



Felix

THE NEWSLETTER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

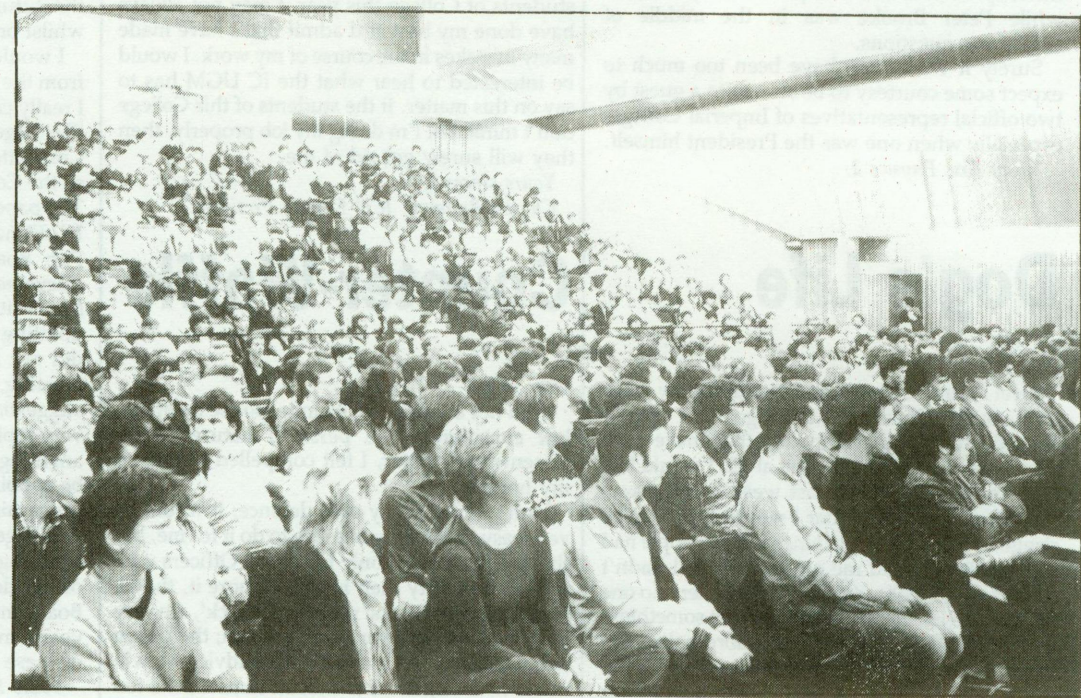
Council votes to make itself supreme body Farewell to democracy?

Following a heated debate Monday night's Union Council voted to abolish Union General Meetings (UGM's) by a two thirds majority. The motion, which constitutes a change in Union by-laws, will now be put to the UGM on Tuesday and it will have to be passed by a second UGM before it can be taken to the Governing Body for approval. If passed the move will leave Council as the supreme Union decision making body.

Under the the terms of the motion, students will be able to mandate Council members to submit motions to Council provided they have 25 seconders. Ordinary Students will be free to attend Council Meetings, but they will not have voting rights and will have speaking rights only at the Council's discretion. The Hustings UGM for Sabbatical candidates will be replaced by an elections meeting, but students will still be able to call Emergency General Meetings if they collect 150 seconders.

The motion was submitted to Council by the unofficial working party set up to investigate the merger between IC Student's Union and St Mary's student's Union. The working party argued that the present UGM system is unrepresentative because students from St Mary's are unable to attend UGM's on the IC site. They say that the only viable solution to this problem is to abolish UGM's leaving Council as the supreme decision making body.

The working party, which has met regularly since the start of the academic year consists of 5 representatives from IC Union and 5 from St Mary's. The party discussed the UGM at a meeting on December 19, for 2 hours, according to St Mary's Union Secretary Graham Price. Mr Price told FELIX, 'We've been in student politics a



long time and we went away and discussed the matter for a week before Christmas until two weeks afterwards. Council at IC would have a lot more student scrutiny'

Union Deputy President Chas Brereton, a member of the working party, said that the party had rejected the proposal that motions should be submitted through the Consituent College Union (CCU) UGM's because this would create difficulties if motions were to be ammended. He added that alternating the UGM's between St Mary's and IC would also be impractical.

Speaking on behalf of a group of students in opposition to the move, Postgraduate Affairs Officer, Dave Clements outlined his concerns that the new system would make it difficult for students to make their voices heard. He was particularly

concerned that the move would allow Union Officers to make 'decisions behind closed doors' without being accountable to the students who elected them.

'I am disgusted. It is wrong,' he said, 'The name Students' Union implies that it is an organisation run by students for students. The removal of UGM's is a hacks charter and would lead to a union run by hacks.'

Mr Clements went on to say that the poor attendance at UGM's this year was the result of poor publicity by the Union and expressed concern that motions submitted by minority groups would not interest Council and would not be given a fair hearing. He added that petitions in support of retaining UGM's are available for signing in the FELIX office or Imperial College Radio.

Union President Nigel Baker

admitted that it would 'take up too much time to open Council to everyone' and that speaking rights might be a problem when Council was short of time. He went on to suggest that Union Officers would be 'a hell of a lot more accountable' to students through links with Departmental and Accademic Reps.

Deputy President, Chas Brereton told FELIX 'If someone has something sensible to say I would have no hesitation in granting speaking rights, but I cannot answer for the rest of Council.'

When questioned about publicity for UGM's Mr Brereton told FELIX 'er what can we say? The walkway has been spattered in posters. Exec News could be produced but that remit falls to the Hon Sec. There is a limit to what you can do.'

Comment page 4,8,11

Dynamic Democracy

Dear Bill,

I have just attended the Student Loans meeting in the Great Hall and feel that some complaint must be made about the disgraceful manner in which it was conducted.

The Chairman, Neil McClusky, who is neither the UGM Chairman nor the Union Council Chairman, was extremely biased in the comments that he made both to the Rt Hon Peter Brooke and to the floor. Whether his views are pro- or anti-loans, the meeting should have been chaired in an impartial manner to give a fair chance to all points of view. The Chairman also called Peter Brooke, Mr Easterbrooke and Peter on several occasions, talked to Nigel Baker and rudely interrupted with so-called points of information while Peter Brooke was in the middle of answering questions.

Surely it would not have been too much to expect some courtesy to be shown to a guest by two official representatives of Imperial College, especially when one was the President himself.

Nicky Fox, *Physics 2*.

Dog's Life

Dear Bill,

I feel I must reply to the criticisms of my work in the article 'View from a Bridge'. The tone of the article is such that it appears that I have done very little work for the Union at all. I would like to point out that when last week's article was published, I told Syd that I would expect to be slagged off if there were things which people had continually pressed me on, but which I hadn't done. I would not accept criticisms where no one had ever asked me why I hadn't done something. Syd is billed as 'diplomat extraordinaire' but surely it would have been diplomatic and more constructive if he had discussed his criticisms with all of us before rushing into print.

I accept the criticism that I have done very little in the field of Academic Affairs, but I wonder if I could have done anything at all given my job description in August. Perhaps Mr Harbour-Bridge could explain why he initiated the changes in the sabbatical job descriptions without consulting any of his Officers. For example, the Deputy President was made Chairman of the Transport Committee. This apparently innocuous title does not take into account the fact that vans have to be serviced, insured, allocated to Clubs and Societies, bills paid, accounts balanced etc—all of which takes a lot of time. The other sabbaticals will tell you that the system nearly broke down during the summer. (It is rather difficult to take a van for servicing when you have contractors etc to deal with during a refurbishment of the premises.) This issue has been resolved now, but I should say that I see the job that I'm doing now to be considerably different to what Syd proposed last year. I regret to say this, but I have become more of an administrator rather than a representative.

Although I tend to work most weekends, the amount of administrative work that needs to be done has crowded out most of the time that I would like to have devoted to Academic Affairs representation, for example.

I am sorry that Syd has seen fit to ridicule me in front of the students, the Union Officers, and the College personnel with whom I have regular dealings. As well as this I am facing a revolt from the Major Sub-committees (which control and oversee the activities of the Union Clubs) over fundamental changes in the way that their finances are dealt with. It brings into question whether you can afford to have someone who apparently has no credibility left, to have overall financial responsibility for an Union with a £2 million annual turnover and to make and implement important decisions on behalf of the students and negotiate with College on that basis. As a result I have serious doubts as to whether I should continue as Deputy President when it seems that in doing so I will only cause more harm than good.

I believe that I have worked hard for the students of College this year. I may not always have done my best and admit that I have made many mistakes in the course of my work. I would be interested to hear what the IC UGM has to say on this matter. If the students of this College don't think that I'm doing my job properly, then they will surely get rid of me.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Brereton, *ICU Deputy President*.

Counter-Waffle

Dear Bill,

I did not intend to write in response to letters, but considering the personal nature of Mr Greenwood's letter, I felt compelled to defend my honour.

I am writing in my own defence; it would be very easy to get someone else to do it for me, but this is a tactic used only by Union Officers who wish not to dirty their image. 'Ignore it, they'll forget it in two weeks; never write back', are very wise words from a very wise woman; the Union Administrator. As a result of this advice we will never hear Nigel Baker defend himself, it's too risky.

Mr Greenwood has unfortunately got a number of matters wrong in his letter, it being rather long I shall not bore you with an expansion of my previous article to correct these at the embarrassment of Mr Greenwood's misunderstandings. It is, I feel, completely understandable that an enthusiastic, yet inexperienced, young Union activist will jump to the wrong conclusions in his haste to make press. I only wish Chris had consulted me as to the content of his letter as well as Nigel, for I may have managed to save him the embarrassment of being made a stool pigeon, something which will not aid his campaign for Guilds Vice President at all. This is indeed sad as I believe that Chris would do the job concerned well, and I am dismayed by his rash behaviour.

What does help his cause is that he is, in fact, right that a Union Welfare Committee met last term; I had not noticed its occurrence as the minutes were not distributed by the President at Council. Unfortunately I fear the meeting was merely used to rubberstamp the preorganised

and hence predetermined ideas of the President. He is also right that a Welfare Officer has been elected and I must apologise to that person for not noticing his presence; it is presumably because the President had decided his job spent much of his budget before he was elected.

Mr Greenwood suggests my article was a matter of 'sour grapes'. This is not true; I have no political ambitions in this Union as, in fact, I cannot possibly take up a post next year. The series of articles are intended to let me say what should have been said many times, but which most people are too scared to utter.

I hope Chris will understand at the end of the series that the articles had to start with the sabbaticals as they would have held no credibility on other matters if I was not willing to criticise my friends first. A cover up does no one any good.

Chris asks what I did for Joe Student last year. Well I suggest he reads my seven page annual report, especially the section on the £3 million from Harlington that my research and negotiation had all but secured for the Students' Union of the future. Nigel Baker blew the whole deal whilst breaking a Council ruling in the process.

I would also like to announce my resignation from the post of Publications Board Chairman as I really cannot be bothered with pathetic people like Nigel Whitfield any more. I am sure the Committee will survive perfectly well without me as the Committee itself does very little anyhow. The paper referred to in Nigel's letter in the last FELIX had been distributed in draft form at the Pub Board meeting of December 5. It was discussed at the next meeting on January 9, which Mr Whitfield did not attend, but sent a report pointing out his abstention from all votes which did not involve giving him more power. That meeting, not I, agreed to the President's suggestion to redistribute the paper and ask for very rapid comment. The paper did not suggest anything be done to IC Radio, only that someone be appointed to look into a series of possibilities concerning the whole of Pub Board. I therefore find Nigel Whitfield's uninformed letter to FELIX insulting, but wish him luck for the remainder of his degree and request he update the Pub Board minute book with the last one and-a-half year's minutes as is his duty before the record of these meetings are lost forever.

Yours Sydney Harbour-Bridge,

Tolerance

Dear Bill,

Reading Mr Harbour-Bridge's article in the last issue, I suddenly became conscious of the fact that Welfare money had been used in an irregular fashion by ICU to organise that ludicrous 'AIDS Day'!

And what was there? Three homosexuals trying to persuade us of the justness of their views, a couple of other people, with enormous crosses hanging around their necks, distributing syringes 'for the safe use of drugs' (obviously had problems with Bible comprehension) and a 'family planning' group: Totally irrelevant! A shame for Imperial College!

I call all students who subscribe to my point of view to react; some people have to be ousted from somewhere (remember last term's 'questionnaire'?).

Emmanuel Saridakis, *Physics 1*.

Wet Union

Dear Bill,

How does this sound as a newspaper headline? 'University Union Politburo abolish democratic representation for students'. The Daily Telegraph about the antics of some left-wing students' union? No, actually it will probably be the Guardian referring to ICU.

I have been informed that, without consulting the student body—ICU Council has proposed that UGMs—to whom it is responsible—should be abolished. One may use the analogy of abolishing the House of Lords. A more accurate appraisal would be the Cabinet abolishing the House of Commons. Just because ten per cent of our students cannot attend UGMs under the current system, Council decided that rather than reschedule them they will take the opportunity to abolish them altogether. When I asked Nigel Baker what was wrong with rescheduling UGMs to 7pm on Fridays, I was told that this would be inconvenient for IC students. I make no comment on that excuse for an excuse. The truth is simple. Inevitably, since seats on Council are contested posts, their occupants will be people of an ambitious and egotistic nature. How frustrating it must be that there are regular UGMs at which a mere three students can present motions critical of them. Wouldn't it be wonderful if UGMs didn't take place (fewer embarrassing revelations!) while increasing the number of seconds required to 25 should help crash any remaining dissent. It is now easier to form a

society than to criticise Council.

