



Felix

THE NEWSLETTER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

'Vote rigging' at St Mary's delays count

A meeting of the Imperial College Union Executive (ICU Exec) yesterday decided to postpone vote counting in the Imperial College Union Elections following allegations that the St Mary's Union Executive attempted to unfairly influence the result of the election. The allegations will be brought before the Union General Meeting (UGM) at IC on Thursday when students will be asked to decide whether the votes cast by St Mary's should be disallowed.

The move follows the discovery of a poster at St Mary's - labelled with the official Union emblem - asking students to vote for Andrew Meredith for President, Dave Williams for Honorary Secretary and Dave Smedley for FELIX Editor. (Mr Williams is actually standing for Deputy President).

St Mary's Union Secretary, Graham Price, who admitted he had put up the poster told FELIX that he was acting as an individual and not on behalf of St Mary's Union. This is disputed by six St Mary's students contacted separately by FELIX yesterday who claimed that they had been advised how to vote at a Union meeting.

The student responsible for manning the ballot box at SMHMS on Monday told FELIX that a number of students had taken their ballot papers away in order to ascertain "the manner in which they were supposed to vote" and returned them subsequently.

The poster was reported to the ICU Elections Committee last Monday by Robin Davison who is standing for the post of FELIX Editor. The Committee found the St Mary's Exec to have 'acted

irresponsibly and in a manner likely to prejudice the outcome of the election' and subsequently decided to discount the votes from St Mary's.

The decision was challenged by Andrew Meredith, a candidate for President proposed by SMHMSU President, Phil Drew. Although the decision was upheld by a meeting of the IC Union Executive, Mr Meredith decided to exercise his right to bring the matter before a UGM. Speaking from St Mary's he commented 'It's a complete travesty of democracy. I do not feel the poster affected the voting.'

Graham Price told FELIX that he had not been informed of the rules

of the voting procedure. He added that as St Mary's is not as yet a Constituent College of Imperial it is not answerable to IC election rules. In response, Ian Morris told FELIX that by 'similar argument' IC were within their rights to discount the St Mary's votes. Phil Drew said that he was unhappy that St Mary's Union were not consulted before the IC Exec decision and said that it would have serious effects on the merger negotiations.

IC Returning Officer, Ian Morris, told Felix that he felt the poster was 'the provable tip of the iceberg.' He added that he felt confident that Thursday's Union General Meeting would uphold the IC Exec decision.

Legionnaires outbreak at IC

A case of Legionnaires disease in College was confirmed on Friday by the College Secretary, John Smith. Water based cooling towers throughout the College and the Science Museum have been shut down since the weekend as a precaution.

A telecommunications engineer on the College staff was admitted to St Mary's Hospital two weeks ago, but the disease was not confirmed until last Friday. A security guard from the Science Museum was admitted on the same day and is exhibiting symptoms of the disease. He has been in isolation since February 17th.

In the statement confirming the outbreak, Mr Smith stressed that no evidence has been yet found of the presence of the bacteria within College. He also stated that 'person-to-person infection is unknown'.

All recent outbreaks of the disease have been associated with ventilation cooling towers similar to those used by College.

The incubation period for the illness is 2-10 days and the College Health Service Director has advised all students and staff suffering any of the symptoms, which include chest pains on breathing, high fever or nausea, to take them seriously.

Editorial

The Union were right in their decision to disallow the votes from St Mary's. The Medical School Union acted unfairly and blatantly when they tried to get persuade the voters at St Mary's to vote for their adopted candidates.

The explanation proffered by the Union Secretary, that he was acting as an individual when he put up a notice indicating the way St Mary's should vote, just does not wash when the notice was written on Official Union notepaper.

Nor can the claims by students from St Mary's that they were advised how to vote be brushed aside.

The irony of the situation is that many of the Students at St Mary's are not particularly interested in Imperial or its elections. Nevertheless, given the large number of candidates this year, even a few votes from St Mary's could make the difference between success or failure.

No doubt Mr Meredith who was depending so heavily St Mary's for his votes will be trying to rally the medics to attend the UGM on Thursday.

St Mary's will no doubt argue that it is a breach of democracy to take away their right to vote.

But the UGM should not forget that it is a far greater breach of democracy to cheat in an election.

If ICU has the decency to allow St Mary's the privilege of voting in our elections, the least we can expect them to do is to play it by the rules.

Credits. Whoever thought of bringing out a flysheet deserves shooting. Many thanks to the valiant staff who have stayed up all night; Rob, Liz, Sez, Andy and Rupert, and to all the people who worked on FELIX today. I love you all and I want to have your babies



The Baron of Cheapskate

Andy Meritless was a worried man. The citizens had decided they didn't want to count the votes from Bloody Mary's Medical School. They were upset because the Bloody Mary's Chief Citizens had told the lesser citizens which candidates to vote for in the citizens' elections. Andy Meritless was upset because he thought they were all going to vote for him. Why else had he sold his soul, his grandmother and his fire engine to Phil Doodle, the Bloody Mary's Chief Citizen? Now everybody would have to wait until Thursday before they knew the result of the elections.

