty Towers days), the elegant wife of bonvivant Andrew Gale (Timothy West), who, not only reckless but also rather neckless made it to TV-celebrity by hiding his emotional cynicism behind mainstream platitudes. Who cares for the world as long as it serves him champagne for breakfast...

Ralph does. Unfortunately our dear snob doesn't know Ralph or rather doesn't want to know him. Far from being deterred by his old friend's negligence Ralph takes over first the wife, then the neigh-

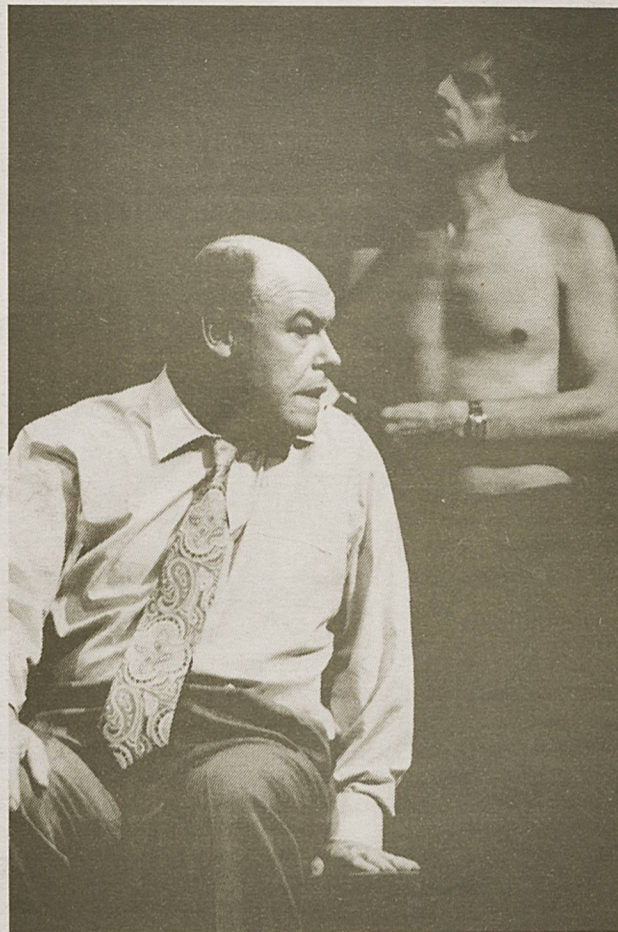
bours and last but not the least the bathtub in a way that is as deadly as it is innocent. So much for the story line. For an English play, the unsuspecting audience is given an extraordinary array of special effects and George Lucas hasn't even seen it yet.

(Right, I said, it's for intelligent people...) To be precise, an average student, preferably male and balding, might draw some fine conclusions about life, wives and friends in general before embarking on whatever career path promises the biggest load of dosh. In terms of this production, the winner for the grand prize of happy life certainly isn't Mr. Gale: It's Ralph!

So, if your IQ is not considerably below 100 (if it is, then at least you might want to throw a glance or two at Ms. Booth's formidable underwear) and you are not a raving feminist (no offence, of course) go and pity poor old Mr Gale.

Ralph will stay at the Comedy Theatre, Haymarket for quite a while.

Thomas Cohrs



Keep your knickers on, will you?

Photo: John Haynes

# Pinter Plays The Audience?

## Blinding discomfort in "Party Time"

"What is he trying to do?" "What does this mean?" These are the questions that inevitably arise on seeing any of Harold Pinter's plays and they are often exasperated, perhaps by the playwright's ambiguity on the subject matter. Pinter's new piece "Party Time" is currently running at the Almeida Theatre in Islington and is the first of similar length (if one can call 40 minutes long) that he has planned for over a decade.

"Mountain Language", a short exposition precedes "Party Time". It depicts a situation in which the militaristic organs in a totalitarian state are being used to crush dissent. The dissent in this case is the language

spoken by an assumed ethnic minority "The Mountain People". Pinter is dealing with communication and the play for all its pretentious ills does show quite effectively how repression of a language dissolves the fabric of communication between all parties in the society, not just those in conflict but even between mother and son.

It is a much more daunting task however to justify Pinter's new work "Party Time". On the face of it the play deals with a ruling elite's attempt to escape from the realities of solid decay and impending collapse by engaging in party small talk and self-aggrandizement. Set in the late eighties with

crass money-makers and political cadres blurring the lines of an established British class structure, one begins to wonder whether the play is an indictment on the health clubs and mediocre culture associated with this era. If so, then the issues are dealt with crudely; characters are caricatures and the jokes are cheap. There is little portrayal of "The Homecoming" or "The Birthday Party" here.

It appears that Pinter has lost his zest for such intricacies perhaps by his long absence from writing plays. The play is cleverly designed to irritate the viewers by making them take the blame for the decayed culture. At the end of the performance,

intense light illuminates the auditorium blinding the audience and forcing them to look away in pain.

Pinter (who attends every performance) scans the front row and grins as viewers shield their eyes with programmes.

Is his contempt for the audience enough to justify showing a play bereft of sufficient intellectual tissue? Maybe. Invariably Pinter's name alone suffices to keep audiences flocking to the Almeida, only to leave feeling vaguely cheated.