The final stage in the removal of accountability is, of course, gagging FELIX. Council now want to make FELIX directly accountable to UGMs. Oh, of course, UGMs are going—FELIX would be directly accountable to Council. Perhaps we will see on Friday mornings 'FELIX—the organ of IC Union'. I think I've made my point. It would appear that a healthy dose of Glasnost (and not a little Perestroika (spell?—TS), i.e. restructuring of the Union) are required.

The motion has to be passed by two UGMs. No doubt, if the usual poor attendance continues, it will be passed. Attend a UGM; they're an endangered species, and this may be your last chance to see one.

Simon Bradshaw, SCC Vice Chairman.

Rant with a hole

Dear Bill,

I am writing concerning the 'Students Against Loans' posters put up by Water Polo Club around College both before and after the Christmas break.

I'm no Union hack but I can tell that these posters break Union rules. Campaigning against student loans is obviously nothing to do with water polo, and so the money given to Water Polo Club by the Union cannot be spent on campaigning against loans.

What makes things worse is that this has been done with the full knowledge of Ian Morris. I

the posters that they are breaking Union rules, but he has also told them that he will take no action against them because he supports their campaign.

Now this is hardly professional behaviour from a man who wants to 'consider how best to project the Union' and who claims to be 'not so immature as to wreck the Union from within'.

Yours,

Ashley Unitt (Computing 3).

Honour Shock

Dear Bill,

I am writing this letter to bring to light a great evil that has been committed in this wonderful world of ours. I refer, of course, to the recent omission in the New Years Honours List.

I was shocked to see that the names of 'Mad' Nige Whitfield and Tom Cunnington were left off the list. The accomplishments and great herioc deeds of these two men must surely rank amongst the finest in the known world. Who can forget the incident in the winter of 88 with the ferret and the apple on the stick? I have seen grown men weep at the mere mention of some of their escapades.

I hope that this letter will be brought to the attention of the general public and give these men the recognition they deserve.

Thank You.

Dave Chang

3RD STREET *cocktail bar*

re-opens with a
Party Night
on Monday 30th January 5.30pm till late

★Cocktails £2.00 all night

★Professional barman

★Live music

Opening Hours

Monday—Friday:

5.30-11.00pm

Saturday

7.00-11.00pm

Happy hour first three hours of opening, cocktails £2.00 each

Live music on various nights

Mondays Party Night, cocktails £2.00 all night



Editorial

Into the valley of death

Children squabbling and fighting in a primary school playground would have displayed more maturity than the Union Officers attending Monday's Council. The meeting was chaotic beyond belief with shouting, swearing, amendments to amendments and procedural motions taking the place of rational debate - indeed of any debate at all.

And amidst the confusion, this bunch of overgrown kiddies voted for a half-baked scheme that would abolish Union General Meetings (UGM's) and turn Council into the supreme body controlling the Union.

'We're the kings of the castle and you (the students) are the dirty rascals!' Heaven help us.

On Tuesday next week at 1pm in the JCR, in a move which reaches new heights in collective absurdity, the Union Executive will ask the UGM to vote for its own abolition. They will ask **you**, the students, to relinquish any say that you have in the way that the Union is run and to hand absolute power over to the handful of infant megalomaniacs who sit on Council. And absolute power does corrupt absolutely.

Theirs not to make reply

Although the proposal is the most serious ever to come before a UGM, the Union have given it very little thought and even less debate.

Under the proposed regime twenty-five students with no particular qualifications, a very limited ability for rational discussion, and their own self interests their main priority, will be quite free to ignore a mandate from 4000 students. And if the mandate involves extra work on their behalf then judging from the behaviour of the Neil McCluskys (Council Chairman) of this world this is all the more likely.

Theirs not to reason why

The executive will argue that unless we abolish UGM's we will be unable to merge with St Mary's Hospital Medical School Union. They will say that time-tabling difficulties will not allow the 200 or so medics resident at the Medical School time to attend UGM's at the Imperial site on a lunch time. This, the argument runs, will make UGM's less representative.

Given the logic of the executive's argument, their

decision to abolish UGM's and make the Union **totally** unrepresentative defies any sort of rationality.

Absurdity

To say that there is no alternative to the abolition of UGM's is patently absurd. St Mary's holds its UGM's in the evening and manages to rouse a very full attendance - why can't IC do the same? Has anyone considered asking St Mary's to shuffle parts of their time table? I doubt it. For an unofficial committee of ten people to presume that only they know what is best for the Union is extreme arrogance.

It is easy to forget that Imperial will gain very little from merging with St Mary's Union, whereas St Mary's stand to gain a great deal of money. If it wasn't for this fact St Mary's would have absolutely no interest in merging at all; like the RSM they are fiercely independent. For the Union office to sacrifice its accountability to students and the democracy of the Union for the benefit of a couple of hundred medical students is the height of stupidity.

At this point, I suppose the executive would retort that students are not interested in UGM's anyway. Of course students show no interest when the Union does absolutely nothing to encourage them to attend or even to inform them when UGM's are about to take place. A handful of posters when they can be bothered is not really good enough. A few years ago, before each UGM, the Hon Sec would gestetner a complete set of UGM papers which the FELIX Editor would allow the Union to place in FELIX. Students knew both the date of the UGM and had a chance to think about the issues which were due to be raised. This year there has been one half-hearted attempt at producing an Exec News; it contained no details of the motions and the exec couldn't be bothered to collate it into FELIX. No wonder students do not attend UGM's.

It pains me to have devote so much space in FELIX to a proposal which is so blatantly ridiculous. I urge you to attend the UGM on Tuesday and vote against this motion. There will be petitions circulated at the UGM copies of which are available for signing now in FELIX and IC Radio. Do not let the Union become a dictatorship.

The Union does **not** consist of the 25 people who regularly attend Council, nor does it consist of the Sabbaticals or the Union Office. The Union is made up of 4000 students all of whom should have a right to say what the Union does. Do not sign that right away by being apathetic and not voicing your views at the UGM.

Comment page 11 and page 8
Council Sketch page 19

Thanks to Dave, Sez, Liz, Ramin, Doug, Paul, Steve, Andy, Sumit, Dave, Julian for his opinion article on page 8, Wendy, Jason, Mike, Andy, Andy, Rob, Simon, Cosmic for Space Invaders, Phil, Ralph, Neil, Syd, Walter, Rose, Dean, the reviewers, Steve, Rugby Club, Christian Union and SF Soc for collating last week, this weeks collators and anyone I have forgotten (Adam).



The case for student loans

My only disclaimer in this article is that I am not a member of Consoc or Indosc. My reason for writing this article is that I feel there is too much bias in favour of the anti-loan lobby and that this is not a fully representative view of the feelings of the people in College. This article attempts to explore some less debated ideas.

The purpose of higher education

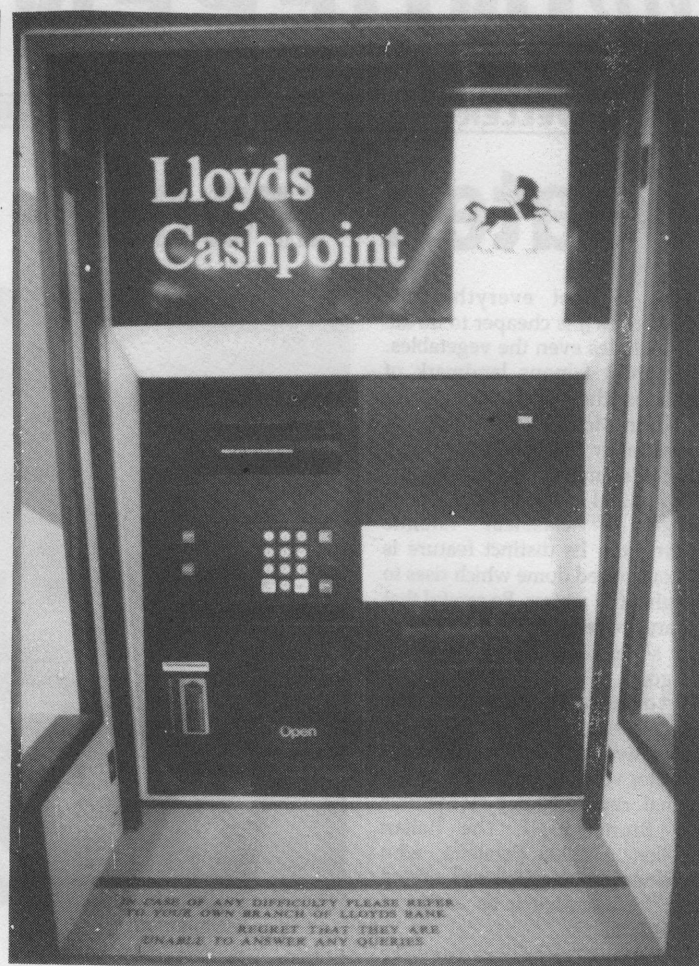
Central to the loans debate is the question of the purpose of higher education. The major claims of the anti-loans lobby is that the whole of society benefits from higher education and should therefore subsidise the privileged few who enter into it.

In its guidelines published prior to the White Paper the NUS quoted Bruce Johnstone who said 'the public benefits are such as more enlightened discourse, lower crime rates and more stable economy', and yet Britain in the late 1980s with more people than ever before in higher education shows none of these attributes.

The concept that educating people to a high standard makes them better people is completely fallacious. Student benefits from higher education are said to be one or more of the following; more money, more options and more control over life, and I believe that this is predominantly true.

Academic Freedom

A further argument against loans is that it will result in students having less academic freedom both in the courses they choose to take and in 'their right' to pursue thought freely without pressures from the outside world interfering. However, is such freedom a right? Or is it a privilege to be earned? I believe that academia must remain accountable to society in general if it is to benefit society as a whole, but in the past it has all too often adopted a clandestine ivory tower approach giving what, if crudely stated, can be said to be no more than a perpetual self ego trip to those within it. How many in academia (students and lecturers) are aware of the demands that the outside world is making? To be honest, industry, commerce and the government sector are finding it increasingly hard to find graduates and post docs of the appropriate calibre and training to fill their vacancies and this is despite the fact that there are supposedly more people in higher education than ever before. Surely this implies that there is something wrong with



higher education at the present.

It think a turning point is now occurring in higher education as the power of academics decreases and the demands of society increase, and somewhere there must be a balance between the immediate needs of society and the pursuit of academic freedom which, if the privilege is used properly, benefits society.

These needs of society and the world outside are increasingly being met by vocational and sandwich courses that are becoming increasingly popular with even the most academically gifted students and if loans are introduced I believe that this trend will be accelerated.

The responsibility of loans

Having aired some views on the purpose of higher education I now wish to consider how this will be affected by loans.

The anti-loans lobby claims that loans will discourage students from less well off backgrounds and increase the drop out rate from courses and the time taken to complete courses. This argument tends to centre around the notion

that at 18 the average potential students is too young to take on the responsibility of a loan and the worries of repaying it. The White Paper as it stands is simply transferring the responsibility of paying from parents to the student, the student paying back in relation to earnings. With the safeguards the White Paper details in relation to this, the loans system in terms of paying is certainly no more unfair than the current grants system. The reason why students object to loans is that it entails responsibility. Yet as stated near the beginning of this article, I believe students benefit as much from higher education as does the state as a whole. If students are not responsible enough to face the burden of loans are they responsible enough to pass through higher education? I believe that entering higher education at 18 and living in academia for three to four years is an insular environment which leads to false expectations and a sub-optimal use of all facilities available in undergraduate life caused by a lack of direction in what one is doing. Basically this is well demonstrated by IC student apathy.

Many potential students (though I think fewer at IC) regard entry to higher education as a right and a time for a 'good doss' expecting the state to subsidise it all. Many students expect the state to pay an average circa £15 per week housing benefit (much of which is illicitly obtained) and yet easily spend at least £20 a week plus on entertainments—particularly drinking. Personally I believe this expectation is inherently selfish especially when under current tight monetarist policies and ever less cash to go round there are many people in far greater need of such benefits. OAPs, single parent families, etc. For those who don't believe my claims on alcohol expenditure a trip to Southside Bar on a Friday night should be worthwhile. However, I am no killjoy and believe in having fun but fun and selfishness don't mix.

I think loans will make people more responsible to higher education and more deserving of the places they earn hopefully encouraging people to earn with more maturity and experience.

A balanced education

However, the White Paper does contain one, somewhat disconcerting, aspect which is that of tokens to do courses and students having the power to decide what courses are run. The inherent problem in this is that students may dismiss more theoretical or useless course in favour of more vocational ones to the detriment of their overall understanding. This is where the free market policy of higher education collapses and why, as I stated earlier, there needs to be a balance between the immediate needs of society as a whole and academic freedom. However it may mean that the quality of courses improves as lecturers bid to maintain the popularity of their subjects.

Conclusions

To conclude, I believe higher education is a privilege and not a right and that loans will encourage responsibility in students encouraging entry at a more mature age. This would be of benefit to both students and society as a whole. However in such a system more safeguards need to be applied to ensure a rounded educational balance in options taken and to maintain balance between the immediate needs of society and the privilege of academic freedom.



The INDEPENDENT

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Off the beaten track - Brunei

The oil and gas rich State of Brunei Darrussalam, on the northern coast of the island of Borneo, is one of the smallest and wealthiest nations in the world. With an area of 5,765 square kilometres and a population of 220,000, Brunei has a per capita income of about US\$17,000 per year, giving its people one of the highest standards of living in Asia.

The country is a monarchy, ruled by His Majesty Sir Hassanal Bolkiah. Brunei was a British protectorate until January 1 1984 when it became independent. The capital is Bandan Seri Begawan.

The country has not developed quite as fully as a tourist spot, though the potential is there. This country would be for those who are tired of going to the common places. It will be a change albeit an expensive one.

