



Felix

THE NEWSPAPER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

REPORT SETS 'TARGET DATE' 1993

RHBNC MERGER

A working party report published this week has suggested that Imperial College and Royal Holloway and Bedford New College should merge to form a College similar to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in America. The report recommends that a final decision be made by the Summer of this year, with a 'target date' for a merger in 1993-4. It also seeks the setting up of a Joint Planning Committee between the two Colleges to explore the implications of the merger. The report acknowledges that the financial difficulties of RHBNC and IC will not be solved by a merger, and concludes that the 'longer term advantages' of merging outweigh the short-term disadvantages.

The working party suggest that first-year Science, Engineering and Arts undergraduates and half of the second year students should be housed on the Egham site. They anticipate that this arrangement will prove attractive to students who will initially be housed 'at a comparatively sheltered and close knit campus at Egham' before moving to a 'more independent existence in Central London'.

The financial difficulties faced by both IC and RHBNC will not be solved by a merger and a merged institution will need to make cuts in order to break even according to the report. Because a merger would not

change the financial situation of either College, says the report, each site would be responsible for settling its own debt; Imperial College faces a deficit of £4M and RHBNC a deficit of £2.5M by 1992.

A merger between the two institutions would allow new accommodation and research units to be built on the Egham site, says the report. According to the Rector, Professor Eric Ash, the College may be able to take out loans for new accommodation and set rent levels such that the College's deficit is not increased. The Rector commented that building in South Kensington would not be possible because the

rents involved would be 'out of this world' but added that if building were to take place on 'free land in Egham' the arithmetic would 'look quite good'.

The report states that the merged institution will concentrate on Science and Technology but highlights the possibility of incorporating arts into scientific courses. The working party compares Imperial College with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and quotes an internal report on undergraduate engineering education at MIT which states that 'it is essential that engineering undergraduates receive a broad foundation in the humanities, arts and social sciences.'

The possibility of 'new areas of research between the Arts and Social Sciences and the Sciences and Technology' and the possibility of broadly based four-year degree courses are also discussed in the report.

The report does not mention the effect of a merger on the Student Unions. The omission was described by Union Deputy President, Chas Brereton, as 'disgraceful.' He stressed that the effect on clubs and societies would be highly detrimental and described the whole concept of a merged Union as 'a bloody nightmare.'

Union President, Nigel Baker, told FELIX that the problems which have arisen between St. Mary's Student Union and IC Student Union are a direct result of the lack of consideration given to the Union in the discussion of that merger. He insists that at least one official officer from each of IC and RHBNC Unions should be members of the new joint committee to be set up and intends to discuss this proposal with the Rector in the near future.

UGMs here to stay

A controversial motion to abolish Union General Meetings (UGMs) was defeated by 150 votes at the Union General Meeting on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by over six hundred students, including a delegation of over 200 from St Mary's Medical School in what has been described as the most crowded UGM since 1986. The motion was met by strong opposition from a group of concerned students and IC Union's three media services who organised a petition and a poster campaign in support of retaining UGMs.

The motion, tabled by an unofficial Union working party looking into the problems of merging the Imperial and St Mary's students' Unions, was brought to the UGM after receiving approval from Council last week. It was designed to solve the problems students from St Mary's would have in attending UGMs on the Imperial site, and presented a number of recommendations on accommodation, clubs and ULU representation.

The motion called for the abolition of UGMs and the establishment of Council as the supreme decision making body of the Union. Under the proposal, students would be able to mandate Council to discuss motions provided they had 25 seconds, but they would not have the right to vote and speaking rights would be given at the discretion of Council. The motion allowed Emergency General Meetings to be called through a petition of 150 Union members and mandated Union Officers to report to students by pinning reports on departmental

cont'd on back page



'We are militant'

Aids I

Dear Bill,

Having just read the letter by Emmanuel Saridakis, we feel compelled to write in response. Mr Saridakis seems to object to the contents of the ICU AIDS Day, describing them as 'totally irrelevant'. How can anyone pretend that drug abuse, homosexuality and family planning have no connection with the general issue of AIDS?

He also complains about the money spent by ICU on the AIDS Day. From his description, everything provided was free. Syringes and condoms are distributed without charge by the relevant organisations. From our point of view, Mr Saridakis' argument is non-existent and purely indicative of his ignorance of the factors affecting AIDS and its spread.

The views expressed in Mr Saridakis' letter illustrate the need for days like the AIDS Day, in our opinion, acquiring life-saving information is priceless.

Yours,

Sophie Wardle, Physics 1,

Gareth Davies, Physics 1.

Wendy's Glasshouse

Dear Bill,

Firstly, may I point out a few inaccuracies within last week's letters page:

1. To Nicky Fox—Neil McClusky is the Council Chairman.

2. To Simon Bradshaw—The minutes of the St Mary's merger working party were put to Council to decide whether or not they should be submitted to a UGM. Anybody who was under the impression that Council has the power to enforce such a decision is misguided. Your comment therefore about not consulting the student body is secondhand, incorrect information no doubt derived from an irate Dave Clements.

3. To Ashley Unitt—The posters in question were privately funded, not by Club funds.

The question as to whether the Club can indulge in anything not directly connected with water polo is a case of constitutional interpretation. This interpretation is at the discretion of the committee as defined in their constitution. If the committee did not support the action, the person responsible would have been acting unofficially, that however is a different problem and one that I cannot be blamed for. It is not my job to check that every poster reflects a club's committee decision exactly.

Also, Bill, your news page contained a rather biased cartoon which goes against your own policy of news is news, opinion is opinion. When I complained to someone that FELIX was too biased about the UGM issue, they answered that I could have submitted a letter stating any opinion I might like to. However, you have stressed to the Exec on many occasions that letters and reports *must* be submitted by 12.30pm on Mondays. Now unless Simon Bradshaw

emulated the Sun by writing a letter on a decision which had not yet been decided (ie the report of Torvill and Dean winning the Olympic medal even though the newspaper had been printed before they won) then you accepted that letter for some extenuating circumstances. Those circumstances are your complete and utter bias towards maintaining UGMs, a bias which clouds your ability to present an informative FELIX rather than an indoctrination of your beliefs.

You are not the Union's God, Bill and some of the stones you are throwing might one day smash the panes in your glass house.

Yours,

Ian Morris.

Hole rants

Dear Bill,

I feel I must reply to the highly misinformed letter by Ashley Unitt. The reason why the students against loans posters were headed by the title 'Swimming and Water Polo Club' was to legalise the posters. As a group of students forming a students against loans society we needed a legitimate title for our posters before our society was officially formed. The Swimming and Water Polo Club title was used because it was an official title and because the Club felt that the loans system may prevent water polo players from coming to Imperial College. At no time did we spend any of the Club's, or the Union's, money on these posters as they were privately funded.

I would also like to comment on the Conservative Society's statement that 'We should not think that the current leftish rabble is representative of more than a handful of hacks'. Firstly, the membership of Imperial College Students Against Loans Society consists of people from the entire spectrum of political thought, including several former Conservative voters (eg myself). Secondly, that the 1,700 people who signed the petition against loans, do not constitute a handful of hacks. This number is several orders greater than the average turn out at a Consoc meeting.

Julian Moore, Treasurer Swimming and Water Polo Club.

Vote for me

Dear Bill,

In reply to Nicky Fox's letter of January 27 I do happen to be the Union Council Chairman. I was only asked to chair the meeting with Mr Peter Brooke at a couple of hours notice and I was prepared prior to that for questioning the MP myself. I'm afraid I may well have come across a little biased but I think the comments reflected the feeling of the meeting. On the whole the meeting was well ordered, the questions pertinent and representative of the persons present at the meeting. If offered the opportunity of chairing another such meeting I would surely stand down in favour of those better qualified. I believe the Labour spokesman on Education may be speaking some time in the near future Nicky, fancy a job?

Over to Bill 'it pains me to have to devote so much space that's why I've put it in double size print Goodwin'. A few more factual inaccuracies;

1. There are more than 25 students on Council. In fact, of the 50 posts there was around 70% attendance of the posts filled at last term's Council meetings.

2. My name is spelt McCluskey.

3. You intimate that I ignore mandates to do work. Far from it, Council papers have been out on time for every Council so far not withstanding the propensity of bump. I just wish Council members would stick to the motions and papers presented instead of deviating to heart felt 'discussion' completely unrelated to the matter in hand.

And there's more... Council sketch p19 Jan 27, yet more inaccuracies! 'The motion made it no longer compulsory for sub-committees to present their minutes to Council', referring to my motion. Sorry, but as far as I'm aware it's never been compulsory to present minutes of sub-committees to Council, simply tradition to present a selected few. In passing the motion Council democratically agreed that all minutes of all sub-committees be available for all to see in the Union General Office.

Neil McCluskey, Council Chairman.

PS. Congratulations on a wonderfully unbiased FELIX of Jan 27, you obviously thought very hard about which articles to include so that you gave a fair view of both sides of the coin. It seems a pity that you've got a double-headed coin.

What a rotter I am—Ed

High farce

Dear Bill,

Above the core of every politician lies a thin veneer of decency necessary to obtain their election. Last night that layer, snake-like, was shed, the hideous face of totalitarianism revealed from behind the mask.

The three weapons of democracy are a free press, a directly accountable executive body, and a free flow of information from the committees that make up that body. Last night attacks fell on all three.

The first blow came in a change to the proceedings of the Council. As the rules used to stand, the chairman of a Sub-committee of Council was required to submit the minutes of each meeting to the full Council for approval as a fair and accurate version of the events that took place.

Now the rules are different. All that now has to be submitted is a report, written by the Chairman, of his version of events. At no time do the minutes of the meeting have to be passed or approved.

The second blow came with the main order of business—the St Mary's merger working committee report and motion. The working committee, after giving the matter 'a great deal of thought over the Christmas Holiday'—S Snell (89), had come to the conclusion that to hold UGMs on one site only would be undemocratic. Their recommendation? Abolish UGMs and establish Council as the sole policy making body of Imperial College Union. Ordinary students will be able to have motions raised at Council if they can collect a petition with 150 signatures, but they will not have an automatic right to speak, and they will be unable to vote.

Perhaps the saddest moment of the night came

in a quote from the Electrical Engineering Departmental Representative: 'After all, Council is a more democratic body than a UGM', which he actually seemed to believe.

A few minutes later, one of the few opponents for the motion inquired how many members of Council had gained their posts unopposed. Over half the members present raised their hands.

In parallel with this, the Exec were mounting a totally unforeshadowed attack on FELIX. One of the most important freedoms enshrined in the Constitutions is the right of the FELIX Editor to determine the contents of his Newspaper. This right has been attacked many times in the past, and has stood firm against all challenges. If the last bastion against the powerlust of the inner few is breached, hope is no more.

The meeting was chaired by Neil McClusky, although at times it was hard to differentiate between him and the proposer. He ignored speakers whom he disagreed with, and seemed totally incapable of following procedure. At times, the only thing needed to create a High Farce was a vicar and a set of French windows.

Ten minutes from Guillotine, the meeting came to a vote. Unbelievably, almost the entire Council voted for the proposal that 'abolishing UGMs is a good idea'. In true Ian Howgate style, Cosmic Ferret stormed out of the meeting in disgust, and several people were very close to following.

Now is the time for action. A petition form is being printed at this moment, and will be distributed round the departments. Any help that you can offer will be gratefully received. Don't sit back and ignore the situation—this one will make a difference to you.

Simon E Spero, Observer.

Distraught

Dear Bill,

I write to you as the distraught ICUGM Chairman. I do not even have a seat on Council, did not know what was going on, have made no other job plans etc, etc. Now I find that I'm going to be out of a job if those faceless hacks have their way. Sod democracy, I'm going to be out on my ear! I feel therefore that I must write to complain about the undemocratic and downright sneaky way in which all this has been carried on.

When an RCS General Committee discussed the matter, and decided that some sort of senate type body might be a good replacement for UGMs, Steph Snell had carefully planned that I would be completely pissed and unable to object to the plan. She has since put paid to my naval promotion prospects by calling my boss a 'fruit' over the phone last week.

I can now reveal to FELIX readers that this whole UGM business is just a ploy on the RCS President's part to drive me to drink and render me destitute. (Fortunately I've already found the drink, so she can only make me destitute). I must inform you that I have a fiancée and overdraft to support and cannot take any more of this harassment. I shall be taking my plight to the next ICUGM and let the people decide what should be done.

I can only implore everyone to preserve the UGM in order to keep me in a job and keep student democracy alive at IC.

*Yours sincerely,
Dave Burns, IC UGM Chairman,
RCSU Assistant Honorary Secretary.*

ICU IRC

Dear Bill,

The ICU Industrial Relations Committee met for the first time last week. One item which we discussed was our objective to 'help in supplying advertising contracts to ICU publications'. The conclusion that we reached will interest and affect some of your readers, and I would be grateful for their comments and suggestions.

After discussion, we concluded that many ICU and CCU publications would like to carry more advertising, but that student editions do not have enough time to search for potential advertisers and negotiate contracts. We therefore propose, as a trial scheme, to employ a student, with relevant experience if possible, to negotiate advertising contracts for these publications. We suggested that our targets should be the ICU and CCU handbooks and the Rag Mag, but this is, of course, subject to the agreement of the editors.