Jonathan Asante

*Party Time runs at the Almeida Theatre, Islington, till the end of December.*

# Piper Sails at Camden

## Christianity and Slavery examined in 'A Ship Called Jesus'

Hardly anyone will have heard of the Camden Arts Centre, a beautiful Victorian brick building where there is an exhibition by Keith Piper at the moment. "A Ship Called Jesus," as Piper named his exhibition, concerns itself with the relationship between Christianity and slavery. This relationship began in 1564, when the English buccaneer John Hawkins went on a slave hunting expedition, for which he was given a ship called 'Jesus of Lubeck' by Queen Elizabeth I. The exhibition which consists of three different installations wants to examine "some of the traumas and transitions" caused by the confrontation of Christian values and slavery.

The first installation called "The Ghosts of Christendom" is a series of blown-up slides on glass, lit from the back, with small pieces of canvas in front of the glass causing a blurring effect. The pictures are not abstract in the sense of not depicting anything, but they are not figurative either, instead laying many different 'motifs' over one another to form some sort of 'collage'. It is hard to understand the meaning and the intentions of the artist without reading the informative documentation, which explains that the first installation is about the "lengths to which one culture will go to alleviate its guilt and to smooth over the contradictions between its temporal demands and spiritual aspirations".

The second installation called "The Rites of Passage" consists of different colour slides projected onto

a wall of 15 meters' length. The slides assemble a constantly changing picture of Christian symbols and symbols of power and wealth. Slavery is represented acoustically by the sighs and howls of the slaves in the ship. Acoustic continuity is preserved by the constant sound of waves slapping against the side of the ship. The combination of constantly changing projections and the sound create an eerie atmosphere in the large room.

The last installation uses video techniques and will probably come as a disappointment after having seen the previous two rooms. The video screens are dull and uninteresting even though the topic of "The Fire Next Time" may seem gripping. It is about the language and the symbols of religious fundamentalism and the arising limits of perception. After strolling around in the third room you will soon find your way back to the "The Rites of Passage" to enjoy the stimulation offered by the constant change of views. Stepping out of the exhibition you will take with you some impressions on aspects of one of the biggest crimes against humanity, a mental chewing-gum which lasts for quite some time.

The exhibition at the Camden Arts Centre in Arkwright Road, NW3, runs until December 22 and is open from 12 noon until 8pm from Tuesdays to Thursdays and from 12 noon until 6pm on the weekends. Admission is free. You are bound to enjoy it.

Hans Gutbrod

## Best Action

### Terminator 2

Terminator 2 was THE film of the year. Fast and furious, it had everything that one would expect from an Arnie movie: fantastic special effects, great comic one-liners and as much action as one could take, including an innumerable number of explosions.

What's more, poor old Arnie was unable to kill anyone, despite the fact he looked like one mean mutha, therefore a lot of people were shot in the legs. This did not matter because the T1000 unit killed enough people to satisfy even the most blood thirsty people.

With most action films something suffers, usually the plot, but T2's plot withstood everything that was thrown at it and therefore it was enjoyable to watch. Being a fan of the original movie I was pleased to find that Hollywood had not loused up the sequel, like it usually does to other successful films.

The special effects were outstanding, especially those scenes which evolved around the chameleon — like abilities of the T1000 unit. Melting into floors and producing steel blades from his hands to being frozen in liquid nitrogen, anything seemed to be possible on the big screen, but then that's the magic of the movies.

Terminator 2- Judgement

Day was a great action film and is thoroughly recommended.

Neil Andrews

## Best

There were not that many good films to choose from this year, but it is difficult to choose between the few good films there were — I have chosen two and they're both gangster films, 'Millers Crossing' and 'Good Fellas'.

'Millers Crossing', directed by the enigmatic Coen brothers, was a superb, low-budget, stylish production. Full of the weird and wonderful characters that one expects from this pair, and quite obviously a parody of the whole gangster genre in

some parts whilst excelling in that same genre in others.

A superb cast is led by Albert Finney, Gabriel Byrne, and John Turturro with great camerawork, editing and the usual originality in the screenplay and directing, revitalising a genre which before then had gone quite stale.

Revitalisation is also the name of the game in 'Good Fellas'; this is Martin Scorsese at his best and features great acting from an excellent cast including Robert de Niro and a truly frightening Joe Pesci.

There is a high level of technical expertise in this film, which features probably the best bit of Steadicam work ever seen on film and snappy editing which results

in one of the piciest 2-1/2 hour films that I have had the pleasure to watch.

Both films are period pieces featuring realistic and beautiful sets and costume on top of all their other attributes, and both overshadow Coppola's 'Godfather part 3'. Having been available on video for a while now, they are both worth a look either for the first time or again if you've seen them already.

Navin Reddy

## Worst

I can't really say I go to the movies to waste a fiver on a crap film. Nevertheless when I took my seat for "Highlander 2" I had no idea just how much drivel I was to

witness.

Don't get me wrong, I wasn't expecting much. The first film was a classic, so if the sequel was even half as good as the original I was at least in for a couple of hours exiting entertainment.

How further from the truth could I have been? Everybody knows sequels are a blatant attempt to cash in on the success of the original, yet once in a while a filmmaker could at least make it value for money.

Highlander 2 supposedly cost twice as much as the original to make but where the extra money went I couldn't see. Somehow loopholes were found to recreate truly dead and

# Lorca delights audiences at LSE and the Etc. Theatre

I was looking forward to watching this Drama Soc. play, but I wasn't really relishing the idea of writing a review on it. What would I say if I didn't like it?