The climate is equatorial with high temperature, humidity and rainfall. Temperatures average 28°C and there is little variation. So take with you t-shirts, short sleeve shirts and shorts. It tends to get very hot especially under the sun.

The first thing you notice about Brunei, as your plane prepares to land, is the greenery. Green trees, grass and bushes everywhere

It seems they have built a city in the middle of the jungle.

The capital itself is small, probably the size of Kensington. Everyone knows everyone there. Thanks to oil, however, the cars you will find on the roads will be of the latest

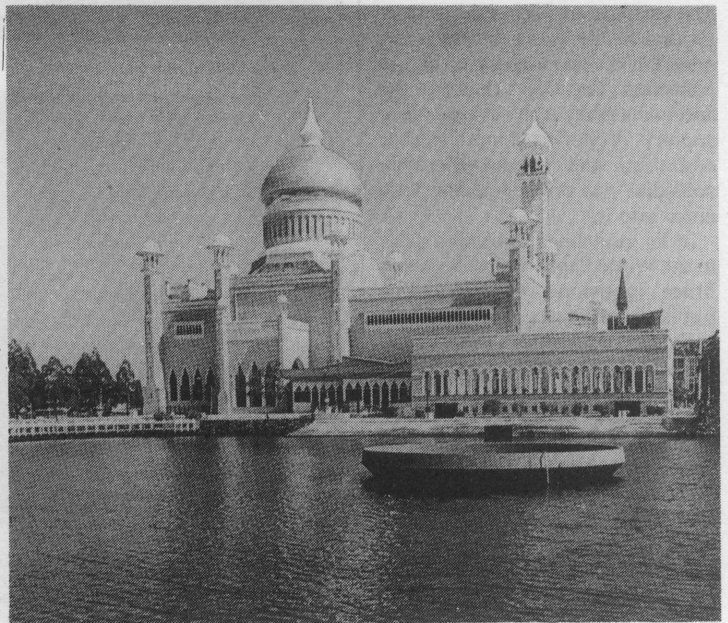
model. Almost everything is imported, as it is cheaper to do so. That includes even the vegetables.

The most famous landmark of Brunei is the Sultan Oman Ali Saifuddin Mosque, in the capital, named after the present ruler's father. It's simply majestic. You just have to stand back and look. It is an edifice of classical Islamic architecture. Its distinct feature is the gold-plated dome which rises to a height of 52 metres. Be careful that you are properly dressed and leave your shoes/sandals outside when you go in.

Part of the capital stands on water. It is a grouping of small villages on Brunei River called Kampung Ayer (or water village). In fact it was the original capital and synonymous with Brunei itself. The Italian traveller, Antonia Pigaletta, who travelled with Magellan and arrived in 1521, described it as a city of 25,000 families.

The town is basically an extensive collection of houses on stilts. These houses have all the luxuries normally associated with modern living, including schools, clinics, post offices, electricity and water supplies. Take a tour of this village by one of the numerous water taxis available. It's a bit of a wonder that they don't get tired of living there, surely if you don't look where you are going, you end up with wet clothes.

The Nurul Iman Palace is the official residence of His Majesty, the



Sultan. You should be contented with just a look from outside as it is not open to the public. However, if your visit coincides with the Hari Raya Festival (at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan) the palace is open and the public is invited to visit the Royal Family and look around the palace. This is usually some time in April or May.

The other places to visit are the Brunei Museum and the Arts and Handicrafts Centre. The museum has a large collection of exhibits of the cultural heritage of the country. The Arts and Handicrafts Centre offers silverware, bronzeware and brassware which are crafted according to the Malay Cultural Heritage. One thing to see, is how the Kris is made. Kris is the Malay's ancient weapon. It has a razor sharp blade which is usually wavy. It was used by the royalty and commoners in the old days.

Seria is the most vital town after the capital and has been the seat of Brunei's petroleum industry since oil was first struck there in 1929. Just outside this oil town is Lumut where the world's largest Liquefied Natural Gas plant operates.

The cheapest places to stay in Brunei are probably the Brunei

Hotel and Capitol Hostel. The rates are still pretty high. Phone them from the airport.

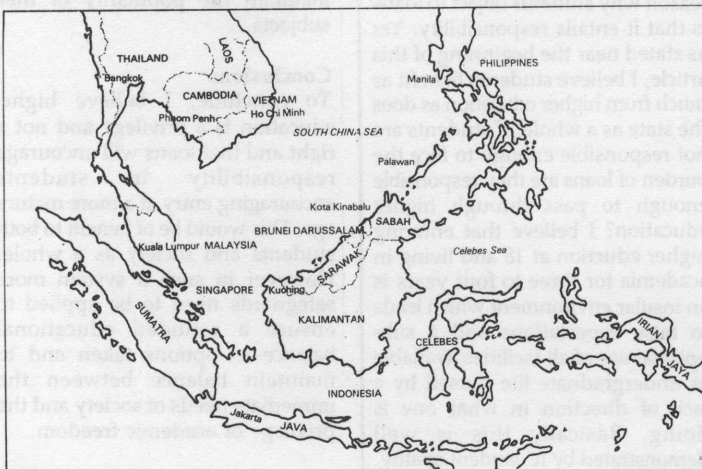
Transport is the most frustrating aspect here. Public transport is virtually non-existent except for the very expensive taxis. Everyone here seems to have one or two cars. Luckily the capital is small enough that you can visit all the places on foot. Though as I said, it can get bloody hot walking around.

There are coaches to other towns running from the bus station in the city centre.

There are no direct flights to Bandan Seri Begawan from London. You will have to go to Singapore and take a connecting flight. The fare from Singapore to Brunei is about the same as from London to Singapore, there is a wide variety from Aeroflot (very cheap but via Moscow, a painfully long flight) to the direct flight by Singapore Airlines. For British citizens, visas are not required for visits up to thirty days.

Note: Brunei is an Islamic country. So please dress modestly. Kissing and holding hands in public is frowned upon.

Waseem A Siddiqi,
Elec Eng 3.



View from



The survival of IC as an institution of excellence is dependent upon its ability to recruit high standard students and pump out higher standard students into industry and commerce. The matter of producing higher standard students is one for another opinion article but it is a fact that over the past four years the average entry grades at IC have been steadily falling and that the cost of living in London is a topic studiously avoided at all costs during interviews with prospective students.

In view of the increase in the cost

of living in London over the past six years, the changes in Government policy towards education which have already cost the average London student approximately £200 more a year and the reducing value of the grant in real terms, which is only worth 85% of what it was six years ago, it is the opinion of the author that student finances will become the predominant factor in student recruitment in the future.

The following set of figures aim to demonstrate that Imperial is in a very poor position to attract students on grounds of financial benefit.

Yearly cost of essentials for student year (Oct to July)

London Student

Rent = £47.59 x 41 week (39 during term and short holidays and two over the summer)	£1947.50
Food = £20 x 31 weeks (total term)	£620.00
Books and stationery = £140	£140.00
Other equipment = £80	£80
Transport and travel:	
Parental home to College = £50	
To and from College daily = £150	£200.00
Clothes and laundry	£200
TOTAL	£3187.50

Non-London Student

Rent = £27.50 x 41 weeks	£1127.50
Food = £17 x 29 (average term length outside of IC)	£493.00
Books and stationery = £140	£140.00
Other equipment = £80	£80
Transport and travel:	
Parental home to College = £50	
To and from College daily = £50	£100.00
Clothes and laundry	£150.00
TOTAL	£2090.50

The difference in the cost of living is around £1,000 per year. However a London student may benefit from an extra £350 grant and is eligible for approximately £400 (on average) more housing benefit than a student in a provincial university. This means London students pay an extra £250 per year to be educated.

Neither group will gain housing benefit under the new student loans scheme and hence the Extra Cost of a London Education (ECLE) will jump from around £250 to £650 per year. The Government aims to freeze the grant through the loans scheme; the effect of inflation on the larger costs in London will mean that, at present rates, the ECLE will increase by £65 per year until such a time as the Government deems it appropriate to reassess the grant.

A further matter that is not taken into account in the above figures is that of entertainment. This is not something which interests the Government; as in their eyes, students should not be spending money on being entertained. It is, though, a matter that should concern the College.

Students entering colleges such as IC have worked hard and long to get their grades and wish to learn a little more about life than can be read in a book. They will spend money on entertainment and will broaden their education in doing so; the cost of this will influence their choice of university or college.

London may have the widest range of entertainment in the country but it is also the most expensive in the country. A trip to the cinema in London will cost nearly double what it would at a provincial university; a pint of beer is one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half times the cost of the same beer in the North of England; a theatre trip is generally too expensive to consider.

London students are often unable to afford the entertainments that students at other universities enjoy. Worse still, having worked hard at school and not enjoyed this time as much as they might have done, they find that even their peers who are in low paid jobs can afford to spend much more on entertainment. Should the price for becoming educated and improving the country's prospects be three years solitary confinement during the prime of your life? The way things look, it could be this way for many students at IC unless they are willing to accept an even larger overdraft.

As potential students become aware of the effect that London will have upon their social life and/or their pockets recruitment figures at IC will fall. £1000 a year is an incomprehensibly large figure for a 17 year-old who is trying to decide which university to go to.

I see the College as having a series of options. If IC is to stay in London we must look at adapting the College to make us more attractive to potential students; we cannot reduce the costs of London, but we can try and make life here better value for money.

Suggestions

1. Cut timetabled hours, saving costs and releasing staff time for other activities, releasing student time for greater appreciation of London and enjoyment of cheap Union-based entertainment or to

take up part-time jobs to supplement their income.

2. Re-direct staff time towards greater research to increase the academic reputation of the College.

3. Research into graduation salaries for students from department to department and compare with other colleges. If salaries and employment rates for graduates are not high, the College should do something about them as they are crucial if we are to recruit students.

4. Coordinate an informed and honest recruitment drive from each department, with emphasis on those coming from families who are able to afford to support their students, sponsored students and those who are very dedicated.

5. Invest time in the gradual development of Alumnus links with the department by providing an enjoyable and more relaxed environment for work. Ex-student support in the areas of recruitment, employment or sponsorship will not be forthcoming if they do not enjoy their time here, or if they are forgotten for twenty years and then called back to a dinner with people they never knew and at this point squeezed for a quick buck.

6. Invest money in the Careers Service, as this is vital to the future of the College. Prepare the service for a heavy demand for vocational jobs.

7. Help the Students' Union to negotiate student deals with industry and commerce to help student funds.

8. Reorganise many of the jobs in College so that they can be done by a series of students as part-time labour.

9. Turn the College into a sponsorship based college. The idea is that students will only be accepted onto courses if they are sponsored. The departments would have to spend a considerable amount of time negotiating mass sponsorship deals with industry to try and corner an even larger section of the market.

The effects of this would be:

a) Students at IC would be able to afford to live in London and would probably have vacation jobs to supplement their income.

b) Students that came would have to be completely sure of what they wish to do in life and sure that it coincided with what their sponsors wanted.

c) It is likely that much of RCS and RSM will cease to exist, due to a difficulty in finding sponsorship, leaving 'Imperial College of Engineering and Medicine'.

d) Courses would be heavily affected by industrial and commercial demands and as a result academic freedom would be severely damaged.

e) It is likely that companies

interested in sponsoring a student will not be interested in extra-curricular activities as they are not looking for a broadened character but a character specialised in the particular vein that will suit them. The result will be a dramatic reduction in the activities of the Students' Union, an increase (if possible) is timetabled hours and the loss of a mind-broadening education.

10. Get out of London completely. This would enable IC to continue to run in exactly the same way. It would undoubtedly cost a considerable sum as the College is not allowed to sell the London site off to a non-academic tenure without Royal consent.

11. Relocate part of the College activities on the outskirts of London.

This is what is being proposed by the merger with Royal Holloway & Bedford New College (RHBNC). The proposal at the moment would appear to suggest a split site institution under the name Imperial College with research and major laboratory work based at IC and teaching facilities based at RHBNC.

This would mean that only research and third/fourth year students need to be based at the South Kensington site. This is around 2,500 students from IC plus around 500 students from RHBNC. Of these, the College could house around 2,000 students at the present rents. By selling off some of the mortgaged property, the rent might be reduced to an average of £30 per week. This would save the average student at the South Kensington campus around £200 per year. It should be noted that many of the students would be postgraduate research students who would be better located out of London as they are not free in the summer to take up jobs and supplement their income or to get out of London to reduce their costs. The situation on the IC campus would still be one of high expense and the housing problem, although improved, would not be solved.

Other effects of the merger would include:

a) Large transport costs for students and staff who need to use facilities on the other campus, eg postgraduate demonstrators, lecturers and students requiring laboratory space.

b) The cost of living in Egham, the location of RHBNC, may be less than South Kensington, but the difference is not all that significant. It is rumoured that the University Funding Council will support the merger by funding extra student accommodation in Egham. If sufficient money is put in this could be of considerable benefit to students at Egham.

c) The distance between campuses would doubtlessly result in uneconomic use of staff and student time. Timetabling problems would be immense and it may become apparent that to overcome the time lost in travel it is necessary to timetable more activities at one time that there is space available for. This would mean extra cost in creating more space through building programmes.

d) The effect on the Students' Union could be disastrous. The Egham site would doubtlessly have a lively social atmosphere, but the South Ken site would deteriorate into a hive of academia and very little else.

Clubs and societies will find it extremely difficult to operate under this situation. One society cannot operate from two campuses that are so far apart. If two societies were to operate from the different sites it would be far worse than at present as the experienced people, capable of running the societies and teaching new-comers, will be at South Ken and all the new-comers will be in Egham.

