



Felix

THE NEWSLETTER OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

Protest Against Government 'Loans Scheme' Continues

I.C.U. Plans Lobby of Parliament

Imperial College students' union have planned a lobby of Parliament next Thursday as part of the continuing protest against the Government's 'Top-Up loans for students scheme.' The action will involve a large number of IC students gathering at parliament to talk to, and in some cases present letters to their own local MPs stressing what they see as the pitfalls of the loans scheme.

IC Union president, Nigel Baker, presented the ideas for the lobby to the college's governing body who were described by the Rector, Eric Ash, as being "sympathetic to the critique of the plans." The Rector has written to the heads of all college departments supporting Nigel Baker's requests that a cancellation or rescheduling of

lectures for that afternoon might be effected. Nigel Baker is also in the process of visiting 65 per cent of college department years to explain the plans and a simple 'show-of-hands' vote has been conducted in each case to determine the number of students willing to boycott Thursday afternoon lectures for the lobby, should their department not agree to a change in time-table. In all cases so far the majority vote has been in favour of a boycott.

A petition has been drafted by the union which states that "the undersigned believe that the introduction of student loans will be detrimental to the future of higher education and that the loan proposals put forward by this government should be withdrawn." Copies of this have been circulated

around all college departments and the union believes that it will receive "a significantly large number of signatures."

At 1 pm on Thursday Mr Peter Brook, MP for Westminster South, is due to address the college on the issue of student loans. As a Conservative MP he will be emphasising the government's argument on the issue. The address will involve a large amount of time set aside for questions, will take place in the Great Hall and will include the presentation of the college-wide petition to Mr Brook by Nigel Baker.

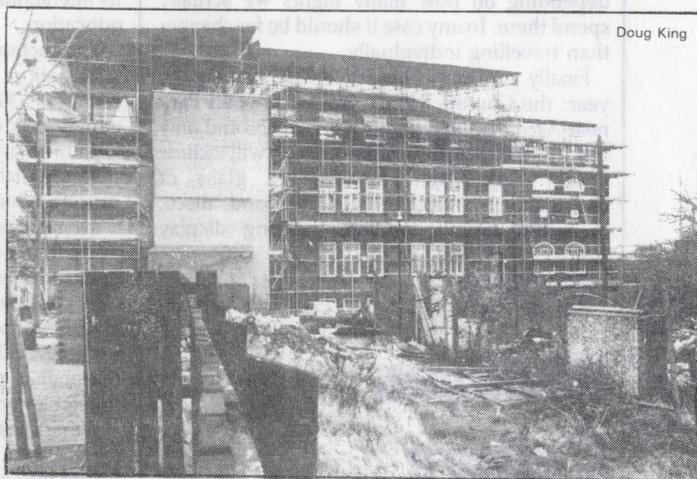
At 2 pm Nigel Baker will make a short speech stressing the aims of the lobby and the mode of action to be taken.

Later that afternoon the students involved will gather at the Houses of Parliament. There will be no march, so the plans pose no risk of arrest as witnessed at the NUS march on 24th November last year. The President hopes that many students will have prepared letters to their MPs briefly stressing the argument against loans and requesting that the MPs meet representatives of the students' union and pass on their concerns to Secretary of State for Education, Mr Kenneth Baker.

The action will be followed by another march on 1st February organised by NUS London which IC students' union will be supporting. Students will march from Finsbury Circus through the city to Shoreditch Park.

New London College

One of the most deprived inner-city areas of London is to be the site of the first new college in London for 15 years which is due to open its doors by January 1990. The new Further Education College will initially be based at the Arbour Square and Jubilee Street premises of the City and East London College and at Hackney College's Poplar Centre. A new extension is to be built on which work has already started. The plans have been received with great enthusiasm by the London Education Business Partnership and the East End Local Employer Network, but were described by a spokesman from the Department of Education and Science as 'simply renaming existing parts of Hackney College'. The plans were submitted by Tower Hamlets Borough Council in a scheme set up to involve individual boroughs in education as the



Doug King

Extension work for the new college starts

abolition of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) moves into action. A spokesman for ILEA, whose further education sub-

committee is initiating the plans, described the move as 'a major educational improvement in the

Conference Office Re-shuffle

The Conference Office has been reorganised this holiday, following the resignation of the Conference Officer, Miss Gill Davies.

Refectories Manager, Mr Rob Northey, has now taken responsibility for conferences. He will oversee the catering himself and work with Loretto O'Callaghan to organise the accommodation.

Mr Northey told FELIX that the plans for the change were initiated before he started his job 3-4 years ago, and that the job has always been in his contract, but the Rector, Eric Ash, was keen to stress that Miss Davies has 'not left because of any tension at all, but because she felt she would like a new job after being here for a number of years.'

A supportive letter

Dear Bill,

This is a reaction to a letter of the Islamic Society in Issue 822. A bottle of whisky is not an 'abominable thing': it is just something forbidden by a few religions. Moderation is a virtue, and in Ancient Greece, the homeland of all philosophy, religious and secular, excessiveness (the rhetorical 'hyperbole') was, and still is, an insult to God. It usually leads to Ayatollah Khomeiny types of regime! I therefore express my support to the Editor, noting that if we, Christians, were to react with such violence, the whole of the FELIX Christmas issue should have been siezed and thereafter destroyed, whilst the editorial staff would be excommunicated!

Yours sincerely,

Emmanuel Saridakis Physics 1 (Christian)

Shurley shome mishtake

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on suggesting the best present for your readers this Christmas. I refer to the Qur'an (mis-spelt Quoran) in the sack of Father Christmas on the front cover of the last issue of Felix. Since embracing Islam eight years ago, I have found the Qur'an to be the True and Uncorrupted Word of God, the final and complete revelation for the guidance of mankind. The only thing I found objectionable was that the Qur'an was placed next to a bottle of intoxicants, something which has been forbidden by the Qur'an. Also that the Qur'an has been associated with the pagan festival of Christmas, which is more of an event for commercial exploitation than the commemoration of the birth of Jesus of whom the Qur'an speaks of very highly.

Yours,

T Sadi, Civ Eng

Anonymous writer avoids bitching

Dear Bill,

I would like to reply to Mr McCall's letter (FELIX 821), which I quite frankly found somewhat distasteful. As co-ordinator of the Hitsquad, I put in at least 60 hours of solid work during Rag Week. For this I did not and still do not expect any money/gifts/thanks/sympathy, in fact the only thing I did expect was to be flanned myself. I did this job because I enjoyed it and, although this may sound rather clichéd, I liked the idea of others getting enjoyment out of my work. The careers fair is organised on behalf of IC students and it is an athema to me that an elite band should receive a gratuity, particularly when one considers that most of the organisations represented at the Fair would carry out

recruitment drives in College regardless of whether or not the Careers Fair existed. The Indsoc members gained much anyway: organisational experience, 'brownie points' and contacts in companies, a nice little line in their CV's and a sense of satisfaction in a job well done. But no, this was not enough. What particularly rankled was Mr McCall's statement 'If we were to be paid properly then we would each receive over £80'. Having, due to family circumstances, spent the last nine years living and working in the 'real' world I find his belief that his right, as an undergraduate, to put a value to his work both arrogant and naive. In essence, I believe that an event like this ought to be run on a purely voluntary basis, with no thought of personal gain, as are all other student events in this College (eg Ents, Rag etc).

Since I have no wish for Indsoc to batter me to death with their Filofaxes, I have refrained from making any of the following bitchy comments:

i. 'If brains were dynamite, McCall couldn't blow his nose.'

ii. 'Where I come from we say 'Where's there's muck there's brass', perhaps Indsoc Committee should go and jump in a pile of dung.'

Phew! Good job I avoided using those comments.

Name withheld by request.

Adverts in FELIX cost £20

Dear Bill,

Just thought I'd let you and all your readers know what the RCSU Entertainments Committee intends to be getting up to in the coming months. Tonight (Friday 13th) sees our first event selling burgers in Beit Quad during the Carnival. Please buy some, we've got more than even I can possibly eat! The next event pencilled into my diary is for the weekend starting March 11th when we'll be going to Amsterdam. Expect to pay about £50 for travel and accommodation, depending on how many nights we actually spend there. In any case it should be far cheaper than travelling individually.

Finally, on Friday May 5th, is THE event of the year: the Country House Ball at Silwood Park near Ascot. Double tickets will cost £55 and only one hundred will be available. These will include sherry reception, transport, a glass of champagne, a buffet meal, wine, band, disco, breakfast, and a fabulous lighting display courtesy of Dramsoc.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Daghish (RCSU Ents Committee Chairman)

Malayan Culture

Dear Editor,

Your article on Malaysia written by Third World First in the issue of November 11 was extremely disturbing to many Malaysians in Imperial College. I would therefore like to clarify several points. In the process I do not wish to negate

the facts surrounding the article. However, I would like to point out the reasons for the actions described in the article, for which the author has conveniently omitted to inform the reader. Firstly, in terms of the arms deal, anyone with a knowledge of the Malaysian armed forces readily accepts that it is the least equipped force in the region. Additionally, the military hardware available is old and decrepit. Thus re-armament is necessary, given Malaysia's strategic location, to enhance her role in the defence of the sealanes used for free world trade. The second, perhaps more disturbing comment, related to the recent arrests of the political dissidents. Malaysia is a culturally mixed country, so has a very volatile racial mixture. The people arrested have been fomenting discontent; bringing cultural and religious prejudices to the fore. The actions that followed, despite their severity in Western terms, were necessary to prevent the spread of racial violence.

J Jengi, Mech Eng 2

AUT Action hits exams

Dear Student,

This term, your lecturers, supported by other university staff, will be refusing to set and mark examinations. You may be adversely affected by this action and we therefore want you to understand why it is being taken. This 'exams boycott' is being held by members of the Association of University Teachers (AUT) as part of their campaign to achieve decent salaries. After 12 months of negotiation, their employers (represented by university Vice Chancellors and principals) have refused to offer any salary increase at all for 1988. Over the last decade salaries have fallen (in real terms) by over 20%. Problems in retaining, recruiting and motivating high calibre academic and related staff have escalated beyond recognition. If good staff cannot be attracted to a university career, then the students of tomorrow will suffer as Britain loses its interational reputation for excellence in higher education.

The action means that members of the Association of University Teachers (which represents 30,000 professors, lecturers, librarians, administrators, researchers and computer staff in UK university institutions) are withdrawing from the examination process and the administrative process which supports it:

- examination papers will not be set
- examinations will not be invigilated
- examination papers will not be marked

In continuous assessment, feedback will be given, but not formal marks. The action continues until Vice Chancellors have made their staff a reasonable pay offer for 1988 and agreed a timetable for negotiations for 1989.

We are very sorry that it has been necessary for us to take this drastic action, but we have been forced into a position where we cannot see any alternative. If you have any questions about the action, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Parry, President, ICAUT

Ext: 96292/3338

Top up loans too expensive

The cost of administering the proposed student 'top-up' loan scheme will far outweigh any savings it could make according to a report by Dr Nicholas Barr of the London School of Economics.

The Government's claims that the taxpayer will save £230 million by the year 2027 are mistaken according to Dr Barr who estimates it will cost £150 million more than the present grant scheme.

According to the report, Banks and Building Societies are unwilling to participate in the scheme unless they are able to recoup their administrative costs - about £100 per student.

The Government proposes freezing the grants at 1990 levels and phasing in a loan until it matches the level of the grant estimated to be in the year 2007.

ICU to hold NUS referendum

Imperial College Union (ICU) must hold a college-wide referendum on whether to reaffiliate with the National Union of Students (NUS) by Easter 1990, it was revealed on Wednesday. ICU President, Nigel Baker, was told by the NUS Executive Committee that such a vote must be carried out as a condition for ICU liaising with them over the issue of Student Loans. Mr Baker intends to draw up papers on the matter in the near future. The papers will then go via ICU Council to a Union General Meeting.

Calling All STUDENT PARENTS

-Do you want help looking after your child?

-Do you need financial assistance?

-Do you want to be free to work?

The Union is in the process of trying to help the student parents at College. If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, then we may be able to help you.

Contact Nigel D Baker, ICU President on extension 3504 NOW!

IC students win BOC challenge

A team of Mechanical Engineering students from Imperial have won the British Oxygen Company (BOC) Undergraduate Challenge. The five team members, Basil Heaney, Clare Knowles, Mandy Phillips, Richard Spencer and Dominic Strowbridge, have each won travel bursaries of £1500 plus £100 cash, and £5000 for the College. The team qualified for the final by coming in the top ten after the first round of the competition. Their opponents came from an original entry of 110 teams from a broad range of British Business Schools, Universities and Polytechnics. Last weekend, the ten finalist teams assembled at a top London Hotel to compete over a further six rounds of the business game. The winners were announced at a gala dinner, attended by B.O.C. Group Chairman Richard Giordano, Director General of the Confederation of British Industries



John Banham, and many other distinguished guests from industry. The competition is due to run again

next year. Applicants should submit teams to BOC by the end of the Summer term.

Queen's Tower causes Government split

The fate of the Queens Tower at Imperial may have caused a dangerous split in the government of Harold Macmillan in 1958 according to secret cabinet minutes, released under the thirty year rule.

The papers show that ministers disagreed over the proposals to demolish the 287 foot Italianate tower after a public outcry headed by Sir John Betjeman (later to become the Poet Laureate) and the Royal Fine Art Commission.

