

RAGE

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about RAGE:
a counter-zine for freshers.

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rageofmaidens@gmail.com

Rage: *a violent passion; sometimes used collectively.*
Examples: *rage of maidens, 1486; of teeth—Bk. of St. Albans, 1486.*



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A CAPITALIST HISTORY OF BLOOMSBURY

BY ANGELA WITHERS

IN THE 1370S, KING EDWARD III ('THE LEOPARD') GAVE THE LAND KNOWN AS 'BLEMUNDS FEE' TO THE MONKS OF THE LONDON CHARTERHOUSE. THEY LEFT THE LAND ALONE, RENTING IT OUT TO SMALLHOLDERS. BLEMUNDS FEE, LATER TO BECOME BLOOMSBURY, REMAINED AS RABBIT WARRENS AND GRAZING PATCHES.

With the dissolution of the monasteries (1536-1541), the Church's land was stolen by the king and given to the gentry. The monks of London resisted this expropriation of their lands. Enclosure happened nonetheless: the prior of the Charterhouse was hung, drawn and quartered at the gallows in Marylebone, and the rest of the monks were thrown into Newgate prison. Thomas Wriothesley, Chancellor to Henry VIII, ambassador to Brussels and general state bureaucrat, was given the lands of the London Charterhouse, and made Earl of Southampton in 1547, as a reward for his services.

Lord John Russell was similarly made Duke of Bedford in 1551, and the lands of Woburn (a small Saxon village just off the M1) were gifted to him by Henry VIII. John was also given the Benedictine Abbey of Tavistock in Devon (along with its surrounding villages and lands), and the gardens of the Convent of Westminster Abbey (Covent Garden). With this acquisition, the Bedford estates became substantial.

During the 17th century, in Britain, the fervour for religious dissent spilt over into outright rebellion against the King. The establishment of the English Commonwealth brought the Protestants into a new political framework. Things calmed down upon the King's return. In 1669 Bloomsbury (still mainly rabbit warrens) passed over to a family whose colonial wealth turned it from a rural commons into pleasure gardens. The daughter of the Earl of Southampton married William Russell, 4th Earl of Bedford. They knocked down the Russell family mansion on the Strand (which overlooked the estates in Covent Garden) and moved everything to Bloomsbury, laying out Southampton Row to connect the stretches of the estate.

The 4th Duke married the daughter of the Earl of Gower, Tory MP, in 1737 (more marriages, more street names). Gower and Russell became politically and financially powerful Whigs (Liberals), and exercised huge sway during the imperialist wars, which secured for the British state the land which is now the Eastern half of Canada and the United States, the Caribbean and Senegal. The



boost in the economy of slaves, gold and sugar was headed up from the mahogany tables of the Bloomsbury estates. And with colonialism came the British Museum.

Whilst the revolutionary war waged in America, Bedford Square became a set-piece of classical residences for the gentry. And as the British state colonised the tip of Africa, the London Institute was founded by a group of protestant 'dissenters', aspirational and patronising bankers, merchants and colonialists. Not long after the Institute's establishment, a group of Liberals decided to take this idea one step further: in the creation of a University which would not only educate but also award degrees to non-Anglican men; somewhere which wasn't Oxford or Cambridge, yet still maintained the royal monopoly.

In 1823 the banker George Birkbeck founded a school for the education of working men, and in 1826 James Mill and others established UCL. In 1836 the University of London was created and given another Royal Charter to grant degrees to the students of both UCL and Kings College London, UCL's newly established Anglican rival. Meanwhile, John Russell, Duke of Bedford, became the Prime Minister.

The ailing and unpopular King George IV, in financial strain, no longer wanted to pay for the upkeep of the grand collection of manuscripts and early printed books amassed by his predecessors, and donated the volumes to the British Museum, in the process creating the King's Library.

In the 1850s (as Karl Marx scribbled away in this new library) industrialisation and empire soared. Colonial universities were created in Australia and India through the University of London's external program; this was concurrent with the establishment of the first Bachelor of Science degrees. They disposed of the core classical education, and opened the way for the biomedical supremacy of UCL.

The copper mines near the town of Tavistock brought in millions of pounds, and Gower Street and then Bedford Way were laid down, until the whole area was a complex of blocks and squares. From the mines to the classical squares, the ordering of science and Empire interwove between the British state, capital and the colonies, making up the tapestry of the new university. It was also at this time that cables were passed under the Thames, new networks



of electricity and power criss-crossing the city.

Power shifted away from the gentry and to the new capitalist class in the 1867 Reform Act, and a parliamentary representative for the University of London was created. In the 1870s, this delight in bourgeois freedoms extended to women in Bloomsbury and those throughout the other cities of Britain, and the college of extramural studies was founded in 1876. Women were finally brought into UCL on equal terms with men in 1878. Early for universities; a bit late for humanity as a whole!

Edward Holden MP, expressed in 1902: "University competition between states is as potent as competition in building battleships, and it is on that ground that our university conditions become of the highest possible national concern."

The Russell family continued (amid the profits from sexual subjugation in Covent Garden, and the toils of labourers in heavy industry) to reshape their lands in the parish of St Pancras until the end of the century. But the family influence ended in 1911 due to death duties. The bureaucrats were standing by, ready.