The first that most citizens knew about the elections was when the playground next to the 'Quite Tasty' Burger Factory was plastered with posters, the mediocrity of which was surpassed, with only a few exceptions, by the mediocrity of the twelve candidates.

Grovin Shittyhouse, possibly the most boring person to have stood for election since Dr David Death, made the big mistake of standing in front of a brick wall which looked good job the Snack Bar is a poster-free zone, or untold members of citizens would have thrown up their nutburgers at the sight of them.

Day two of the campaign, and the perfect opportunity for the candidates to show off their verbal

banter: A Citizens' meeting. Now that the proposal to do away with the Citizens' meetings had been thrown out, this was just like any other Citizens' meeting—no one knew about it and no one turned up. Even the great defender of the Citizens' rights, the man (?) who is to democracy what Derek Dash is to expansionism, Phallix Editor Willhebe Goodforacolumninch didn't know until an hour before the meeting. Not surprisingly, therefore, there were no histrionics from the 'Dirty Dozen', apart from Grovin Shittyhouse, who proposed that the big book of the 500 or so slightly less random citizens who were on club committees should be sold to people who gave jobs to ex-citizens. The companies that Grovin had in mind were boring money counters such as Proctor and Shambles; Snoopers in Y-Fronts; Peat, Marwick, McRipoff; and Stock, Aitken, Watermen. It was unfortunate for Grovin that nobody could be bothered to tell him what a crap idea this was, as he desperately wanted to tell everyone how wonderful he was.

After a day's rest, everyone gathered again for the highlight of the week: The Hecklings. This was when the Dirty Dozen would try and tell the citizens how they sat on several zillion committees, how they

considerably more interesting than he did. Clare McUseless, a former clown and hot-tip for Chief Citizen produced some very nice posters, which looked as if they'd been done by her very good friend, and candidate for Phallix Editor, Smuggly. He, meanwhile, looked as if he was about to hatch out of his eggy posters into some sort of green salmonella-infested mess. It's a basically ran the Citizens' Club already, and how much better it would be if they were paid for doing so next year. Fortunately, there were a few exceptions to this rule, and they will receive a prize far more important than electoral success; something that cannot be bought by money, favours, popularity or notoriety: A mention in 'The Duke of Sluicagate'.

Phallix photographer Doug Queen was running a squeaky-clean campaigning. Clean because he printed his handouts on toilet paper, squeaky because one of the patches on his jeans was too tight, although he tried to rectify this by getting well oiled on stage.

Alistair Goodfornothing stood on an amazingly courageous 'I'm not a hack or on any committees' platform which was novel and refreshing but probably too brutally unsubtle, even for Cheapskate. Finally, Says Who was too scared to even speak, so she sat on the front row whilst her Dracula lookalike proposer claimed that she had been kidnapped by Daleks, who were coming to exterminate everyone. Unfortunately, no one told him that 'we will exterminate' is not quite so funny when given as a reply to the 25th consecutive question.

Grovin Shittyhouse then reminded everyone how like a Thunderbird's puppet he was, although it must be said that at least they have some character, and far

better dress sense. Another candidate accused of being a puppet was Neil McSlimesky, whose answer to Cheapskate's debt crisis was to send a Rag Tit Squad to kill Hillman Rustbox, the author of the Moronic Verses. Now it's funny that he should mention that, for the next day's Grauniad suggested that the brass plaque from the 'Friendly hit-squad Embassy round the corner' was not on its way home in diplomatic baggage, but had been stolen by the lumpsofmetal-worshippers. This was hotly denied by their new vice-clown, Keven McCanot, who pointed out that they were busy stealing a lion at the time.

Anyway, back to the elections, and the only one you lot really care about—the one that delivers you this twenty pages of toilet paper every Friday—The Phallix Editor. Standing for this were Smuggly, the fairy-story writer, and Winthrop Cravat, the in-depth fairy-story writer—and Winthrop certainly knew an in-depth fairy when he saw one. The Hecklings for this post were particularly boring, apart from when Smuggly (proposed by Julian Less, chair of Cheapskate Citizens against Water Polo Society) forgot about the wonders that 1992 and the single European market will bring, like rabies.

On Monday all twelve candidates thought that their problems were almost over, and that they would soon learn the deliberations of Citizens of Cheapskate. Now they, and everyone else, would have to wait another two agonising days.

I bet you expected some silly questions here — Ed.