The government was forced to reconsider the development proposals, the only Higher Education issue to be considered above committee level in 1958.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer claimed that to stabilise the Queens Tower, originally part of the Imperial Institute Building and historically unconnected with IC, would have cost £200,000 but to pull it down only £40,000. 'To the charge of vandalism they would no doubt add a charge of breach of faith. I doubt whether the resulting row would be worthwhile,' he said.

The Queens Tower was reprieved as a free standing campanile the form in which it stands now, against the Chancellor's wish to save money and much to the chagrin of the architects, who wanted to build on the site.

New Year's honours

A number of College notables were featured in the recent New Years Honours list.

Mr Evelyn de Rothschild, the chairman of the Governing Body of St Mary's Medical School received a Knighthood. Mr A.L Smith, a visiting Professor of Chemistry, was awarded an OBE; and the director of the Japan-Europe Industry Research Centre, Prof Ronald Dore was awarded a CBE.

Roll up for delicious new meals

The Southside Kebab Bar has this term introduced three 'delicious' new meals to their repertoire. The New Tandoori Chicken Kebab is guaranteed to keep you warm all night at a very reasonable price of £2, said a spokeswoman. Barbequed Spare Ribs at £1.75 and a Steak Sandwich at £1.65 are also now available.

NO I'M SORRY - BUT WE CANNOT PAY FOR THE NEW SUPPLIES, BUT WE CAN GIVE YOU A 30¢ CANDLE ...



IC FINANCE OFFICE REVERTS TO PARTIAL DUE TO LACK OF CASH.



Editorial

The state of the Union...

At the beginning of this year I could honestly say that it had the potential to be one of the best years the students' Union has ever seen. Now, at the beginning of the second term I am struck by the realisation that I was completely wrong.

The fate which has beset this year's Union is one that has been responsible for the failure of numerous Union administrations in the past; it is the obsession of the individuals within the Union with their own self importance.

The Union finds itself with a President who feels the need to be in complete control of everything within the Union; he prefers not to accept help or advice and likes to give the impression that the other Sabbaticals are in some way subservient to him.

It is sometimes easy to forget that the Union is not controlled by the President, or for that matter any of the other Sabbaticals. The Sabbaticals are here to act on behalf of the students; they were elected by the students to represent their views, and when it comes down to it, it is the students who should control their Union. And the vehicle for this control is the Union General Meeting. It is ironic then, that the Union is adopting a policy of keeping UGMs as short as possible and that there are rumours about abolishing UGMs altogether in a move designed to appease St Mary's Medical School.

I remember reading the following statement in Nigel Baker's election publicity; 'One side of Union life which has saddened me this year is the seemingly incessant internal bickering between the Union Office and FELIX. Everyone in Beit Quad is on the same side...' I would like to think so. Yet while the Union Office expects FELIX to bend over backwards to help them publicise events and do their printing work for them they are not prepared to put anything back into FELIX. Far from it; they have treated FELIX very shabbily indeed for a whole term.

For example, there was the time when Nigel Baker and the other Union Officers decided they'd much rather get drunk in the Union Bar than help collate FELIX on the occasion when we had no one to collate. There was the Alcohol Awareness supplement which FELIX put together to support the Union Alcohol Awareness Week. Nigel promised lots of collators to help put the insert and Exec News in what was a larger than average edition; none turned up and five very depressed FELIX staff ended staying up until 3.30am to ensure that FELIX came out. There was the motion which the Union put through Council shortly after Pub Board had finally agreed on a workable arrangement for dealing with external income which in one swoop invalidated all that we had worked so hard to achieve. And the list goes on.

I do not think that FELIX has been scathing or unfair in its criticism of the Union. On the contrary I think it has been too kind.

Yet while our Union President likes to dismiss FELIX as something which is read for half an hour and then thrown away, he gets very worked up about every turn of phrase in every news story or editorial that mentions his name. So incensed is he that he would dearly desire - if only he had the guts to go through with it - to take the FELIX Editor to a UGM and call for a vote of no confidence, but he knows deep down that such a call would be very quickly thrown out.

There, there Nigel, never mind.

The Union's latest move is to set up a committee to look into 'the standard of FELIX.' 'Oh sorry Bill, we were going to tell you about it but we forgot.'

What followed were a series of petty complaints: for example charging Guilds for an advert which they eventually got free of charge (Oh Gawd I'm so sorry); not folding and collating Guildsheet (surely this is the job the Guildsheet editors); having to reprint a job which went wrong; and sending someone an incorrect invoice (bloody hell what a catastrophe). Of course none of the people involved had thought about bringing these things to the attention of the Print Unit Manager - myself.

Come on Nigel, what does your little Committee really expect to find?

And what's next on the cards? 'Why don't we take the Print Unit out of FELIX.' Well, because .. FELIX didn't have a Print Unit there would be no FELIX.

What it all boils down to, of course, is the Union's dislike of a newspaper which is free to print what it likes i.e. the truth, because the truth can often be disconcerting. It keeps the Union on its toes; it means that Union officers can not get away with doing nothing; it brings egotistical Union Officers back down to the ground. To quote from a predecessor of mine; 'without its newspaper IC Union is a festering heap of egomaniacs.'

Thanks to: Dave, Sez, Rob, Romin, Steve, Liz, Andy, Paul, Doug, Wendy, Andy for masses of pasting up, Summit, Ian Morris, Jason, Penny, Syd, Simon, Walter, Chris Edwards, Rose, Dean; anyone I have forgotten, and all the collators.

The Baron of Cheapskate



Little Lord Patacake sat in the corner of the Citizens' office, sucking his thumb. That naughty PHALLIX Editor Willhebe Goodforacolumninch had done it again, just as Little Lord Patacake was about to set up his committee to find out just how naughty Willhebe had been.

Little Lord Patacake had thought he was safe for the rest of the term. Then Willhebe had printed a flysheet, just to slag him off.

'It just isn't cricket!' thought Little Lord Patacake, 'And I've been so slimy and nice to him recently.'

Meanwhile, in the PHALLIX Office, Smuggly, the PHALLIX Fairystories Editor, was in a huddle in a corner with his sidekicks, Steve Thingy and Says Who. They were bitching about the rest of the PHALLIX staff and the fact that they never finished collating before half past three.

'Bloody Hell,' said Willhebe Good-foracolumninch, as he shuffled into the Print Room, 'they weren't around in Rabid Bones' year.'

'Bloody Hell,' said PHALLIX Busybody, Dizzy Lizzy, as she hung on to his arm.

'Oh, isn't it a nice day?' said Winthrop Cravat, as he trundled after Dizzy Lizzy, who was desperately trying to get rid of him so that she could be alone with Willhebe at last.

Back in the Citizens' Office, Chas Pianoplayer hid under a desk as Sydney Spanker (brain changed in

aid of comic relief) flounced in. Spanker was Meeja Committee Stool and was anxious to find out what had happened at the last Meeja Committee, which he'd missed because a sequin had fallen off his favourite dress.

'They took it out of contingency,' snapped Little Lord Patacake.

'Oh, right,' said Spanker, as he made his way towards Mrs Jolly Hockey-Sticks.

'Never mind, dearie,' she said, 'have a glass of sherry and let's talk about the good old days when you were Chief Citizen.'

'They took it out of contingency,' said Little Lord Patacake, as he burst in on the scene.

Seeing Spanker's puzzled look, which was slightly different from his usual confused look, Mrs Jolly Hockey-Sticks leaned across and whispered in his ear, 'They're taking the money for a leaving party for the Meeja Committee Head Money Counter out of contingency.'

She sat back and sipped her sherry appreciatively.

'Oh, excellent,' said Spanker, 'it's about time too!'

'But, but, but...,' said Little Lord Patacake, and slunk back to sulk in his office.

Chas Pianoplayer emerged from underneath his desk. His floozy, John Dense, the Sorry No One Watches (SNOW) superno, had just arrived. They had been going round the Citizen's Building holding hands and changing door locks together. This was supposed to stop naughty people with Arthur keys getting in and stealing computers.

Just after they'd fitted a new lock to the SNOW studio, someone broke a window and stole their new 'autofocus 3D stereoscopic camera-wamera'. But as nobody could use it, it didn't matter anyway. The real purpose of changing the locks was to keep the PHALLIX Editor out of the PHALLIX Office.

Little Lord Patacake sat in his office and rubbed his hands with glee. If Willhebe Goodforacolumninch couldn't get into the PHALLIX Office, he couldn't produce PHALLIX. And if he couldn't produce PHALLIX, then Little Lord Patacake could no confidence him at the next Citizen's Meeting.

Will Little Lord Patacake pluck up the courage to no confidence Willhebe Goodforacolumninch?

Is John Dense making a late entry into the race for Deputy Chief Citizen, and can he really be serious?

Will Winthrop Cravat ever wake up to the real world?

Find out in the next thrilling episode.



GUTTERPRESS

You may think you are unlucky as you stagger back from Christmas at the parents with a box full of currant-filled plutonium covered in a scrummy layer of almond flavoured wallpaper paste under the pretext that you need something to eat for the next six months. However, such tests of endurance as telling Aunt Agnes for the fifth time that you don't dish out aspirins in Boots even if you are called a chemist pall into insignificance when compared with the sheer indignity of some who decided to stay in London.

There are some who complain that the content of columns like this are highly hack-oriented. Now, there is a reason for this, and it is not just because I can't manage to find the energy to get out of the office long enough to find something really interesting to write about. No, the content is dominated more by the collective insanity suffered by the more active parts of Imperial College Union, and this is why Gutterpress is taking this opportunity to appeal to you.

The next few paragraphs are best read with a piece of orange peel stuck behind your top lip, a freshly peeled onion and the theme music to 'Hearts of Gold' or 'Children in Need'.

When people find themselves working for the union they can be drawn into a trap of promises and delusion. As committee post after committee post piles up, the sheer weight of self-importance is enough to crush most ordinary mortals, and it usually does. However, the only symptoms are not a tendency towards Napoleonic megalomania and a need to talk at length about how jolly democratic UGMs are because 'as soon as you get to a good bit someone calls quorum; there's power for minorities'.

There can be potentially more devastating consequences, usually revolving around the concept of the Election. These exercises in participative democracy generally take place when posts cannot be carved up amicably and can cause a great deal of trauma for prospective candidates. They can find themselves doing all sorts of odd and highly reportable deeds in order to stay in print and, if they are not sick over too many people, in

votes.

The traumas become increasingly severe as sabbatical elections creep ever closer, until the strain becomes too much and they come into a headlong collision with this column which, considering it is only 0.05mm thick, can be quite painful.

There is only way to stop this hideous carnage and wanton waste of human quasi-life. When the posters say 'Vote!', ignore them. Try not to let the fact that someone ate an entire caterpillar thinking it was a snack bar meal influence your decision. When somebody pushes a flyer under your door, read it carefully, peruse its inner meaning and flambé it in a white spirit sauce. Whatever you do, when it comes to ballot box time, **JUST SAY NO!** You'll only encourage them.

As an example of the mindless folly of becoming involved in sabbatical elections we will take as our victim the FELIX Editor, a Mr William R Goodwin.

I remember Bill when he wanted to be a reporter on FELIX many years ago. He would rush into the office and be given a task which generally revolved around knocking on people's doors in Linstead and asking them questions about food, rent strikes and Bobbie Robson's management of the England football squad. This would take up much of Bill's time, and that didn't include the Linstead extension.

Eventually he became unhappy with his lot and became News Editor, and finally he was so unhappy that he ran for FELIX Editor and won. However, it was too late to save him.

He decided that bringing out a FELIX every Friday was not enough to slake his thirst, even if he did have to do it with three-and-a-half staff and a rusty pair of scissors. He thought that he could bring a little happiness into the world with the patter of tiny feet.

No, not another bloody caterpillar. Babies, loads of them.

He took it upon himself to launch attacks on all sorts of unsuspecting victims and offer his services as a surrogate mother, the current state of medical technology notwithstanding, with the immortal words: 'I want his/her/your babies.' Nigel Baker, Paul Shanley and a certain old dinosaur and washed-up

sabbatical candidate have all featured high on Bill's list.

However, due to popular demand, Gutterpress is running a book on who's next, with Wendy Morris at 40-1 and Clare Ash and an unnamed wide mouthed frog in London Zoo running neck and neck at 10-1.

Now, once upon a time there was an erstwhile member of Motor Club known by the highly descriptive moniker of 'Joe 90', not least for his passion for totally undrivable cars and the fact that he is a complete sleazeball.

Joe's reputation is so complete that FELIX Editor Bill Goodwin's only claim to fame, other than a desire to be the first male surrogate mother, is that he was Joe's lab partner way back in the distant past.

To fill in a little background, Joe is not someone who believes in the easy way to do things. Show him a can of beans and a tin opener and he'll open it by holding the tin opener in his teeth and driving over the can with a Mini.

Which brings us conveniently on to cars. That's nice, because Joe likes cars, especially ones with with the s**t kicked out of them and no sense of direction.

When Joe went to make his latest purchase he sought the most clapped out old wreck he could find, and he was not disappointed. The old owner found that his prize possession (well you have to dress it up a little) failed its MoT so badly that he decided not to pay its road tax or insurance as it was not going far.