I would welcome comments on the desirability and feasibility of such a project. Our intention is to employ a student for roughly four weeks, over the coming Easter vacation. Some work would obviously need to be carried out before and after Easter. The end result would be editors being given adverts to print and cheques from advertisers.

The IRC next meets on February 20 and I hope to reach a conclusion on this matter, which we can then put into action.

I look forward to hearing from interested parties.

*Gavin Spittlehouse,
ICU Industrial Relations Officer.*

Aids II

Dear Bill,

After reading Mr Saridakis's letter to FELIX in the last issue I feel it necessary to reply to what I think is unjust and naive criticism.

The aim of all these 'Welfare Weeks' is to provide information to the students so that he/she can then make up his/her own mind on how to react to such topics as drugs, AIDS, etc. The aim of 'AIDS Day' was to make people fully understand the dangers that AIDS represents to hetero- and homosexuals alike (it is, after all, a huge problem in the States). The idea that the whole thing was 'ludicrous', 'totally irrelevant' and 'a shame for Imperial College' I find unbelievable! If it has stopped one unwanted child from being born or one drug addict from dying of an infected needle or even one person (such as myself or Mr Saridakis) being infected with AIDS, then I consider all the hard work well justified, and, for your information, no money was spent on organising 'AIDS Day', people put themselves forward free of charge.

Having said this, I am glad that Mr Saridakis takes a strong view on Welfare at Imperial. I consider it to be a very important subject, but rather than trying to 'oust' anyone, will he not represent his views more productively by standing for the position of 'ordinary member' on the Welfare Committee (there are still two places available). Thus he will also be able to take part in some of the work.

For those people waiting for the results of last

term's questionnaires, they are still being processed free of charge by the data processing company. However, we should be getting them back any day soon and they will be publicised almost immediately afterwards.

Mark Fisher, Union Welfare Officer.

CCU UGMs

Dear Bill,

I would like to congratulate FELIX, IC Radio and STOIC on their excellent publicity campaign culminating in the unprecedented turnout at today's UGM. This was an ideal opportunity for the merger with St Mary's to be discussed and a workable merger proposal to be passed. It was unfortunate then that a lot of people seemed unaware that UGM is the means in which the Exec report on their activities and the students' views are heard. How many times has the order of the business changed so that the reports are sent to the end and are only heard by the few loyal 'hacks' who can be bothered to stay. How many of yesterday's voters have been to a UGM before? I even saw one person turn up as the final vote was being taken, ask what was going on and then vote against the motion—lucky he happened to drop into the JCR in time! What right has he to vote on an issue when he hasn't even bothered to listen to the reasons for the motion.

At the moment we have the strange situation where St Mary's students are full members of ICU and have full voting rights. However the reverse is not true and the feelings of IC students in Kensington and Silwood have no effect on St Mary's decisions. We also have the problem that in four years time IC will be centrally funded. This means that all funding for SMHMSSU will come from ICU. Without a merger we will have no control over where that money goes, if St Mary's receive any money at all.

The suggestions from the working party covered aspects of the merger from welfare and accommodation to the contentious UGM issue. Surely some of these proposals were acceptable and could have been passed?

On the UGM issue, one important point seems to have been overlooked. We already have the machinery for holding CCU UGMs. If the ICU UGM was abolished then the students would have a voice through their CCU. If a motion was passed then the CCU representatives to council, the President, Hon Sec, Academic Affairs Officer, and the Dep Reps, would be mandated to present the motion at Council, even if they do not agree with what is said. The MSC Chairmen could also be lobbied and the proposer of the motion given speaking rights to ensure that the meaning of the motion is not altered. Surely it would be easier to pass a motion through a CCU UGM where a smaller majority is needed. The proposer can still call an EGM (with 150 seconders) if they are not satisfied with Council's decision, or they could take the matter straight to Council if they get 25 seconders.

The working party's recommendations will probably come up before another UGM, perhaps including some of the ideas presented above. Next time give the other points made a chance. You can always propose an amendment if you dislike what is proposed. I look forward to a rational debate.

*Yours,
Chris Horne, Elec Eng 2.*

March success

The anti-loans demonstration took place peacefully and successfully on Wednesday despite large setbacks including the withdrawal of support by the National Union of Students and subsequently by the University of London Union (ULU) Executive Committee. The police estimated that between two and three thousand students participated in the march between Finsbury Circus and Shorditch Park. Despite fears about rioting and violence, no arrests were made.

Fred Jarvis of the National Union of Teachers, expressed his sympathy and stressed that a great sense of brotherhood was needed between students of all disciplines in order to present a 'united front' against loans.

Louisa Woods, 15 year-old Chairperson of the Hackney South Labour Party Young Socialists, claimed that the implementation of loans would take the right to education away from the poor. 'We will not give up,' she said, 'we'll fight 'till we win.'

Keith Budden ULU International Officer, whose name was on the public order bill for the march, was proud of the success of the demo, but disappointed that the route was so 'ineffective'. He stressed that the

route was imposed by the police and was the only option available.

Simon Aldis, Co-President of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and senator to ULU, told FELIX that he felt the demo would have far more success in the fight against loans than the NUS march on November 24 1988. In response to IC Union's lack of support for the demonstration he described the Union as 'shortsighted', and said it showed that the sabbaticals do not take their position seriously.

If they have no confidence in sabbaticals of other unions to organise the march of their own backs, they obviously don't feel confident enough to take such action themselves', he remarked.

He felt that the banning of publicity about the action was the main factor leading to the poor turnout from Imperial, and said it reflected very badly on IC Union Officers. 'They have no right to represent students and ought to resign', he said.

IC Union President Nigel Baker told FELIX he still stood by his original decision not to support the march but added that if he had been able to foresee the eventual success he may have reacted differently.

Sagging ceiling

A room in Garden Hall was left with a sagging ceiling last Friday when an upstairs bathroom flooded. The occupant has been told there is no room elsewhere in the Hall while the ceiling is repaired.

Loretto O'Callaghan, the College Accommodation Officer, said that if the ceiling was considered dangerous by the Managing Surveyor of Residences, Mr Peter Hallworth, then the student involved would be given urgent

priority on the waiting list in other halls.

Mr Hallworth said that he does not consider this event particularly dangerous and commented that 'If the student wishes to move there is nothing stopping him'.

Mr Hallworth went on to say that the recent collapses have been due to water seepage, usually through the negligence of students. He added that the onus is on students to report any defect in their ceilings.

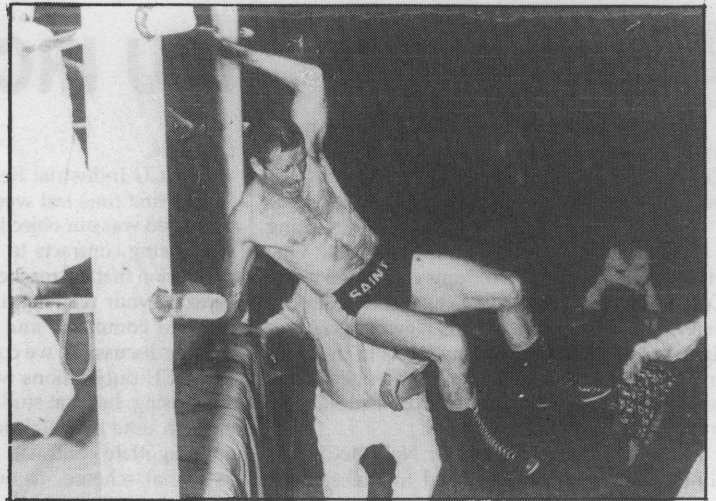
ICU to hold DES vigil

As part of its liaison with the National Union of Students (NUS), IC Union will be holding a vigil outside the Department of Education of Science (DES) on February 6th from 8am to 6pm.

Union President, Nigel Baker told FELIX that he hopes to display a coffin at the vigil, bearing a copy of the cover of the Government's White Paper on student loans and

the words 'R.I.P. Higher Education.'

The vigil will be held on a rota system with 5 people present throughout the day. Anybody interested in attending the vigil should contact Mr Baker in the Union Office today. Numbers are strictly limited to 5 people at any one time to meet with the law on unofficial picketing.



Thursday's wrestling tournament in the Great Hall.

Security lodge

A new security lodge has been installed at the entrance to the Union Building to provide security guards with a view over Beit Quadrangle.

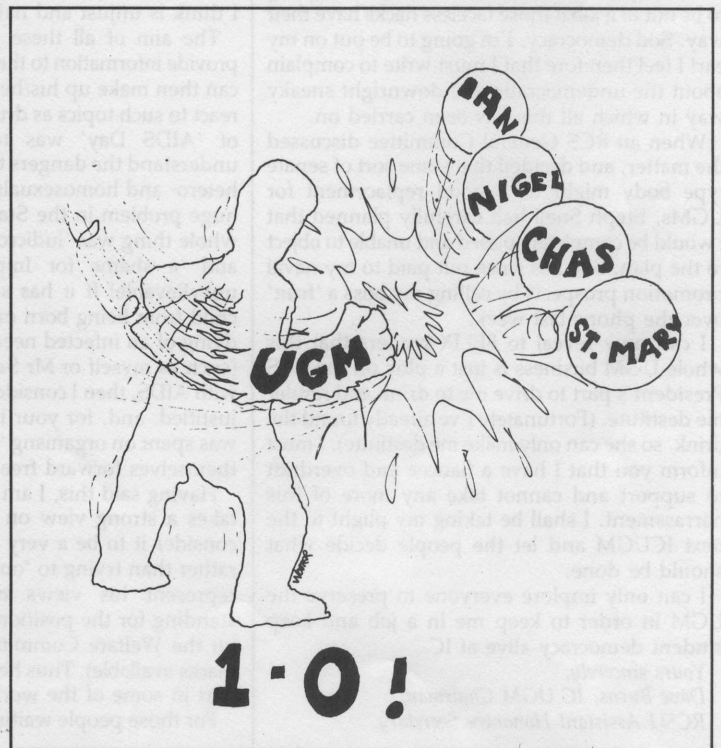
Chief Security Officer, Geoff Reeves, told FELIX that the new lodge will be in addition to the present porter's lodge under Beit Arch, which will be altered to provide messengers with a 'Challenge point.' Mr Reeves added that he intends to provide a guard in the new lodge from 7am until midnight. The lodge will hold Union room keys and will be used as a distribution point for Union mail.

Balls of fire

Wednesday morning saw Prince Consort Road cluttered with old cars and cameras for the filming of part of a short scene in the film *Great Balls of Fire*. The film follows eighteen months in the life of rock star Jerry Lee Lewis and is set in England in 1958 when Lewis was said to be a bigger hit than Elvis Presley.

Karate win

Kate Taylor, a postgraduate student at IC, has won the individual ladies Kata event at the British Karate Championships held at Crystal Palace on January 28. Ms Taylor also won the Bronze in the individual free-sparring contest.





Editorial

A victory for common sense.

In recent history there have been few Union General Meetings (UGMs) as well attended as the UGM on Tuesday. The issue at stake, of course, was the abolition of Union General Meetings. Over six hundred students turned up and despite the presence of 250 students from St Mary's Medical School intent on removing UGMs, the motion was defeated by 150 votes. It was indeed a victory for common sense.

The unofficial working party looking into the problems of merger between St Mary's and IC Union will now have to rethink the UGM problem.

For those who are unaware of the situation, the working party decided that St Mary's would have difficulty attending IC UGMs and concluded that the best way to deal with this problem was to abolish UGMs. No UGM, no problem!

I hope that this time the working party will learn from their mistakes and bring a wider body of opinion into their discussions. Otherwise, as we have seen, a group of ten people can become fixated with a solution which, although ludicrous, can seem to be the only solution.

Perhaps it is time for an **official** working party to be set up. If this party reported regularly back to

Council then so much the better; it would allow ideas to be tossed around and developed much more thoroughly.

Looking at the people who sat on the working party it is easy to see why they favoured throwing out UGMs. Of the ten members in the group, eight were representing the Constituent College Unions (CCUs) and if UGMs were removed there would be an inevitable increase in the importance and influence of CCU UGMs and hence the CCUs themselves.

The other two members of the Committee were ICU President Nigel Baker and Deputy President Chas Brereton. I will hazard no guesses here as to what their views might be. Suffice it to say that in conjunction with the rest of Council they would have gained much more personal influence in the Union if UGMs were abolished.

This aside, I hope that as a Union we can reach an agreement which will be both to the benefit of the average student and to the two unions.

Valentines FELIX Next weeks issue will be a special Valentines edition complete with a page or two devoted to readers Valentine messages. Send your Valentines to the FELIX office by Tuesday

lunchtime. Slushy poems, etc, welcome.

Drinks

In the Union Bar tonight at 8pm to celebrate democracy. IC Radio, STOIC and the pro-UGM lobby are particularly invited to join the FELIX staff and the FELIX Club.