The effect of Arts students upon the politics of the Union will mean the moderate and apolitical nature of IC will be destroyed. Art's students will dominate student affairs in the new college. This is likely to mean that IC will become just another college of ranting politicians who miss the most important topic: the needs of the students.

e) An improvement in the character of the College will be unavoidable, as the presence of Arts students and an improved sex ratio will lead to the establishment of a more balanced community. This may improve recruitment in the future.

12. The College, or possibly the University of London, could oppose the proposed student loans system on the grounds of unworkability and the likely effect on Higher Education in London. This would only be a short term solution unless the College was willing to fight for a more realistic London grant at the same time.

I do not like the thought of any of the above, but favour a well thought out, united and careful approach to the last point. I fear that an ill-informed University Funding Council has already decided that money can be saved by merging IC and RHBNC and that we will find it difficult to stop this merger now. I also feel that the RHBNC merger has not been at all well thought out and will be considerably less efficient than two independent colleges. I would be interested to hear the College Secretary's views on the matter.

Tell me what the fuck is going on?

'Request for information!' screamed Steph Snell. 'Will somebody tell me what the fuck is going on?' This was one of the many insane comments made on Monday night at Imperial College Union's longest running farce - Council. Monday's performance turned out to be something of a dramatic classic with Sydney Harbour-Bridge resigning from one post, only to put himself forward to take up another, petty insults being traded around the room faster than a stock market crash, Andrew Meredith (RCS AAO) voting both for and against the same motion and Cosmic (alias Dave Clements) storming out in a tantrum, setting an example as to how mature postgrads should behave.

The reason behind this chaos lies in a report put forward ICU Exec and St Mary's Exec which, among other things, suggests that Council (yes, the children's' creche I described in the first paragraph) become the policy making body of ICU. This proposal does two things. Firstly it removes the right of students to vote and talk on issues concerning their future and the future of this college. Secondly it hands over these responsibilities to a few people, most of whom were never even voted into their positions of power, but elected unopposed.

The majority of the debate, when not dedicated to petty bickering and rattle throwing, centred around how

this 'supreme' Council would go about notifying its student 'populace' as to what decisions it had made, instead of actually debating as to whether or not a student's right to speak and vote should be removed.

However when a motion was finally put forward giving students the right to speak at Council it was defeated by a large majority. Also when, at last, Nigel Baker asked 'Whether Council believed that the abolition of UGMs was too great a price to pay for a merger with St Mary's', Council decided that it was not and promptly voted to abolish UGMs by a large majority.

The next question to be asked is 'why did Council vote this way?' The answer to this can be gleaned from a comment made to me by Graham Price, secretary of St Mary's Union. He said, 'The thing that has always angered me about these meetings (Council) is the complete insecurity of the people present.' From this, one can deduce that the people on Council are there, possibly, to boost their egos and satisfy their megalomaniac tendencies. So it comes as no surprise that they should vote through a motion giving themselves supreme power over Imperial College Union.

'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely' Lord Acton, 3rd April 1887

DEFEND UGM's

Would you like a student's union which will:

- spend your money without your consent
- make decisions behind closed doors
- consist of Union Officers who do nothing and get away with it
- take actions in your name behind your back
- be accountable only to itself

NO?

Sign the petitions in FELIX, IC Radio and STOIC to defend UGM's from abolition. Turn up at the UGM on Tuesday 31st Jan in the JCR and make your voice heard before it's too late.

What's On

A guide to events in and around IC.

FRIDAY

- Consoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
ME569.
- Rag Meeting**.....12.40pm
Union Lounge. All welcome.
- Friday Jamaa Prayer**.....1.00pm
Southside Gym.
- Christian Union Meeting**.....5.30pm
308 Huxley. Time for prayer, worship and discussion.
- Poetry Readings**.....6.30pm
University of London School of Oriental and African Studies Room G57.
- Islamic Society Annual Dinner**.....7.00pm
Junior Common Room. £4 (contact Faisal Khan EE2).
- GLC Meeting**.....7.00pm
Trip to Jongleurs (comedy club). £4, meet in Snack Bar at 7pm and sign up at 12.45-1.30pm
- Real Ale Soc Meeting**.....7.30pm
Union SCR. Traditional farmhouse cider at ridiculous prices.
- Fencing Club**.....12.30pm
Union Gym. Meeting also at 6 o'clock.

SATURDAY

- Rag Raid**.....9.00am
Meet in van park to go to Bedford. Be there or stay in bed and have a really boring life.
- Karate**.....10.00am
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.
- IC Kung Fu**.....4.30pm
Southside Gym. Beginners always welcome.

SUNDAY

- Holy Communion**.....10.00am
Sherfield Building. See West London Chaplaincy.
- Sunday Mass**.....11.00am
West London Catholic Chaplaincy, More House, 53 Cromwell Road. Also at 6pm (followed by bar supper). All welcome.
- Wargames**.....1.00pm
Senior Common Room. All Welcome.
- Kung Fu**.....4.30pm
Union Gym. Beginners welcome.
- RCSU Night in the Bar**.....7.00pm
Union Bar.

MONDAY

- Rock Soc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Anyone interested in any form of rock music come along.
- Artsoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Sign up for shows. Membership £2.

- Yacht Club Meeting**.....12.30pm
Upstairs in Southside.
- Recitation of Holy Qur'an**.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens (Basement).
- Improvers Ballroom**.....6.00pm
JCR. 80p.
- Beginners Rock 'n' Roll**.....6.45pm
UDH. 80p.
- Advanced Ballroom**.....7.00pm
JCR. 80p.
- Karate**.....7.00pm
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Latin American Dance Class**.....8.00pm
UDH. Cha, Samba, Rumba, etc. 80p

TUESDAY

- CU Prayer**.....8.15am
308 Huxley. For those who think prayer is more important than



- Modelling Club**.....12.30pm
Southside Upper.

Annual Debating Competition
Prize money
Thursday, February 2
Watch out for the Debating Society posters
No previous experience required

- Boardsailing Club**.....12.30pm
Southside Lounge.
- Audiosoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Cheap records and tapes etc.
- Roman Catholic Mass**.....12.40pm
Mech Eng 702. Mass followed by lunch. 50p.
- Ski Club Meeting**.....12.45pm
Southside Lounge. Interested in

- learning to ski? Already hooked? Want to try racing? Come and find out more.
- Consoc Speaker Meeting**..1.00pm
Mech Eng 213. Ivor Stanbrook—'The Conservative Party and South Africa'.
- 3rd World First**.....1.00pm
4th Floor, Env Tech, 38 Prince's Gardens.
- Beatles Hour**.....1.00pm
For all the best Beatle and Beatle-related material on Cd with Spenser Lane.
- Qur'an, tradition of Prophet**.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens.
- Amnesty Meeting**.....5.30pm
Brown Committee Room (top floor Union Building).
- Meditative Prayer**.....5.45pm
Chaplain's Office, 10 Prince's Gardens. Come and join us for some peace and quiet. See West London Chaplaincy.

- Beginners Ballroom**.....6.00pm
JCR. 80p. All welcome.
- Judo**.....6.30pm
Union Gym. All grades. Beginners welcome.
- Karate**.....7.00pm
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Intermediate Ballroom**.....7.00pm
JCR. 80p.
- Caving Club Meeting**.....7.00pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Everyone interested should come along.
- IC Methsoc Quiz Night**.....8.00pm
With CathSoc at More House.
- Improvers Ballroom**.....8.00pm
JCR. 80p.
- Mountaineering Club Meeting**.....9.00pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Beginners always welcome.

WEDNESDAY

- Caving Club Meeting**.....1.00pm
- Hamsoc Meeting**.....1.15pm
Third Floor of Union Building. Amateur Radio Society regular weekly meeting.
- Intermediate Rock 'n' Roll Class**.....2.15pm

- UDH. 80p.
- Jazz Dance Class**.....3.15pm
UDH. 80p.
- Karate**.....3.30pm
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.
- Open Circle Study**.....4.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens. See Islamic Soc.
- Orchestra Rehearsal**.....7.00pm
Great Hall. Mahler 3. All string players needed.
- Kung Fu**.....7.30pm
Union Gym. Grandmaster CK Chang's class.
- Basic Christianity**.....6.30pm
Senior Common Room, 7th Floor. A meeting held by University Christian Outreach examining the life and claims of Jesus.

THURSDAY

- Fencing Club**.....12.30pm
Union Gym. Meeting also at 6 o'clock
- ICYHA Meeting**.....12.30pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Everyone welcome.
- Audiosoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Cheap records, tapes etc.
- Ski Club**.....12.45pm
Southside Lounge.
- Debating Society**.....1.00pm
Room 341 Maths (Huxley).
- Arabic Lessons**.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens. See Islamic Soc.
- Gliding Club Meeting**.....5.30pm
Aero 254 (opposite Beit Arch). Trial flights still available.
- Prayer Meeting**.....5.30pm
Chaplain's Office, 10 Prince's Gardens. All Christians in College are welcome to come and pray for the work of Christians in College.
- Cricket Nets**.....5.45pm
Meet in Mech Eng Foyer. Sign up on cricket noticeboard. Everyone welcome.
- Judo**.....6.30pm
Union Gym. Beginners welcome.
- Soup Run**.....9.15pm
Meet Week's Hall Basement (back by 11pm).

To all Clubs and Societies and other budget holders:

You are required to submit a written estimate of general income and expenditure for 1989/90 to your MSC/CCU or myself no later than 12.30pm on Tuesday February 7, or exceptionally 12.30pm on Wednesday February 15. Five Year Plans should also be updated and submitted. If you are not sure what to do, please see me asap. Clubs 'who do not submit an estimate will have their grants frozen for the rest of this year.

Chas Brereton

AAAARGH!!

A butterfly stomach, a dry mouth, sweaty palms, a thumping heart, a tense neck and a dull, pounding headache; we all know how it feels.

Stress has become a cliché of the eighties to the point where it has been accepted as normal. It is 'trendy' to be busy, to be rushing around the place, to have 'no time to stop'. The medical dangers of stress have however, been constantly buried in the subterfuge of action. A recent survey discovered that almost 80% of people medically classified as being in a 'high stress risk group', believed that they were in no medical danger as a result of the stress they were under. Medical history tells a different story.

Stress claims to be one of the biggest Twentieth Century killers, directly linked to heart disease and cancer, responsible for 75% of all illness in Britain today. It costs about 40 million working days each year, and accounts for 50% of deaths in men over 40 in Britain.

A recent survey showed that university students are under greater stress than students in any other area of education. It also discovered that even greater levels of stress are encountered at universities falling into one of the following categories.

- i) those situated in the centre of large cities.
- ii) Those containing an uneven ratio of males and females.
- iii) Those situated in 'expensive living cost' regions
- iv) Those with high academic entrance requirements
- v) Those specialising in medicine, veterinary medicine, science or engineering.

On this basis, Imperial College could be renamed 'Stress City.'

Stress-related disease is now so prevalent it is estimated to cost the medical and social services an average of £55 million a year—two or three per cent of the gross national product.

Research into stress is going on all the time, and it is now thought that people can become hooked on the hormones they produce under stress. Permanently busy people can get high on their own 'nor-adrenaline', and so they become

THE TELL TALE SIGNS OF STRESS

- Do you feel guilty when relaxing—uneasy if not 'on the go'?
- Do you lie awake worrying about tomorrow?
- Are you tense...does your neck feel 'knotted up'?
- Are you impatient or irritable—do you interrupt when others are talking?
- Do you feel that you have a lot on your mind—have difficulty concentrating?
- Are you smoking or drinking more—do you eat in a hurry?
- Does life seem full of crises—are you always having rows?
- Do you find it difficult to make decisions?
- Do you feel frustrated when people don't do what you want?

If you've said yes to any of these, read on...

dependent on constant challenge, and non-stop deadlines is the only way to produce their best.

People experience stress differently. Some thrive on what others perceive to be negative pressure; too little stimulus can also be stressful.

Our response to stress is part of the dynamics of staying alive, the primal instinct to survive. However, too much noise, too many people, crowded cities, not enough air, exercise, peace or tranquility, constant self-induced pressure over academic work, and a consuming desire to excel in examinations all

jangle the nerve endings, causing irritability, apathy, tension and, eventually, illness.

Eating badly, drinking too much and particularly smoking can all cause strain. Mental stress is generated by aggression, impatience, anger, fear, anxiety, emotional conflict, inner turmoil, financial insecurity, competitiveness and all the major life events from childbirth through marriage to divorce and bereavement.

Chemical treatments such as tranquillisers are often more harmful than beneficial, and all-too-often become addictive. Last year

fifteen million prescriptions were written for tranquillisers. It is estimated that there could be three million addicts in Britain.

Alternative therapies and simple relaxation exercises have provided a far more effective relief from the symptoms in a number of cases. Aromatherapy, the art of healing and relieving stress with the essential oils of plants is rapidly increasing in popularity, and many doctors recommend meditation and yoga for relaxation. A good way to help keep stress down is to remember to breathe deeply from the diaphragm and not the chest. This controls the blood pressure and reduces the tension in muscles.