As it happens, I had nothing to fear — last Wednesday's production was great. Not only did the Drama Soc., with just a month's rehearsing do a good job of putting on a play, they did a damn fine job of putting on two.

'The Love of Don Perlimplin and Belissa in the Garden' (nice brief title that one), and 'The Butterflies Evil Spell' were both serious plays with love being the linking theme, and it is obvious that in undertaking such an ambitious task the

Drama Soc. obviously had their 'act' (sorry!) together on the organisaton front — so a big thumbs up for the director too.



What have you done with my Giro? Photo: Barry Pourghadiri

roles. As far as I could tell nobody fluffed their lines and the scenery managed to stay in one piece, but there was

one funny bit in the first play when the two sprites, after delicately circling the main characters, tiptoed their way offstage and went crashing into some cardboard boxes.

Still for those of you who didn't go — by way of a tip — don't miss out on next weeks performance by the other half of the Drama Soc. of Carol Churchill's

'Vinegar Tom'. So, put this down RIGHT NOW and nip down to the Quad and pick up a ticket.

Gavin Gillham

This rather unknown play by Lorca is an exciting, energetic fringe production. It tells the story of a man waiting for his fiancee for five

years, how she rejects him and leads to his search for love. But it is much more than this; the play is a whirling fantasy of love, fears and regrets. In this respect the set is effective in mirroring this strange world and is perhaps a legacy of the authors origins in puppetry.

Time is the main theme of the play. All the characters live in a world dominated by the past and future, not accepting the realities of the present. It is a play of hope

and vitality which, eventually coming to realise the value of life, proclaims: "One must never wait! One must live!"

play is poetry rather than dialogue and contains wonderful imagery. Also impressive is Lorca's ability to laugh at his own pretensions and

the play is very amusing in places.

However, the translation tries too hard to make the script work in English, the lead (Jon Huyton) is not strong enough to hold the play together, and it tends to lose momentum. Indeed some of the smaller players such as Gareth Vanness, Lachele Carl and Walter Hepworth-Lewis steal the show.

It is a very enjoyable production that breathes life into fringe theatre; it is well worth seeing, if just for the intriguing finale.

Graham Silbermann



I knew I should have gone private! Photo: Philip Wade

The acting is memorable in places if somewhat overdone.

What is more interesting is that the language of the

## Maggie's Downfall War and Peace in the Thatcher Decade

As the anniversary of the Margaret Thatchers' political downfall is upon us, this book makes an interesting read concerning the decade in which she held the seat of power in Britain.

Published before she left office, John Scanlon's 'Surviving the Blues' is a collection of personal writings by 18 women who "came of age" in the 1980s, and more specifically were influenced by feminist ideas.

The writers are drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds and share differing experiences, though the

common thread is that they each felt out of step with the agenda set by the Conservative government of the time.

One talks of her involvement with the 'Women against pit closures' during the miners strike of 1984-5, while another traces her involvement with the peace movement centred on the air base at Greenham Common.

Others write of less political involvement but share their everyday experiences in other ways. For example one writer is disabled; another is dependant on the Health Service.

It is refreshing to read frank and honest accounts of how individuals came to form their opinions in the light of their experiences. A striking fact about the book is that it documents the testimonies of individuals who are stereotyped and dismissed by the mainstream media. In doing this it exposes the shallow analysis and portrayal of people and events that are fed into society via the tabloid press and all in all this is a good, easy, read - whatever ones opinions on the Thatcher decade.

John Hobson

buried characters from the original but not even Sean could rescue this.

Yet again one more mindblowing plot simply was pulled out of a comic. You would never guess that our hero ends up saving the world and conquering evil, now, would you?

The plot sprawled all over the place, sub-plots were an enigma and even the memorable quotes, "Don't lose your head" or "It's a kind of magic" were worked to the bone.

Highlander 2 relied on the cult quality of number one, with us punters going along expecting more of the hack and slash fantasy. Alas we will never see the

like of the original again and I hope no more of it's sequel.

Nick Fletcher

### Best Porn

**A Political Broadcast on Behalf of the Conservative Party**

Excessive, unintentionally funny, overtly suggestive, unconvincingly acted, with a catchy title, this year's top pornographic film contained, despite its brevity, all the ingredients necessary to merit such an accolade.

The actors' experience showed through as they somehow managed to concealed signs of nervousness, despite all that they had just been getting up to — it is apparent that they now feel

comfortable with an audience so well accustomed to their antics.

It still baffles me, though, as to just how those actors managed to get into the positions we see them in. Years of valuable practice, no doubt.

Tantalisingly teasing throughout, vital statistics were cruelly either skillfully hidden away or carefully caressed and masterfully manipulated. Years of experience showing through yet again, no doubt.

The soundtrack was a trifle on the dodgy side and some may say in bad taste in its attempt to glorify the sort of activity they regularly indulge in.

It is no wonder then, that television authorities

wouldn't allow them a screening before 9 p.m. Can't wait for the next one!

Zaffar Rashid

### Worst Action

**Terminator 2**

If anyone ever tells you that Terminator 2 is a good film, don't believe them. It's shite, completely illogical and over-the-top.

Why didn't Arnie kill anyone? Surely shooting people in the legs at point blank range will leave a large proportion of Los Angeles' police force in wheel chairs for the rest of their lives.