Credits

It has been one of those weeks. My heartfelt thanks go to Liz Warren for pasting up until the early hours, Simon Bradshaw for boundless enthusiasm, Ramin Nakisa for being strange, likewise Dave Smedley, Sez Wilkinson, Steve Meyfroidt, Robin Davison, Andy Clarke, Sumit Guha, Mike Dalton, Paul Barton, Anup Karia, Dave Thomas, Jason Lander, Dev for saving our bacon, Doug King, Wendy Kite, Adam Harrington, Andy Bannister for putting the erm back into Ermintrude, Gill Knowles, Sydney Harbour-Bridge (name changed etc), Ian Morris, Walter, Wouter Van Houten, Rose Atkins, Dean Vaughan, SF Soc, RCS Ents and the pro-UGM lobby for collating last week, the reviewers, Sunny Bains, David Jones, Pallab Ghosh, Neil Motteram and the Knights of the Cat, and this weeks collators. I love you all and I want to have your babies.

WALTER WALTER WALTER

Sad, but true; it's been another one of those weeks. Our Illustrious Leaders in the Union office have reached the state where the very mention of the words FELIX or Union General Meeting reduces them immediately to a catatonic trance, and the good Mr Goodwin has succumbed to stress to such an extent that he was actually rude - in front of witnesses - to two people in one day.

What was all this about? Well, in retrospect, not a lot. The above Illustrious Leaders set up a working party, which decided that it didn't think UGMs were a very good idea. The Illustrious Leaders Council decided it agreed with the working party, and tried to put a motion to a UGM, abolishing UGMs. Not surprisingly, the UGM disagreed with this, and told the Illustrious Leaders so by defeating the motion in no uncertain terms. End of story.

If only! Walter is quite certain that the story is only just beginning, and that the next chapter will involve the Illustrious Leaders in a concerted attempt to curtail Mr Goodwins freedom to print what he likes. He will keep telling you what your Union is up to, and we can't have that, can we?

Enough of this drivel. News now of the strange collection of equipment which turned up on Prince Consort Road on Wednesday. Walter is in a position to dispel all vicious rumour: they were in fact making a film about Jerry Lewis, to be given the original title of 'Great Balls of Fire'.

And now to a more important matter. After all, it's very topical, this business of Unions and films, but you wouldn't want a whole column full of it, would you? No, this is really important. Walter is delighted to report that he was in error in assuming that all the Antipodean types who have taken over Gloucester Road are Australians. Some of them are from New Zealand, a fact your columnist only discovered whilst ignoring his doctors orders last night and getting securely drunk with a few of them in the wine bar of the Norfolk Hotel (a nice little claret called Fosters Kiwi Special). Anyone who has met Paul Hogan will agree that anything - absolutely anything - is preferable to an Australian, and the names of New Zealanders such as Ngaio Marsh have been heard all over the civilised world. And in America.

Smallads

ANNOUNCEMENTS

● **Attention** all prospective 'new applicants' and 're-applicants'. Application forms for IC Halls/Houses and intercollegiate Halls are now available from the Accommodation Office.

● **Volunteers** required—by Physiological Flow Studies Unit for non-invasive ultrasound studies of blood vessels which are being conducted to further the understanding of arterial disease. £10 for 2-3 hours study. Please contact Marilyn Evans, PFSU ext 4082.

● **Wanted**—one or two students to count two different sets of voting forms. Probably two hours work. Payment of £5 per hour. Contact Professor Silberston, Management School (ext 7006) or leave names with Ainslee Rutledge (ext 7051).

● **Third World** First have Francois Nectour, from the Southbank Polytechnic to speak on 'Deforestation and its Economical Motive'. 12.50pm, 3rd Feb at the

Centre for Environmental Studies, 48 Princes Gardens (fourth floor). All welcome.

● **LOST** If anyone found a 1988 black desk diary in Falmouth-Keogh, Tizard or Selkirk, please return to Phil, Room 354.

● **FOUND** After keep fit lesson, on Thursday 20 Jan; 1 pair white exercise shoes, see Keep Fit Committee.

ACCOMMODATION

● **Wanted**—Male/Female to share first floor house with 4 other guys. Single room, rent £30 p/w. Contact Paul Richardson ME1. Ealing Common area.

● **Double** room in North London house. £50 p/w including bills. Contact Steve Roach via Chem Eng staff pigeonholes or ext 4434 or on 01-363 3972.

● **Flat** for 4 in Fulham. Single room needs filling. £38 p/w. Contact S Goacher, Chem Eng 2 or W Duffin, Maths 2 if interested.

PERSONAL

● **Home** needed for vagrant.

Anything accepted preferably upside down and smelly to hide my odour.

● **Recruits** needed for harem expansion. Apply in writing enclosing photo to S.

● **Does** anyone have a Psion Organiser Formatter that I can use, for a small consideration of course. Ring Nigel on 228 5247.

● **Gully** pours forth quotation—or is it cider?

● **Geoffrey**—have you got worms?

● **The Soup Run**, the crowd they couldn't hold, now in two vans.

● **Fast** vans, loose women, chickens and toothpaste (?).

We've got it all on a Thursday Night. The Soup Run.

● **RCS** hacks vandalised our candlemeter. Think up your own ideas—if you can. Splinter Soc. **Ben & Anna** at St Mary's. Please contact Rob at Hughes Parry on 387 8417, room 11.10.

● **Dave V.S.O.?** I would love to interview you about your experience for an article in FELIX. Please contact Features Editor, FELIX Office.

Subterranean peddle-cycle blues

You see us every day, weaving back and forth through the traffic on Cromwell Road: luminous yellow jackets flashing in the early morning sun. We are the people who eschew the daily game of sardines on the tube. We are the ozone-friendly commuters. We are the London Cyclists!

Yea! Hallelujah! Brothers and Sisters of the saddle, the wheeled shall inherit the Earth. But I am here to talk about the devil: the devil we all know, the London driver.

Toning down the evangelicals, what is it about the typical London driver that makes him want to kill the two wheeled road user? You can see it in his face. His eyes mist over as he lines the furry dice up on your rear mudguard. The foot unconsciously reaches for the accelerator. The engine revs. A mind with but a single thought: to reduce Joe Cyclist to an ingenious new road marking. 'Red Stain'; it means Cyclists Beware.

No drivers seem to be immune. There is the 'Lombard' the man who part-exchanged his brain to buy a GTi. He sits there in the driver's seat, one hand on the car phone, the other on his secretary's knee and he will race anything that moves. An unwary cyclist scuttles past him in the queue for the traffic lights. The lights change. Five yards beyond them, our two-wheeled hero, feels a rush of air. Behind him there is the sound of a hi-fidelity, graphic equalised car horn.

An experienced cyclist would know what to do: pull over as fast as possible and watch as a smirk on an implausible salary thunders past. But our hero is new to London, he holds his ground. There is another blast on the horn and several thousand pounds of Vorsprung Durch Technik fly past millimetres from the handlebars. A lot of 'Lombards' own blood-red cars; that way mistakes don't show.

Then there's the 'Rep'—People to see, deals to do, money to make and never enough time. He considers himself to be a professional London driver. 'Me, have an accident? Never! Reactions far too fast for that—F***, those lights changed quick'. He slams on the brakes and old two-wheels behind him becomes a permanent feature of the rear bumper.

But these are but foot soldiers in the Great War. Most Lombard's were extinguished in the Stock Market crash and Reps don't

venture into the darker back streets, at least not during office hours. They are minor players compared with the Black King of the motorists, the London Cabbie.

Cabbies have the honour of sharing the few so-called cycle lanes with their rightful owners. Only they don't seem to see it like that. To them, the pedal-powered are as good as invisible. Your typical London Cabbie suffers from chronic bicycle blindness. All the cyclist ever sees of a cab is a cigarette ad rocketing past without so much as by-your-leave.

But the cabbie has more subtle weapons too. Picture this: the cyclist waiting at traffic lights, the cabbie behind him. Again the lights change to amber. These are London traffic lights, green is go, amber is go, red is go if there's nobody watching. The cabbie thinks the cyclist should be moving. The cyclist starts to pedal, but apparently not fast enough. The cabbie stays on his tail, he doesn't overtake, he doesn't even try to overtake, he just hovers there. The cab speeds up. The bicycle has to match him. The cab speeds up more. The cyclist pedals faster and faster—no time to change gear. All effort going into staying ahead. No attention is given to steering or braking. A bicycle out of control thundering along the road. At the very last minute the cab overtakes leaving the cyclist, legs aching and eyes watering to totter on. A small battle, no fatalities but the driver's undoubtedly the victor.

I say no fatalities, but there do seem to be more bright red cabs on the roads. Perhaps Lombard's found himself another job...

Something **MUST** be done! Cyclists of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains. We must all pedal together. I have a dream, a dream that one day cyclists and drivers will live together in harmony. That drivers will leave a three-foot gap when overtaking. That the council will repair all the pot holes in the Kensington roads. That cycle lanes will be found throughout the land and Cabbies will wait at traffic lights. This is my dream and it is a dream in which all must believe, cyclists and drivers alike.

And if the drivers cast aside these words of wisdom, we must wait. Wait until the petrol runs out and everyone has to drive Sinclair C5s. And the **vengeance will be ours!!!!**

THE BARON OF CHEAPSKATE



Some people felt so strongly about it that they scribbled on sheet upon sheet of paper in a frenzy. Everybody felt that they were making a big decision as they frantically scribbled upon their bits of paper.

Should they have another Working Party and have lots more big meetings or should they let little Lord Patacake and his chums spend all their money without telling them?

When everybody felt they had scribbled on enough pieces of paper, some of the citizens who could count rummaged through the big box full of paper. They decided that the Working Party had been ruined and Little Lord Patacake would have to think again.

Now it was time for Sydney Sillyname to say the things that had to be said. Sydney had said so much recently that he had thought about changing his name again. The best suggestion so far was Noggin the Nog (name changed in aid of greater clarity).

All around Cheapskate the citizens were talking about who would be Chief Citizen next year. Kneel McSlimesky had already told everybody he was going to be Chief Citizen but there were other moves afoot.

Duncan Random had decided to stand and even ex-clown Clare MacUseless was talking about the idea: Stephalump Snell was still denying everything. The fact of the matter was that things were not going to change a great deal if any of them got in.

Meanwhile, In the heights of the Surefield Fortress, John Secretary was thinking about his years at Cheapskate. He hated the Baron and his wife and he wanted out. Now was as good a time as any, he thought. This Summer, he would leave, even if the Baron, Derek Dash, was going to appoint a Yes—Man in his place. He had so wanted his friend from You-Loo to do the job, but he couldn't have everything. John knew that when he went, all of his friends would follow.

Will Little Lord Patacake throw a wobbly?

Is John Secretary really about to leave? Will Rob McNorthy ever appear in the Baron?

Will Duncan Random do anything significant?

Find out in the next episode.

Derek Dash was laughing. He knew it made him look senile but he couldn't help it. This was the best! The Chief Citizen had made such a fool of himself, he was even beating Mad Dash, this time.

Little Lord Patacake, the Chief Citizen, had dreamt up a Working Party to entertain all of the citizens. After divine inspiration, he had called it SMUDGE. Few people knew what SMUDGE stood for and still fewer cared, but it seemed impressive.

To celebrate the Working Party, the citizens had held a citizens' meeting, where everybody jumped up and down and shouted a lot. At the end they had torn up lots of bits of paper, scribbled on them and thrown them in a box.

Little Lord Patacake had hoped the citizens would like the Working Party and he had asked his good friend, Phil Doodle to bring all his friends along. Phil Doodle was the Chief Citizen of all the Doctors and Nurses and was very popular with them. If he said 'Scribble on lots of bits of paper,' they would.

Little Lord Patacake's Working Party was such fun! Lots of people liked it and lots of people didn't.



The INDEPENDENT

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Cycle Britain

What makes someone want to cycle 1000 miles around Britain in 9½ days? The answers could be many but in my case it was to raise money for the Christian Charity Tearfund who fund long term development projects in developing countries.

Equipment

Of paramount importance to such a feat is a good reliable machine—mine is a Peugeot Ranger 10 gear Mountain Bike—punctureless and in good working order, having done 3000 miles in 7 months. Only an idiot would not train in advance of such a feat. However flash training schedules are not required. The best training is cycling itself. I did several runs from London to Kent and back (60 miles each way) some hill work and some sprint work building up the stamina and the appropriate muscles. However, as I was to discover, more important than training is sheer guts and determination. To make life as easy as possible it is advisable to carry the bare minimum amount of luggage. Personally I prefer a rucksack to panniers and carried less than 15lbs. Essential is a good full first aid kit and the odd Mars Bar as iron rations. Otherwise just a few tee-shirts, a jumper, socks, lock for the bike, tool kit for the bike and wooly hat, gloves, a few polythene bags and a monsoon-proof set of waterproofs.

The Journey

So I set out on Friday July 22 at 1.30pm from Wye in Kent and started on the most physically challenging experience of my life. This was an easy afternoon, a quick 65 miles to Barnes through pleasant countryside with no technical problems bar pain from the rucksack. This was soon remedied on reaching Barnes.

Leaving Barnes at 7.45am on a dismal Saturday morning my next stop was Newport in Cheshire—170 miles. The trip to Aylesbury was slow. However the 40 miles from Aylesbury to Banbury whistled by; I had made 85 miles by lunch thus reaching the beautiful market town of Banbury which to my surprise has the best jam doughnuts in the country.