All this did not worry Joe, not even the knotty problem of getting the object home. 'I'll drive it,' he thought, even after seeing those old police favourites, Irish number plates. 'No problem,' said he.

In fact, he was so successful that he decided to go for a celebration drink in Southside on the way home, just so that he could give the rozzers a real excuse to pull him over.

*NEW TECHNOLOGY
BAFFLES
PASSED OLD
HACK...*

WALTER WALTER WALTER

On casting an eye over his files, Walter observes that it is almost two years since last his presence cast a literary shadow over these pages - two years which have seen the rise to power of Kenneth Papa Doc Baker in the government, and of Nigel Baby Doc Baker in the Union. It is highly encouraging to see our new President working so tirelessly to achieve the very ends treasured by his namesake in the Department of Education.

Walter is rather less encouraged to note that the price of a pint of bitter beer in the Union Bar has reached the order of one pound. The new decor in the Snack Bar looks pretty expensive. Far be it from anyone in this column to suggest that these two facts may be connected... or that the new decor, in addition to looking expensive, also looks quite repulsive and is certainly not an improvement on the old.

After strict orders from both his doctor and his psychiatrist Walter is unable to drink alcohol, so it was over a large orange juice in the above mentioned Union Bar that he was informed of the theft of a television camera from that arbiter of broadcast excellence, STOIC. His informant seemed quite agitated, which seems strange when you consider that the loss of a camera here or there means little to a television station which manages to spend £3500 every year broadcasting nothing at all.

Whilst on the subject of theft, we must give credit where credit is due. All praise to the Union supremos who have caused a new lock system to be fitted in the union building. Rather less praise to their initial decision not to give the FELIX Editor a key to the new lock on the door outside his own office. Walter understands half an hour of shouting at the Deputy President was required to reverse this policy. And after Bill has been so nice to them, too.

Completely changing tack, have any readers noticed that our area of London appears to have been the subject of a quiet international takeover? Walter would like to suggest that the road we used to know as Gloucester Road should be renamed 'The Independant State of Australia in Exile'. With that thought, we leave you.



The INDEPENDENT

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RAIL EUROPE

Gone are the great days of rail travel—when the rich took the luxurious Orient Express to Istanbul, and rail was the only way to travel across Europe. The aeroplane put paid to that. However, in recent years rail travel has been revived as a cheap way for young people to see Europe. The national rail companies of many countries, in an attempt to fill empty trains, have opened up a series of cheap fare deals for under 26's, that has led to the European rail network being inundated by thousands of backpackers every summer, intent on 'doing' as much of Europe as possible in the time available.

Rail is an ideal way to see Europe. The network is the densest in the world; nearly any destination can be reached by rail, and if this is not possible, the rail head will be only a coach's journey away from the destination. There is no lack of companions on your journeys, climb aboard any train with backpack in tow and you will soon strike up a conversation with any inter-railers on the train. And, take a bottle of the local gut rot and a few goodies from the local supermarket with you to while away the hours on long journeys, the guards always seem pleased to share it with you!

Because the network is so extensive, there is no limit to the itineraries available. In fact, everybody seems to do it a different way. Many people use a ticket as a cheap way to reach the Greek islands for a laze on the beach, taking in a few European cities on the way, or there are the manic inter-railers who spend their time sleeping exclusively on trains, 'doing' every country in Europe during the period of the ticket. There are also the specialists, who travel to one country and then tour it in detail, like the two Oxbridge types who spent a month touring the Gothic cathedrals of northern France (yawn!). Whatever your fancy, Europe is your oyster.

THE OPTIONS

There are essentially two ways to see Europe by train on the cheap -

Inter-Rail and Transalpino. Both are only available to under 26s, and if you don't fit that category, then things can get very expensive.

An Inter-Rail card, available from major British Rail stations, gives you unlimited rail travel for one month through 21 countries in Europe, including Morocco, European Turkey, Hungary and Rumania. The basic card costs £145, but an Inter-Rail + Boat card is also available for £175, which also allows free travel on some Mediterranean, Scandinavian and Irish shipping routes. Either card will also give a 34% discount on rail fares in the

United Kingdom, and a discount on cross channel ferries. It is a good idea to remember that it will cost quite a bit to leave and return to the U.K. when budgeting for an Inter-Rail trip. Also, you can only travel on standard second class trains. This can be a problem in some countries, particularly Spain, where extra supplements have to be paid for travelling express, or in air conditioned luxury.

A Transalpino ticket is available from one of several Transalpino shops in London (see the telephone directory). Normally, the ticket will be a return to a single destination, valid for two months. The great strength of Transalpino is that the outward and return journeys can be made via two different routes, and

stops can be made at any point along the route. Transalpino tickets are also valid twice as long as Inter-Rail, and compare favourably in price. In order to take best advantage of Transalpino, choose a distant destination like Athens, and then travel out via Italy and the ferry, and then return via Yugoslavia and Northern Europe. Fares within Great Britain and channel crossings are included in the price of the ticket.

VISAS

An extra expense for those travelling to Eastern Block countries, and non EEC nationals in France, will be a visa. These can normally be purchased on the border, but it is best to check with the relevant embassy in London. Note that Bulgaria is not part of Inter-Rail, so to travel to Istanbul one must pay the extra to travel through Bulgaria, or take the roundabout route via Salonica in Greece. The really adventurous can take a train to Moscow, and then on to Peking on the Trans-Siberian railway.

THE TRAINS

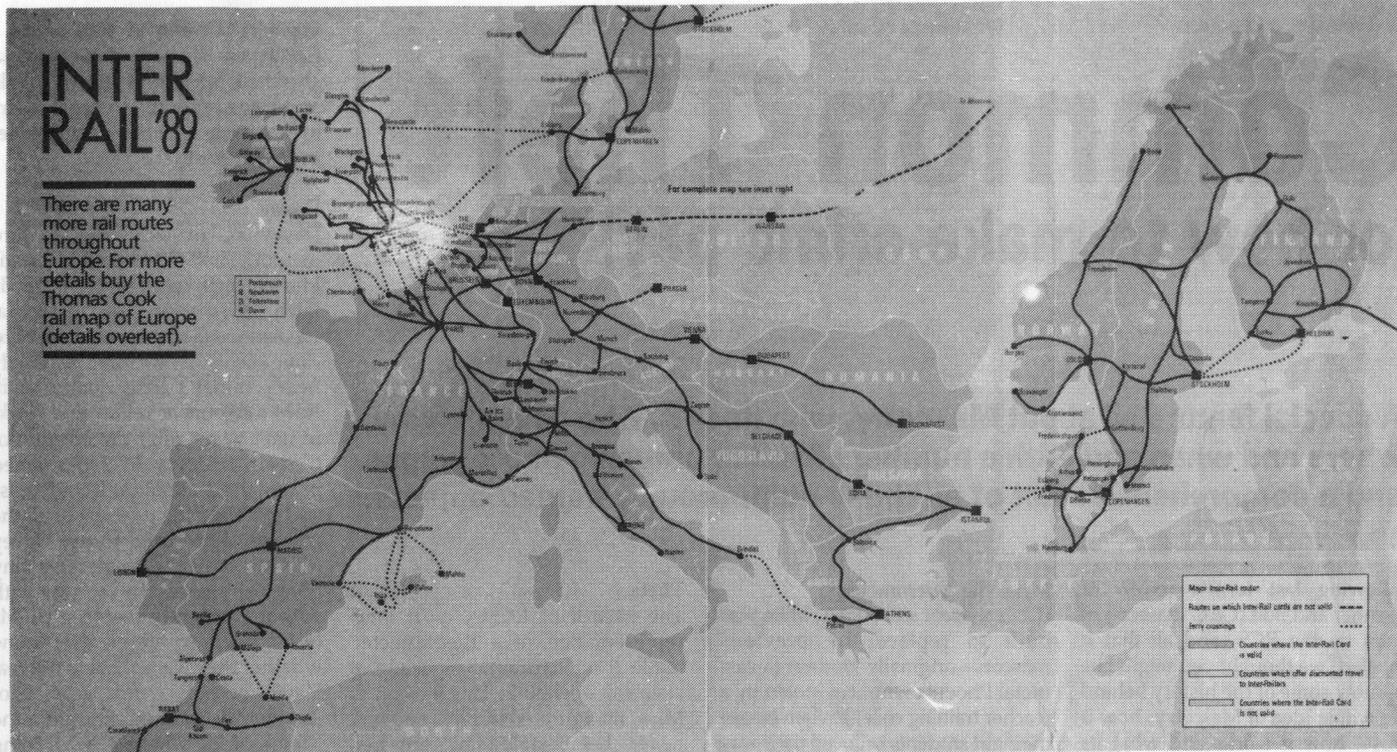
Accommodation on international trains in Europe is pretty standard—coaches with compartments seating eight people. However, the state of the coaches is highly dependent on the country of origin. On international trains, Northern European and French coaches are the best, Spanish and Italian can be okay, but they can also be bad, and avoid Yugoslavian coaches like the plague. In the south of Spain, go for air conditioning if at all possible.

For journeys within individual countries, the same standards as above seem to apply, but there are always exceptions to any rule!

The truly hardened traveller will roll out his or her sleeping bag on the floor without complaining on an overnight trip, but for those who prefer a little comfort for those long journeys, couchettes are available. Couchette compartments seat six people, and can be converted to sleep six people on beds in relative comfort. You are provided with sheets, and a guard to wake you in the morning. Again, these are pretty standard.



Eiffel Tower, Paris.



BOOKS

The inter-railer's bible is "Europe by Train" by Katie Wood and George McDonald, which seems to be updated every year in March. The book covers every country in Europe with short notes on what to see and all the information a budget traveller might want. Books on individual countries might also be a good idea, and phrase books for those wishing to converse with the natives.

A good rail timetable is invaluable; it is surprising what weird and wonderful routes can be discovered in one of these. It is also possible to save considerable time being able to plan ahead, rather than turning up at a station and hoping for a train. Many countries in Europe do not run services between major cities that are as frequent as British Rail's services. British Rail publishes a European Timetable which is cheap, but only covers direct journeys from London. The best choice is the Thomas Cook European Timetable that is published every month; it is available from Thomas Cook shops at £4.95, and a rail map of Europe will cost £3.15.

ACCOMMODATION

Cheap accommodation can be hard to find in Europe, especially in the height of summer. The cheapest option is camping, but you have to carry a tent etc around with you all holiday. Most cities have campsites on the outskirts; be careful, some countries insist that one stays in official campsites only. Next on the price scale come Youth Hostels. Europe is littered with them; all you

have to do is join the YHA in this country and attach a photo to your card. A book detailing all the youth hostels in Europe is available from the YHA. However, the rather strict rules may put many people off Youth Hostels; the further south you get, the more lax the rules. Another alternative in Southern Europe is the ension, a small, family run hotel that can sometimes be as cheap as a Youth Hostel. Apart from that, cheap hotels are the only alternative, and prices begin to get steep at this point.

...AND

Don't take too much luggage - you always end up with clothes you don't need. Also, remember that you will want to bring back presents, booze etc. from Europe, so leave room in your bag for these things. It is easy to buy detergent to wash clothes, and many youth hostels and campsites will have facilities to wash clothes.

An ISIC card is useful for reductions in museums and on coaches. The tourist agencies of the European countries in London will be only too happy to load you down with piles of pretty leaflets full of photos of their country, and, more importantly, maps of the major cities. And remember, enjoy yourself!

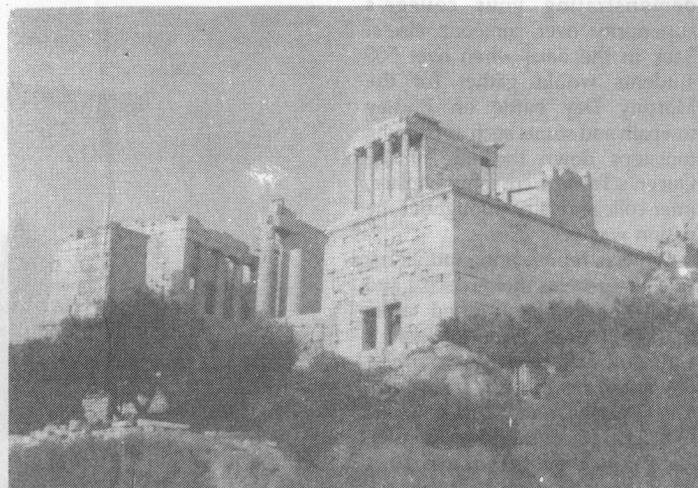
TO ISTANBUL BY THE SIMPLON ORIENT

Day 1: Boarded the Dover to Calais ferry at midnight to make the best use of the month inter-railing. From Calais, took the 5am train to Paris, grabbing a few hours of sleep. Spent

the day in Paris, climbing the Eiffel tower and checking out the Louvre. In the evening boarded the Simplon Orient for Venice, camembert and wine in hand, and stretched out on the seats for the night.

Day 2: Woken at 4am by a family of Italians going on holiday, the whole family left little room in the compartment for us. A day trip to Venice was abandoned when we missed the station, so carried on to

joined us. Day 4: At 4am Salonica station is not pleasant. Rescued my companion from the tracks - he had decided to sleep there. Boarded the train for Istanbul at 9am, and crashed out. Woke at noon to find my companion had started a party with the remains of the Ouso. Spent the day sandwiched between smoking Greek peasants, reaching the border in the evening. There the



The Acropolis, Athens.