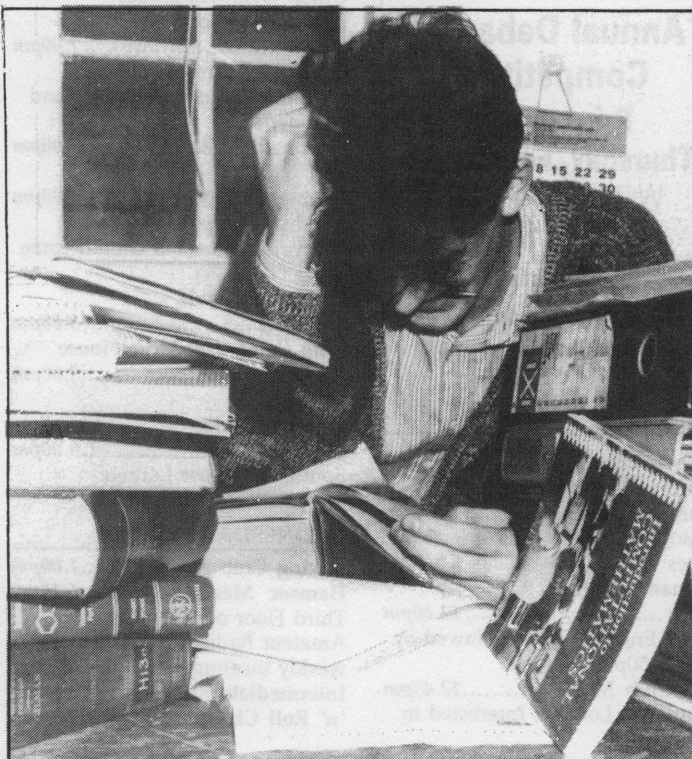
It is important to cut down on drinking and smoking. These may be used to 'unwind', but the relief is only temporary, and the effect they have numbs, rather than solves, a problem. It is also obvious that a large number of people at Imperial have little or no beneficial exercise in their daily schedule. No miracles are required in this area. You will survive if you are not in the 1st XV in rugby. Gentle rhythmic cycling, jogging or swimming are ideal ways of reducing the tension caused by stress. They release pent-up energy and encourage deep, refreshing sleep.

Be aware of the damage stress can cause you. Review your lifestyle and

under. Take it easy, plan ahead so that you can have 'evenings off' occasionally, and don't ever believe that getting tomorrow's problem sheet in is the most important thing in the world.

My aim is not to leave you with a 10% increase in stress levels, because you are so worried about the dangers of stress! Reasonable levels of stress are quite natural and inherently good. Stress is the body's ammunition in danger. It is a state of arousal when the body responds to unusual demands. The release of stress chemicals such as adrenaline, increased blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen intake and blood flow to the muscles are all things that enable us to move fast and think clearly. But if the pressure is kept up for too long, those responses become harmful, unhealthy and counterproductive.

Working on this feature made me more and more aware of the risks evident at Imperial. Exams matter, degrees matter, careers matter: Health matters immeasurably more



ICU - the Fourth Reich?

By now the details of the decisions taken at ICU council and the details of the motion to be taken to next weeks UGM will have been reported by FELIX and ICU will have a clear choice on whether to abolish UGMs as the supreme body of the union. The purpose of this article is not to criticise any of the union officers for their views, which I believe to be sincerely held. It is to initiate a more detailed debate on the issues raised by the proposal and to think through some of the consequences for the union and for FELIX. I do not believe that such a debate has occurred, certainly not at the recent council meeting. This article is intentionally brief and so not exhaustive. It is also provocative, but so is the proposal to be put to the UGM.

The problem

Perhaps the clearest aspect of the matter. It is to integrate Saint Mary's Hospital Medical School Students Union (SMHMSSU) into ICU as a Constituent College Union with full participation in the reconstituted union of ICU, within the constraints of a split site. This is a dilemma facing a number of colleges throughout London and no doubt the executive would have analysed their solutions.

The working party solution

The proposal to radically change the status of UGMs is an extreme proposal which I would now like to discuss at some length.

Is it Democratic?

This is, of course, not the question which is central but will no doubt be raised by many students. The answer is that the Union would still be run along broadly democratic lines with mass elections, with an AGM where reports can be presented and Emergency General Meetings (EGMs) that can be called by students. However, it is better to question whether this framework, would strengthen the Union in terms of increased participation in its affairs and its campaigns by students. I think not.

ICU Council

The incorporation of medical school student union reps on Council will not change it appreciably. Their numbers will be too small to significantly influence Council other than as a pressure group. The same problems that exist with the representative role of UGMs would exist in microcosm on Council. The real changes would be due to the concentration of sovereign power in the hands of a small core of individuals who will be free of any wider accountability to the student body. Their accountability would be to smaller,

more polarised, and often less representative groups eg Major Sub Committees (MSC's). In effect this power would place more stresses on Council as a decision making body increasing its factionalism. Indeed, it is questionable whether Council at the moment conducts itself effectively in terms of debate and discussion.

There are other ways in which the proposed change in the balance of power could affect Council. For instance it would be much easier for a sabbatical to revoke their election manifesto confident in the knowledge that 20 to 30 votes at Council would see him, or her, through the year.

In the same way major policy decisions could be taken by groups of individuals elected by, though not representative of, the student body. Thus there would be the distinct danger that the views of the Union as would be expressed by the Council would significantly diverge from the views of students. The major difference from the current situation is that this could arise consciously by Council members taking a 'more balanced view' rather than passive apathy at UGMs.

Lastly a parallel proposal has been made at Council for more authority to be delegated to its sub-committees. This delegation could be justified by managerial arguments. However, despite appearances, in a student union the management arguments must be subjugated to those of democracy and accountability. If this is not challenged a system is legitimised where key decisions are taken by an oligarchy of no more than 8 or 9 people. I understand that Mrs Thatcher uses the same system herself.

FELIX

It is quite clear that the abolition of UGMs would leave FELIX as the only medium for direct communication between ICU and its sabbaticals. This undoubtedly would make FELIX much more

powerful within the Union. That the Exec realise this is clear from their rather heavy handed attempt to exert authority over the Editor and the editorial authority of FELIX. In a very specific way the exec will begin to define themselves acting as if they are accountable to FELIX. It is through FELIX that they will have to persuade, convince, justify and campaign.

This raises the serious question of editorial freedom that I am sure Bill Goodwin can discuss elsewhere. I would only offer the view that the power of FELIX will undoubtedly place it in a very good position to construct alliances of its own and to play the system whether as 'king-maker' for future sabbatical candidates or as a voice of a certain section of the Union. This will crystallise the central problem and the greatest argument against increasing de facto the power of FELIX. This is again accountability. An editor with any degree of editorial freedom would only be nominally accountable to Council. Council would, therefore, become dependent on the whim of such an editor acting alone (rather like Lee Harvey Oswald). Should Council find this intolerable and totally constrain the editor FELIX would become the docile organ of the Union rather like Pravda. And the Union would have sacrificed both FELIX and its UGM on the basis of short term goals.

Participation

The power of an open meeting to involve ordinary members in important affairs of the Union is undeniable. Certainly a general apathy - perhaps complacency - amongst students exists yet there have been many occasions throughout the last ten years when 600 people packed the Great Hall and played an important role in Union policy. Eliminate the UGM and such popular involvement in student politics will be severely diminished. It is interesting to see that no national trade union has abandoned the public meeting as an effective mechanism for the participation of members in party affairs. They recognise that the only real power they have is through a mass action. How sure would a future president be of being able to involve students in mass action?

Fragmentation of the Union

I have discussed a situation where



a remote council and executive lose contact with the views of the student body. I suspect that if this occurs then eventually those bodies that offer participation will attract the enthusiasm and loyalty of students, in particular the CCUs and to a lesser extent the MSCs. This would inevitably lead to a less corporate approach to decision making with ICU's role diminishing in proportion to its loss of popular support. The Exec will have to reconcile many more vocal and mandated council members less prepared to compromise. A new tribalism would emerge.

The election and dismissal of sabbaticals

I am old enough to know former presidents of the ICU who were elected by and from Council and were dismissable by Council. The inevitable consequence of making Council supreme is that any sabbatical who is gets a vote of no confidence at a meeting would probably be unable to continue in office. I also suspect that a proposal would eventually emerge to return to the election of the sabbaticals by Council acting as an electoral college. You may think this last point a flight of fantasy yet it is not so distant from the leap to create a sovereign Council.

The solution

I cannot do other than stimulate a debate from which I hope a more inspired vision emerges. I do not accept that there is no federal solution which preserves and enhances both the new CCU and the reconstituted IC/SMHMSSU. Having decided that the baby and the bathwater should be separated the drowning of the baby is not an acceptable alternative.

Stephen Goulder
ICU President 1982/83
RCSA Rep to Council

Space Invaders

On Saturday February 4, the Science Fiction Society will be holding its one day Convention, PicoCon, in the Union Building. What is a Science Fiction Convention, and why do people want to talk about SF for the whole day?

An SF Convention (or to use the standard abbreviations, an SF Con), is a collection of SF related events that takes place over a day, or weekend (PicoCon is a one day affair), where guests come and talk, films are shown with the general idea of having an enjoyable SF related time. The actual events in general cover a very broad range. At the last World SF Con held in the UK (the 1987 WorldCon, called Conspiracy, Brighton), the talks ranged from discussions of particular authors' work, conversations between authors and scientists about how likely their predictions were, talks on how to write SF and, more importantly, how to get published and much much more. Over five days there were twelve hours of talks each day in five separate streams (that's 60 hours a day) and that doesn't include the video and film shows. Ken Livingston even gave a talk on possible future politics!

Of course one area that always fascinates SF fans is that of space travel, and many SF writers are in fact scientists of one form or another. Dave Brin, who talks to ICSF last year, is a cometary physicist, and the famed Carl Sagan has written science fiction (whether that includes the *Cosmos* series is another matter). The process also works the other way; Arthur C Clarke is credited for inventing the idea of the geostationary communications satellite. Science fiction, in fact, inspires many people to go into scientific careers, as I'm sure is true for many IC students.

There is also a very strong vein of anarchic humour that permeates the SF fan world, perhaps due to all the strange and conflicting fureres they read about, and there are usually some very odd things happening at conventions. At the recent Oxford Con, Conine, there was a performance of *Fundament* a thirty minute opera based on Isaac Asimov's Foundation saga (not just the first three books but all five!).

The one thing about conventions that you can expect is that the unexpected will happen. This unfortunately sometimes applies to the guests as well. At last year's University Convention (UniCon) in Winchester, the guest of honour, Patrick Tilley, left a couple of hours after he arrived, leaving only a short note and a pair of bootlaces. Somehow I doubt he'll ever be asked to a convention again.

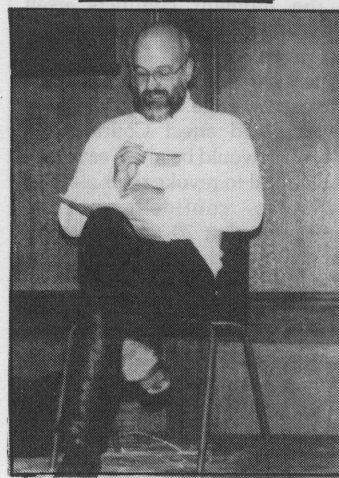
What are SF fans like? Strangely enough, and against all the suggestions the media will give you, they are completely ordinary people. They do not dress up like Dr Who (we leave that to the 'Whovians' and the less said about them the better), make beep beep noises or try to beam up to the Enterprise. However, they are likely to be more interested and aware of science than most people, and perhaps that is why Imperial has so many SF fans. They are also perhaps a little more aware of the long term implications of scientific and technological advances, since many have been considered by science fiction writers, and that cannot be a bad thing for anybody. In general SF fans are all very friendly and only too willing to talk to others who show an interest in SF.

And what can you expect from PicoCon? Some of the guests are detailed in this article, and there's a provisional timetable as well. Among some of the other activities going on, the Amateur Rocketry Group needs some explanation. Since model powered rockets can now be imported, a group of SF fans have got together to sell them and will be giving a talk on how to build, fly, retrieve them, and, most importantly, how not to kill yourself with the things. There will also be SF wargaming all day, with Paranoia (apt description) game and a Space: 1889 scenario (that's the new one about the Victorian space explorers). We've got a full programme of films and television SF, and there will be many other things happening that we haven't planned for, as is usual for a Convention. Hope to see you all at PicoCon next Saturday.

Bob Shaw

Bob is one of the best and most

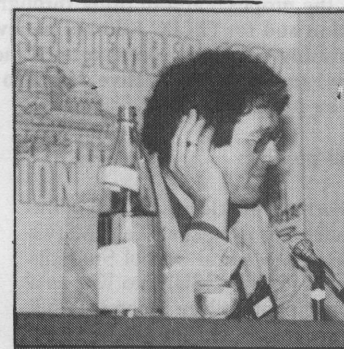
prolific British SF writers. He's written a vast number of books, ranging from the near future (eg *Ground Zero Man*) to the far future (*Orbitsville* series) and most recently to an isolated double world system where balloons can act as spacecraft (*The Ragged Astronauts* and *The Wooden Spaceships*). He is renowned among SF fans for his frequent 'Serious Scientific' talks (which are neither), packing halls at WorldCon and NovaCon whenever he gives one.



Terry Pratchett

Terry is unusual among British SF writers in dominating the Times Bestseller list with one of his books. This was *Mort* the latest in his expanding series of DiscWorld books, which are doing for Fantasy what *The Hitch Hikers Guide* did for science fiction. Terry was a guest at

last year's PicoCon and was so popular that we asked him back.



Dave Langford

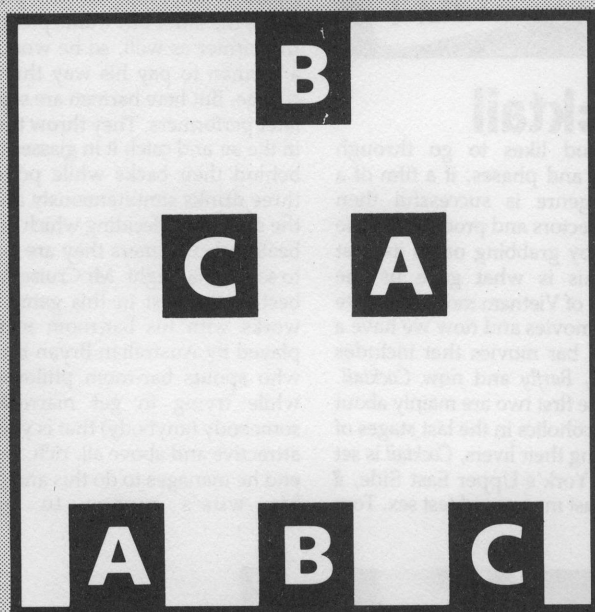
Dave is a reformed Nuclear Scientist (see *The Leaky Establishment* for what is definitely not the story of his nuclear career!), who now makes a living as an SF writer and fan, and is an almost permanent fixture at all UK SF Cons. His manic talks are very well worth attending. His most recent book, *Dragon Hiker's Guide to Battlefield Covenant Beyond Dune's Edge Odyssey 2* is a salutary lesson and threat to anyone who ever thought about writing a sequel.