Thus replenished I continued up the A41 through Warwickshire to Birmingham. To my mind Birmingham is a horrible soulless place, the least pleasant place I visited on the entire journey (sorry brummies). Needless to say I sped through Birmingham as fast as possible—especially Handsworth—on through Wolverhampton to make Newport by 10pm. Despite roughing it on the verge of the A41 I had a good night's sleep.

With no tent one may wonder how I roughed it. Simple—I wore all the clothes I had; my waterproofs, wooly hat, scarf and gloves and plastic bags on my feet (I cycled in sandals, personally finding them more comfortable than anything else!). My pillow was the rucksack.

Up at 5am on Sunday to hit Lancaster (120 miles). At this point I had no iron rations and I therefore had to cycle for 4 hours until I got any breakfast at the first shop I found open. At this stage my backside started to feel painful, a recurring problem from this point on. This proved to be an uneventful day of reasonable progress reaching

Lancaster and a friend's house by mid-afternoon.

Thus repleted I headed off rather late the next morning (9am) to hit Scotland. The A6 and skirting the lakes were no problem as there was good weather on the pass and a spectacular view. Lunch was in Penrith which was the most scenic town I passed through. The ride to Carlisle was easy but on passing over the River Esk and onto Gretna Green I hit 40 mile-an-hour crosswinds and was forced to walk along the A74 for 3 miles. That night was to prove to be the worst of all. I spent it just outside Beatoch. It was a blustery wet cold night in which I initially slept in the churchyard where, on feeling unsafe, I slept just off the A74—I got two hours sleep.

On Tuesday I was intending to travel via Glasgow to Edinburgh but due to my lack of sleep and the poor weather I took the direct route to Edinburgh via Biggar. I left Beatoch at 4.30am and hit Edinburgh at 10am. Here I did some sightseeing for a few hours then crashed for the rest of the day in a friend's flat.

Wednesday I decided to make up a bit of mileage and cycled 50 miles around Edinburgh and the surrounding districts. That evening

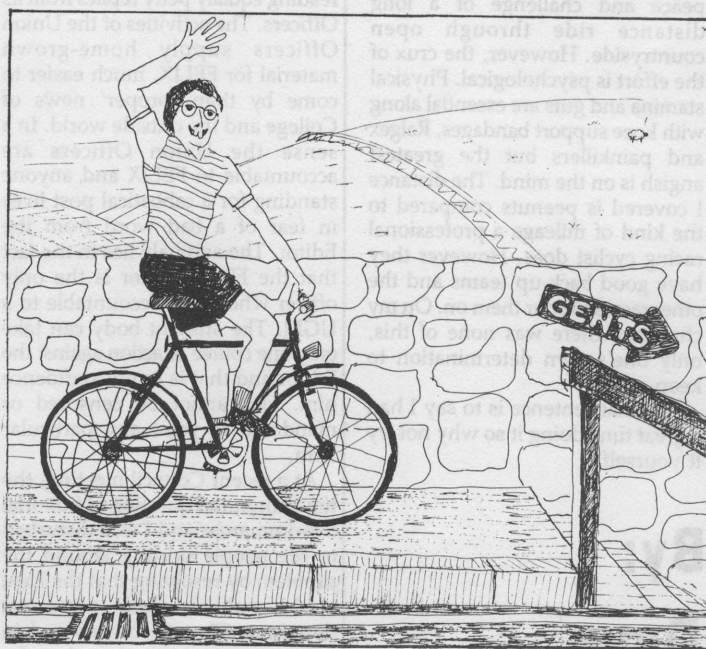
I was taken to the Lorre Mans, undoubtedly one of the best pubs in town with sheet music covering the walls the whole place having the appearance of an Aladin's cave and whisky being £1 a shot (¼ gill!).

I had now completed 550 miles, nothing was going to stop me now—or so I thought.

So on Thursday I headed South through the Borders to Newcastle. The Border's were heavy with drizzle—my average progress was down to 7 miles an hour with heavy reliance on the low gears. The only main town you pass through is Jedburgh—built like a fortress. At 7pm 30 miles from Newcastle—my next intended stop—my gear cable snapped, there was no way I could make it to Newcastle so I walked back 2 miles to the village of Otterburn a few miles inside England. Here there were 3 hotels and by Sod's law all were full bar the most expensive. However I was soaked and spending a night out in the continually bad weather was a guaranteed method of obtaining hypothermia. However, North-erners being a friendly breed—an evening in the bar was pleasant and a hot bath and warm bed and cooked breakfast a good start for the next day.

Friday saw me hobbling 30 miles to Newcastle in 5th gear where the bike was repaired and serviced for a mere £2. After lunch I bombed it down the A19 and A64 to York stopping in Thirsk for Fish and Chips—the best in the country (those in Edinburgh were foul). York proved to be a problem in itself. I wanted to crash out in a field south of York but did not realise I could go via the unlabelled by-pass. The centre of York has no traffic signs at all—I spent half an hour trying to find my way out of the place—it seemed to have an active nightlife though.

A few hours kip in a field and I sped it down through mundane countryside to Grantham. Sped is an exaggeration—my progress was severely hampered by bad back and bum pain that had to be suppressed by painkillers, only grit determination keeping me going. At Grantham I caught a train to Kings Cross and then cycled to Wimbledon and another bed for the night. I knew that on my last day



Co-ordination is important

Why FELIX should print what it is told

Ian Morris

Throughout my time at Imperial a 'them and us' situation has prevailed between the three sabbaticals in the Union Office and the fourth, responsible for the production of FELIX. This probably arose due to differences in opinion which could not be resolved without going into battle but it is the propagation of this situation that is of concern. FELIX takes a lot of time to produce, particularly in collating and I believe that the group of people who are involved are motivated, on the whole, by regarding themselves as constantly defending themselves against attempts to restrain editorial freedom. Scandals become watergates and reporters are constantly fighting the repressive power of the Union Office.

I apologise to the few people in the FELIX Office who do work hard to produce balanced reports based on fact, but they themselves have voiced their opinion that the Editor has actively perverted the facts presented to him to produce a 'juicier' FELIX.

The end result is that people regard FELIX as a pedantic bickering schoolkid and lose whatever interest or positive ideas about what the Union Office exists for, whilst reading equally petty replies from its Officers. The activities of the Union Officers supply home-grown material for FELIX, much easier to come by than 'proper' news of College and the outside world. In a sense the Union Officers are accountable to FELIX and anyone standing for a sabbatical post lives in fear of a bad word from the Editor. The anomaly lies in the fact that the FELIX Editor is the only officer who is *not* accountable to a UGM. The student body can take only one course of action against the Editor and that is to no-confidence him. He cannot be censored or mandated to print any particular item.

At a recent Council meeting, the time honoured question of Editorial freedom arose and I was disturbed to see people skirting around the problem by resolving that the Exec could publish their news on departmental noticeboards and in CCU newspapers rather than by mandating the FELIX Editor to print up to one page of such news.

The present Editor accepted that

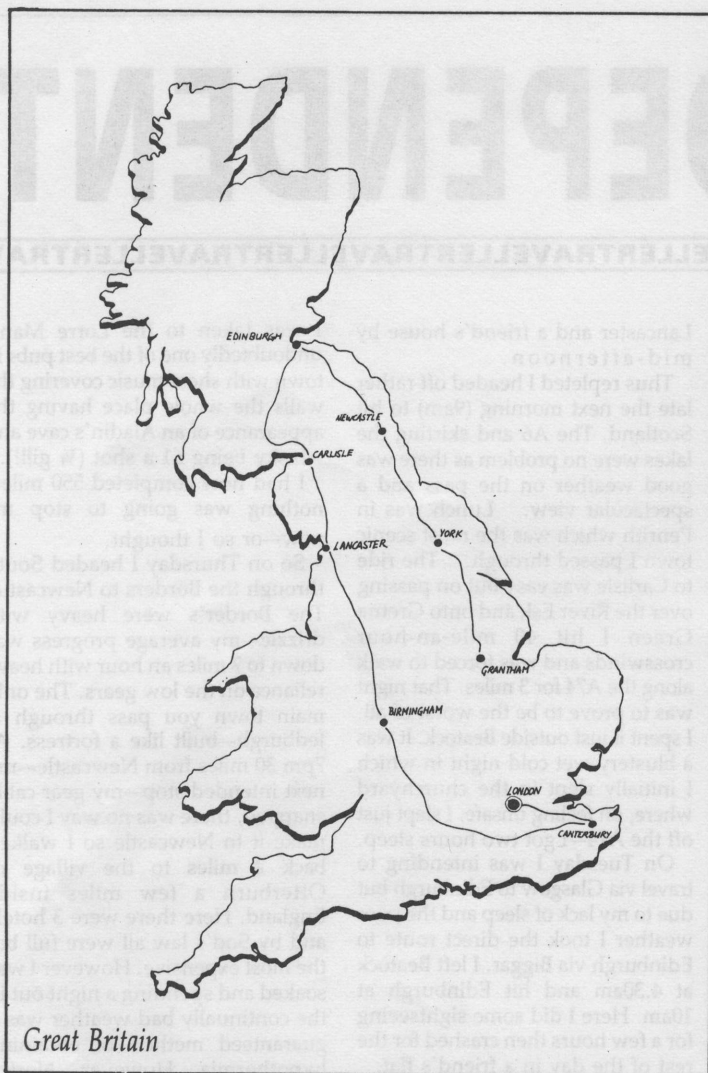
he would put in Exec news if we provided him with pasted-up, camera-ready page and provide collators to insert this page. If everyone who ever writes anything for FELIX had to do this, the Editor would have only the Print Unit to manage, but no, other articles are okay (with some exceptions). But in this great world of democracy as highly supported in last week's FELIX, the Editor does not feel that an Exec News is important enough to print without blackmailing us into doing part of his job. If the Editor wishes to stay up all night helping me with Carnivals, discos, bar quizzes, etc, then I will surely stay up all night to collate.

Speaking of democracy, FELIX insisted (very strangely) that students should have the right to their say at a UGM. If UGMs are therefore so righteous and representative, why does the FELIX Editor refuse to be mandated by one? The other sabbaticals are essentially the employees of the student body, with a UGM as Managing Director. The FELIX Editor is paid in exactly the same way without having to care in any way what a UGM tries to make him do.

Now, why does this attitude prevail? It is because the idea of editorial freedom must be passed down in some sort of ritual, chanting handover ceremony during which the Editors eyes are fitted with tunnels and he smears his loyal helpers with the blood of a virgin cat.

So what should be done? At present things aren't desperate. There is a working relationship between myself and the Editor, although this might not prevail in future times. A major point is the Exec News. It might be wise for the FELIX Editor to agree to print up to one page of Exec News every fortnight, this agreement to be reviewed at Joint Council each year. His failure to do this might lead to a constitutional change to make the Editor accountable to a UGM.

I apologise to those of the FELIX staff that I do respect as doing a very good job and I hope that the Editor does not see this as a personal attack. If there are any factual inaccuracies, please don't write in, it is the gist that I want to promote not small details.



Sunday I had to do 125 miles to finish. Leaving at 8am I whipped down the South Circular beating the cars at the lights all the way and down the A2 for North Kent. Through Rochester and Chatham to Canterbury for lunch was no sweat. Sixty miles still to go, I left Canterbury for Margate, still no problem. However, the last 30 miles from Ramsgate to Wye were hell. I just made it by 9pm. Sheer ecstasy overcame me; 1002 miles done and £250 for charity and myself having completed a feat I never expected to do.

Reflections

At the speed I went, sightseeing was not much of an option—to do this one can only realistically expect to do 50 miles a day—I averaged 120. However to see most of the country by bicycle in 9 days is a unique experience—the diversity of the British countryside is amazing. Without a doubt the Borders were my favourite part—beautiful countryside close to Edinburgh and Newcastle which are both great cosmopolitan cities with plenty happening.

Asked if I would do such a thing

again an emphatic unhesitant yes is the answer—London is not a great place for cycling and I miss the peace and challenge of a long distance ride through open countryside. However, the crux of the effort is psychological. Physical stamina and guts are essential along with knee support bandages, Ralgex and painkillers but the greatest anguish is on the mind. The distance I covered is peanuts compared to the kind of mileage a professional racing cyclist does. However they have good back-up teams and the other racers to spur them on. On my challenge there was none of this, only one's own determination to keep going.

My final sentence is to say I had a great time doing it so why not try it yourself?

**By:
Dave
Thomas**

A Bill of Rights

The case for Britain having a Bill of Rights grows more controversial, particularly as the Government embarks stubbornly on the implementation of tough anti-terrorist and immigration laws. Charter 88 is the latest 'basket of proposals' in urge of a written constitution and an entrenched Bill of Rights, and as the previous article suggests, it has struck a chord in widely diverse circles. What is, naively, ignored by the agitators of Charter 88 is the immense, if not revolutionary, changes that would have to be undergone in the British Constitution to accommodate such a document. And then, the question must be asked, 'Will human rights necessarily improve?'. The United States has had an enshrined Bill of Rights for almost two centuries—is the situation better there? Apparently not, if one were to judge by recent 'Civil rights for blacks' demonstrations.