Trieste to spend the day on the beach. On the train again in the evening and into Yugoslavia, where they took the train apart at the border.

Day 3: Arrived in Belgrade around lunchtime - Belgrade doesn't have much to recommend it except the Slimovitch. Carried on to the Greek border, where a bottle of Ouso

train left the carriage in the middle of nowhere for three hours while the border guards collected the passports and then held a lottery with them. Shunted across the border, where the Turkish border guards played the same game. Day 5: Continued to Istanbul at a snail's pace, arriving at 8am to sample the Orient.

Common Theft

(or how to make crime pay)

A special feature all about Mascotry, who does it, who doesn't, why, where and when and with a number of rather amusing photographs and a comprehensive list of all those humourously named objects.

Following last term's return of Spanner and Bolt (C&G mascots) to them by the RCS, and all that it entailed, we thought you might like to know some of the history behind the whole idea of Mascotry, how it arose, how it works and what its *raison d'être* is.

Definition

Mascotry is: 'The practice of keeping one's own mascot safe from theft from a rival college, while at the same time stealing another college's mascot to ransom back to them for Rag.'

Mascotry began as 'oneupmanship'—almost every college in the country used to have a mascot of one form or another—and from the late thirties it was used as a way of demonstrating your college's superiority over someone else's. Back in the days when over 500 students would gather for the Morphy Day battle on Putney towpath and stunts such as painting footsteps down the side of the Queen's Tower were commonplace, inter-college rivalry throughout the nation was very strong.

Symbols representing individual colleges arose as their mascots and these ranged from stuffed tapirs through concrete carrots to Nelson's Column. It became common practice to run off with say, King's lion (Reggie), remove its genitalia with a hammer and chisel and then leave it for them to find in a dung heap. As far as we can tell, the only reasons for this would be that it caused a lot of hassle (what with having to make a new brass pecker for your lion and then weld it on!)—and some might say that this would be reason enough. Eventually some bright spark had the idea that you could ransom back a mascot in order to raise money for Rag and this is really where the story starts.

As you may or may not know, Imperial currently has a large selection of mascots. These are:

Mike the Micrometer

ICU's mascot since 1966. Mike was built to replace the previous mascots—originally Herbert (a cast metal Phoenix who was stolen by a teacher training college when two of their girl students seduced their way into the Herbert bearer's flat, got them drunk and made off with the mascot), then a lamppost and finally the Queen's Tower. Mike was designed and calibrated in RCS, cast from spent rifle cartridges in RSM and machined in C&G. He weighs 170lbs, is 4ft long and has had a very chequered history, being stolen from his display plinth MARIA (Mascot Anti Raiding Interference Alarm) shortly after his creation by QMC who used pneumatic drills to remove him.

Theta

The mascot of RCSU, a 7ft long representation of a thermometer made from hydraulic pipe and a stainless steel bulb. This version is Mk 4, inaugurated in 1975, and has never been stolen by another college. The original Theta was christened in 1958 and was made from a ballcock stuck on to a broomhandle. Previously, RCSU had a drum which they used to announce their presence at Barnights, Rag events etc etc. Theta Mk2 went walkies from the Physics departmental office in October 1969 and was never seen again. Version 3 emerged in 1970 and consisted of 2 litres of lead cast on to the end of a scaff bar. The most ingenious theft of Theta was from the Maths

Freshers' Dinner in 1964 when a Guildsman dressed up as a waitress snatched Mk1 from the top table and legged it down the back stairs in Southside with the whole Dinner in hot pursuit (see photo).

Davey

Davey is, in fact, RSM's third mascot. Firstly they had a plastic Michelin man called Mitch who rode with them on the original Clementine (a traction engine). Next came Davey Mk1, an incredibly heavy miner's lamp lookalike in RSM's colours of yellow and black. In later years, after the creation of the current Davey, Mk2, (fashioned in anodised aluminium and brass and certainly the prettiest of all the mascots) RSM used to use Davey Mk1 as a decoy to deceive any potential 'thieves' by carrying both versions into and out of their UGMs in bin liners so no one ever knew whether they were chasing the real Davey or not. A few years ago, Davey Mk1 went missing from the Mines office where it was being used as a doorstop and ended up in the Physics level 1 common room behind a wood panel. From there, it disappeared and has sadly never come to light. In one episode of Davey's life, two RCS men spent 18 months tracking down where he was stored in RSM by hiding in cupboards after RSM UGM's and listening out for the Davey Bearers going by. Eventually they narrowed down the location of the mascot to one particular storeroom in the basement and hid behind a filing cabinet just outside as Davey was put away. Later that night they returned with hacksaws, hammers, drills and boltcutters, picked the lock to the room and demolished the only cupboard therein which was Davey's hideyhole.

Spanner and Bolt

In order to protect Bo Mk 1 (C&G's original veteran car) from harm by other colleges, the Bo driver used to threaten them with the biggest spanner in the toolbox. Over the years, as Bo became more valuable, Guild's mascot changed to being a large Spanner instead. Several Spanners have existed, the first was lost to Kings, the second broke when sat on by a Guildsman just after being recovered from being buried in Putney towpath and the third they have now. Bolt is a fairly new acquisition by comparison, but quite nicely made in the traditional style (ie bloody heavy!). RCS have just handed back S&B to Guilds following their removal from the boot of a car last March. This was the first inter-CCU mascotry that has been played fairly for a very long time, with RCS designing a Treasure Hunt for the Guildsmen to



Theta, Anchor, Walrus, Growl and Quack



Theta with two playmates

follow in order to secure the return of their mascots. In the end, over £1,100 was raised for Great Ormond Street Hospital and both RCS and C&G went away happy. Perhaps the most famous theft of mascots was perpetrated on S&B in 1976. An RCS man arrived in college to do Physics exactly at the same time as a Guildsman failed to arrive to study Chemical Engineering. By coincidence they had the same name—Martin Watson. The RCS Martin Watson was prevailed upon to go to C&G lectures, hang around in their Office, go on their Rag stunts and generally pretend to be the C&G Martin Watson (who wasn't around to clarify matters). After a term of doing this, he was entrusted with the task of being a link in the car chain that was bringing the mascots into College. RCS hired him a car, he sat at the rendezvous, C&G delivered the mascots to him for transport to the next rendezvous and he turned S&B over to a waiting RCS van instead. It was so subtly done that it was quite a time before C&G realised their mascots were actually missing. That was the first time that S&B had been taken together.

Jezebel, Boanerges and Clementine

These are the motorised mascots of the RCS, C&G and RSM respectively. Though Jez has been stolen by UCL students before now, and Bo has had his headlights nicked in the past, they are not violate (ie legitimate targets) and anyone who threatens to do them damage usually gets subjected to hours of torture with fire axes, larger hammers and rock cutting lasers. They are far too valuable to be mucked about with and are a credit to the dedication of the people who look after them.

With times as hard as they are now for students, the emphasis is much more on the work aspect of a

university education, rather than on the education of life. Old traditions such as the Morphy Day battle, throwing people in the Round Pond, painting zebra crossings across Prince Consort Road etc are fading into the background to make way for problem sheets, lab reports and a swift half down in Southside at 10pm. Few, if any, other colleges engage in mascotry and the few that do (primarily medical schools) don't have any organised rules.

However, there's a latent tendency for nicking things in most students, whether it's signs, glasses from pubs, street furniture or food from fridges. Although mascotry comes in for quite a panning from the general student body ('I'm not standing up for some scrappy lump of metal, it's so childish'), if it's done properly, cleverly and achieves its aim—raising money for charity—then it's as valid as any other club.

There's a mythology that has grown up around this activity and many apocryphal stories are to be had. For instance, did you know that RSM once stole Chelsea College's Anchor by blowing it out of the wall of their College with gelignite? Did you also know that they then buried the anchor in the King's Road? Has Mike really got 'QMC 1969' engraved on his shaft? Is Spanner Mk1 actually on the roof of KQC's Union Building? How many times has Theta been stored in the tunnels beneath IC? Is Davey kept in Kensington Palace? Is Mike really hidden at the top of the Queen's Tower (as KQC believe)?

For every embellished story, there are two real ones which are much more fun.

Guilds and Mines once kept the entire population of RCS barricaded into Chemistry for two days,

removing the trousers of anyone caught using the tunnels to escape.

During a dispute with Chelsea and QMC one year, it was decided to teach these lesser colleges not to mess with IC. Posing as a Chelsea student, a chap ran up QMC and told them of a planned raid on IC the following Wednesday lunchtime. QMC agreed to help in the raid (of custard pies etc) and a meeting place was arranged. Then Chelsea were contacted and told the same story by the same chap posing as a QMC student. Come Wednesday, and the two raiding parties were met and led to Beit Quad. Once inside, their contacts vanished, the gates were locked and hordes of students, rugby teams etc appeared armed with fire hoses, buckets of refractory slops and used oil. The ensuing battle resulted in the trouncing of QMC and Chelsea—College Security Chief Geoff Reeves was called, he took one look through the locked gates of Beit Quad, pronounced that he hadn't seen a thing and left again. QMC and Chelsea spent the next few weeks accusing each other of setting the other up.

Though this isn't strictly mascotry, it's along the same lines.

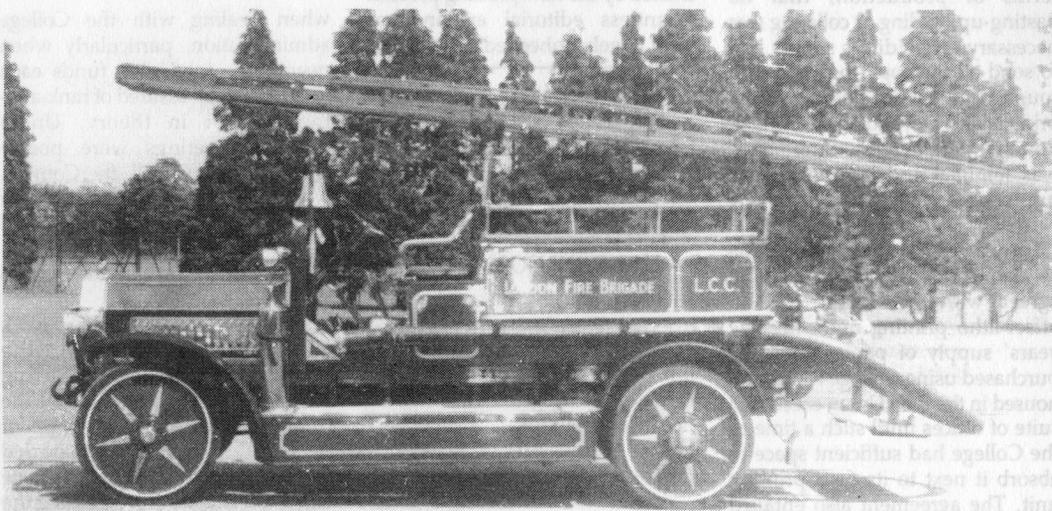
By and large, mascotry looks after itself. All attempts to formalise the rules, impose penalties and curb the somewhat chaotic nature of activities have met with limited success. Guilds and RCS accept the spirit of the game (evident from the pleasant nature of the S&B Treasure Hunt recently) and very rarely do things get out of hand. Mines are a slightly different bucket of haddock—they don't care about much, except maintaining their own identity and 'fair enough' to that. However, you've got to be a bit careful as regards Davey. No use

trying to take it by force, or overwhelming numbers because they're of the opinion that baseball bats are legitimate mascotry tools. The almost complete destruction of Maths Lecture Theatre 213 several years ago resulted from a small RSM contingent requesting the return of their mascot in their own inimitable fashion! To get a hold of Davey you need either a daft mistake on their part, unbelievably sussed plans or a small thermonuclear device. The last of these is an impracticality, the second is down to you and the first is just a matter of time.

When it comes to the crunch, Imperial is a unique place. We have unique traditions, a unique union structure and a uniquely eccentric air that sets us apart from the predominantly militant rest of the University environment. As the Sunday Times put it in its review of Universities a couple of years ago: 'Imperial is conservative, chauvinistic and boozy (Ladies Rugby!!)'

Mascotry may get a bad press at times, perhaps people feel that traditions are stupid and we should be concentrating on survival, but to destroy a society you first have to remove its identity and while such quaint pastimes as, for instance, cherishing some lumps of metal (where the penalty for not doing it properly is the generation of funds for a children's hospital) continue to be championed then I submit that we will live through the worst excesses of any government and outlast all those others who are frantically sacrificing their principles just to stay alive.

*Simon Banton, BSc ARCS
RCS Broadsheet Editor 1983-4
RCSA Record Editor 1988*



A fire engine with a shiny bell

Keep the Cat Free!

The FELIX Club, founded in 1975, was established to encourage fellowship between the past and present members of FELIX, and to act as a source of support for the newspaper. The Club has its origins in the campaigns fought against particular attacks by the Union on the freedom of the paper in the three years prior to its formation. The battles between FELIX and the Union were 'dirty, ruthless, underhand and bloody'.

In the following article, Mike Llewellyn-Williams, FELIX Editor 1974-75, recounts the developments which led to the clubs formation.

Origins of the Club

The origins of the FELIX Club, or rather the origins of the *developments* which led to the conception of such a club, can be traced to the beginning of the academic session 1974-75. It was a period of inexorable change in many ways, not least of all being the way in which FELIX was physically produced. The key event was the change from contract letterpress to offset-litho print production in-house.