This time travel business is a bit suspect as well. How can two androids look the same if they were designed

than Viz.

Characters to be found in this glorious publication include 'The Crazy Adventures of Canny Ken', which is a comic strip about fallen Liverpool idol Kenny Dalglish, 'Gavin St. James, a kind of up-market Roger Mellie (The man on the telly) and a comic strip based on the adventures of Prince William. The jokes are either very disgusting or very violent, but if you like that sort of thing, like I do, then you'll find this comic very

funny. But then people who say Viz is still funny will probably hate this simply because of its disgusting content, then again, I never asked for your opinion. You're American. Also look out for your free Christmas gift of your very own Slade to cut out and keep.

Zit: As funny as Viz used to be a couple of years ago before people started reading it.

Neil Andrews

much cop either. I could do better using my ZX81. Call those effects special? Have you been watching Blue Peter lately — all those robots seem to be made from a washing up bottle and some double-sided sticky tape.

I dunno, the youth of today. I remember the days when a film could be made with innumerable car crashes and explosions, and lots of computers and still have change from £500,000.

What a waste of money.

Neil Andrews

**The above are our personal choices and if you don't like them you can just f\*\*\* right off**

The special effects aren't



# Its That Time Again...



Ron Voce gets a page to himself, but is it any good? It's about Christmas Number Ones if you're interested.

Bah humbug! It's that time of year when mediocrity replaces class and the sensible record buying public are wooed by sleigh bells and snow to buy those records we all love to hate, Christmas records.

All record companies rely on the Christmas period to generate sales. Records that were falling in the charts have a brief resurgence.

Those brilliant records released at this time are often overlooked in the rush. Some manage to survive and become monster hits in the new year.

Examples of this are Relax by Frankie Goes To Hollywood in 1984 and Dead or Alive's You Spin Me Around in 1985. Both entered the charts in late November of the previous year to become number one's months later.

But how many good records are lost to the buying public because dumb DJs think all we want is Christmas forced down our ear drums.

It must be remembered that in the 39 years of Christmas number ones only 12 have anything to do with Christmas. In the early years we had to put up with such classics as Here in my Heart by Al Martino, It's Only Make Believe by Conway Twitty and Cliff Richard's first of three Christmas number ones, I Love You. The first genuine Christmas number one was the memorable The Christmas Alphabet by Dickie Valentine and we all know what a knob he is.

The second was in 1957 by the right-on anti apartheid campaigner Harry Belafonte with Mary's Boy Child which also topped the tree, pardon the pun, again in 1978.

However, from 1957 to 1973 we had to deal with such un-Christmassy tunes as Return to Sender by Elvis Presley, Day tripper by the Beatles and the all time puke master Long haired lover from Liverpool by the then little Jimmy Osmond (teeth and all).

The latter held off the late John Lennon's Happy Christmas (War Is Over) which, even the most ardent James fan would agree, would have been a much better Christmas number one; as it was it went on to be the joint most successful Christmas record spending 31 weeks on the charts.

John Lennon's record must have struck a chord with the music fraternity as for the next three years there were

two classic Christmas number ones plus some others worth mentioning.

In 1973 the all time Christmas number one was released. Christmas doesn't start for most people until they hear the strains (literally!) of Merry Christmas Everybody on the radio or juke-box.

Slade were the most successful group of the early '70s. In three years they had 12 top ten hits including six number ones. Three went straight to number one, the last one of these was written as a thank-you to their fans for their support and has since become a national institution.

Merry Christmas Everybody set standards for all of the Christmas records to follow. Its success was unparalleled as it re-entered the charts no less than eight times including every year from 1980-86.

The success of this record overshadowed another Christmas classic. Wizzard's I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday featured the virtuoso talent of Roy Wood. He too was following up a brace of classic number ones but was held up at number four.

The following year Mud took another seminal (o'er), record to hit the highspot at Christmas. Lonely This Christmas was done as a throwaway track—you only have to hear Les Blair's vocal—yet it stayed on top for four weeks.

In a way it was a good job as I don't think I could eulogise over the merits of Mike Batt's alter egos, the Wombles. Yes, 1974 was their year. However through a quirk of fate, Wombling Merry Christmas had to make do with the number two slot and for once I am grateful.

However it just goes to prove that someone with the obvious talent of Mike Batt can write and release such dross to capitalise on the Christmas sales beano. However I digress so back to the plot.

The following year the Christmas number one was doing an attempted Bryan Adams. Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen was looking like a permanent Millwall home fixture. However for all its merits we won't dwell on it. But if you want to write a thesis on its influence on popular music and the music video then go ahead you sick person. Instead I am going to look at the number



Merry Christmas, we're back again. Where's Bryan?

two.

This was a song that successfully married a classical theme by some Russian composer I should know to some moving lyrics of a child's view of Christmas. I Believe In Father Christmas is a brilliant song except for one giggling thing, Greg Lake.

At that time Greg Lake was still in the pompous rockers Emerson, Lake and Palmer, and having been played a copy of Brain Salad Surgery in all its overblown glory I thought here we go again, someone else extracting the urine. However as I got older and began listening to more and more Christmas records I realised every one was taking the piss.

Novelty records are definitely popular around Christmas and they come in all shapes and forms. Who can forget those classic number ones of Lily the Pink by the Scaffold, Ernie (The Fastest Milkman in the West) by Benny Hill or Chuck Berry's My Ding A Ling.