An enshrined Bill of Rights (such as Charter 88) is consistent with the logic of a written constitution; The most obvious example is that of the USA where the written constitution consists of a conservative rigid framework, whose authority exceeds that of any elected government. On the other hand the British constitution is largely unwritten and based on a system of flexible conventions.

What the enthusiasts of Charter 88 fail to anticipate is that in a written constitution every piece of legislation has to be laboriously shaped to the given standard structure. This then is one of the major disadvantages of a written constitution. A permanently installed document (such as Charter 88) would create a cumbersome monolith which could slow government response to public opinion, sometimes fatally. A classic (if cruel) example is that the US (birth place of modern feminism) should have no national equal opportunities legislation; the equal rights amendment (to provide protection against sexual discrimination) was formulated in the heat of the Women's Movement in the 70s. But according to the US constitution, any such amendment must be ratified by a two-thirds majority in the Congress. Consequently, the equal rights amendment hauled through expensive and exhausting campaigns in different states, finally

dying from lack of the necessary number when its deadline for ratification was reached.

On the other hand, Great Britain reacting to overwhelmingly social pressure of the time, adopted a Sex Discrimination Act almost within the life time of a single Parliament.

At present, the essence of the British Constitution lies in its Parliamentary sovereignty (that is, no legal body can oppose any act passed by the Parliament). In this way, the separation between the Judiciary and Parliament is maintained. However, with the introduction of a Bill of Rights, the Judiciary would be invariably pulled into the political arena (after all, to which other body would the supporters of Charter 88 entrust the task of being above Parliament). This could arguably give Judges, and not Parliament, the ultimate discretion in setting political limitations on legal powers. In particular, Charter 88 is based on a broad set of principles, the application of which would depend on the 'personal opinion' of the judge. One should remember that the judges are unelected and hence not answerable to the public, as politicians are. In addition, the 'politicisation' of the 'unelected' Judiciary would bring them into direct conflict with the 'elected' Parliament, any realist would acknowledge the jealousy with which MPs protect their sovereign power. At most, the threatened Parliament could be led to reviewing the Judiciary, thus restricting the restricting power of justice, itself a safeguard of freedom.

As Law Lord McCluskey argued that final policy decisions should be made by society as a whole through an elected Parliament and not by judges, no matter how 'upright' and 'distinguished' they may be.

Even if sufficient consensus to an incorporation of Charter 88 could be achieved, it is likely that the sharp divisions and constant fluidity of British politics will ensure perpetual challenges to the Bill.

The Conservative Party see the 'right to own one's property' and 'the right to work' unhindered (euphemism for anti-trade unions) as basic human rights. On the other hand the Labour Party views the Government's right to own property and trade unions to exercise total power as their version of basic rights. Already there are

allegations by the opposition party that the Judiciary is politically biased. With a Bill of Rights and subsequent politicisation of the Judiciary, there would be absolute chaos in party politics. So unless party politics were to die, legislation such as Charter 88 would be no greater guarantee of liberty than present.

Thus when the New Statesmen Society (co-creators of Charter 88) speak of creating popular politics out of 'Bourgeois Revolution', they presumably mean an injection of French democratic concepts into the traditional British political system. But the British tradition of democracy predates the French Revolution and human rights can be protected by legislation despite the absence of a written constitution; Magna Carta, Habeas Corpus and the 1688 Constitutional Settlement prove so. An elected Government is always answerable to the people. Harsh oppressive laws can be opposed by intense lobbying from the public and then there is the European Court of Justice, to which the Government is ultimately answerable to.

Indeed the agitator of Charter 88 have a point in that the Government is now operating in a world with little effective opposition, but a more realistic approach is needed. The desire to defeat an unbeatable Government by erecting supra-legislation is not a democratic impulse, nor is it sound even in Charter 88's own terms.

Arup Karia

RUGBY INTERNATIONAL

ENGLAND v SCOTLAND
Shown on a 50" screen in the
Snack Bar
Bar open all day
FREE entry
Sat 4th Feb, starts 2.00pm

UGM Sketch

Union Officers tend to get a little terrified when faced with large numbers of students. Sabbaticals suddenly realise that these people could fire them. Aspiring sabbaticals are cautious because a false word could force them to become accountants immediately, as opposed to in a year's time. This is how it was on Tuesday.

Was it a successful publicity campaign? Was it whipping of the Mary's block vote? Was it a sudden and concerted abandoning of the general apathy for Union affairs? For whatever reason there were 600 people at the UGM, and the hacks shrank into the background.

Occasionally the Exec were forced to speak on an issue. Even then they immediately headed for the middle ground of conciliation. Nigel Baker opposing Amin El-Kholy's motion to allow foreign language posters was unnaturally polite. 'I'm opposing this motion but I don't want to annoy any foreign students if that's all right by you'

The stars of the meeting were the complete randoms who stepped out of obscurity to propose a procedural motion that we go straight to a vote, to then vanish into the crowd without leaving a name for the annals of time. Are you sure you don't want to be External Affairs Officer?

And finally, with the masses itching to get back to lab, we reached the motion on the abolition of UGMs. Nigel decided to waffle interminably about the entire history of ICU, Mary's and the universe finishing with '...but if you don't want to, then we'll have to go back and think about it.' The opposition, having decided not to let Cosmic speak, brought out their pet dinosaur (Dave Parry). Dave told people that it wasn't right, they'd never have done it in his day, and people should have the right to ask sabbaticals questions even if they didn't want to answer them. Another procedural motion to go straight to a vote and we were treated to a tall postgrad telling us that we were all first and second years so we should listen to what older people with more experience had to say before we voted. That one was carried straight off.

After ten minutes of shambolic mess the votes were taken on lots of bits of pink paper. Everyone, having voted to save democracy, decided 'democracy can sod off now, we're going to lab'. Despite the astounding turnout from Mary's, the astounding turnout from IC won the day, and history is history. They

Neural Networks

Can computers simulate the human thought process?

Our minds are indescribably complex and yet are made up of the simplest of units, the so called 'neurons'. It is the complexity of the connections between these neurons that make our brains so powerful, not the neurons themselves. Scientists are now finding ways of simulating these connections on computers in research which may ultimately produce 'Artificial Intelligence' - the thinking computer. Ramin Nakisa investigates.

We can never know, said the philosopher Kant, what a thing is like 'in itself' because our very observation casts things onto the bases of space and time. Science up to the present day has dealt with the knowledge of things-in-themselves rather than the mental machinery with which we form our picture of the world. Neural nets should understand the universe as we understand the universe and by building models of this machinery we are gaining a great insight into how our very 'selves' function.

Human brains have evolved over millions of years so that the answers to many problems in artificial intelligence are literally within our own heads. Understanding the answers, by understanding the brain, has proved to be very difficult. Neural networks have all the essential ingredients of brains, that is they are made of many simple units that switch one another on and off.

There are two ways of trying to understand how the brain works; The *top down* approach: We know what things a brain must do, and so we can speculate as to how the brain does them.

The *bottom up* approach

We know what units the brain is made of and can therefore build collections of units like these to see what they can do.

The top-down method of building a car is to specify what it must achieve ie. it must be able to carry human passengers at a reasonable speed, it must run on easily available fuel... The bottom-up method of building a car is to buy all the parts, and bolt them together in inspired ways until the resulting machine works.

Looking at the brain bottom-up we see that it consists of ten thousand million neurons, or brain cells, which receive and send electrical impulses down nerve

fibres to other cells. One neuron can connect to a maximum of one thousand other neurons, in a very complex array.

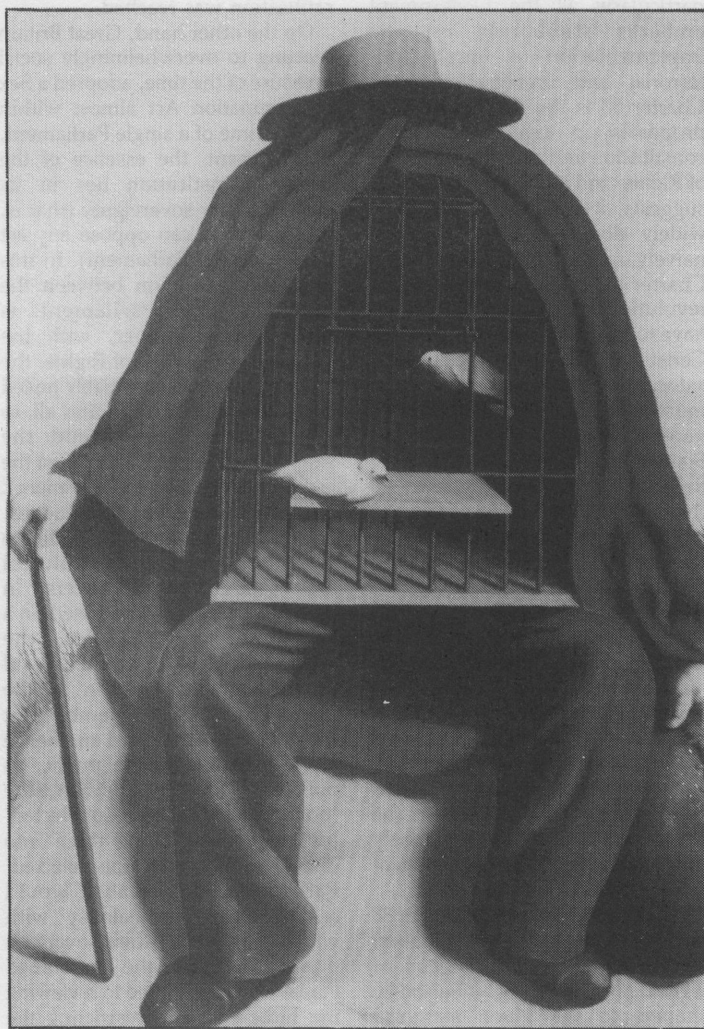
On a larger scale, considering the brain top down, it looks rather like a walnut, with a crinkly surface called the cortex. Crinkliness is nature's way of maximising the surface area, so that by making the surface of the cortex crinkly she has fitted more room for neurons to interact. There are separate sub-structures in the brain such as the cerebellum (little brain), hippocampus, thalamus etc and this almost always means separate functions in biology. For example the cerebellum is thought to be responsible for fine-tuning movements and coordination. It would be impossible to give sufficient account of our present knowledge of brain structure in this article, but suffice it to say that there is a great deal of knowledge but little understanding.

Taken together these two approaches only allow a finite number of architectures for some functions of the mind. At the moment the emphasis of research is on finding methods of computation for each problem separately without integrating these into a machine which can solve a variety of problems. But even in their present early stage of development some interesting results have been obtained.

Just as statistical physics can derive the macroscopic behaviour of gases from the physics of a single particle, so it may be possible to derive the physics of mind from that of a single neuron, and the interaction of groups of neurons.

Why Use Neural Nets?

There are limits to every computer set by its speed, memory and most of all by its programmer. Using present day computers one has to



'The answers....are literally within our own head.'

translate well defined problems into an explicit set of instructions which can be interpreted by a computer. If we want to solve a problem which has no exact solution, we can write down a set of differential equations and quite easily create an algorithm to give their approximate solution.

There are a large group of problems in artificial intelligence which would require an immense number of rules, and so cannot easily be solved by a computer in real time, since computers need a set of IF... THEN... statements to cover all possible situations. Speech recognition is just such a problem. One has to pick out words in real time with a noisy background and a huge variation in accent. It is extremely difficult to find a set of

rules which could cope with such variations, but it is possible to build a neural network which can be trained on various examples of speech obviating the necessity of rules. A network, because it learns from examples, can cut development costs by an order of magnitude in problems dealing with pattern recognition.

Some pattern recognition tasks can be tedious for humans, and in these cases neural nets come into their own. For example, in screening for breast cancer X-rays of breasts have to be checked for tumours which show up only faintly. Neural nets have been successfully trained to check for such growths. In factories parts must be checked before assembly, and again this task

is extremely tedious. By feeding the image of a bolt into a trained network one has a reliable quality control system (which is now used by General Motors). Voice controlled machines are in the development stage, but even now some are 100% efficient.

An interesting way around the problem of a noisy environment has been found at the Royal Signals and Radar Establishment in Malvern. An image of the mouth is input with the sound of a voice so that the network has more clues as to what is being said. The network soon learns that for the letter 'e' a speaker will show their teeth, or the shape of the mouth for the letter 'o'. There are also many military applications. For example, one can train a net to recognise a fighter aircraft and distinguish it from civilian aircraft or other friendly aircraft, as shown below.

Computer Models

Before being built in hardware networks are tested in computer simulations. Computer models consist of a set of neuron-like units which are connected to each other. Each unit can be either on or off. In a network, a neuron 'listens' to its neighbours, and decides whether to switch on or off from what it hears. For example, imagine you are a neuron and lots of your neighbours are telling you to switch on and only a few are telling you to switch off; you would switch on. Some neurons are more influential than others, and this is accounted for by having a number to represent their persuasiveness.

There are a huge number of computer-simulated models in the literature, but most are variations on two themes. The most popular model at the moment for practical applications is called the error back-propagation model, but another interesting model has been created recently by John Hopfield.