Prior to this time, the newspaper

Clashes between the Editor of FELIX and the President of the Union are nothing new

had for several years been printed outside the College, which meant in terms of production, that no pasting-up, folding or collating was necessary. The Editors simply had to send all the copy together with rough page lay-out designs to the printers and they would do the rest. Editorial staff, in terms of numbers, was minimal and largely ad hoc; production staff was effectively zero.

Early in 1974, with printing costs escalating dramatically, the Union agreed with the College that an offset-litho printing unit plus five years' supply of paper would be purchased using College funds and housed in the then Union executives suite of offices until such a time as the College had sufficient space to absorb it next to its own printing unit. The agreement also entailed recruitment of two professional staff (to be paid for out of Union finances) and rehousing the Union Office in its current location (the old TV room).

It was further understood that the

primary purpose of the new unit was the production of FELIX (without any prejudice to the College's printing needs; it was, after all, the College's machinery).

Now with the Editor suddenly faced with the unprecedented prospect of organising the complete production schedule from start to finish as well as the more usual reporting, writing and editing, the drama started. In the first instance, the catastrophic rupture of the hitherto generally accepted work routine of the Editor (which was exacerbated by continual print-machinery breakdowns) went largely unnoticed.

Which meant that when FELIX was unable in the first instance to crack the enormous production problems encountered and as a result could not immediately maintain continuity in terms of content and 'up-to-the-minute'-ness, the newspaper was showered with criticisms which displayed total ignorance and complete lack of understanding of the new problems created by the new printing process. Countless editorial explanations went largely unheeded and nothing

The FELIX staff had developed into a closely knit group of partisans, united in their opposition to Union intervention

but hard slog, often working through the night, was keeping FELIX on the rails.

Enter key factor number two

The President and Hon Sec of the Union during 1974-75, in a coma of dizzy-heights grandeur, held the view that the entire Union membership should adopt a coherent, single-minded posture

when dealing with the College administration, particularly when negotiating for Union funds each year. Although assured of rank-and-file support in theory, Union General Meetings were poorly attended. Worse still, the Council, which held the Union's purse strings, was composed of irrational self-seeking factions. Hardly a basis then of presenting a united front to the College.

However, with a lot of hard work and persuasive acumen, the President succeeded in acting presidential at UGM's, wooed the Council factions to a pretence of unanimity and even bamboozled the interecine Constituent College Union Presidents into accepting the notion of collective responsibility within the ICU executive. So far so good.

The next step in the chain of events was the suggestion of the creation of a sabbatical Junior

Treasurer. And since the College was in no mood whatsoever to create a fourth sabbatical (the three existing ones were President, Hon Sec and FELIX Editor), this could only be achieved by taking the third sabbatical from FELIX and re-allocating it.

The President's timing for such a suggestion, with FELIX under fire and with the enormous problems created by the new printing process largely unperceived, was impeccable. For all the President's men, it seemed a logical extension for increasing union efficiency whilst simultaneously crippling a potentially dissenting voice in the political arena. For those of us on the FELIX staff, our superhuman efforts on the newspaper largely unsung, it amounted to a declaration of war.

And it was indeed a council of war that was called that night in the FELIX Office. Our retaliation tactics

were quickly agreed. they were nothing short of a strategic conspiracy which was to defend FELIX to the death if necessary!

The campaigning that ensued was dirty, ruthless, underhand and bloody. We were taking no hostages. And by sheer persuasion and force of argument mixed with

complete. And just as war can bring people together and bind them together in the heat of conflict, so this 'war' produced the indomitable fighting spirit which can create a unanimity of purpose. It was this spirit which would later be harnessed and would lead to the

similar nature also occurred in 1972/73 and 73/74 which clearly highlighted the Editor's increasing vulnerability to interference from self-important Union bureaucrats.

For those of us on the FELIX staff, our superhuman efforts on the paper largely unsung, it amounted to a declaration of war

The 73/74 programme of harassment of FELIX actually ended with the forced resignation of the Editor after just one term of office.

The 1974/75 dispute then effectively crystallised our intention to reduce this perennial vulnerability. In the spirit of 'Let us prevent FELIX from being threatened by the Union again', a policy of respectable entrenchment ensued.

One strategy was legitimately to enhance FELIX's image, essentially to 'institutionalise' it. The crest and Editor's honour board evolved as a result.

Another tactic was to position FELIX not just as a recorder of events, but also as a sponsor of events. Thus was born the annual FELIX motor rally and photographic competition.

The final strategy concerned staffing. It was agreed that ideally the newspaper's staff should spring from the CCU's. And if they were union officials then so much the better in terms of achieving a better understanding of FELIX's problems.

Nothing but hard slog, often working through the night, was keeping FELIX on the rails

Lastly, the idea of a staff tie was developed. It was to be a single red cat on a blue background, but the red was changed at the last minute to silver/white in token of the 25th anniversary of FELIX's foundation. It was shortly afterwards that the idea of forming a club arose.

The FELIX staff by now had developed into a closely knit group of partisans, united in their opposition to Union interventionism. Within that framework, the notion of forming a club along the lines of other IC clubs (an hence rekindling the spirit which was once enshrined in the old Scriblerus Club) took root.

The Club was to serve several purposes such as: an aid to staff recruitment; a source of ideas; a course of support; a vehicle by which old members could keep in touch with FELIX and each other; a promoter of good fellowship between members old and new.

Friday, the newspaper's publication day, was chosen as the day that the Tie had to be worn on pain of forfeiture of a pint. The Club was formally devised on an elective basis and thereby assumed an aspirational status for newcomers to the FELIX staff. Past Editors were considered automatically eligible for membership and the task of tracing



them across the globe was pursued with some notable success.

Since its formal foundation in October 1975, the Club has gone from strength to strength despite the odd bout of soul-searching and constitutional revision. Given the origins of the Club however, it's perhaps not really surprising that some of the older members can occasionally feel defensive with regard to the relatively unencumbered autonomy of FELIX which survives today because of their own vigilance and uncompromising persistence.

It will be the new members who will hold the key to the future

I certainly hope we all try never to lose sight of these 'fighting spirit' origins. In the final analysis though it will be the new members who will hold the key to the future and it is to them we must look for the maintenance of the institution we've helped to construct.

So, long may it flourish, and *Keep the Cat Free!*



the occasional hyperbolic threat, we won the day, in as legitimate a manner as any politician can claim to act in.

It was several conspiracies and

The primary purpose of the new unit was the production of FELIX

one highly acrimonious council meeting later that we were able to cheer 'Felicide averted' on the front page. Several more conspiracies, one working party investigation and yet another highly acrimonious council meeting, it was all over. The President and Hon Sec were isolated, beaten and thrashing about in defeat.

The FELIX staff got as pissed as rats that night. The triumph in the face of hostilities had been

foundation of the FELIX Club.

Clashes between the Editor of FELIX and the President of the Union are nothing new. They've happened several times in the past and perhaps one of the most publicised was in the session 1963/64. It started with the President disagreeing strongly with the sentiments of what the Editor had written in the newspaper, followed by stinging criticism from the Editor, then outrage from the President, then a rebuttal etc., etc. Fortunately for us, the 'freedom of the press'

The FELIX staff got pissed as rats that night

argument won the day and the President lost the face-to-face UGM showdown on the subject.

Major acrimonious disputes of a

SPEED

READING

"Before we meet tomorrow, you should read these few references." An enormous list of journals, dates and pages appears on the blackboard. You know damn well there won't be enough time to read them all as well as write up that lab report for tomorrow, but you might do it at the weekend...

The purpose of this feature is to help with such problems and perhaps to provide benefits in other situations. Having seen the title, you already know what the subject is - speed reading.

An improvement in reading speed provides many advantages, including the obvious attraction of being able to complete some course-work in record time. It could also mean being able to read one or more daily 'papers, as well as monthly journals and novels.

One benefit, perhaps unexpected, is that faster reading can lead to increased comprehension. Everyone is, no doubt, familiar with the following rather embarrassing situation:

Having almost finished a practical write-up, you find that you desperately need to read through an article in a past 'Nature.' You dash off to the library, find the required article, and start plodding through it, bored out of your skull. Eventually you come to the end and stop, trying to remember anything about what you've just read. Nothing comes to mind. What a waste of time! Oh well, back to the beginning...

This situation wouldn't arise if reading automatically meant comprehension of a text. Unfortunately it doesn't. And slow reading is more likely to lead to boredom than faster reading, which in turn, is more likely to lead to lack of concentration with corresponding lack of comprehension. Hence, by increasing reading speed, not only is text covered quicker, but comprehension is also enhanced.

In the following article, I hope to outline some of the causes of slow reading and also to present some suggestions that could improve your reading speed considerably.

Anyway, enough of why you should read this feature, and on with the show...

worth the work. The first thing to do is to cast your attention to the bookshelf. See a dictionary? If not, then you might consider buying one. For the rest of this discussion, it is assumed that you do have easy access to one. A thesaurus is perhaps less useful to the reader,

to avoid interruption. The word is then referred to in the context of the original text, hopefully fixing its meaning firmly in the mind.

Probably the improvement method of greatest return is one that can not be fully covered here; it involves learning lists of pre suffixes found in many 'speed reading' or 'vocabulary training' books. Such lists, once learnt, allow immediate comprehension of words built from a root with attached prefix or suffix.

For example:

*extra- means outside or beyond
terra from the Latin means earth
So extraterrestrial (ET come home!) means 'occurring beyond the earth'*

Also apparent from this example is that the Latin you may have unwillingly studied during secondary education is actually useful. In fact, lists of common Latin or Greek roots are often presented alongside the lists of pre/suffixes.

"Using these techniques, and after some practice you may find your reading speed increases 400% or more"

VOCABULARY

A limited vocabulary, although a problem in itself, can lead to other difficulties detailed below. Unable to understand fully some word or phrase, our natural reaction is to stop, think, and re-read the offending section. This tendency to back-skip and re-read text is, as explained below, symptomatic of deeper problems regarding poor eye movements while reading. Improving your vocabulary will, then, cure many problems at once.

The small effort required to improve your vocabulary may seem daunting, but the results are well

but is invaluable to anyone wanting to write.

Tried and tested methods for expanding vocabulary include attempting to introduce a new word daily into conversation. Despite sounding good in theory, this idea is not so practical for the average IC student; it might be useful to know the meaning of 'sarcophagus', but to use it in a quantum mechanics tutorial may prove to be a little tricky...

Rather more practical is the idea of referring to the dictionary upon encountering an unfamiliar term while reading. Note that the most beneficial way to do this is to skip the unknown word on a first reading, then look it up at the end

EYE MOVEMENTS

Now onto some of the mechanics of reading, and in particular the eye movements taken when reading a piece of text. Surprisingly, the eye only sees properly when actually fixed on an object, and so when reading, your eyes jump along lines of text in a series of small hops. Although it may feel as if they are moving smoothly across the page, this is not the case.

The situation is further complicated by the backward leaps

The lever snapped off. The ship twisted sharply
and rocketed upwards. The crew were hurled...

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

The lever snapped off. The ship twisted sharply
and rocketed upwards. The crew were hurled...

your eyes make when back-skipping. This activity can be either conscious or unconscious; in both cases your eyes move backwards through text to continue reading from a point 'upstream' of the current reading position. Clearly this action is wasteful, and, as explained below, it is also unnecessary most of the time.

The typical eye movements of a normal reader are shown in Fig. 1. This diagram shows the small leaps taken across lines of text with the superimposed back-skipping movements, the length of which may vary from one word to a sentence to an entire paragraph.

The first obvious step in improvement of eye movements is to increase the length of the basic eye-jumps. Initially, this must be done consciously by forcing yourself to jump over a group of words, pausing, and then taking another leap. This action is shown in Fig. 2.

Clearly, in taking such long leaps over the text, you are relying on peripheral vision, that is, the ability to see outside the optimum field of vision. When the eye is fixed on a word, you can see, and recognise words on either side of the point of focus. Fast reading exploits this ability; advanced speed-readers can move their focus down multiple lines of type when reading a newspaper column, and still fully comprehend what they are reading.

Probably the greatest hurdle to overcome when initially trying out this lengthening of your eye-jumps is the fear that you are not understanding the text. At first, your leaps should be relatively small; larger jumps come with practice. As far as understanding the text is concerned, don't worry, you probably comprehend more than you may consciously think.

After some practice, this new method of reading will become second nature, and should provide the first positive signs of an ability to read quickly. Gradually, the length of the jumps taken can be increased and the time spent pausing between leaps can be

decreased. Combined with the elimination of back-skipping, these techniques can lead to considerable speed increases.

BACK-SKIPPING

Conscious back-skipping can be avoided quite easily; even if you think you haven't followed the author's argument over the last phrase/sentence/paragraph, DO NOT skip back to re-read it. You have probably understood the section fairly well - at least well enough to continue reading without having lost the thread. Studies have been made on this point with the result that people who allow themselves to backskip do not perform appreciably better than non-backskippers in comprehension tests.

Unconscious backskipping, by its very nature, cannot be directly stopped. To eliminate this habit, reading speed must be increased to the point where there is no time for the eyes to wander round the page.