Dave Lally

Dave runs the fan club for that most enigmatic television series *The Prisoner*, and promises to be giving us a run down on the real spying background of one of its devisers. He'll also say something about the programme's conception, and perhaps might actually say something about what it was meant to be about.



Running Cons does this to you



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The Woman in Black

'The combination of the peculiar, isolated place and the sudden appearance of the woman and the dreadfulness of her expression began to fill me with fear. Indeed, I had never in my life been so possessed by it, never known my knees to tremble and my flesh to creep, and then to turn cold as stone, never known my heart to give a great lurch, as if it would almost leap up into my dry mouth and then begin pounding my chest like a hammer on an anvil, never known myself gripped and held fast by such dread and horror and apprehension of evil...'

....and I was merely the audience.

'It was as though I had become paralysed. I could not bear to stay there, for fear, but nor had I any strength left in my body to turn and run away, and I was as certain as I had ever been of anything that, at any second, I would drop dead on that wretched patch of ground.'

....well, seat 27 row M to be precise. Call me susceptible if you like but *The Woman in Black* (of which the above is an extract) is a ghost story of the chilliest and most spine-tingling order.

'Twas a dark and stormy night when I battled against the elements and District Line commuters to get to the first preview of this new play: Stephen Mallarat's adaptation of the Susan Hill book. The essence of the spooky tale is introduced to the audience by means of the protagonist hauntingly recounting his story to an actor whom he has engaged to help him present the tale of events to a small audience of family and friends. The motive? Apparently to explain an (as yet unarticulated) recent family tragedy. With half an eye for potential theatre managers, the actor sets about transforming the pedestrian and overlong monologue into a two-hander play, heavily relying upon the wonders of 'recorded sound' and the imagination of the audience. For instance, a wicker hamper, first a desk then railway carriage seat, is pulled centre-stage; our hero gingerly climbs aboard and, to the accompaniment of much hoof-clumping and jiggling up and down, the 'pony and trap' draws away.

By this device the ground work is laid meticulously, if slightly labouriously, but as the two rehearse together scenes lengthen and the incidence of fatuous references to Henry Irving decreases. The lighting becomes

Cocktail

Hollywood likes to go through fashions and phases, if a film of a certain genre is successful then other directors and producers try to cash in by grabbing on to its coat tails. This is what gave us the outbreak of Vietnam movies, a spate of baby movies and now we have a series of bar movies that includes *Ironweed*, *Barfly* and now *Cocktail*. But as the first two are mainly about seedy alcoholics in the last stages of destroying their livers, *Cocktail* is set in New York's Upper East Side, a land of fast money and fast sex. Tom

Cruise is ambitious, he gets plenty of the the latter but wants plenty of the former as well, so he works as a barman to pay his way through college. But here barmen are sought after performers. They throw the ice in the air and catch it in glasses held behind their backs while pouring three drinks simultaneously and at the same time deciding which of the beautiful customers they are going to screw that night. Mr Cruise is the best of the best in this game. He works with his bar-room mentor played by Australian Bryan Brown who spouts bar-room philosophy while trying to get married to somebody (anybody) that is young, attractive and above all, rich. In the end he manages to do this and uses his wife's money to open

Manhattan's most exclusive and trendy watering holes. He finds success and money aren't all he thought they were. Meanwhile, Mr Cruise finds true love, accidentally gets true love pregnant and loses true love. When his friend kills himself Mr Cruise is inspired to get true love back again, for a nice happy ending.

Basically, this film is little more than another Hollywood crowd puller. You can lie back and for one hundred minutes or so the film washes over you. Absolutely no strenuous thinking at all is required from the audience. Technically the acting and directing is reasonable but as a whole the film simply does not hold together.

Mike Morton.



'Sorry, the 6X is off.'

more dramatic as the emphasis shifts from the telling of the story to the events themselves, characters and audience now fully absorbed.

Finally comes the watershed: A massive expansion of scale, emotionally, dramatically and technically. A staircase, landing and nursery are now differentially illuminated to great effect. A dull, repetitive creaking is heard

overhead. Through shimmering curtains we see our hero in silhouette, step by deliberate step slowly ascending the stairs. Screams and apparitions; explanations and, of course, the twist in the tale...

...But for that you will have to go and see for yourself. I recommend this play unreservedly, and not just because it provides the perfect excuse to grab hold of the arm of your

(carefully selected) companion. John Duttine and Charles Kay gave compelling performances complemented by a superb production. This is one not to be missed.

The Woman in Black is on at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith until February 11. Tickets £10, £8, £6 £5 and concessions available.

Sarah Conyers.

FILM

Someone to Love

ICA, from Jan 20

'This is a movie isn't it?' asks Orson Welles, approaching the end of *Someone to Love*.

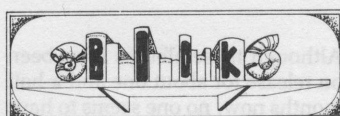
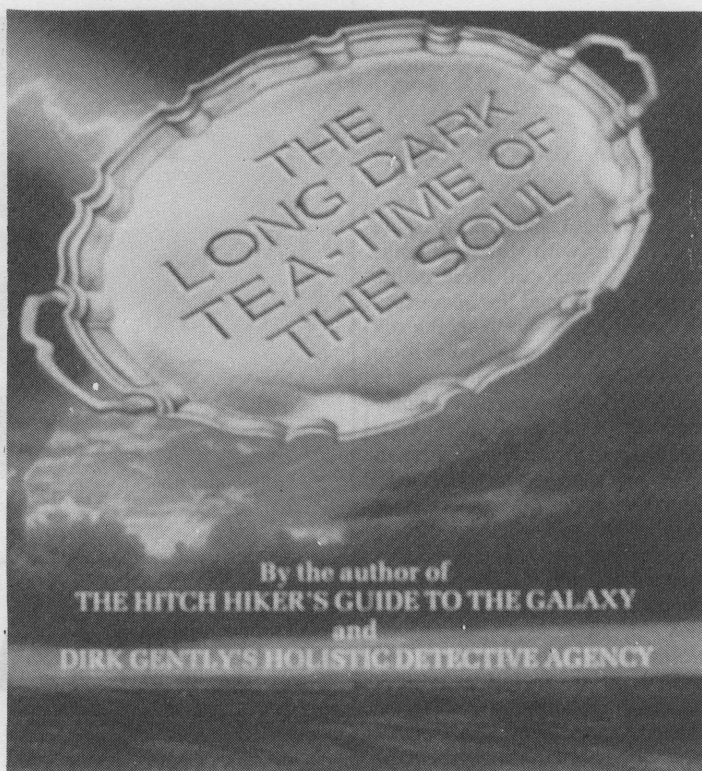
Henry Jaglom's (writer, director, main actor) previous film *Always* told the story of his own divorce, and starred himself and his ex-wife, shot in the home they lived in before separating. Small wonder, then, that this new product seems barely shifted from reality, an unusual hybrid of cinema and documentary, with a touch of home movie style even (barring the competent camera work and superb editing, the latter Jaglom's forté).

Jaglom plays film director Danny, puzzled by the fact that none of his friends seem to be in permanent relationships. Plus his girlfriend won't let him sleep overnight in her bed, her own space. Danny's sensible, property acquiring elder brother, Michael, has acquired a lovely old theatre in Santa Monica, and sold it, shortly to be turned into a shopping centre. Naturally, Danny invites all his 'lonely heart' friends to the theatre on Valentine's Day, pulls along a camera crew, and films, rapping out 'Why are you alone?' to all and sundry.

The film is shot through with emotive, ironic and often funny observations by a splendid range of characters, all believable as individuals, and nicely rounded off by the slightly cynical Michael, a bit suspicious of 'all these actors, artists...that kind of thing.' As the party progresses everyone eats, drinks, talks, and has their say into a camera.

This part of the film has been lovingly crafted to blend formal with casual photography, cutting off camera exchanges (private scenes over lunch, and in the ladies room) with Danny's free-for-all talk exchange in the main theatre hall. Even a reluctant cameraman is pulled to face the camera to consider his partner-less state.

Presiding over, or rather behind events is Orson Welles. In this, his last screen performance, Welles is lifted almost entirely out of context and given an unmoving, magisterial position seated in the back row of the theatre. 'I'm speaking from the cheap seats, not Mount Sinai' he barks, necessarily reminding on and off screen mentor Jaglom not to take his word as law. Welles is commentator, the supreme



The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul

Douglas Adams

Many moons ago the British radio comedy scene was shattered by a revolutionary new series. Where *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* broke new ground was in its humour as much as anywhere. It had some.

After bleeding the characters, plots and universe in general dry, with three good books and a lousy one, Douglas Adams has begun a new collection. It seems that he wants to be remembered as 'that man' who wrote some funny stuff once for the wireless by not writing anything else amusing.

It is almost impossible to describe this latest book without reference to its predecessor *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* which sat in the best-seller lists for the whole of last year. Why either one could be a

observer, throwing out the funniest, and most profound lines in the film concerning the feminist revolution, population explosion, decline of the communist state of the movie and more. This, apart from the ideas and humour, is a priveleged glimpse into the 15-year friendship between Jaglom and Welles: Welles giving Jaglom insight, and relishing the

success, beyond the author's reputation, I cannot fathom.

Gently is a sleuth with some interest in Physics, and attempts to prove the fundamental interconnectedness of all things. This he quite resoundingly fails to achieve. Furthermore he has become the main character of the second tale, revealing just how incompletely he approaches everything, but more importantly losing all the mystery which kept me reading the first book when the story escaped me.

While the plot is just about decipherable this time, the descriptive passages and observational style maintain Adams' unique manner, and the book is largely unoffensive, it is not funny or compelling or even thick and chunky and nice to hold. I only read it to the end to find out just what the eagle and Coca-Cola vending machine had to do with everything. The answer to that can be found on page 242.

Those of you about to buy it because you didn't get it for Christmas—don't bother.

Andrew Clarke.

repartee involved. The film ends with Welles shouting 'cut!' as Danny's movie has run its course, and a marvellous image of a deep rumble-bellied laugh, with a glint in the eye that will refuse to die.

'My God, you are looking for emotional truth' exclaims Yelena—whether Jaglom finds any is debatable; what has been



Impressionists

Under the umbrella of Impressionism in the 1870s and '80s, it would be hard to find two more disparate talents than those of Claude Monet and Paul Gauguin. Monet, the master, whose 'Impression: Sunrise' gave the movement its name, enjoyed critical and financial recognition for his artistic strength and originality. His work is a celebration of light, never twice interpreting the subtle interplay of light and shadow in quite the same way. By applying small, separate daubs of colour, each object in his work 'loses its local identity' and vibrates to give an impression of the whole.

In total contrast, both in art and outlook was Paul Gauguin. The man whose rebellious attempts at emancipation from European discipline ended in abject poverty in the South Seas, broke from the Impressionist style at the early stage. At variance with Impressionist practice, he used strong, flat colour with forms often rimmed with contour lines. Simplifying his palette, he adopted a vivid re-interpretation of colour rather than a naturalist reproduction. 'That shadow is rather blue, so paint it with pure ultramarine. Those leaves are red? Put on pure vermilion.'

These two hard-backed volumes from part of 'The Impressionists' series, published by Cassell. They are exquisitely produced to a glossy 96-page formula, perfect for the esoteric coffee table, and have the virtue of being reasonably priced. Both texts are very interesting, considering his rebellious attitudes, escapist travels, and attempted murder with a cut-throat razor by Van Gogh, however unsalaciously described. These are beautiful books, of the sort that it is very pleasant to leaf through in bookshops, and think of an excuse to yourself for buying.

Alan Young.

accomplished is an entertaining chronicle, documenting an entire generation. Gleeful comedy, delicate characterisation, the mighty Welles and skillful editing all combine to make *Someone to Love* an interesting film, and as funny a documentary as you're likely to find.

Susan Appleby.

Glass-ware

On the Richter scale of weirdness Glass' music is more than a tremor but less than a Tippet. It is part of the minimalist genre, which tries to make music in the simplest possible way, that is with the least number of themes. The trick is to use the same melody repeatedly without letting the music become boring, and Glass manages this fairly well. He often takes the theme, stretches it out in time and adds it to itself, so that we have repetition on two or three time scales. The whole thing is like the superposition of waves, and this may be why Glass likes the idea of Light. His music is approachable by all because it has some dashing good tunes (although it is too complex to whistle).

A characteristic example of his work is the opera *Einstein on the Beach* (CBS Records M4K 38875). The structure consists of long Glassy arpeggios forming the meat, separated by Knee Plays. This is a strange name but the entire opera is self-consciously strange. The Knee Plays are nonsense texts set to music. In the first Knee Play we start with a single deep note on a synthesizer to which a chorus of female voices counting beats in a bar is added. After a few repetitions a woman starts counting over the chorus and then reads a text which starts 'Will it get some wind for the sailboat. And it could get for it is. It could get the railroad for these workers. And it could be were it is. It could Franky it could be Franky it could be very fresh and clean...' and so on. This first Knee Play is probably the parody of a Bach fugue.