Other records fail but are still worth mentioning if only for their rarity and laughability rating. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree deserves a mention as does Elton John's Step into Christmas. Needless to say Judge Dread's Jingle Bells is nearly on a par with the version done by the Snowmen.

But these groups who release these banal records refuse to elaborate as they would harm their proper career. Yet Christmas is a time for the ultimate pop phenomenon, the one hit wonder. Two of these exist, the first being There's No One Quite Like Grandma by the St. Winifred's School

Choir and Save My Love by the overweight duo from Bradford, Renee and Renato.

There is at last a pattern emerging. Not only do Christmas number ones have to be throwaways and fun but they have to be acceptable to parents as I can't see your average Smash Hits reader buying the above two records even at Christmas.

When I asked my mother to buy D.I.V.O.R.C.E by Billy Connolly in 1975, she bought me the Tammy Wynette version. For the first time I realised what the generation gap was.

But today with dear old Tammy chortling away with dear old KLF, I suppose I would have seen this as a bonus, wouldn't I?

Anyway I couldn't mention Christmas records with the immortal record White Christmas by Bing Crosby. It is strange to note that this classic only reached the top ten in 1977 but it has been in the charts eight times.

But popularity is not all. Sales and rewards are probably more noticeable, and if you go by that the most successful record for Christmas must be Do they Know It's Christmas by Band Aids I and II. To be honest I never rated the song—Geldof and Midge have both written better—but the sentiment hit the spot.

The success spawned the Live Aid concert and for once something good came out of Christmas rather than the blatant commercialism one has become used to. However Christmas to many would not be right without Turkey, Pudding, Queen's Speech, crap film and Cliff at number one. In 1988 and 1990 he sang those easily forgettable tunes Mistletoe and Wine

and Saviour's Day and he was even singing on Band Aid II in the year in between. That's really it, but he has had 14 records in the charts over the Christmas period, so I suppose he is becoming an institution.

Talking of Institutions, I suppose the Christmas number one has become just that. It's like the whole country get's given another Christmas present. Its become so typically British that it's remarkable to believe that the first ever song that mentioned Christmas in its title was by the Goons. In 1956, Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers and Harry Secombe had the hit I'm Walking Backwards for Christmas in the Charts. What's so typically British about this was, it was the middle of summer. Yet again someone was taking the piss.

Well we will follow my rants and raves with a few objective comments on the previous 39 Christmas number ones. I can honestly say I have memories of nearly 24 of them, so as Neil would say I'm an old fart.

1952. Here In My Heart by Al Martino was the first ever number one.

1953. Answer Me by Frankie Laine. But no one knew the question.

1954. Lets Have a Party by Winnie Atwell. Sounds just like Jive Bunny.

1955. Christmas Alphabet by Dickie Valentine. But it's in February.

1956. Just Walking in the Rain by Johnnie Ray. What about snow?

1957. Mary's Boy Child by Harry Belafonte. At last seriousness.

1958. Its Only make Believe by Conway Twitty. Was he a Twit.

1959. What Do You Want To Make Those Eyes At Me For by Emile Ford and the Checkmates. The longest ever title and definitely not worth it.

1960. I Love You by Cliff Richard. The first of the three.

1961. Tower of Strength by Frankie Vaughan. Not by the Mission.

1962. Return to Sender by Elvis Presley. All those crap presents.

1963. I Want To Hold Your Hand by the Beatles. Oh no you don't.

1964. I Feel Fine by the Beatles. But not after 40 cans of Norseman.

1965. Day Tripper by the Beatles. No chance everything's shut.

1966. Green Green Grass of Home by Tom Jones. Hey man, pass the....

1967. Hello Goodbye by the Beatles. Great for those friends you hate.

1968. Lily the Pink by the Scaffold. Another good cure for Norseman.

1969. Two Little Boys by Rolf Harris. My mother warned me about this.

1970. I Hear You Knockin' by Dave Edmunds. Well I'm not answering.

1971. Ernie (He Drove The Fastest Milk Cart In The West) by Benny Hill. If you know anything about Benny Hill you will know this is banal.

1972. Long Haired Lover From Liverpool by Little Jimmy Osmond. Donkey droppings

1973. Merry Christmas Everybody by Slade. Nuff said.

1974. Lonely this Christmas by Mud. And its no surprise why!

1975. Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen. Freddie wrote a monster...!

1976. When A Child is Born by Johnny Mathis. About every 5 seconds.

1977. Mull of Kintyre by Wings. Stay there and don't come back.

1978. Mary's Boy Child by Boney M. Like Milli Vanilli they didn't sing.

1979. Another Brick in the Wall by Pink Floyd. Strange one this...

1980. Starting Over by John Lennon. Look what a bullet in the head can do.

1981. Don't You want Me by the Human League. Sorry not really!

1982. Save Your Love by Renee and Renato. Ideal Simon Bates Music.

1983. Only You by the Flying Pickets. This lost me £100 at the bookies.

1984. Do They Know Its Christmas by Band Aid. Nothing to say.

1985. Saving All My Love by Whitney Houston. Please don't bother!

1986. Caravan of Love by the Housemartins. Now that's what I call...

1987. Always on My Mind by the Petshop Boys. Buy the 12 inch!

1988. Mistletoe and Wine by Cliff Richard. Parsley, Sage, Rosemary etc.

1989. Do They Know Its Christmas by Band Aid II. S.A.W. shit.

1990. Saviors Day by Cliff Richard. Why do we bother, is it worth it?

1991. Who knows! But by the time the next Beaver's out, Who will care?

# Herbal Remedy

## This Year's Blonde and The Herbs prove their worth in salt at Tequila.

This Year's Blonde are a fucking great band. Unfortunately, at this moment in time the only people who are aware of this fact are the band's friends and relatives, students who attend the LSE and some bloke from the Melody Maker.