SUBVOCALISATION

Subvocalisation - 'speaking' the text to yourself - derives from the method used to teach reading to infants. In primary school, we are taught first to 'read out loud', and then, when we get a little bit older, we are told to 'read quietly to ourselves.' At this stage, the action of speaking may be performed by the mind, with the mouth still moving to form sounds. Gradually the habit becomes subconscious, though it usually remains into adulthood.

The habit of speaking text in your

mind can slow down reading, but it is thought that it can never be completely dispelled - only pushed further into the subconscious. The further back it is pushed, the less intrusive it becomes, and so the faster reading can be performed.

SKIMMING

Skimming means quickly looking over a text to grasp the general concepts being put across. The related action of scanning is looking over text in order to find a particular point, or, in the case of many research papers, to find the end of the waffly introduction and the start of the important section.

By skimming a text, as explained below under 'previewing', you automatically gain some understanding, so that reading can proceed relatively quickly. Some authorities even recommend flicking through an entire book, eye fixed on the middle of the pages as they fly past, in order to be able to read it more quickly! (Dunno whether I believe that 'un gov.) Certainly, previewing a text is well worth the effort.

PARAGRAPHS

Paragraphs are, in a well written piece, assembled with a well-defined structure. The first sentence usually summarises the rest of the paragraph or gives the next topic of discussion. An expansion of this topic follows, with the final sentence sometimes linking into the next topic to carry the reader through the text.

Within the overall structure of a text, the first and last paragraphs are

usually the most important; the first giving a summary and the last a conclusion. However, the first 'real' paragraph may not be the first paragraph of a piece if the author feels the need to begin with a helping of waffle. Magazine or newspaper articles such as this are usually split into smaller paragraphs than those found in books. In this case, it may be the first three or four paragraphs that give a summary of the text.

PREVIEWING

Previewing a text, that is getting a basic understanding of the ideas to be presented, relies heavily on the writer's skill. First, the title and any subtitles should be read to get a feel for the overall structure. The first paragraph is then read, followed by the first sentences of other paragraphs. At this stage, you know the author's main points and are almost ready to begin a first reading. First though, quickly skim the whole text, and then start reading from the beginning.

With practice, the whole procedure will take less time, and lead to greater comprehension, than simply ploughing your way through the text from start to finish.

CONCLUSION

Using the above techniques, and after some practice, you may find your reading speed increases by 400% or more. The important point to bear in mind is that there is no miracle cure - practice is necessary, and the more you practice, the faster you will become.

If you are interested in the subject of speed reading, I would recommend Speed Reading by Tony Buzan for further reading.

by Steve Meyfroidt

View From



View from a Bridge is a series of opinion articles by the 1987-88 Union President about life at College; the rights and wrongs of how it is run, the personalities within it and its future within the British education system.

This series does not intend to pull any punches, it will annoy a number of people, especially those who deserve it, but also a number of the author's friends. It will doubtlessly damage the author's relationship with the College and the Union and two of the articles may in fact affect his degree result. The material within the series is solely the opinion of the author and does not represent facts unless they are implicitly stated to be so.

If you have any desire to write in response to these articles, please do so but remember that it may be wise to ask for the Editor to withhold your name from the letter. The author does not intend to reply to any letters written regarding previous articles but is interested to hear other people's opinions.

Nigel Baker

Although the best candidate for the job at the time beating his 'joke candidate' opponent by a vast majority and showing all the potential to be an extremely good leader of the Union, Nigel Baker appears to think he is the Union. The megalomania virus which appears to have taken control of our President has resulted in him forgetting who put him in office and who can oust him if they're not satisfied. Mr Baker informs his Council of his actions rather than asking their opinion in advance. He appears to take advice from very few people and rarely fraternises with students.

The Union Office is run as an efficient new package with a marvelous wrapping of bureaucracy all tied up in pretty red tape. New 'self help' schemes have been established; 'you want a minibus, well what do you expect me to do, pull one out of a hat? Here's a telephone directory, go and find one yourself'.

One student who had a complaint about a Union trading outlet was sent to a random location in College; this new procedure was called 'passing the buck'. The Office now closes at 5.30pm with no exceptions,



Diplomat Extraordinaire, Sydney Harbour-Bridge addresses the United Nations on the subject of this year's sabbaticals.

Mr Baker seems to have forgotten that most students are timetabled until 5.30pm. My belief was that the Union was there to provide a service for the students to help them find their way through the jungle of bureaucracy thrown up by College and London life and not to provide a training ground for up-and-coming bureaucrats.

Nigel often treats his Deputy President with contempt, ridiculing him in front of staff and students whilst obscuring much of the Union's work from him. There is very little doubt in my mind that much of the lack of action on the part of the DP is due a distinct absence of encouragement from his peers.

So what has Nigel D Baker done this for? Well so far Nigel's aim of having an Office with as few

students in it as possible has not in fact encouraged anyone to take up the posts of Welfare Officer or External Affairs Officer and as a result much of his time has been spent in Welfare.

This year the Welfare Committee has not been called, even though it is bound by its articles to meet at least once a term, nevertheless Nigel has managed to spend a large quantity of that Committee's budget on a series of campaigns and a questionnaire for which expenditure was not authorised by any committee. Furthermore, he has managed to appoint a Welfare Adviser at almost double the cost of the one that left, negotiating a lucrative deal with College that cost the Union a sizeable society room and around £7,000 a year ad infinitum.

Nigel has also worked in the area of accommodation, where it appears he has rubbed a number of the College wardens up the wrong way.

It is what Nigel has not done that really demonstrates the potential of the man in national party politics.

Still on the matter of accommodation, Nigel managed to totally ignore the complaints regarding rent levels emanating from the queue of students outside his office. It was not until a bemused student fell through Ian Morris' door thinking it was the way out and explained that there was a brick wall sitting in the President's chair that something eventually got done.

The topic of Athletics poses the question of why the President ignored a paper passed by Council last year aimed at defining the Union's ownership of Harlington Sports Ground, the three million pound gravel fund and certain other facilities, whilst allowing a totally different constitution to go all but unquestioned at the Athletics Committee.

The External Affairs Committee has not yet met this year even though we have seen the onset of the student loans scheme, a commitment from the Union to become involved in the 1990 Council elections and the fact that it is bound to meet three times a term.

The situation concerning the merger with the Union at St Mary's seems to have deteriorated further following Nigel calling the St Mary's President 'a big fish in a small pond' and a merger now looks unlikely for at least a year.

We must ask why our President has not acted decisively concerning student loans and the effect it will have on this College? Why did he support the ULU President who was in favour of many of the present Government's policies on education and why is he not acting as he agreed, in an aim to oust Tory Councillors from the local Council to aid College planning permission? Perhaps his personal politics are hindering his ability to represent his students fully?

At the same time deep down Nigel is a hard working, dedicated and extremely capable Union President, whom I once would have considered a good friend. Presently I fear for his future as his

bureaucratic and self-important attitude not only loses him the support of many of his Officers, but the involvement and support from students and staff in the Union. A great deal more discussion of what are generally good ideas and important issues would be a step in the right direction. Nigel D Person, all is forgiven.

Bill Goodwin

Bill suffers from one of two unfortunate problems either he is too nice a person or he is an out and out coward. I find the latter rather hard to believe considering his outspoken nature, a side of his character we have not seen very much of last term. FELIX is an extremely important commodity in the running of the College. It manages to keep the system in check, keeps a large number of people on their toes and reminds all of us that we are still human, we make mistakes no matter how important we are.

FELIX is here to spread news and keep the public interested in the running of their own organisation; a little bit of scandal is always good for involvement. Its ability to point rumour and hearsay is also very important so long as it does not damage someone's reputation. If rumour was not printed, then a number of people in very entrenched positions in College and the Union would be able to get away with anything. That little hint of fear that it produces in everyone in College helps to stop outrageous things happening.

This year Bill has failed to grab the bull by the horns and investigate stories to the embarrassment of those concerned. It is my belief that Bill has been too soft on too many people, especially the sabbaticals. I am sure that in part this is a kick-back produced by the over-zealous behaviour of last year's Editor and the legal wrangles she found herself in over libelous material printed in these pages.

Bill has not had an easy time. He broke the mould when he got the job and, having found his feet, he finds an over-zealous President breathing down his neck threatening to rewrite everything in FELIX.

This is partly of his own making. If he had not been so nice to these people at the beginning of term over matters such as the Union refurbishment he would not have the problem.

Bill has also put too much emphasis on being involved in every area of the production of FELIX. True it does produce a good looking FELIX, but does it produce and interesting read? I, for one, would far prefer to read something

that intrigued me and made me want to see next week's issue.

The FELIX Editor's job is to edit FELIX, not produce it almost single-handedly. A FELIX Editor must cut the dross and print the scandal. Bill has it the wrong way round.

Bill must learn to delegate to allow himself more time to stick his nose into other people's business and let the students have his opinion in a revealing editorial that has been well researched. This is what Bill is excellent at.

Ian Morris

It is very hard to be critical of anyone in this job, as it is totally new. What is true of all the sabbaticals is that they only have one year in which to achieve as much as possible before they find themselves prematurely cut short. Ian, although working hard, does not appear to be working at a rate suitable to achieve the world in one year.

The Hon Sec (Events) is responsible for Entertainments, Rag, industrial relations, sponsorship, publicity and campaigns. As yet the Industrial Relations Committee has not been established, let alone met. It now has a sizable budget, but no financial regulations under which to utilise this budget.

Under campaigns Ian is responsible for the planned Human Rights Week which first underwent a drastic reduction in size and was then scrapped altogether. This may be due to the fact that it was unfeasible or that ULU hindered its development too severely last year, but I believe it is because Ian Morris has no interest in the subject matter. Ian must realise that representing the students means you must represent their desires whether you agree with them or not. On the other hand the Union Entertainments this year are running more regularly and successfully than in many years gone by. The Charity Monopoly planned for the summer is being received enthusiastically by students and the outside world alike. The Union is looking at new forms of entertainment, recently the Union Building has been unduly full of women and it looks as though a number of national sporting events will generate their own TV parties even though Ian can't fit his new big screen telly into the lift.

At the same time, Ian has donned a white hat and silver plated 45s to become the students' hero taking up the causes of student rents and student loans with considerable effect when his fellow sabbaticals have all but ignored them.

We could see an outstanding year from Ian if he pays a little more attention to industrial relations rather than sexual relations!

U.R.O.P.

The **Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP)** gives undergraduates the opportunity to participate in the research activities of Imperial College staff and postgraduates. It is entirely voluntary and is open to all undergraduate students. Participation will give you a chance to:

- learn at first hand what research is about;
- contribute to knowledge in a field of research;
- further interests you have already developed;
- cross disciplinary boundaries;
- get your name on a scientific publication;
- get a flying start on your final-year project;
- get a useful summer vacation job.

How to Join

The scheme operates on a first-come-first-served basis through the UROP Directory which gives full details of the scheme. The 1989 Directory will be published early in January. To get a direct-mail copy, complete and return the slip below.

Delaware Exchange Scheme

Under an exchange scheme with IC and the University of Delaware, USA, you have the opportunity to join their UROP for 10 weeks work in the Summer of 1989. They give a grant of \$1500 and on-campus accommodation (costing about \$400). Complete the relevant section of the slip to receive further details.

To Dr Sinclair Goodlad, UROP Office, Room 440 Mechanical Engineering Department.

*Please send me a copy of the 1989 UROP Directory when it is published.

*Please send me details about the Delaware exchange scheme.

NAME (block letters).....

DEPT/YEAR.....

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ULU TRAVEL



The Dressmaker

British films are as good as any in the world. At least the good ones are. If you have any doubt, this should change your mind.

The Dressmaker takes us back to the end of the war. The people of Liverpool are still suffering the oppression of rationing and wartime regulations. As such they live in the shadow of the affluent American GI's though with small worry of impending doom as was felt in earlier times.

The title role is taken by Joan Plowright. She represents all that is the moral and stern remnants of Victorian England, in the form of Nellie.

Cohabiting in their two-up-two-down terraced house is Margo (Billie Whitelaw), Nellie's sister.

She is an amorous middle-aged woman with all the bounce and modernity of a Glenn Miller tune.

Rita (Jane Horrocks) is their 17 year-old niece. While desperately attempting to grow up she remains a product of her aunts upbringing. Relentlessly she approaches a rendezvous with the pitfalls of adolescence.

Together the three form a contented family. Only a contrasting view of men can separate Nellie and Margo. Rita maintains a confused stance in between.

Opportunity to resolve her bewilderment arrives when Wesley, a GI appears. Love rears its ugly head. As the relationship develops, yet refuses to blossom, the conflict of opinion threatens to disrupt the family ever further.

The story is not complex in any way. Written in 1973 it earned authoress Beryl Bainbridge a Booker Prize nomination. The world in which this tale is set is simple and identifiable,

populated by easily recognisable characters. The cast are accessible to all but the most blinkered of audiences.

Quickly drawn into their lives we are obliged to remain, to observe the full extent of Wesley's intrusion, the path is sorrowful but fortunately one scattered with much humour.

The exploration of feelings and accompanying perplexity of hopes and fears inherent in a first love is a theme to which we can all relate. The protection felt and dependence built are often misleading. We can see where it is all heading and sympathise fully with Rita, who can't.

The Dressmaker is an engaging piece of cinema. There is possibly not enough feel for the city itself but otherwise the film is largely flawless. This is an ideal way to rekindle a few fond teenage memories, and a fairly entertaining way of passing an evening.