Error Back-Propagation

This type of network is based on a layered structure with data passing from one layer to the next. Each unit in the input layer is connected to each unit in the inner layer, and each unit in the inner layer is connected to each unit in the output layer.

Learning is a matter of changing the connections of the network so as to map each input pattern to the correct output pattern, and so each type of network has its own 'learning rule' describing how to change the connection strengths. Let us imagine that the network is being trained to recognise faces. In this case the input layer would consist of the pixels making up the digitised image of a face. One would

build up a large body of training material consisting of digitised pictures and the correct answers as to who was depicted in the picture. A long standing problem was finding the learning rule for inner units since we, as the trainers of networks, only know the desired output values. This problem was solved by Rumelhart in 1986 by using separate learning rules for output units and inner units.

Training

The training data is compiled first of all. For a face recogniser this would contain a few thousand photographs of, say, ten people taken in different lighting conditions and angles with different expressions. With each picture one has to have the correct answer ie. 'this is Bill Goodwin'. The following procedure is then followed.

1. From the training data feed in activities coding for the picture of a face into the input layer.
2. Calculate activity of inner layer from the activity of the input layer.
3. Calculate activity of output layer from the activity of the inner layer.
4. For each unit in the output layer compare actual activity with desired (or target) activity.
5. Change output to inner layer connections according to Rumelhart's rule for output to inner layer connections.
6. By feeding back the change in weights to the output units, change the input to inner layer connections.
7. Repeat 1-6 until the network recognises the training corpus pictures correctly. The network is now trained!

It is interesting that networks can generalise what they have learnt. If the network is now shown a picture of one of the ten people which was it has not seen before (even if the person is disguised) the net may still recognise them.

The problem with error back-propagation is that training can be slow. For tasks in which the environment stays fixed, such as a factory floor, this presents no problem once the network has been trained. But in the battlefield if a new enemy tank was built, for example, the net would have to be completely retrained from scratch - a process which may take a few hours.

Hopfield Networks

Hopfield is a physicist who lives in California and wears shorts. His nets are based on physical ideas and designed with electronics in mind. Their architecture is not feed-forward like Rumelhart's, instead they consist of a set of fully connected units. This means that every neuron (or amplifier in electronic language) is connected to

every other neuron in the net. Each neuron is rather like a proposition, such as 'It is raining'. If the 'raining' neuron is on then the 'sunshine' neuron must be off, so that a negative connection would exist between rain and sunshine.

The network is programmed by specifying the connection strengths between the units. The net starts off in a random state and changes to a state which represents its answer. For example, imagine a simple net to recognise animals. There might be neurons representing furriness, cuddliness, and scaliness. If we start the system off with the furry, cuddly neurons active then the net will recognise some furry, cuddly animal such as a kitten. It would not go into a state representing a scaly animal, such as a snake, because the scaly neurons would be inhibited by the furry, cuddly neurons.

One can compare the process of recognition to a ball rolling down a hill. The ball moves to a valley and stops where its potential energy is a minimum. Instead of being in normal space the net's state is a point in an N-dimensional space with one dimension for each neuron. The network starts off at some point in the N-space and moves in the direction which decreases its 'energy' until it reaches a local minimum and stops changing state. In this way one can encode a problem into the network so that its 'energy' minima occur at points in the space which correspond to solutions of the problem. The network will settle into these minima, and the network's answer is decoded from this final state.

Many problems in robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are optimization problems such as walking through a crowd as quickly as possible whilst bumping into as few people as possible. Optimization problems are problems in which one can define an energy which has to be minimised. To give an example, you probably solve an optimization problem in tutorials: 'How can I get away with doing as little work as possible?' Here the 'energy' would be the amount of work you have to do, and it is this which must be minimised. In a 1985 paper Hopfield describes a network which can converge on a solution to the travelling salesman problem (TSP) very rapidly. Although the TSP is not very important in AI it is useful in showing the general method for setting up a net to solve an optimization problem.

In the TSP one has a set of cities which must each be visited once in a tour, and the problem is to find the shortest path which accomplishes this. One way of solving the

problem is to do an exhaustive search of all possible paths, but this is an immensely lengthy process. The Hopfield net, on the other hand does not necessarily find the shortest tour but it does find a very short tour, and it does so in a very short time (a few hundredths of a second).

This is encoded by simply creating an N by N array of neurons. Each unit represents a city and its position in the tour. The connections are set up so that each neuron inhibits other neurons in its row and column, so that the energy minima will code for matrices with each city visited only once. The distance of the tour is added to the energy so that only short paths are allowed as solutions.

The network fares very well compared to standard algorithms in terms of the length of tour and computing time. An electronic circuit can be very easily constructed, and more complex problems of more use in robotics could be built based on this simple circuit. Hopfield networks have now been built which solve time-dependent problems such as the recognition of sequences of patterns. This has been done by introducing communication delays between neurons; this makes the energy surface change with respect to time creating new valleys which lead from one stable state to another.

The Future

Neural nets will never replace computers, but instead will complement them, filling the niches that standard sequential programming cannot. Very few practical applications have been developed commercially yet, but in time this will certainly change. Judging from the amount being spent on research and development in the field of neural nets people seem to have realised their importance. These rather strange 'computers', built in our own image, may give computers a more human face. If computers could listen to and 'understand' human speech, and even reply to it, computers could really become user friendly. They share our human foibles, such as the tendency to make mistakes and at the same time have all that is best in the human mind like its parallel and highly interconnected architecture. If machines are ever to take over the world, these are the best candidates.

by Ramin Nakisa

GRADUATES

TOTAL SUPPORT FACILITY

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View from



The Battle of the bars Sydney Harbour-Bridge

With its three main bars, the Union, Southside and the Holland Club along with a number of hall bars, Imperial College has a massive turnover of beer. It is the largest outlet in the South East of England and as a combined purchasing unit it not only qualifies for extremely large discount rates but has massive bargaining power with which to secure even greater discounts. Its discount rates are at least equal those of the whole of the NUS and it is rumoured to have secured a higher discount that can not be disclosed for political reasons.

Yet prices in the Union Bar and Southside have passed the £1 figure whilst undergoing a 22% price rise over last Summer. Over the last five years prices have only increased by about 20%. The Holland Club, a members only club for non-academic College employees and postgraduates, is approximately 17% cheaper than the other Bars. It is better presented than the other bars but is only open to members; it is totally unreasonable that poor undergraduate students should have to pay considerably more than paid members of staff.

The reasoning behind this is supposed to be due to costs of refurbishments, but this is not altogether true. Southside is the most expensive bar in College but has not been refurbished for six years. The Holland Club is the cheapest bar and is being continually upgraded. The Union Bar has recently been refurbished and the cost of this refurbishment is due to be covered in two years at pre-refurb turnover rates. This is ludicrous as it necessitates a dramatic increase in prices. The aim of the refurbishment was to make the facilities more attractive to the students and hence increase trade, increasing prices by 22% does not help that objective.

Even though the Union has fouled

up on its refurbishment, it is saintly in comparison to the College in its running of their bar, Southside. In 1986, the only year we have reliable figures for, Southside operated at a gross trading profit of 36% when they were aiming at 40%. This means that due to bad trading practice, not low prices, 4% of the £600K turnover was lost. When the Union discovered that they were only achieving 38% gross profit last year they suspended all the casual staff and reorganised the management structure. This drastic measure not only resulted in the Union reaching its projected profit level but also succeeded in shocking Southside so much that, according to their published accounts, their profits rose for a short period to a level higher than their prices suggested they could ever achieve. The trading figures with which the committees are ment to make management decisions took over six months to arrive and over the next six months three different figures were produced for the same trading period. Nobody really knows what is going on! The latest accounts show Southside to be operating at 57.5% gross profit; they project a turnover of £660K. Southside made a £20K net profit in 1986 despite operating at 36% gross profit; this translates into a 5% net profit. This year it appears that Southside are aiming at 26.5% net profit. Financially this means that College are aiming to screw the students for £175K in Southside this year.

So why doesn't the Union undercut Southside's prices? Firstly, they have the wrong policy towards recouping the costs of the refurb. Secondly, College won't let them. If the Union tried to undercut Southside the College would cut them out of the joint purchasing deal. The result would be a small reduction in the discounts that

Southside secures and a massive reduction in the Union's discount. The Union would lose income from reducing prices and would lose further by the loss of brewers' discounts. It simply can not afford this.

The Union's only option if it is not to deal with Southside and hope to produce a free market is to join the NUS and benefit from its discount deals. This would cost around £30K pa and would have massive political repercussions. A far more sensible move would be for the Union to exert its right to Southside Bar as laid down in the by-laws, take it over and run it for the students. After all, we are one of the few Unions who do not control all the campus student bars. In 1986 the Union encouraged the students to boycott the bars and the outstanding success resulted in the Union taking over the Union Bar. The strange hold that Southside has over the Union leaves us no choice but to take Southside the same way.

The Union Refurbishment.

The refurbishment that took place in the Union this Summer was conceived in its earliest stages by the RSMU Exec with the objective of turning the Snack Bar into a more sociable place to have a drink in the evening whilst traditionalising the Union Bar. The aim was to attract more students to the Unions outlets and it was these aims that persuaded the Bar Committee and last years Exec to head along the costly road towards refurbishment. Under recommendation from the newly appointed Union Manager a consultant was brought in to address the problem of producing a flexible trading outlet that could be used by the Snack Bar and Bar at the same time. The consultant listened to the ideas of a number of people in the Union and spat them out in a form that was totally unstudent-proof and very expensive.

A second set of plans were drawn up by a student Officer (Syd - Ed); these encompassed the general opinions of many students and staff of the Union including a dais, partition, dropped ceiling and fixed seating. These plans were generally considered to be superior to those of the commercial consultant. The same student drew up plans for the Ents Lounge on similar advice and the Ents Lounge plans were agreed and instigated by the House committee.

At this point the sabbatical year ended and this year's sabbaticals took charge. In an effort to impress the new intake with a totally refurbished ground floor, three inexperienced and enthusiastic new sabbaticals and one enthusiastic and inexperienced new Union Manager threw out the student plans and

negotiated a new deal with the original consultants. The deal cost about £30K and covered a long, tall, straight, bright, pink and grey Snack Bar with comfy fixed seating into a long, tall, straight, bright, red and blue Snack Bar without fixed seating. At the same time, at almost twice the original verbal quotes, the Ents Lounge refurb was carried out through the use of different contractors.

The newly refurbished Snack Bar does not have a cosier atmosphere to encourage students to stay for a drink. It does have a dropped ceiling that cost £5k but it was only dropped 1' 8" instead of the 4' suggested. There is no dais, as proposed by the Bar Manager. The movable partition that was provided was not only unsuitable as a partition but has already fallen apart. As for the Union Bar, the new furniture moulds pieces of wood of leg size dimensions, not seasonally but every day. The objectives of the refurb have been missed altogether and the Union is £30K worse off.

The sad facts are that the trade turnover in the Snack Bar and Bar have not increased and if anything the number of people using the Snack Bar has fallen. Part of the reason for this was doubtlessly due to the astronomical prices proposed and instigated at the beginning of term by yet another consultant. The Snack Bar food now has nothing like the heavy veggie bias that existed at the beginning of this year and the prices are extremely reasonable, but the damage has been done. The main reason must be that the new image of the Snack Bar is no better than the old. The Bar not only has no comfy seating but has 22% higher prices: not a very good incentive to travel from Princes or Evelyn Gardens for a beer. To all intents and purposes the Snack Bar has become an evening pool hall and very little else. The only saving grace seems to be the increase in entertainments laid on by the Hon Sec (Events).

The refurb in the Ents Lounge, on the other hand, has not fallen apart; it has proved extremely successful and as a student venue is now claimed to be one of the best in the South of England. Good praise indeed coming from the bands that play there.

College will claim that the Holland Club is cheaper than the Union Bar because it made a £4K net trading loss last year. This is only 1.6% of the total turnover of the Club and could be compensated for by an equivalent increase in prices. This does not account for a 17% differential. A balance must be restored to the system or the PG membership of the Holland Club will have to be terminated.

Theatre

The war of the roses

The Old Vic—until March 11

The English Shakespeare Company, under the artistic directorship of Michael Bogdanov and Michael Pennington present seven plays in Shakespeare's history cycle over the next six weeks. We will be reviewing each of the plays in the ambitious theatrical undertaking over the next three weeks beginning today with *Richard II* and *Henry IV* pt 1.

Richard II

In all too many of Shakespeare's plays, the speed of narration leaves one weary and encumbered by the plot. But not so in this case. Swift and sure direction has made this play what all good plays should be—a story told with eloquence and the actor's art.

Michael Pennington plays King Richard II, a wily monarch deep set in corruption and revelling in self-importance and power. He expels Henry Bolingbroke, son of John of Gaunt, from the country and on the death of Gaunt, siezes Bolingbroke's rightful inheritance to pay for Irish wars. While Richard is in Ireland, Bolingbroke returns to England and raises the country against the King. Richard returns from his campaigns to find his authority swept aside. Reluctantly he surrenders his crown to Bolingbroke who becomes Henry



IV, and Richard is imprisoned and killed in Pomfret Castle.