Whenever they play live, especially at Tequila, they always deliver the goods. This time was no exception.

Having heard the group's recent demo tape I had a distinct advantage over most of the audience because I actually knew some of the songs, amazing eh? Highlights of the set included 'Sermon' and the excellent 'Catch A Falling Star', which this time around was directed towards a certain rock star who appears to have died last week.

Once again This Year's Blonde were a hard act to follow but The Herbs were rather good. They just lacked an audience as student apathy hit Tequila. Or was it the presence of the BBC cameras which drove them out of The Quad in droves?



"And if you press this spot ...." This Year's Blonde conquer Tequila Photo: Neil Andrews

The Herbs did have a hard task however thanks to our glorious Social Sec.

The Tequila Society had hoped to get a rather big name in the world of popular music for the Christmas Apocalypse but their cries fell on deaf ears. Calls for James were refused almost immediately as our gallant Sec. replied with a simple "They'll never play here". Well thanks for trying, luv.

Then Primal Scream

agreed to play but Fiona TURNED THEM DOWN. Airhead never materialised and it was left to The Herbs to carry the can.

If she exerted as much effort into booking bands as she does into seducing men in her office then she probably would have got The Smiths AND The Beatles to perform. Apparently the Rolling Stones were going to play Tequila as well but dear old Fiona turned them down

on the grounds that two lead singers with LSE connections on the same bill would clash!

In the end The Herbs played their set to a much reduced audience and departed the stage. A storm of a set it may have been, but most party goers simply didn't have the heart. Most of them were Primal Screams fans. Probably.

Neil Andrews

# Truly Refreshing Album

## Genesis' new album, 'We Can't Dance,' proves to be too much for our writer

'We Can't Dance', Genesis' newest album, clearly shows that this group of artists (Tony Banks, Mike Rutherford and naturally Phil Collins) has come a long way since the Peter Gabriel days of the 1980s (Actually it was the '70s — Ed.)

In fact, most of their albums since that time have proven to be chart-busters (Wooooo — Ed.) and 'We Can't Dance' is not any different.

Following its release at the beginning of November it immediately zoomed up the British pop charts and stayed their for about two weeks. The album may not reach the heights of the group's all time masterpiece 'Invisible Touch' (Ha,ha,ha — Ed.) but it should more than satisfy any Genesis fan (They have fans? — Ed.).

'We Can't Dance' is an epic meditation on intangibility, and at the same time it deepens and profoundly influences the meaning of the four preceding album. The music conveys a sense

of harmony which literally grips the listener forcing him to play the songs over and over again (hey, we have a pretentious journalist in the area — Ed.).

In addition, many of the songs address social issues, reflecting dark emotions and focusing on personal conflicts. "Driving the Last Spike", for example, is an emotional ballad about British Railway builders in the 1800s who risked their lives for the system (Oh wow. They still are — Ed.). The melody is simply overwhelming (Aaaarrggghhh — Ed.) and the slow background drumming by Collins adds even more to the overall effect. In fact, the second to last verse so deftly depicts the hopelessness and despair of the men that it sends shivers down your spine (Spew — Ed.).

The album's hit single "No Son of Mine" is another hors d'oeuvre by the band and has gone all the way up the British single charts. It is a sombre rhythmic song about a child running away from

home and then being rejected by his father for not trying to confront his problems. The song reflects the loneliness, paranoia and alienation of the runaway (Oh bollocks. It's just a tax loss — Ed.). Mike Banks' virtuosic guitar skills add to the overall atmosphere and make this piece especially pleasing to the ear.

"Dreaming While you Sleep" is another outstanding musical composition, which tells the story of a man attempting to cope with the reality of having killed a person (I'm going to kill you — Ed.). Even though Rutherford's bass appears obscured, the band on a whole sounds tight and is once again propelled by Collins' truly amazing drumming.

The other songs on the album are all equally enthralling except for maybe "I Can't Dance" which seems a little to obscure and farcical and does not fit into the general scheme of the album.

A large portion of the praise has also to go to Nick

Davis who has never found as clear and crisp a sound as this. You are practically able to hear every nuance of the instruments,

In terms of lyrical craftsmanship and songwriting skills this album hits a new level of professionalism. Take for example the song "Jesus He Knows Me", a piece about today's religious beliefs, which in many ways is funkier than anything Michael Jackson or Prince have produced.

Finally, I'd like to add that Phil Collins solo efforts seem to be more commercial and therefore more satisfying in a narrow kind of way. But I also believe that Collins works better in the confines of a band than as a solo artist — the stress is on the word artist. In fact, the word artist applies to all three band members because Genesis is still the best and most exciting band to come out of England since the 1980s and 'We Can't Dance' clearly proves this.