Andrew Clarke



Bartholemew Fair

A 3¼ hour play may seem excessively long to some; a recipe for boredom perhaps. However, the National Theatre's production of *Bartholemew Fair* never flags for an instant. At least you get your money's worth! Don't miss it.

Originally written in 1614, the play has been transposed to Victorian England. *Bartholemew Fair* was a festival celebrated annually since 1113, when Henry I gave a grant to hold it. In the play, the enormous cast (over 50 people) dance around the stage in a sometimes bewildering array of vulgar and outrageous scenes. Two respectable married women become whores (one of whom is pregnant); a widow is determined to marry a madman; a clergyman in pink women's underwear shares the stocks with an undercover judge; greasy Ursula (Mark Addy), the pig woman of outrageous proportions flounders about on stage; the culmination comes with an x-rated puppet show.

The whole cast performs so well that it is impossible to pick out any one actor from the rest for their performance. Possibly the star performer is the stage itself: ingenious, versatile and colourful, William Dudley's multi-faceted set creates a turbulent fairground atmosphere. A different backdrop to each scene was produced so fluidly so as not to divert from the motion of the play.

This production is staged at the National Theatre, South Bank Centre. Performance dates vary, the Box Office telephone number is 01-928 2252. Prices vary from student standby at £5 to £14.

David Robbins and Wendy Kite.



First love, first loss

The Making of the Representative for Planet 8

Philip Glass Doris Lessing

Whilst opera can encompass many subjects and musical styles it generally includes singing and some dramatic action to keep us entertained. *Planet 8* has virtually no action, a trek through an ice-field is hardly rivetting stuff, and

no one really sings a song as such. Instead the dialogue is spoken and the chorus intone melodically or otherwise 'to add to the musical atmosphere' or so it says in the notes.

Philip Glass, for those who have never come across him is a minimalist, and his music involves three or four note arpeggios repeated incessantly until the third flautist makes a mistake and the rest of the orchestra follow him into a different arpeggio. Hence the music 'progresses'. It is hypnotic, atmospheric and at times distinctly tedious, even if you like this sort of thing. Thus *Planet 8*

has fewer tunes than your average Lloyd Webber fart, but we get recurring themes which made me wonder if I was watching one three act opera or a one act opera three times.

Doris Lessing is an authoress who writes 'consistently refusing to accept restrictions on her subject matter'. To be unkind she is a communist, feminist, science fiction writer and in *Planet 8* she used all these traits to the full.

The plot to *Planet 8* is simple. Paradise planet suddenly gets cold and everyone dies except one (The Representative). There is a wall, a guardian from another planet and a wicked glacier which

rolls around the stage like a demented Python creation, gobbling up the natives. The lighting is atmospheric (must stop using that word) but three hours of subdued ice-bound effects is monotonous and I came out longing for sunshine.

This controversial opera has much to recommend it. There are two intervals and the ice cream is very nice. It has now finished its inaugural run in London but despite universal critical approval, sold out swiftly and is bound to surface again at a later date. An experience, even if only for the killer glacier.

C.D.L.



Dead Ringers

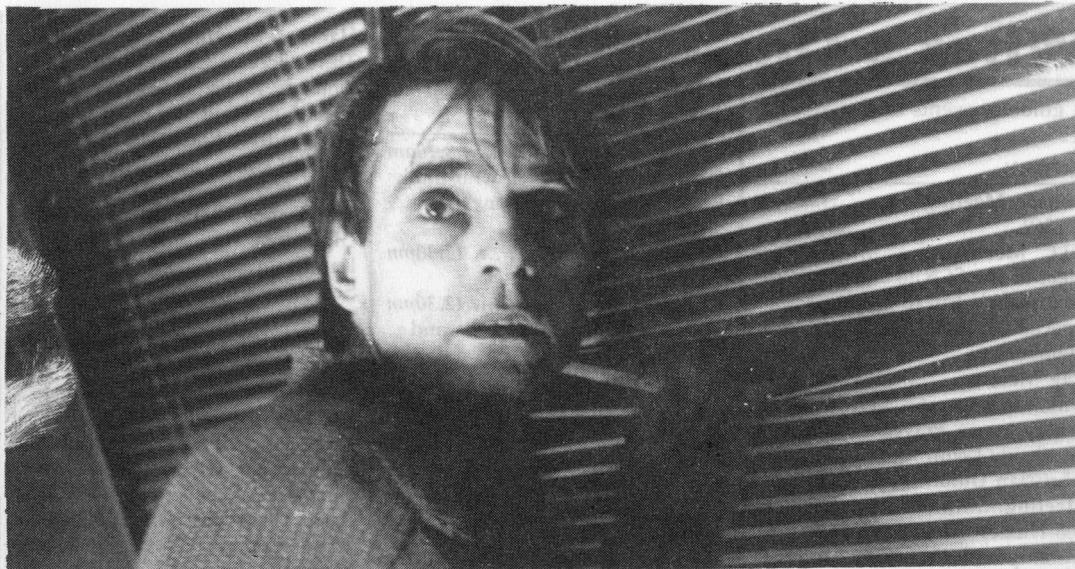
The Mantle Twins are inseparable. Elliot and Beverly are their names. From the off they take identical paths to gynaecology practise, starting at an early age with grisly toy operating equipment, continuing through medical school, culminating in a joint specialist surgery in Toronto.

Bev has always been the studious type. Elly is rather more flamboyant. They play a game of deception as only identical twins could, each using his own charisma and persona to achieve what both want. Together they form one complete entity.

French-Canadian actress Claire Biveau stumbles into their lives. 'Tell me about my uterus' she demands over dinner, and so begins a love tangle destined to disrupt the happy existence the brothers have.

Beverly falls in love. The woman provides and irresistible comfort despite, or perhaps because of, her extraordinary mix of strangeness ('I need to be spanked. I'm bad'). It is solace away from Elly though and thus the wedge is driven in.

For the first time in their lives



The taxi has arrived.

a separation occurs. The anger, confusion and madness which ensues slowly tears them apart.

The twins are played by Jeremy Irons (*The Mission, Brideshead Revisited*). He does the job wonderfully showing a diversity and competence which marks the real ability of the man.

Genevieve Bujoid (*Coma, Tightrope*) though headlining with Irons never shows more than a supporting role. She is completely outshone by the leading man and the technical accomplishment.

On the surface *Dead Ringers* is

a thriller dealing in relationships and the depths of closely related psychologies. Beneath are one or two lessons, if you care to look.

It is Bev, the scholar, who sees all things in black and white, with no understanding of his brother's feelings during his period with Claire. Although his life collapses more dramatically when he loses the girl it is he who copes substantially better when all events within his experience fall into boxes which he may label.

Conversely Elly follows a volatile lifestyle which is

destroyed only when his most fundamental ingredient is removed.

Ignore these subtleties of character if you wish. *Dead Ringers* opens a touch slowly but remains compelling viewing. It is both tense and sad, distinguishing it from director Cronenberg's previous snuff movies, *Scanners, The Fly*, etc.

This is not the most cheerful movie on release, but it is worth a visit just the same.

Andrew Clarke



Moonwalker

The magic of the cinema and the magic of Michael Jackson combine to blast the movie audiences of the world with a musical and visual feast, interlaced with enough supreme acting to collect every Oscar imaginable and one or two you've probably forgotten all about.

Well...that constitutes something of an exaggeration. It would be more accurate perhaps to say that *Moonwalker* is a string of videos vaguely attached to each other by a bemusing storyline of stupifying simplicity.

Sit back and enjoy the journey into Michael's mind. By all means tap your foot to the boogie-woogie tunes but don't ignore the point (points, there are several) of this film.

An opening sequence of video clips imparts a retrospective of the musical life which we know so well already. The first lesson we are presented with is that Michael

is absolutely fed up of being chased.

In fact this becomes a motif of the movie as we see a repetition of chase sequences. Firstly through a parody of *Roger Rabbit's* Maroon Toon Studios, where all the speaking parts are taken by people in outrageous plastic masks, perhaps in an attempt to make Mr Jackson's look more human.

Later we have hot pursuit through a topsy-turvy world reminiscent of *Batman's* Gotham City. In amongst, just to hammer the message home, is a new song *Leave Me Alone* accompanied by a video of the style favoured by Prince and Monty Python. This statement of irritation at the hounding received from the press is one of two highpoints in the film.

The other is the video sequence for *Smooth Criminal*, which gives first airing to the next message. Michael it seems has no objection at all to gratuitous violence if it's against the baddies and well choreographed.

Another one of the pop guru's ideologies is that drugs are bad. Now here's a moral stance worthy of some vinyl and a glossy

promo but this instead turns out to be just the obligatory narrative.

It does allow some further shooting and killing and leads to the most fundamental revelation yet. Michael Jackson is, in fact, a spaceship. More than that he is that annual Christmas favourite, a Transformer. His alter egos are Robocop and a sports car, his clever disguise is that of overtalented megastar, this time without sequined glove and sporting designer finger bandages instead.

Michael zaps the baddie and flies off into space, only to be hit by a shooting star.

And as sadness descends on the house and we mourn our hero's departure a tiny voice assures us that happiness will prevail. Our final lesson is that if you wish on a star you too could find yourself at a Michael Jackson concert.

Ultimately it's just another ninety minute music video. While *Rattle and Hum* is merely offering a chance to relive the full glory of a U2 concert, *Moonwalker* gives a ringside seat in Jackson's imagination. As you explore this realm you begin to wonder exactly how you got here, though

not necessarily where the exit is.

I left feeling a little perplexed and worried that Michael Jackson might actually believe all this stuff. Someone tell him please.

Andrew Clarke.



Man, Machine or Michael?

What's on

What's On

A guide to events in and around IC.

FRIDAY

- Consoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
ME569.
- GLC Meeting**.....12.30pm
Meet in the SCR to sign up for next week's trip to Ronnie Scotts. Special admission for GLC members £5.
- Rag Meeting**.....12.45pm
Union Lounge. All welcome.
- Friday Jamaa Prayer**.....1.00pm
Southside Gym.
- Christian Union Meeting**.....5.30pm
308 Huxley. Time for prayer, worship and discussion.
- Poetry Readings**.....6.30pm
University of London School of Oriental and African Studies Room G57.
- 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 Mass**.....11.00am
West London Catholic Chaplaincy, More House, 53 Cromwell Road. Also at 6pm (followed by bar supper). All welcome.
- Wargames**.....1.00pm
Senior Common Room. All Welcome.
- Kung Fu**.....4.30pm
Union Gym. Beginners welcome.
- RCSU-Night in the Bar**.....7.00pm
Union Bar.

MONDAY

- Rock Soc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Come along and have a good time.
- Artsoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Sign up for shows. Membership £2.
- Yacht Club Meeting**.....12.30pm
Upstairs in Southside.
- Recitation of Holy Qur'an**.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens (Basement).
- Improvers Ballroom**.....6.00pm
JCR. 80p.
- Beginners Rock 'n' Roll**.....6.45pm
UDH. 80p.
- Advanced Ballroom**.....7.00pm
JCR. 80p.
- Karate**.....7.00pm
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.

- 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.
- Boardsailing Club**.....12.30pm
Southside Lounge.
- Audiosoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Cheap records and tapes etc.
- Roman Catholic Mass**.....12.40pm
Mech Eng 702. Mass followed by lunch. 50p.
- Ski Club Meeting**.....12.45pm
Southside Lounge. Interested in learning to ski? Already hooked? Want to try racing? Come and find out more.
- 3rd World First**.....1.00pm
4th Floor, Env Tech, 38 Prince's Gardens.
- Beatles Hour**.....1.00pm
For all the best Beatle and Beatle-related material on Cd with Spenser Lane.
- Qur'an, tradition of Prophet**.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens.

- Amnesty Meeting**.....5.30pm
Brown Committee Room (top floor Union Building).
- Meditative Prayer**.....5.45pm
Chaplain's Office, 10 Prince's Gardens. Come and join us for some peace and quiet. See West London Chaplaincy.

- Wine Tasting**.....6.00pm
SCR. £2.50. See Wine Tasting Soc.
- Beginners Ballroom**.....6.00pm
JCR. 80p. All welcome.

- Judo**.....6.30pm
Union Gym. All grades. No more complete beginners.

- SF Soc Film**.....7.00pm
ME 220. 'Robocop'. 50p to members (membership £1.50).

- Karate**.....7.00pm
Southside Gym. Beginners welcome. Build your fitness and confidence.

- Intermediate Ballroom**.....7.00pm
JCR. 80p.

- Caving Club Meeting**.....7.00pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Everyone interested should come along.

- Improvers Ballroom**.....8.00pm
JCR. 80p.

- Mountaineering Club Meeting**.....9.00pm
Southside Upper Lounge. Beginners always welcome.

WEDNESDAY

- Building Blocks**.....12.30pm
Mech Eng 702. A course in Christian Education run by West London Chaplaincies. Everybody welcome. Lunch provided for only 75p.
- 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.

- Audiosoc Meeting**.....12.30pm
Union SCR. Cheap records, tapes etc.

- Ski Club**.....12.45pm
Southside Lounge.

- Debating Society**.....1.00pm
Room 341 Maths (Huxley).

- Arabic Lessons**.....1.30pm
9 Prince's Gardens. See Islamic Soc.

- 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.