Pennington portrays a Richard who exhibits a churlish arrogance befitting a spoilt child. When in power he is the ultimate authority, and although seemingly in control there is always an unstable facet to his character. His smile is an insidious grin and his eyes shifty, but his head is aloft. Yet his pride disappears in the face of defeat, to such an extent that he seems querulous.

This characterisation contrasts well with the more down to earth, solid presence of Bolingbroke,

played by Michael Cronin. He shows little of his human traits apart from pride and workmanlike determination.

Bridging the gap between the two lead characters lies the forlorn reasoning and wisdom of the Duke of York (Colin Farrell), uncle to both Richard and Henry, who has to weigh up good and bad in the face of conflict.

There is a predominantly Victorian flavour to the sets and clothing. At the beginning of the play we see Richard's court adorned with a mish-mash of clothing styles and colours. Once Bolingbroke takes

over, the costumes become uniform grey; very little colour but immaculately orderly, which cleverly emphasises the relative styles of leadership.

I think that the 19th Century setting lessened the impact of the play, by removing much of the coarseness of the medieval period. It is a common ploy these days for productions to set Shakespeare's plays in different times, to emphasise the timeless quality of the work. This production may not have got the mood quite right, but it was an interesting experiment all the same.



Rainman

Charlie Babbitt is a smooth talking car dealer interested in Buick's, Lamborghini's and himself. His father dies leaving three million dollars to Raymond Babbitt, a brother Charlie never knew he had.

Raymond is an autistic savant which means he is mentally handicapped, withdrawn in his own world, but also exhibits moments of genius. Charlie is understandably upset—not because of the state of his brother, but because he received no cash.

'He's inherited three million dollars, and he doesn't understand the concept of money? It's poetic, isn't it?'—he exclaims.

He decides to kidnap his

brother and together they journey across America. Slowly Charlie discovers more about his past, his father and that there's more to life than looking after number one.

Tom Cruise, fresh from smiling his way through *Cocktail*, plays Charlie Babbitt, and shows not only that he can act, but that he is very good at it. But the show belongs to Dustin Hoffman who plays Raymond, a man who acts like a child, is prone to panic attacks and can't make eye contact. It is a role that only his genius could pull off. Indeed, Hoffman is so comfortable and natural that he detracts the attention away from himself and lets us focus on Tom Cruise's change from narcissism to companion. A good script, and excellent direction by Barry Levinson (*Good Morning Vietnam*) make this film one to look out for at Oscar time.

Release date March 3.

Sumit Guha.





Henry IV, Pt 1

Henry IV, who usurped Richard II's crown, is now King. The Earl of Northumberland, who helped him to the crown, has turned against him. The King's son Prince Hal, spends his time in taverns with the disreputable Falstaff. Hotspur, Northumberland's son, raises a rebellion against Henry IV, advancing the claim of Hotspur's brother-in-law to the throne. Hal joins the King to fight the rebels and kills Hotspur at the Battle of Shrewsbury.

Michael Cronin returns as King Henry. I was interested to see whether he would expend on his character in Richard II, which was largely a black-and-white portrayal. But here it is much the same. I was surprised to learn that Henry IV was not the central character, but appears occasionally throughout the play. So, Cronin continues to play him as a tough, resolute King, but with little emotional subtlety.

Most of the play concentrates on the young Prince Hal's relationship with his boozing, bungling elderly companion Falstaff. In their scenes together, the stage is full of people and the scenery condensed to suggest intimacy and fellowship amongst the pubfolk, simpletons and scoundrels that the wanton Prince associates himself with. Falstaff is a lovable old buffoon played with zest and roguish impudence by Barry Stanton. His tall tales and witticisms allow the play to move on confidently.

The whole of the first half of the play takes on an air of frivolity, as our senses are bombarded with an anachronistic blend of characters and costumes. We see Northern yokels, London bobbies and even punk scumballs. Richard II was set in the 19th Century but here it seems that any style of costume that fits the mood of the character is employed. The costumes and general effervescence of the performances are great fun, if a bit overdone. Especially the brash and frenetic Hotspur, played by Andrew

Jones. His over-the-top antics are enjoyable to watch, but I couldn't help feeling that it was all a bit too eccentric.

In the second half the tone of the play becomes more serious, as the wars begin and loyalties pronounced. But there are gems of humorous interludes furnished by Falstaff and wry directional flourishes: While the King's men are attired in full regimental uniforms, Falstaff does battle in World War II

camouflage gear, emphasising his cowardliness. He is struck in the stomach by a sword, only to rise and reveal a protected belly, shielded with a 'no entry' sign. It is here that he delivers his famous 'The better part of valour is discretion' speech.

The characters and plot are cemented together by an excellent solid performance by John Dougall as Prince Hal. I look forward to seeing how he develops in Henry IV pt 2.

I would recommend both these productions, especially to those who believe Shakespearean plays to be inaccessible, incomprehensible or even, dare I say it, boring. The plots and language are easy to follow and one would feel better for the experience.

Student standbys are available at £6.

Next week Henry IV pt 2 and Henry V.

Sumit Guha.



High Hopes

Set around King's Cross, *High Hopes* examines the contrasting lives and personalities of an assortment of characters. Cyril, a despatch rider and his girlfriend Shirley; his sister Valerie and her husband Martin;

Cyril's widowed mother, Mrs Bender and her yuppie neighbours Laetitia and Rupert. Their paths cross when Mrs Bender locks herself out of her house and again when Valerie arranges a party for her mother's seventieth birthday.

Mike Leigh, the director has an established reputation in producing those gritty true-to-life plays that win enormous critical praise. He has successfully transferred this realism to *High Hopes* to create a film that, but for the farcical stereotypes of

Laetitia, Rupert, Valerie and Martin would be little removed from a documentary. The ludicrous yuppies and social climbing Valerie provide some relief but leave an engaging yet unsatisfying mixture of comedy and social observation.

So horrendous are the yuppies, Valerie and her nasty wideboy husband that you feel no animosity towards them. So human are Cyril and Shirley that you can sit and wonder how they go cast with such unhuman characters, although that

I assume was the intention. They argue about Cyril's doggedly idealistic socialism and whether to start a family or worry about Mrs Bender, a marvellous if chilling portrayal of age and senility played by Edna Dore.

This is not a frivolous film, and more fun can be had down the road with *Roger Rabbit*. Yet for those who prefer something a little more testing, try *High Hopes* because the note of optimism at the end more than compensates for the dour plot.

LIVE

Gigs

ULU, your loo, our loo. Let's face it, the mergers bar at the University of London Union is a bit of a toilet when it comes to venues. On free gig night it is socially stifling. A home for the hopelessly hip, serious haircuts and sensitive young men whispering of Morrissey and Dosdoevsky. In gigland however, popularity is everything and ULU is certainly that. It fields bands regularly and draws a regular crowd. Why do people return again and again? Why, after being aurally assaulted by the likes of the *James Dean Driving Experience* do hordes come back? Cheap drink, free live music or even the company? I think it is the hope of seeing the occasional gem like *Frazier Chorus*.

Frazier Chorus take the title men's room and refurbish it into their very own Dream Kitchen. They have a head start on the other bands having a lead singer who looks like Dave Gedge but they do have a substance of their own. Tunes of pure white wipe-clean formica float out. Hard to draw analogies with other bands for *Frazier Chorus* are more like your favourite Slumberland than the wild, drug-crazed youth of today. The songs ain't all soft though, bite through the marshmallow and you find the saying-something-solid centre of raw lyric. If you haven't yet heard of *Frazier Chorus* you will, and they're good.

Perhaps not so endearing are *King Swamp* playing in the concert hall of ULU (for money). The press release says 'these (obviously rich) English boys were in New York looking for a way out, Louisiana seemed perfect'—bollocks. Why did they travel to Louisiana to write conventional rock songs, Cricklewood would have sufficed. The lead singer needed to practice his pout and sultry looks, the gear-tarists needed to grease their axes to avoid friction burns and the keyboard man spent some time wanting to be in *The Mission*, going bald and bumping into things because his specs were too dark.

They sing songs of riding down the interstate on motorbikes (pronounced 'sickles'), leather, women and, of course, the ballad. The lead singer was visibly pained as he uttered the tale he was telling, equity card in the post. Unfortunately, the biggest music market in the world, which shall remain nameless, laps up exactly this sort of Bon Halen Maiden group so they will probably have more success (and money) than the former group. No justice.

FELIX EXCLUSIVE Orbison is Dead



Before his recent single

Roy Now

SINGLES

Texas

I don't want a lover

It is a long time since I have had a new single with no centre in it, perhaps there is a message in that somewhere. *Texas* appear to be fronted by a female vocalist in the style of Michelle Shocked, perhaps the oil-state breeds this sort of your woman. *I don't want a lover* is a plodding four chord strummer that bores. It is backed with 'Believe Me' which sounds closer to Michelle Shocked and is a better song.

Ford Cortina.

Thrashing Doves

Jesus on the Payroll

A twelve inch single of four versions of the same song. A soft drum club version, plinky piano 'streetgroove' version and two normal versions (one acoustic). A little excessive considering the original song isn't too exciting to start with. There are shades of James Taylor and Mat Johnson on this record which can't be bad. The *Thrashing Doves* have been around a long time and it appears tht they still can't get it right.

Lada.

Jesus Jones

Let us Prey

Jesus Jones only managed to fit two versions of the same song on their record. Their energy and live performing arrogance (see next week's gigs) do not come across on record but still the Wonderstuff in them shines through. This sort of confident noise band are consolidating their position in the new music scene. The best record of this lot.

A Noisy Chevy

COMPETITION

Win some funky singles by Big Country, Hue and Cry, Love and Money, Texas and others:

Answer this, scrawl it on a scrap of paper and drop the answer into the FELIX

Office in Beit Quad:

Ian Curtis was in a band when he killed himself. Which band, and who are they now??

ALBUM

Rush

Show of Hands

Following last year's superb *Hold Your Fire* tour, Rush have released *Show of Hands*, a double live LP showcasing the material from their last four albums and culled from two tours.

The shows were intensely visual incorporating lasers and videos on a stunning scale, and obviously this aspect is lost on record for those who were not there. (Although the video promises to be something special). However, the music has been sympathetically mixed to produce a live record of significantly higher quality than normal.

Resisting the practice of employing extra musicians for live work, Geddy Lee uses a complex system of programmed synthesizers to enable him to simultaneously play bass, keyboards and occasional rhythm guitar. Backed by Neil Peart's phenomenal drumming and Alex Lifeson's deft, yet powerful, guitar work they produce a sound that has been aptly described as 'a three piece symphony orchestra'.

Included on the LP is much of *Hold Your Fire* such as the powerful *Force Ten* and the hit single *Time Stand Still*. But the highlights must be on side three which incorporates the menacing *Distant Early Warning*, *Mystic Rhythms* and *Witch-hunt* in which Lifeson extracts a spine-tingling cadenza from the top string of his guitar. The oldest song included is the anthem *Closer to the Heart* which stands up well twelve years on, despite sounding as though from earlier phase.

Peart's indulgent drum solo *The Rhythm Method* is the only disappointment but does not detract from a record that shows how naturally Rush have progressed from the hippies *Fly By Night* and *2112* to make music that is more articulate and intelligent than most other bands of the heavy rock genre. Eight out of ten for the music but only four for the sleeve which leaves much to be desired considering the visual nature of the concerts.

C.D.L./A.C.D.

Quote of the week...

'.....Acid House....a predominantly working class scene had no racist undertones at all. Which just goes to show, I suppose, that facists can't dance.'—Factory Records, Tony Wilson.

IC RADIO

Radio Days

Imperial College Radio can offer a broad range of musical tastes to the students of IC. Just look at this smattering of delights:

Mondays—The Spenser Lane Breakfast Show for the music of your era. Includes the 9.05 classic. 8am-9.15am

Tuesdays—The Beatles Hour for the very best Beatle and Beatle-related material. 1pm-2pm.

Wednesdays—Neil Press Golden Oldie Show. Listen to the songs that inspired today's music. 12pm-1pm

Thursdays—The Fast Trousers Show. Packed with more letters, handy tips, flashes and star interviews than your lecture notes could possibly handle. 1pm-2pm

Fridays—the Friday Feature. IC Radio's look into the history of popular music. 7pm-8pm.

And all through the week, Mr Classix tape will provide hours of musical memories. All on IC Radio, 301m MW, 999kHz and test transmissions on 97.7FM

FILMSOC

Cry Filmsoc

Filmsoc's offering this Thursday is *Cry Freedom*, Attenborough's directorial triumph set in South Africa.

Donald Woods (Kevin Kline), investigates a newspaper article critical of Steve Biko (Densel Washington) and is won over by Biko's charisma and conviction. After Biko's brutal murder at the hands of the South African police, Wood refuses to believe the official explanation for his death and calls for a public enquiry. Persecution and harassment ensues.

Excellent direction and acting performances here along with some of the most amazing crowd scenes ever filmed. This is political cinema at its best. Not to be missed. See What's On page for details.