Patrick Fietje

# Beethoven Abdicates

## The LSE Music Society in concert

The LSE Music Society gave their Michaelmas term concert last Tuesday, performing an ambitious program of Handel's "Utrecht Te Deum", and Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto, "The Emperor".

The Handel was musically sound, but the performance suffered from one or two small problems. The choir were disadvantaged from the start, as they were tucked behind the orchestra due to space restrictions. This was criminal where the soloists were concerned, as they promised much but failed to deliver it as far as the audience.

This could partly have been due to the cello's determination to get their point across louder than everyone else, and the brass effortlessly smothering the full choir even at its maximum volume.

Despite this, everyone succeeded in conveying the vivacity of the piece, although it would have benefited from attention being paid to some minor points of detail.

The Beethoven could also have been handled with a little more care. The first chord, somewhat consequential for what follows, sounded like a few old men farting in tin buckets. It was as if everyone was making a vague stab at their note. Come on, folks, if you can't get your first note in tune, what hope

do you hold for the rest of the piece?

Once the wincing had stopped, sun broke through the clouds of gloom. The soloist, Julia Cload, proved immensely competent, slashing her way through the runs, and tinkling through the trills with aplomb. To say that her performance saved the day would be an understatement: Her interpretation of the second movement ranked up with the greatest.

Despite improving on their opening, the orchestra carelessly stomped over her delicacies, and the ending was a disaster. The magic of the piano/timpani chat was ruined (possibly forever) by the apparent lack of communication between said drum, piano and conductor. Each obviously thought that THEY were out of beat, with the result that they all changed simultaneously, remaining out...

This was not the best performance I've heard, but one well worth attending. Congratulations to everyone, especially the soloist and Gordon Kirkwood, the conductor, for an enjoyable evening. The Emperor didn't so much die as abdicate his throne to say, Mozart (well, it was the eve of the Bicentenary). Even so, he will never quite seem the same again.

James Brown (I feel good)

# Nirvana's the Place to Be

## Nirvana play the Astoria

One of the first gigs of the current Nirvana tour and it's sold out. To gain entrance to the Astoria we queue from 6pm to get one of the 200 tickets available on the night — and it was well worth it.

Nirvana were superb, playing most of the new 'Nevermind' album, as well as some old stuff and a cover of The Vaselines' 'Jesus wants me as a Sunbeam' (strange choice). They played virtually all my favourites from the current album and the highlights were a rampant version of the single 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' (buy it now (What's this? Free advertising? — Ed.)) and the superb but slower 'Polly'. To see a mosh-pit in full flow to tracks like 'Breed' and 'Lithium', and then stop and watch in awe as the band

render a classic version of 'Polly' is an amazing sight.

The pit was pretty wild — which brings me to the only negative part of the evening: idiots in the pit who didn't want to watch the band, but to try and start fights and injure people. A pit should be lively, energetic and FUN. No one should get hurt. Perhaps that's a naive statement to make, but it is possible.

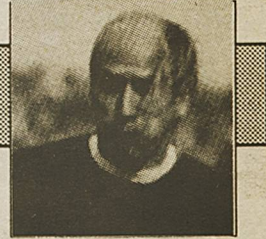
Tonight, Nirvana were totally brilliant. Kurt dived into the crowd at the end, and a great many people went home satisfied. Very soon Nirvana are going to be really big — let's hope corporate manipulation doesn't spoil that — and buy the 'Nevermind' album if you haven't already. (Where have you been?)

Geoff Robertson.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, Jolly Easter, Swing Your Pants (Hic!)...



## The Bobby Charlton Fact Finding Mission



# LSE Music Sucks

Bobby Charlton investigates why the LSE has such bad taste in music. Be prepared. Bob is watching you...

"This week boys and girls I'm investigating the reason why the students at LSE have such crap music taste. It's something that you should all be concerned about as you are all LSE students, therefore you all have crap music taste.

I begin with that section of the community commonly known as AMERICANS. Americans have possibly the worst music taste in the whole college. Why, I don't know. Americans have always been insecure ever since we decided not to let them be a part of our glorious Empire and its shows (We were the ones who wanted out, Neil, er, Bobby! — M.Ed.).

Americans are born ugly. This ultimately affects their taste in music. Americans like anything, and I mean anything. If they like Public Enemy then they're bound to like Peter, Paul and Mary. Diversity is the word I'm looking for here, because that describes them the best. They have a diverse music taste; unfortunately they don't like anything decent. Blame the youth of America



Steer clear of this man. He is independent but dangerous.

Photo: Jon Fenton-Fischer

for making U2 big and Simple Minds huge. It's their fault. They're so ugly that they can associate themselves with the gruesome features of Jim Kerr and Bono. QED. Americans like ugly, crap bands.

When it comes to rebellion by the 'Kids', the States come

bottom. Elsewhere kids riot for their rights to the sounds of the day. What do the Americans do? They lie on their beds and listen to 2 Live Crew say some naughty words on their Walkmans while Mom and Dad watch The Oprah Winfrey show or Cheers on television down-

stairs. That sort of action will bring a government down one day.

Then there are those students into Classical music. Why? Didn't your parents allow you to listen to Madness and Wham! when you were a child? Perhaps it was your own fault? Yes, it was, wasn't it! Instead of watching Top Of The Pops or The Chart Show you were playing with your sister's Barbie doll, trying to make her do naughty things with your Action Man. Admit it. You were beaten as a child if you so much as uttered a line by Spandau Ballet. You probably went to boarding school and are trying to blame the institution for giving you a classical education.