The musical imagery is quite interesting with three themes recurring throughout. These are the Train, the Trial and the Spaceship. The train represents both the toy trains that Einstein played with as a child and also the trains used in his thought experiments to display the bizarre effects of Special Relativity. In the Trial we are shown what must have been Einstein's nightmare in which he has to face the terrible consequences of his work on the bomb. The Spaceship represents another of the standard gedanken experiments, and also the idea of freedom. Sometimes a solo violin plays arpeggios in the foreground set against a complex and repetitive backdrop of electronic keyboards and chorus. The violinist was dressed as Einstein in the performance in the New York Met because, like Sherlock Holmes, Einstein was a part-time fiddler.

This is not a recording which I would buy, but it does make a refreshing change from the mainstream i.e. *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, *The Four Seasons*... His latest opera *The Making of the Representative of Planet 8* has been a huge success. It was broadcast on Radio 3 on December 12, and is based on a novel by Dorothy Lessing in which an ice age destroys all life on planet 8—a planet not unlike our own. The story is very moving, the music's good so if you come across a recording give it a try.

Ramin Nakisa



Philip Glass likes his new magnetic boots.



Rock locks

KERRANG!

The Dirty Strangers—Trill Records
Rocky City Angels—Geffen Records
The Dogs D'Amour—China Records

Although these albums have been on release for about one and-a-half months now, no one seems to have picked up on them yet, so I think an airing in *FELIX* will do them no harm.

I'll start with the *Dirty Strangers* which included guest appearances from Keith Richards, Ronnie Wood and Phil Spalding. It is clear to see why Ron and Keith were included, as this record is pure early seventies Stones, it is one of the most blatant and sincere of the current set of Stones rip-off records, that is no reason to shun and dismiss it as the songs are fresh, bouncy and often amusing. This is all good stuff as the guitar work is sleazy and growls at the tunes, a perfect complement to the fake cockney of the lead vocals.

The *Rock City Angels* are a young American band from Tennessee and are another of Geffen Records' excellent pool of mean, talented and street wise bands, such as *Tesla* and *Guns and Roses*, in fact the G'N'R similarity doesn't stop there. This is a superb mix of old white blues and mean red neck boogie à la Lynard Skynard. The guitar work of Mike Barnes and Doug Banx is quite considerable coming up with lively, throw-away tunes like *Hush Child* to the haunting classic *Mary*. The song writing is equally accomplished with deep emotion and though coming through well is the harsh social comment made in *Beyond Babylon*. On the whole it is a long way removed from the 'get-your-knickers-off-girl-and-have-a-good-

time' type of song that has become expected of heavy rock music. If nothing else this record provides good value, giving you four sides of fine music for the price of a single LP.

Although looking at the *Dogs D'Amour* one would expect to hear something like the *Mötley Crüe* sound, the music contained within owes more to the classic white blues of the mid- to late sixties and the attitude of someone like *Hanoi Rocks*. The *Dogs* are a British band who have risen through the clubs and have just beaten their contemporaries *The Quireboys* to a major record deal.

As is vogue nowadays, the vocals are grave and strained, though tuneful throughout. Again we see a high level of song writing ability, this time from lead vocalist Tyla, he goes from the bad ass rock 'n' roll of *Debauchery* to the tearful lament of *How Come it Never Rains*. All this is thrown carefully on top of the dirt sweet guitars of Jo Dog, with a neat bass, drum, and sax back to tidy things up with. This could have easily been lost on a first album but the production of Mark Dearnley, has held it together, he has been creative though cautious and also managed to give it a live thrill. All in all probably the best of the three LPs.

Dave Williams

Well, if the records are half as good as the reviews we should soon be hearing this dense vinyl from all those good time boys on Radio Three. Nice one Dave.

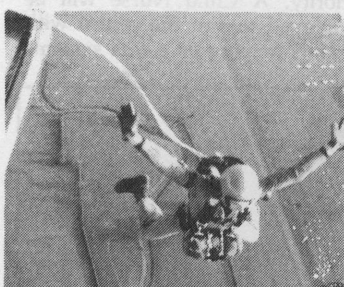
PARACHUTE

All fall down

If you missed the chance to do a parachute jump last term don't worry...we are running another course in the beginning of February.

The cost of the course is £70 which includes 8-10 hours instruction by British Parachute Association approved instructors, equipment hire (boots, helmets, jumpsuits, main and reserve canopies) and your first jump. Subsequent jumps are £12, approximately £4 of which will be refunded by us on production of a receipt.

The training will take place on the evenings of February 7 and 9 (Tuesday and Thursday). This will then be completed on the Saturday



at Headcorn Parachute Club (near Ashford) and, weather permitting, you will also do your first parachute jump.

If after reading the above you are still interested come along to our weekly Monday meetings at 12.30pm in the Union Dining Hall (first floor of the Union Building). You will be required to pay a £20 deposit to secure your place on the course and £4 Club membership.

If you are still unsure please feel free to come to the meetings and have a chat with one of the Committee.

I.C.C.A.G.

ICCAG—Is there life after College? Whilst at College it is all too easy to believe that these Ivory Towers are all that matters for the next three or four years and in so doing ignore the existence of a far larger community which is all around us and has had to tolerate the presence of five thousand or more Imperial students every year.

ICCAG is part of a national network of College Community Action Groups. The words Community Action do not mean that we are all out to change the world but it does mean that we are a part of a group of over 15,000 students who are involved in the community in which we live and study through many different kinds of voluntary work.

We now have a new constitution which should make it easier for us to publicise and organise links with the local community. But whilst we can put as many posters and write as many articles as we like about voluntary work, such as the Playgroup which we are involved with, the Soup Run and other activities, it is all wasted unless people are prepared to look outside College and see what else is going on.

There will be a meeting next Monday (23rd) at 12.45pm in the ICCAG/Rag Office which is on the top floor of the Union Building. So if you are interested then come along or if you can't make it then get in touch with us through the Soup Run or the ICCAG pigeonhole in the Union Office.

WELLSOC

Illegible

Wellsoc have done negotiation with the managers of Skirmish to offer his game again at 75% discount (ie £5). most of this is illegible—TS.

SNOOKER

The Snooker Club is proud to present the 1989 doubles competition. We've refused Steve Davis's entry to leave more places free in the draw. There'll be a trophy and cash prizes (amounts depend on number of entrants). So come up to the Club (top floor, Beit) before February 1 to put your name where Steve Davis's is not allowed to put his. Entrance is £4 per pair.

CONSOC

Centre-right politics is still alive at IC despite the current rantings about student loans. Imperial College Conservative Society is still very active and has five speaker meetings scheduled for the rest of this term. Notably we have Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, visiting on February 7. The Society supports the Government's plans for student loans and we believe the majority of IC students couldn't really care less. We should not think that the current leftist rabble is representative of more than a handful of hacks.

Our contribution to the argument will be a speaker meeting on February 14 by Angela Rumbold, Minister of State for Education and Ken Baker's deputy. Ms Rumbold will put the Government's case on loans and we hope many people will come and listen to the expert.

FOOTBALL

Wham!

Royal Free—1 IC II—2

IC's successful season continued with another fine win against RFH on a very heavy pitch. Unable to play their normal fast flowing football, IC worked hard to secure two points in their title challenge. It could have been a different story had RFH scored a one on one after ten minutes, but a brave save from Webster Nonde kept IC on course. It wasn't long before the dead lock was broken when Guy Phiri beat two defenders and squared the ball for Adam Thomas to pass the ball to the net, just like Jimmy Greaves showed him in the week. A good first half performance was consolidated when Mickey Plummer dribbled through most of the RFH team before firing home for twenty yards. Mickey and Ed Coates then both hit the bar and the keeper made good saves from Guy Phiri and Russ Dark as IC piled on the pressure. But close to the end, a mix up in IC's defence allowed RFH to get a consolation goal, and an equaliser may have ensued but for resolute defending from Captain Jezz Holland and Ivan Parkin.

IC (1sts)—1 Goldsmiths—0

A mere 2,500, IC's lowest home gate of the season, turned out on this dismal Saturday afternoon to see the 'Blues' register another crucial championship victory against defending champions, Goldsmith's College.

The muddy conditions made IC's normally fluent passing game somewhat difficult to play but it was a typical piece of one-touch football that brought the winner midway through the first half. A series of delightful passes released Pip Peel on the left and his pin-point cross was beautifully chested down by Paul Olden who calmly slipped past a defender before jabbing him his second goal in successive games.

The rest of the game was a tale of crunching tackles and IC attacks frustrated more by the elements than by good defending. Goldsmiths came back into the match as IC legs began to tire in the last fifteen minutes but Messrs Ewart, Hattersley, Fisher, and Burton showed why IC have the best defensive record in the league, keeping them comfortably at bay; indeed Paul Olden nearly added a second a second late on when he powered a head just wide.

IC now lead the Premier Division by three points left to play.

SKI RACING

Last Sunday night the Superbowl was not the only major sporting event occurring. Three teams from IC Ski Club were battling it out in freezing conditions at Brentwood dry slope in the third race of the season. The biggest problem of the evening turned out to be the ski bindings which were set at a ridiculously low setting, so skis tended to come off spontaneously, resulting in a lot of falls. Despite this, the 1st team survived the first round unbeaten, and the 2nd and 3rd teams lost only one race each. due to the dubious placings system used by the organisers, the 2nd and 3rd teams could not subsequently come higher than 7th, so they did very well to come 7th and 8th respectively after a thrilling race between themselves. Anna performed some more ballet in the second round, injuring herself in the process, and forcing a re-run of the entire round. In the re-run everybody got it right, qualifying us for the final against RHBNC 1st, which we won by 2 gates.

Thanks to Anna, Emma, Derek, Clive, Chris, Patrick, Stefan, Guy, Paul, Danny, Jack, the two others whose names I've forgotten, and especially 'the fan club'.

Next race on Saturday Feb 25 at Hemel Hempstead (sign up on 23rd please).

HOCKEY

IC 3rds—6 Meadhurst (BP)—0

After a defeat on Wednesday the 3rd again produced a very fine all round performance for a resounding victory on a very wet pitch due to some far from fine weather.

A quiet day in goal for Andy still saw him give the opposition their best chance to score when he gave away a penalty flick, but he redeemed himself producing a good save. Gary (a renegade from some totally un-creditworthy team) playing in his first game after injury had an important role at centre-half setting up lots of play for the forwards.

Several good crosses supplied by Vijay enabled Kaleem to add two more to his tally for the year, and despite his inability to convert short corners, Steven managed to score another hat trick. The game didn't go all IC's way with the home side quick on the break and despite stout defence, especially from Eric, they were unlucky not to score, with a saved penalty and a disallowed short corner. Somewhere amongst all this Kevin brought the total to six with a 'delicate' 'placed' shot.

Central Stores closure

The College's Central Stores were finally closed on the 16th of December. This was the culmination of plans started in January of last year which were intended to make use of the space for the Chemistry Department and for the Interdisciplinary Research Centre's Superconductor Research Unit. Stocks are now stored in departmental stores and transferred as required by internal requisition.

The plan was first announced in a letter sent to all Heads of Departments on January 7th, 1988. A joint Trade Union Committee met in March and decided to produce a report in response to this announcement, which was published on April 28th and suggested that the existing stores should be refurbished and reorganised.

In a meeting between Heads of Departments on June 1 the College and Union reports were discussed and it was decided that the reorganisation should go ahead. It was felt that the College had gone too far down the road of stores specializing in numerous fields, and that refurbishment of the pre-existing Central Stores was unfeasible. The decision was presented to the Unions in a meeting on June 9 in which the College Secretary, John Smith, stressed that devolving the Central Stores into departmental stores did not mean an end to central purchasing. Stocks would be delivered to the Goods Inward section and distributed to the departments where they were needed. There were to be no redundancies as the seven members of staff would be reallocated or put in charge of transferring stocks internally.

In order to avoid shortages the newly appointed Deputy Finance Officer, Philip Shaw, proposed that stocks would be moved between departmental stores by requisition. Stationery is now kept on the fourth floor in the Sherfield Building and moved to other stores in all departments as necessary. One of the faults in the new system is the duplication of the same goods in several places in College. A spokesman from the College Trades Unions told FELIX that a central stationery store would probably be more efficient.

Disarmed!

Mr Bruce Kent, former President of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), spoke to a meeting of the Methodist Society yesterday lunchtime.

Around 80 people attended the wide-ranging discussion that covered topics from press bias, phone tapping and the second world war to US, Soviet and Labour Party politics as well as nuclear disarmament. The atmosphere was generally friendly and Mr Kent later told FELIX that although the audience may not have agreed with everything he said there was not much disagreement.

He argued that the World has become accustomed to nuclear arms and regarded them as a fact of life. He added that nuclear arms are distracting peoples attention from the real issues of pollution, health, national debt and AIDS. However, he was still optimistic and said that recently the situation had changed 'dramatically'.

Paid at last?

Students who worked on the Summer Letting Scheme in Beit Hall and Hamlet Gardens last Summer are to receive a bonus payment for their work after waiting 3 months.

The Summer Letting Scheme lets rooms in College Accommodation over the summer and is run by students. Workers are promised a minimum bonus payment for working the whole summer plus a variable amount based upon the scheme's profits and their individual performances.

College Accommodation Officer, Loretto O'Callaghan told FELIX that a part payment is to be made to workers in Beit Hall subject to a written report from last year's scheme co-ordinator, Simon Chadwick, whilst those in Hamlet Gardens will be paid in full. She said that the delay was due to Mr Chadwick's refusal to submit a report to her, with bonus recommendations. Students who worked in Evelyn Gardens will not be paid until Mr Chadwick presents his report.