WELLSOC

Skirmish

On one Wednesday afternoon this February (provisionally 15th or 22nd) Wellsoc will be organising a game of Skirmish, at a 75% discount, for £5. To reserve your place send your deposit cheque for £5, made payable to S.L.D. Lane, c/o Mat Sci pigeonholes (in the RSM) or IC Radio (next to Southside Shop) as soon as possible. Remember this is the best legal way of venting your anger upon people.

FOOTBALL

Death or Glory

**Birmingham University—2
IC 1sts—1**

IC came heartbreakingly close to pulling off a major upset in their first ever appearance in the last 16 of the national championships. Leading 1-0 with only 8 minutes remaining IC conceded the inevitable equaliser that took the game to extra time where a goal-mouth scramble brought Birmingham the winner.

The pattern of play was established straight from the kick-off as Birmingham surged forward to win a rather dubious penalty decision only to blast the resulting spot-kick against the bar—with less than thirty seconds having been played!

This signalled the beginning of a virtual siege of the IC penalty area, which only some stout defending and inspirational goalkeeping prevented from bearing fruit. Special mention must be made of Ivan Parkin who played superbly at left-back after being drafted in at the last minute.

It was not all one-way traffic, though, and on a rare foray forward Pip Peel wiggled through a packed defence and turned beautifully to drill the ball home and stun the midlanders.

As half-time approached, IC suffered a cruel blow with the loss of key midfielder man Paul Olden after a clash of heads left him needing six stitches. The second half saw Birmingham attacking unrelentingly but IC's composure at the back was admirable. The crucial point of the match came fifteen minutes from the end when IC skipper Nigel Collier was clearly pulled down inside the area having broken through. The referee bottled the decision and gave a free-kick on the edge of the box rather than a penalty which would have surely won IC the match. The chance went begging and in the end the valiant Blues couldn't quite hang on 'till the death.

HOCKEY

100 per cent

**IC II—5
Royal Free II—0**

For the first time in Imperial's history, the Hockey Club is fielding two ladies' teams, and the seconds justified their existence in this, their first win this term.

In the first half, centre forward Paula Grimshaw broke through the Royal Free defence to score on 2 occasions, once receiving a superb cross from newcomer Jackie Scott

and the other an individual effort.

The second half saw Jackie herself scoring off a long corner taken by the versatile right winger Alison Franklin. Paula completed her hat-trick defeating the demoralised Royal Free backs, and finally Kathryn Measures sealed the opposition's fate.

The final result reflected the 100% effort from the whole team and it looks good for the future of IC's newest team.

CRICKET

At Lords

The UAU indoor cricket tournament will take place on February 19, therefore it is very important that all players that have played for IC 1st XI in the past, and any other serious cricketers who intend to play cricket this summer attend the net practices at Lords between 7pm and 8pm every Thursday. (Meet 5.45pm in Mech Eng Foyer, bring whites!), if this causes you a problem, the contact either Girish Rao (ext 4524) or Nick Brown (ext 3524 or Mining pigeonholes) or leave a message on Cricket Club noticeboard (between Union Bar and Union Snack Bar).

IC ENTS PRESENT

THE VIRGINIA VAGABONDS

Friday 3rd February
in the Union Lounge

★Disco★

★Bar Extension★

Doors open 9pm

PRO-AMNESIA SOC

Whatever Next...?

A few of us are considering starting a pro-amnesia society. If anyone is interested in taking part, please get in touch with Ronald Reagan, Oliver North, or Zev Greenjacket, care of FELIX. Send us a note, and we'll forget all about it.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

HELP WANTED

£3.14 per hour

EVENINGS
and
WEEKENDS

The Public Relations Department needs assistance with computer data entry and some research. The ability to type and computer literacy is desirable.

Apply to:

**Paul Shanley,
Room 305 Sherfield Building.
Telephone: Ext. 3025**

What's on

What's On

A guide to events in and around IC.

FRIDAY

Consoc Meeting.....12.30pm
ME569.
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.
The Virginia Vagabonds.....9.00pm
In the Union Lounge. £1 on the door, disco and bar extention.
Fencing Club.....12.30pm
Union Gym. Meeting also at 6 o'clock.

SATURDAY

Karate.....10.00am
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.
IC Kung Fu.....4.30pm
Southside Gym. Beginners always welcome.

SUNDAY

Sunday Service.....10.00am
Sherfield Building.
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.
RC&U 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).
IC Concert Band.....5.45pm
Great Hall. Final rehearsal. All players please!
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 sleep. Free.
Remote Controlled Modelling Club.....12.30pm
Southside Upper.
Boardsailing Club.....12.30pm
Southside Lounge.
Audiosoc Meeting.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Cheap records and

IC Concert Band Concert.....1.00pm
Sherfield Ante Room. 'Pictures at an Exhibition'. FREE.
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



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.

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.

WOMEN

Come and hassle your Women's Officer!

I will be available for discussion on absolutely anything on Tuesday Feb 7, between 1pm and 3pm in the Green Committee Room (top floor, Union Building).
Free refreshments will be available!

Consoc Speaker Meeting..1.00pm
ME 213. Douglas Hurd, Home Secretary.

Intermediate Ballroom.....7.00pm
JCR. 80p.
Caving Club Meeting.....7.00pm

Southside Upper Lounge. Everyone interested should come along.
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.
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.
IC Methsoc Meeting.....12.30pm
Mech Eng 703. 'Open Doors'. Free, all welcome.
Audiosoc Meeting.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Cheap records, tapes etc.
Ski Club.....
The Ski Club will only meet on Tuesdays this term.
Consoc Speaker Meeting..1.00pm
Mines G20. Nicholas Scott MP.
Debating Society.....1.00pm
Room 341 Maths (Huxley).
Arabic Lessons.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens. See Islamic Soc.
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.
Film Soc.....7.00pm
Mech Eng 220. 'Cry Freedom'.
Soup Run.....9.15pm
Meet Week's Hall Basement (back by 11pm).

Women's Party Affairs

I thought it was about time I wrote a few words again. Firstly some reminders:

1. Rape alarms are still available from the Union Office free of charge.

2. I am still willing to arrange a self-defence course but as yet I have only had three takers. If there is anyone else interested, please let me know via the Union or Mech Eng pigeonholes.

3. If there is anyone who would like to visit their old school to talk about science and engineering, and Imperial in particular, please let either Sandra Dawson (Management School) or myself know as soon as possible.

If there is anything else you would like to talk to me about, I will be available on Tuesday Feb 7, from 1pm to 3pm in the Green Committee Room (top floor, Union Building). Free refreshments will be available. I'd be very interested to know what you think I should be doing so I hope to see you there.

Gill Knowles, ICU Women's Officer

Party

Tonight, Friday February 3, IC Ents are putting on the *Virginia Vagabonds* in the Union Lounge. For those of you who went to the Silwood Bonfire Party, they were the first band who played that evening.

Anyone who saw them, will tell you how brilliant they were, playing their own unique style of foot-stomping country and western music.

Not only this, but there's a disco (and perhaps more importantly) a bar extension until 12. Tickets for the event are a mere £1 on the door, and it starts at 9pm.

Loans Wrestling

1. Wrestling—This was a brilliant laugh but not very well attended. Thanks to all those who helped and especially to Links Club for making the evening.

2. Loans—the University of London has submitted a paper to the DES. The Governing Body working party has still not met although I get the impression that the above mentioned paper is supposed to be a substitute.

I am sending my paper on London finance to all MPs and the quality papers.

A VICTORY for common sense



FELIX welcomes IC Radio, STOIC and the pro-UGM lobby for a celebratory drink in the Union Bar with the FELIX Club.
8.00pm tonight

FEBRUARY 14TH
IC Choir in Conjunction with
C&G Union Present

VALENTINES DAY BARBERSHOP-O-GRAMS

—ALL PROCEEDS TO RAG—

£2.50—all in embarrassment package for that special someone in your miserable existence. Plus complimentary artificial rose.

TOTAL ANONYMITY

All details and bookings from C&G Union Office
(Mech Eng, level 3)
or contact Max Kallios on internal 3521.

PicoCon

The Annual Mini-Convention of
Imperial College Science Fiction Society

GUESTS OF HONOUR

DAVE LANGFORD
BOB SHAW

ALSO **TERRY PRATCHETT**
GERRY WEBB & DAVE

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News

cont'd from front

noticeboards and through the pages of Exec News.

Proposing the motion, Union President Nigel Baker said that aside from abolishing UGMs, there was 'no other way for the two Unions to merge.' He added that the working party had spent a long time discussing the matter and pointed out that the decision had 'not been taken lightly'.

Speaking against the motion, Union Life member Dave Parry said the working party had not considered the ramifications of the motion they were proposing and that they had not consulted the rest of the student body. He pointed out that they had not consulted the College on proposed increases in Union representation on College Committees and added that the College would be unlikely to accept such changes.

'The Union is the collective voice of students. Without Union officers directly reporting to its members the Union will become divorced from the people it represents' he said.

The motion was taken to the vote following a procedural motion by Nick Jarman. A paper ballot was called and the motion defeated with 214 students voting in favour and 364 against.

Commenting on the ballot, St Mary's Union President Phil Drew said that he didn't feel the meeting was willing to listen to the arguments in an unbiased fashion and questioned whether the meeting was representative of Imperial's 5000 students. He added that UGM's would be unworkable if Imperial College were to merge with Royal Holloway and Bedford New College.

'IC has to look forward and stop sticking in the mud,' he said.

Speaking on behalf of the pro-UGM contingent, Union Postgraduate affairs officer, David Clements said, 'the large St Mary's contingent demonstrated that they can get here for UGMs. It proves the arguments of the working party are wrong.'

Good Idea?

Any student with a new business idea, a new product, or a new approach to a business problem, could win £20,000 and the backing of the Royal Mail to its completion.

Further details are available from Caroline furminger, Kingsway Rowland Public Relations, 67-69 Whitfield Street, London W1P 5RL. The closing date for ideas is February 28.

CIA ejected from college

Students from the Courtauld Institute of Art (CIA) were escorted from College premises by College Security on Monday, after Union President, Nigel Baker discovered them publicising Wednesday's march against Student Loans.

Mr Baker confiscated posters and leaflets headed London Loans Campaign from the CIA students as well as material being distributed by members of IC Socialist Worker Student Society (SWSS).

Angus Batey, Loans and Poll Tax Officer for CIA commented that if the ICU Executive 'Decided to deny

students the right to freedom of speech,' they were setting 'a very dangerous precedent.' Speaking on Mr Baker tearing leaflets from one female CIA student he said that he was 'angry and disturbed' by Mr Baker's behaviour.

Mr Baker said that he was 'carrying out the decision of the Executive,' which decided to withdraw ICU support for the loans march last week. He added that if the Executive decision had not been upheld by Tuesday's Union General Meeting, the situation would have been different.



Union faces the madding crowd

Through the motions

Imperial College Union is to decide next year whether or not the Union should reaffiliate with the National Union of Students (NUS) following an overwhelming vote in favour of a referendum by Tuesday's Union General Meeting (UGM). The need for a referendum was laid down by the NUS as a condition for the Union's collaboration with the NUS on the student loans issue and was put forward in one of three motions proposed by Union President Nigel Baker on the student loans issue.

The second motion put forward by Mr Baker called for ICU to boycott Wednesday's march against loans. Mr Baker explained that the National and London NUS and the University of London Union (ULU) had pulled out of the march for safety reasons and suggested that ICU should do the same.

Speaking in opposition, a spokesman from the Socialist Workers Society pointed out that the stewards for the march had been

properly vetted and that there was no danger of the march being illegally diverted to Westminster or the Department of Education and Science. He added that it was important to hold a demonstration on 1st February, this being the last day for submissions in response to the Government's white paper on Student loans.

IC Union delegate to ULU's General Union Council, Hal Calamvokis, pointed out that vetting of stewards had been dropped when ULU pulled out of the march. The motion was taken to the vote and passed after a short speech by Julian Moore when he suggested that ICU should not support the march, and pointed out that students would nevertheless be free to attend.

Mr Baker's third motion, that the Union boycott lectures on February 16 and attend alternative events in the Union Building was passed without opposition.

Radio GaGa

Imperial College Radio may have to stop sending its signal to Evelyn Gardens unless more than £1,000 can be found for annual rental of the British Telecom link. Because they cannot transmit to Evelyn Gardens, IC Radio use a cable system to a number of houses. The cable was installed in 1981, but B.T. only started billing IC Radio last June, and did not reveal the price until this week. Station Manager Nigel Whitfield told FELIX 'I very much regret that the line hasn't worked well all the time; even so people do listen to it, and it will be a shame if the service has to stop because we can't find the money.'

NUS vigil

As part of its liaison with the National Union of Students (NUS), IC Union will be holding a vigil outside the Department of Education of Science (DES) on February 6th from 8am to 6pm.

Union President, Nigel Baker told FELIX that he hopes to display a coffin at the vigil, bearing a copy of the cover of the Government's White Paper on student loans and the words 'R.I.P. Higher Education.'

The vigil will be held on a rota system with 5 people present throughout the day. Anybody interested in attending the vigil should contact Mr Baker in the Union Office today. Numbers are strictly limited to 5 people at any one time to meet with the law on unofficial picketing.

Why not intrigue the whole College by declaring your undying love for a complete stranger in next week's Valentine small ads?
Deadline Tuesday 12.30pm