Students who are into AOR and MORTunes are sad. You have grown up too quickly. You are no longer 19 or 20 but 37 or 38. Admit it. All you need is a wife, a mortgage and 2.4 children and your life will be complete. Anyone who says Genesis are really good is talking crap. Phil Collins is probably the best argument there is for abortion! Try listening to the Wedding Present, you might discover something. Like decent music. Get a life, have a bath.

Techno/Hardcore music is rap and dance music as described by Navin "I've got a whopper" Reddy (Yes, of course he has. And I've got a 16 ft. Shark in my fish tank — Ed.). To anybody who isn't called Navin Reddy, Techno/Hardcore is basically rap music sung very loudly, with more beeps than a bloody Road Runner cartoon.

People who go to parties in

order to dance to this rubbish are very said indeed. Beep, beep, crash, smash, "Charlie says you should always tell your mummy when you've got crap music taste", blah, blah, blah. Well, they don't write them like that any more. They just sample everybody else's.

The worst offenders are people over 25. Punk simply past them by. Take Ron Voce, for example, he still remembers the days when he saw ELO at the age of Sixteen. Typical. Ask him who the Wonder Stuff are and he replies "Who?". He is the type of person who enjoyed going to a Led Zeppelin concert and hearing them sing about goblins and spaceships for over three hours (two of which were taken up by their rendition of 'Stairway To Heaven'). Great. Cheers, Ron. Just because you're independent and aware you think you can get away with anything. I demand a card vote...

There are two types of Indie Kids. The first are the nouveau dance-kids, i.e. tossers who like the Happy Mondays and Stone Roses and go around saying nish clish in a wank Manc accent. They are the dregs of society who kept away from the Independent charts until someone decided it was fashionable. The second type is the hardcore/jingly jangly guitar types who believe Dave Gedge is god and Nirvana are good. Steer clear of them. They all went to public school and have names like Tarquin, Nigel, and Sharon. They are the enemy within. Don't trust them with

your lunch boxes.

Metal heads are the pits. Wash your hair or, even better, get it cut and dye it blonde. Simple eh? Bands like Guns 'n' Roses are simply not very good. Screaming and screaming all over the place is not what I call hard. I had to play against Nobby Stiles. Now there's someone who is really hard. He nearly took my legs off in training once.

The 'Spirit Of Ibiza' is found in every disco where at least one girl is called Tracey and wears pink stilettos, and there's a bloke called Dave who simply can't hold his lager (Convert to Norseman. I did and all my hair fell out. But I did win a World Cup winner's medal, score 49 times for England and receive 106 caps. Not bad eh?). Steer clear of discos.

People who go to Tequila parties in silly outfits are also quite sad and can't come to terms with the fact that they're dull. Avoid like the plague.

Before I go, I'd just like to say how good Spinal Tap are. They obviously drink Norseman lager too. Probably why their drummer keeps dying. Finally, the music editor of The Beaver isn't sad. He just likes Echo and the Bunnymen a wee bit too much... (Well, thanks Bob. — Ed.)

And what about me, probably one of the greatest Englishmen to have ever lived. I listen to This Year's Blonde because they really are a great band. Merry Christmas."

## Tripping and Whipped Fantastic!

### Spiritualised at the New Cross Venue

Spiritualised are a band that make slow psychedelic symphonic music with guitars and lots of neat effects. I hesitate to call it rock music as this might conjure images of 'Sgt. Pepper' era Beatles or even Genesis.

Though I would say they are most definitely a band for the post rave '90s, the light show was reminiscent of the Velvet Underground shows played as part of Andy Warhol's 'Exploding Plastic Inevitable' tour of 1966-'67 (the dawn of psychedelia, though definitely not of hippydom). It's not just a visual similarity that Spiritualised have with them, either.

Live, Spiritualised definitely are rock, if a somewhat diverted version of it. It's the subversive kind too, and better yet, subtly

so. On drugs, This could be Heaven or this could be hell.

There are some things you should know about this band. Firstly, none of them were ever destined to be acrobats. Secondly, collectively or individually, the members of Spiritualised don't tend to say much, and this is reflected in the hushed vocal tones of Jason 'Spaceman' Pierce.

Perhaps due to an inability to reproduce the sound of their records live, they have chosen to wash their sound with feedback and distortion. LOTS of it, and I've been to a few Jesus and the Mary Chain gigs, I can tell you. This may not be music for the mosh pit (unless you've had 8 pints of snakebite), but it certainly makes the insides rattle.

These factors combined meant that I was unable to recognise all but one of the

songs, that being a blissful version of Spaceman 3's (Jason's former band) 'Walking with Jesus'.

Okay, I was only there to hear three songs in any case, having arrived at 10:30, but if I had been there on time, I might have been bored with all that feedback by the end of it. Who says gigs should be any more than 15 minutes long anyway? As it was, best gig of the year.

The night wasn't over there though. The post show club featured sounds as diverse as New Model Army and the Shamen. Trendy spot it must be too, as at one point I found myself dancing on the heels of Mikki from Lush.

Nice Chinese meal I had before hand too.

Baby Lemonade



"Cheers Bob." Simon enjoys a quick drink Photo: Neil Andrews