- IC Choir Meeting**.....7.30pm
Mech Eng 342. Join IC Choir.

- Judo**.....6.30pm
Union Gym. No more beginners.

- Soup Run**.....9.15pm
Meet West Week's Hall Basement (back by 11pm).

Smallads

ANNOUNCEMENTS

● **Japanese Society**, please contact K Yokota, Mech Eng PG, ext 6265 or K Kameko, Physics UG2, for details.

● **Winesoc's** first meeting will be Tuesday 17th Jan, featuring five red and white wines from the Rhône Valley.

● **Bean's Club** meeting, 8pm, Southside Upper Lounge.

● **GLC** trip to Ronnie Scotts on Friday 20th Jan. Sign up today in the JCR at 12.30.

● **Beginners** car mechanics course. We need 20 people and a

teacher to get started. Anyone interested contact Jo or Nicky (C pigeonholes), Centre for Environmental Technology, 48 Prince's Gardens, extn 7219 or 7206.

● **Biologist** urgently wanted for Oxford University expedition to tropical forest during Summer 89, preferably botanist. Isable Carballal (Life Science 3 pigeonholes).

● **University of York** reunion weekend for former students and staff on Friday June 30 to Sunday 2 July 89. Please write to the 25th Anniversary Office, University of York, Heslington, York YO1 5DD.

LOST & FOUND

● **Found** near keep fit lockers on December 1. Casio F-87W, Water Resistant watch. Contact Phil Chandy, Room 354, Falmouth-Keogh Hall or via the Keep Fit pigeonholes.

FOR SALE & WANTED

● **Down** filled waterproof jacket with hood, extremely ward, will fit 40 inch chest, ideal for hiking or mountaineering. £40 ono. Contact Steve Madden on ext 5192 or via Elec Eng PG letter racks.

● **Escort 1.3L**, S Reg. Sound and reliable car. £650. Contact Tim Woolman via Mech Eng UG pigeonholes.

● **BMW 2002**, L reg, low mileage. £950 ono. Phone Masoud Mansouri, Linstead Hall, Room 327, 589 5111 ext 9480.

● **Amstrad CPC 6128**. word processor. £200. Contact Masoud Mansouri, internal 9480.

● **Salomon SX90** ski boots size 360. £20 ono. Contact J Biddle, Biochem 3 or Ski Club.

● **Bicycle** urgently needed, contact V D Aschaleris, Elec Eng 3 pigeonholes.

● **BMW 323i**, S reg, very good condition, £2,000 ono. Contact E Doussis, Mech Eng PG pigeonhole or call 735 5658.

ACCOMMODATION

● **Girl** wanted to share double room in quiet mixed flat. Gunnersbury tube. £167p/m including some bills. Phone 995 4409 or contact J Scott, Civ Eng 2.

● **Single room** in West Kensington flat. £42 per week plus bills. Tim O'Donnell or Gregor Bates via Physics pigeonholes.

PERSONAL

A1 Highway Robbery Service contact RCSU Office. Milk floats our speciality.

● **Godawful**—watch this space if you want to see the Boggin again.

● **Save whales**—they can't save themselves.

What's on in Ents

First of all there's the Carnival on Friday 13 January which I'm sure will be detailed elsewhere in this issue. Doors open at 8.00pm and there will be a happy hour until 9pm. The ticket price is good value even just to see the band, *The James Taylor Quartet*, never mind the rest of the activities.

On Saturday January 21, the first rugby international between Scotland and Wales will be shown in the Union Bar on the 50" screen. The Bar will be open for the duration of the match and there will be food available. The other internationals will be shown on Sat February 4, February 18, March 4 and March 18.

On January 22, the Superbowl will be on in the Union Lounge starting late with refreshments served throughout the night. This will hopefully be attended by a large contingent from the American Institute for Foreign Study.

The first of the regular bar quizzes will begin on Tuesday Jan 24 and will be repeated every other week after that. Teams of up to four can enter for only 50p per person. Prizes include cash and drinks.

Thursday January 26 sees one of the biggest events IC Union has ever dared to put on: a professional wrestling tournament in the Great Hall. There will be four male bouts and a female one, with competitors supplied by the company that

provided ITV with its wrestling programme. Tickets will be £2.50 and £4 for ringside seats. Don't be put off by any preconceptions, go along because it's an absolute scream.

On February 10, Silwood Park are having a Valentine's Party and coaches will hopefully provide as per the Bonfire Night. There will be two live bands, a disco and a bar extension.

The Hyde Park Relay will take place on Saturday February 18 and along with Rag the competitors will be collecting for BIBIC. They will gather in the Union Building for a huge party with a bar extension and a very paltry ticket price.

As a result of ULU's resolve on the Poll Tax, we decided that rather than having a one day shut down we would hold a 'Stuff the Poll Tax Carnival' in the Union Building on Wednesday March 22, the last day of the Spring Term. This will give everybody the chance to spend the money they would ordinarily reserve for the Community Charge on having a good time—you know it makes sense.

Besides all of the above, there will be regular Ents gigs on Friday evenings (showing the best small bands in London for ridiculous prices) and free discos every Wednesday night.

Have a good term.

Ian Morris, ICU Hon Sec (Events)

ENTERTAINMENTS WHAT'S ON

Friday 13th

★CARNIVAL★

Wednesday 18th

★FREE DISCO★

In the Union Lounge

Saturday 21st

★RUGBY INTERNATIONAL★

Showing in the Snack Bar, Bar open all through the match (free)

Sunday 22nd

★SUPERBOWL★

Showing in the Lounge, food and drink available (50p)

Tonight is the Carnival night

Tonight, in the Union Building, IC Ents are putting on a Carnival to welcome everybody back this year.

The flyers in this FELIX show the times and places where everything is going on, but I'll take this opportunity to run through what's happening.

Bands. Headlining are the unmissable *James Taylor Quartet*. What can I say? The band started off playing television theme tunes such as *Mission Impossible*. Last year they signed a major record deal with Polydor, and the recently released *Starskey and Hutch* theme took them well into the top 100. The band are on the brink of success and play some of the most dancable music around.

Supporting are *That Swing Thang*—a Scottish band who play swing and jive, recently featured on TV on New Year's Eve.

Theatre. Don't worry if you're thinking this will be a bit heavy. The *Contagious Performance Company* are doing a comedy show to tie in with AIDS awareness week. It's very funny and well worth popping in for.

Comedy. Very funny stand-up/clown and comedian Pierre Hollins starts off the evening—a highly amusing man.

Casino. Roulette, Blackjack etc. Many pounds worth of prizes to be won—collect your vouchers on the front door.

Film—as it's Friday 13th, it had to be a late night horror film—*Friday Night* will be shown.

Disco. IC Ents Disco till the early hours in the Lounge.

Breakfast. If you're still around late on, pop into the UDH for something to eat and some coffee.

Transport. Free transport home for women, departing at regular intervals from Beit Arch—times will be shown on the night.

All this plus happy hour 8-9pm in the Union Bar, cocktails upstairs, burgers in the quad, and a Rag cloakroom in the Union Office.

Finally, just a reminder—don't forget your Union cards. You'll need them to get in, but you can sign other people in with them.

Have fun,
Paul Watkiss, Ents Chair.

Freedom!

FELIX & FELIX Club Social Programme

Present Ice Skating

Friday 16 Jan at 6.30pm

Meet in the FELIX Office

Cheese Tasting with Wine

Friday 20th Jan at 7pm

in the FELIX Office

All welcome!

"The action proposed by the AUT is perverse on several counts." *Professor Eric Ash*

IC To Suffer Exam Disruption As AUT Action Continues

The Association of University Teachers (AUT) have started a nationwide boycott of student examinations after its salary negotiating body, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), refused to make a pay offer last April for 1988.

The AUT claims that the salaries of its members have fallen by over 20% in real terms over the last decade. This will lead to increasing problems in retaining, recruiting and motivating high-calibre academic staff, they say. A spokesman for the AUT told FELIX, "students of the year 2000 will be getting a much poorer deal."

In reply, the CVCP withdrew from negotiating a salary increase on 9th December 1988 and has now told Vice-Chancellors throughout

final results of their action are still uncertain.

The 23rd Report

In 1986 the AUT and the CVCP agreed a pay package which both sides agree was designed to bring academic and related staff's salaries in line with those in the private sector. The '23rd Report', as it is known, agreed a pay rise of 16% on the 1st December 1986 and an increase of 7% on the 1st March 1988.

The CVCP claims that this package covers pay rises up to and including 1988/89. A spokesman for the CVCP told FELIX that it was agreed in 1986 that there would be no pay rise in 1988/89. The AUT refutes this, saying that the 23rd report also contains a section which

of departments reported that student examinations would not be affected by the action. Union members gave a different view in some cases.

The head of the Civil Engineering Department asked his policy advisory committee to decide whether exams could be held at the beginning of this term. The committee, on which the AUT is not officially represented, concluded that it would be detrimental to the students if exams were delayed. At the end of last term the Head of Department informed third year students whose exams were scheduled for earlier this week, that exams would go ahead as planned. When the AUT asked the Head to delay the exams at the beginning of this term, he informed them that he felt it would be unfair on students since he had already told them that exams would go ahead. The AUT members in the Civil Engineering Department have indicated that although the exams have taken place, they may not be marked.

In the Biochemistry Department, a secret ballot has indicated that the action has widespread support. Students on one course have been warned that although examinations will be set, they will not take place or be marked. An AUT member from the Biochemistry Department told FELIX that a number of departments had not held secret ballots but had held a simple head count by the Head of Department. He complained that this was unreasonable since Heads of Departments "decide who gets promoted and who gets blocked."

The Computing Department has also balloted its members, and an AUT member told FELIX that action would be likely.

Other departments, including Physics, Electrical Engineering and Pure and Applied Biology told FELIX that they did not envisage any effects. Many departments, however, were reluctant to discuss the action.

The Rector has expressed his disapproval of the AUT's action in a letter to the Times on 7th December

the country that they may take action against staff who take part in the dispute in one of three ways: they may deduct staff's wages; summarily dismiss them; or send them home without pay, since AUT members taking part in the action will be in breach of their contracts.

Last Friday an informal meeting between the CVCP and the AUT considered a 3% rise for 1988. This was later dismissed by a formal meeting of the CVCP which it felt that any offer would be so small that it would only inflame the situation. The CVCP claims that there is simply not enough money to give a pay rise for 1988. A spokesman for the CVCP told FELIX that, "there never was any question" of a pay rise for 1988-89.

Students at Imperial College are likely to be affected by the dispute. Specifically, AUT members in the departments of Computing, Biochemistry and Civil Engineering have agreed to participate in the boycotting of exams although the

recognises that a further pay increase should be necessary in 1988/89, although the report makes no financial provision for it.

Having fulfilled the financial requirements of the 23rd report, the CVCP is currently holding informal meetings with the Department of Education and Science (DES) regarding pay rises for 1989/90.

The Action at Imperial

The Rector has expressed his disapproval of the AUT's action in a letter to the Times on 7th December. Signed by several Vice-Chancellors, the letter ends by saying, "we cannot, in conscience, support such action and would appeal to all our colleagues to honour their contracts and their obligations." A letter following this pointed out that Professor Ash had not suggested any alternative form of action to an exam boycott in his letter.

In a brief survey of the departments by FELIX, many heads

Nice Mr Northey Stocks Students' Rooms

It is estimated that over £3,300 worth of trays have 'gone missing' from College Refectories recently. Refectories Manager, Mr Rob Northey was unable to explain the loss. 'If I knew where they were going,' he said, 'I would be retrieving them.'

He estimates that over 1,000 pieces of cutlery have met with a similar fate this term, and told FELIX, 'at the beginning of term we stock up all the student rooms.'

And Finally...

The prestigious Charles Brereton Memorial Handicap singles snooker tournament has been won this year by Pravat Bhattachayya.

In a tense final, Mr Bhattachayya snatched the £30 prize from his opponent, Brian Kerr on the last ball of the frame.

The winner was presented with a six inch wood and plastic trophy by the late Mr Brereton (R.I.P) who then dragged him into the FELIX office for an interview.

The shy and overawed winner sat cowering whilst Mr Brereton repeatedly insisted that he be interviewed.

Mr Bhattachayya eventually commented 'Look at this trophy. I mean - well I'm overawed.' Then refusing all offers of hospitality the winner departed adding 'I should have been in lab three quarters of an hour ago.'

roof raising thrills and spills on JAN

FRIDAY 13th (THE CARNIVAL)

featuring

BANDS

THE JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET
That Swing Thang

THEATRE

Contagious Performance Company

& COMEDY, CASINO, DISCO & FILMS

plus BAR TILL 2am, food & cocktails

FREE BREAKFAST

FREE TRANSPORT HOME

FOR WOMEN

TICKETS £2.50«adv»

£3.50«door»

DOORS OPEN 8PM

IMPERIAL COLLEGE, PRINCE CONSORT ROAD., SOUTH KENSINGTON

FRIDAY 13TH (THE CARNIVAL)

	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	
CONCERT HALL	/		that swing thang	/		JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET	/	
U.D.H			/			Contagious Performance Company		
S.C.R	/				CASINO			
LOUNGE			comedy	DISCO				/
PLUS	HAPPY HOUR	bar extension til 2am				/		
		cocktails in crush bar						/
		r.c.s burgers in quad / rag cloakroom in union office				/		