Mr Chadwick is refusing to present his report until he is paid for two weeks work which he claims the College has not paid him for. Ms O'Callaghan has now agreed to authorise this payment, and is withholding Mr Chadwick's overtime claim until he presents his report.

Eviction?

The College is considering evicting two students from its houses in Evelyn Gardens if they do not arrange for payment of their rent today. Senior Assistant Finance Officer Malcolm Aldridge told FELIX that the College is legally entitled to remove people who have defaulted on their rent.

IC Union President Nigel Baker is unsure what stance the Union should take on the students' position. He told FELIX that the College had £21000 worth of unpaid residence bills last term. He is against any action which may antagonise this problem, which may lead to rents increasing in the future.

Playgroup

IC Union is considering the opening of a Union Playgroup in the Union's Lower Lounge.

Union President, Nigel Baker, told FELIX that he was making a 'feasibility study' into a Day Nursery with Westminster Council's Child Day Care Adviser. If the idea is approved at IC Union's Council in March, the Nursery will be held in the Union Building's Lower Lounge on weekdays between 9 am and 12 noon.

25 Children between the ages of 3 and 5 will be admitted, with children of students being given priority. A Child Nurse will be employed to run the centre with parents helping on a rota system.



City & Guilds blood donations

On Tuesday January 31, the South London branch of the National Blood Transfusion Service will be holding a day-long session in Southside Gym. Their target is 160 donations during the day, and a list for volunteers is posted in the City & Guilds Union Office.

Every donation has to be thoroughly tested before it can be stored ready for use in an emergency or an operation—blood which has successfully been tested has a shelf life of 35 days maximum. Some tests can be performed at the donation site itself; the rest must be carried out in a laboratory, no more than three hours after donation.

Testing starts with taking two samples from the donation—all three lots of blood are immediately labelled to allow identification. One sample is used for grouping; the other is allowed to clot, forming a serum which is used for testing for diseases which may be transmitted by transfusion. The labelling used employs a bar code, allowing any donation in the UK to be traced back to its origins.

The grouping test identifies the

two main blood group systems—ABO and Rhesus (Rh). The ABO system falls into four main groups—O, A, B and AB, the Rh system divides into Rh positive and Rh negative. Thus eight categories of blood type are formed, aside from other, more complicated, systems. Most people will remember blood grouping from 'O' Level Biology.

All these tests can now be performed automatically, with chemical changes being assessed by photoelectric cells and results compiled by computer. Donor records are also stored on computer, the two systems being linked.

Disease testing on the clotted sample checks in particular for syphilis, hepatitis B and HIV. All such tests are performed separately, to allow use of the most sensitive, rapid and economic method for each. Syphilis is not as serious a problem as it used to be, but still exists in the general public—each test costs about five pence. Hepatitis is a more serious problem, as the virus lives in the plasma, which is pooled from many samples for plasma products. Thus thousands of

people could be infected with hepatitis from a single donation. Several methods of screening exist for hepatitis, all involving detection of the virus in the blood. The cost of the cheapest test is about twelve pence per sample.

The most recent screen to be introduced is one for HIV, which looks for the HIV antibody. This is one of the more expensive tests carried out, at forty-five pence per sample.

Many more tests are carried out, most for tropical diseases which are rare in the UK—this is why people who have recently been to certain countries are asked not to donate (they may have returned with more than just a tan!).

All blood that is collected in the UK is collected by the BTS, part of the NHS—there is as yet no private service. There are no financial rewards for giving blood, just a satisfaction at having potentially saved someone's life. Besides, it's a good excuse to lie down for half an hour and grab a cup of tea during the day.

withdrew the whole lot, triumphantly having moved the meeting an hour closer to the looming guillotine. Steph Snell then picked up the whole of Syd's discarded amendments and got them reinstated, wasting another half an hour.

By now both sides were in full swing with hastily imagined amendments being created around the table, pitched in to be taken up by a voter, and then battered down with points of information, procedural motions, and good old fashioned ranting. Dave Clements was in fine form, turning pinker and pinker whilst defending good old home-spun democracy with all his many years of experience. At one point a point of order was raised challenging that the point of information raised took precedence over the procedural motion which had interrupted a speaker to go straight to a vote on an amendment. But then it was all over. Democracy had lost a battle and Council had recommended that it became the supreme body. Disheartened and exhausted, the meeting staggered its way to the guillotine and fell apart. We were disappointed but not disheartened. It's one thing for a bunch of hacks to vote for their own supremacy, quite another for the people to vote away their fundamental right of reply.

tell anyone exactly what they are doing. Then all hell broke loose. The SMHMSU/ICU working party had found a problem over UGMs after the proposed merger of the Unions next year. It seemed unfair that ICU (with the majority of students) should hold the majority of UGMs where Marys' opinions were likely to be swamped. It seems reasonable, except that the solution is, obviously, to abolish UGMs and make Council the supreme body.

Much of Council loved this; some of Council thought it the most outrageous thing they had ever heard, and so the fun began. Syd Harbour-Bridge proposed amendment after amendment before anyone had had a chance to comment on the original. In one of the most sophisticated bit of filibustering (delaying tactics) ever seen, he pretended to support the motion whilst delaying it for over an hour. In attempting to mandate the FELIX Editor to print reports he brought back the oldest Council chesnut of them all and forced the debate several miles off the point before the poor chairman had a chance to take control. (Now repeat after me, children, You can't tell the FELIX Editor what to put in FELIX) After half of Syd's garbled, misunderstood and mostly unheard amendments were passed and the other half consigned to oblivion, he

WALTER WALTER

Old and new readers of this column alike will soon become aware that Walter hates to be the bearer of bad news; any subject which might come under this heading he tends to treat lightly or not at all. He especially hates to be the first bearer of bad news, and it is therefore with real regret that he draws readers' attention to the fact that papers for this years circus of sabbatical elections will be going up in about a month, and that the race for candidates is getting under way.

One always views the said circus with a certain wry amusement; how will a candidate announce his or her intention of standing? Two years ago, Mr Sydney Harbour-Bridge got his campaign under way by standing for every committee in sight, and storming out of them all in turn, carefully explaining why in a signed letter to FELIX afterwards. Other people prefer the time honoured method of loudly denying that they intend to stand at all, although those that must be different pretend to be Charlie Chaplin. Don't they, Mr Goodwin?

So be warned: if a close friend starts storming out of committees, writing letters to FELIX, pretending to be Charlie Chaplin, or most damningly of all denying their electoral intentions - take them aside and talk sensibly to them. Try to deflate their ego, to negate the psychosis. If all else fails, Walter recommends the use of a gallon of paraffin and a match.

As a break from this incessant Union bilge, more news on the Australian takeover of west London, which has now reached as far as the Kwaliti Tandoori by South Kensington tube station. Walter entered this establishment the other day to be greeted by a suitably dusky gentleman who treated him to a wide smile and the phrase: 'G'day mate. This table do yer?'

Our hero whistled a polite chorus of Waltzing Matilda, and retired from the fray.

As an enraged aside, Walter has just discovered that if you buy a small portion of grated cheese from the Caterpillar Cafe, it will cost you 25 pence. This is a blatant rip off for what amounts to a small handful of cheap plastic cheddar. Walter suggests a mass boycott of the exorbitant place, as only that will persuade the conscienceless profiteers in power to recognize the fact of the matter: their catering outlet is disgracefully expensive. Vote with your feet!

Council Sketch

And it all began so quietly. Monday's Council sort of drifted together with a resigned air. There was little on the agenda that even sparked a little enthusiasm from the attendees. A little debate on subwardens was referred back to Housing Committee because Council was too bored to discuss it. A few radicals felt the need to take legal action against the AUT over their boycott of exams, but nobody's heart was in it.

But slowly the tension began to build up. Even more unlikely, people began to wake up. The attacks on democracy were beginning. Neil McCluskey proposed a motion, which at first reading, looked so uninteresting that it could have passed as any other Council paper. But Cosmic tried to amend it! It must be worth looking at. The motion made it no longer compulsory for sub-committees to present their minutes to Council, merely to report to it. Less things for Council members to read, must be a good idea. With a surprisingly short debate, the motion was passed, meaning that the exec (amongst others) no longer have to

Loans demo faces set-back

The National Union of Students London branch (NUS London) and the University of London Union have pulled out of the anti-loans march scheduled for 1 February. Members of the Federal Campaigns Committee (FCC), a group set up by the ULU President's Council to discuss student loans have now accepted responsibility for the demonstration.

The march was initially planned by NUS London for February 1st to coincide with the last day for submission of comments on the Government White Paper on student loans. They withdrew because they believed that they did not have the resources to organise the march safely. The ULU Executive Committee had previously passed a policy to support the NUS and so also decided to withdraw.

Louise Van der Straeten, Vice President of ULU told FELIX that the ULU Exec had no resources to organise the march itself and added that several members of the Exec would be unavailable on 1st February due to prior engagements. She said that ULU would be writing to its constituent unions, stating its withdrawal of all support for the demonstration and said that they would now concentrate their efforts on the march organised by NUS National on February 25th.

In a discussion on Monday evening described by the Chairman of the meeting as 'farfetched', a motion was passed to use the title ULU FCC on the publicity prepared for the march. Simon Aldiss, Co-President of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) proposed that the leaflets be headed with the words 'London Students Against Loans' to avoid use of the ULU name but several members felt that such publicity needed 'a commitment of actual organisations and representatives.' A subsequent vote resulted in an 18-14 majority in favour of the use of the name ULU FCC.

ULU Acting-President, Nicola Jones expressed her anger at the use of this name and stressed that 'the ULU Executive does not support the march and the FCC is not a recognised body of ULU.' She also pointed out that the use of the title was illegal and that ULU would consider taking legal action against anyone involved in the production

or distribution of publicity bearing it.

The FCC printed thirty thousand leaflets using the name ULU FCC and claiming support from the NUS Universities National Committee, but following a meeting of the ULU exec on Tuesday when the Executive again rejected requests to support the march new leaflets headed 'London Loans Campaign' have been printed.

Keith Budden, ULU International Officer, whose name is on the public order bill for the march argued that it would continue without ULU and NUS support. He has negotiated a route with the police which will take the march from Finsbury Circus to Shoreditch Park and has insured himself for up to £3/4m. He insisted that the Executive's support is needed 'to provide money for leaflets, stewards' bibs, a lorry with a PA and a number of other items.' He added that the use of the name ULU FCC would give 'credibility' to the march.

Mr Aldiss and Jim Coyle, President of Goldsmiths College Student Union have since added their names to the public order bill for the march and, along with the presidents of the Institute of Education and City University and the co-presidents of Queen Mary College and SOAS, have set up an organising committee for the march.

A meeting of 20 stewards was held last night after further communication with the police. The organisers intend to 'vet' the stewards and will be providing them with bibs and providing the police with photocopies of their union cards. They hope that 'up to 80 stewards' will be available to oversee the demonstration.

Imperial College Union held an emergency executive meeting on Wednesday morning at which it was noted that the original decision to support the demonstration was made at the last UGM on the understanding that the NUS was the organising body. The Executive released a statement withdrawing its support for the march on the basis that such action would 'place the members of IC Union in physical danger.' The decision overturns a motion passed at the last UGM on a technicality. The proposer of the motion, Julian Moore, now intends to support the Executive in their decision.

AUT Update

IC Union is to investigate the legal position of students and their Universities where degrees are affected by the AUT's examination boycott after a mandate at Monday's Council meeting.

Union President, Nigel Baker is to visit a barrister today in order to find out whether there is any legally binding requirement for Universities to provide final examinations. If there is a legal case for students to take up, Mr Baker hopes its use will put pressure on Universities to support the AUT's claim for a wage increase for 1988/89. He added that he thought there may be other legal grounds for a court case apart from a breach of contract, saying 'We are looking at all sides of it.'

Executive Announcement

●ICU has a policy that it should support the demonstration on February 1.

●This support was given on the understanding that the NUS had called a national demonstration on February 1.

●ICU Exec has met and, in agreement with the proposer of the motion, has decided that IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION WILL NOT BE SUPPORTING THE DEMONSTRATION ON FEBRUARY 1.

The reasons for this are:

●The NUS has withdrawn the march.

●ULU feel that they do not have the resources to organise the march properly and so are not.

●Political activists, ie members of Socialist Workers Students Society and Militant, are now organising the march.

●The stewards are likely to be members of SWSS.

●SWSS are campaigning for an illegal march to the DES on that day.

●The Exec feel that the march is likely to degenerate into a riot.

●The Exec feel that if ICU support the march we will be placing the members of this Union in physical danger since we cannot guarantee their safety.

●I hope you understand the reasons for this decision.

Nigel D Baker,

On behalf of ICU Executive.

Comic Relief!

Ex-Union President, Sydney Harbour-Bridge (name changed in aid of Comic Relief) has resigned from his post as Publications Board Chairman. The move is reported to be a result of pressure from IC Radio Station Manager, Nigel Whitfield. At Monday's Council meeting Mr Harbour-Bridge told members present that he felt there were more productive things he could do with his time. Mr Harbour-Bridge is currently standing for the post of Union House Committee Chairman.

Red faces

There were red faces all round this week when a Dalek smashed its way into the FELIX Office and exterminated the small ads. Gorgeous pouting Steve Meyfroidt, 20, said, 'It was like a bolt from the blue'. Security Chief Geoff Reeves has set up a Dalek Hotline on extension 3511

And finally

Union Manager, Dave Peacock returned to work this week after an absence of two weeks. During this time he was admitted to hospital for a 'nose job'. Mr Peacock claims this was necessary on medical grounds after an 'accident' in which his nose was broken in four places. Informed sources report that the 'accident' occurred during a night of wild passion which involved an unspecified female and a chair.



Before



After