Sidney Webb MP, at the close of the 19th century, founded both the London School of Economics and the socialist Fabian Society. A part-time student at Birkbeck and then at Kings College London before becoming a barrister, Webb married into money and concentrated on his political career. In 1929 he became Secretary of State for the Colonies under the first Labour government. Webb ensured that the University of London became a teaching as well as an examining university. Unsure about the Russian revolution, but an ardent fan of Stalin, he saw centralisation and bureaucracy as the gifts of the Labour parliamentarians, as much as a move towards egalitarianism. The concept of precarity and hierarchy within the university was not alien to him. Here's Webb in 1902:

"We must abandon the simple ideal of equality, identity or uniformity among professors, whether of tenure or salary, attainments or duties, time-table or holidays. The principal professors, on whom mainly we must depend for research, should, of course, have life tenure, high salaries and abundant leisure, whilst the bulk of the university teachers required by so extensive an undergraduate population as that of London will necessarily be engaged for short terms, earn only modest salaries, and work at times and seasons convenient to those whom they serve."

Welcome to zero-hour contract land.

Richard Haldane's influence stretched even further. After WW1, the Government decided, based on his advice, to find a permanent location for the University of London, near to the British Museum. It just needed the Duke of Bedford's assent. In 1926, while millions of British workers went on strike, Bedford pulled out of the deal.

The man who eventually secured Bloomsbury for the University was William Beveridge, then Director of the LSE, and future architect of National Insurance. In 1927 he returned from a trip in America with a cheque for £400k from John D. Rockefeller, oil magnate and richest man in the world. In 1911, while the Duke of Bedford had been surrendering much of his estates, the biggest company in the world, Rockefeller's Standard Oil company, had been broken up under US anti-monopoly laws. Two of the subsidiaries were Exxon and Mobil, and another progenitor was a massive charitable endowment policy.

With the profit of oil and railroads under its belt, the first task for the University was the construction of Senate House. Between 1931 and 1937, Senate House was under the reigns of a young architect called Charles Holden, who described himself as an anarchist-communist. A Quaker and a student of arts and crafts socialists, Holden hoped Senate House would reflect 'the beauty in the soul of man in the industrial age.' He revelled in the poetry of Walt Whitman and wanted the building covered with sculptures by the avant-garde Jacob Epstein. He thought of Senate House as a building without style: a timeless functionary for its 900,000 books. As war broke out, the study of Africa was added to Oriental studies, and spies were trained in SOAS's new buildings.

Whilst capitalist powers combusted each others' cities, the new Senate House building was turned over to the Ministry for Information. Being the second tallest building in London the roof was used as an observation point. But the post-war recession meant that Holden's designs for Torrington Place had to be curtailed; there wasn't the money available to enclose all four sides in grand modernist stone-work. Instead, the brick and steel buildings were erected around the central strip of Torrington Place to house ULU, Birkbeck and the Warburg Institute.

Nonetheless, while Atlee's Labour government began to implement Beveridge's 1944 report on creating full employment and secure national insurance (bringing with it a full and free state administered education system) compulsory purchasing powers brought in by the state after WW2 were used to force more land

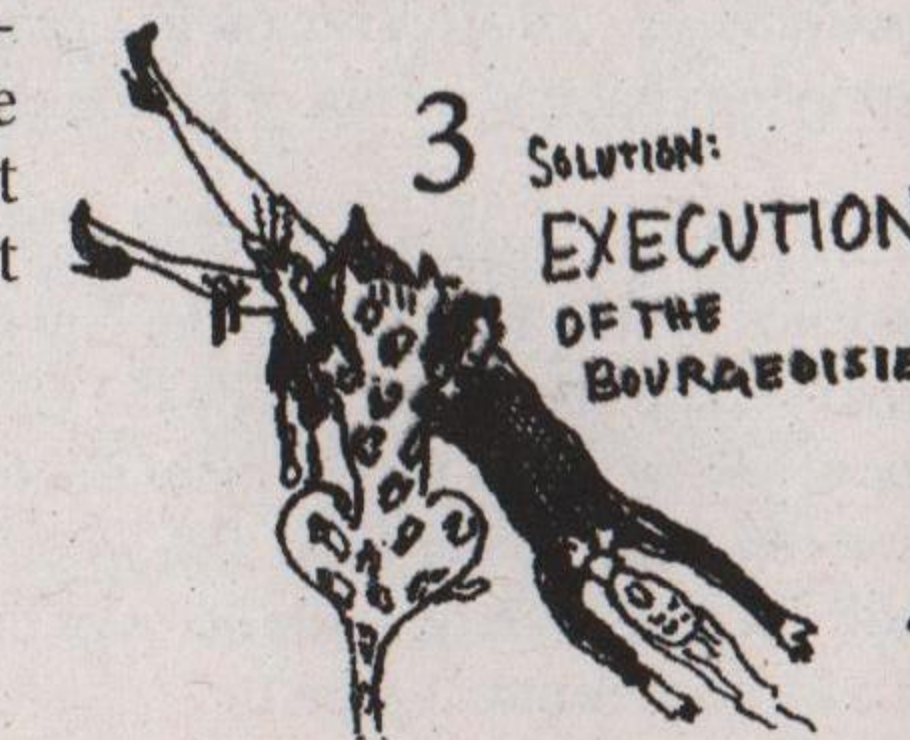
away from the clutch of the Bedfords in favour of the University, making a total of 35 acres of prime educational real estate between the Euston Road and the British Museum.

The 1940s brought more specialist institutions: Advanced Legal studies, Commonwealth studies, new places for the expanding civil service to train. The University MPs were abolished in the astutely named 'Representation of People Act'. The Robbins Report went further in its battle of people vs university: everyone, it boldly states, should have a free education. UCL acquired a Space Science Laboratory in 1966 and the new Collegiate Theatre raised its curtains as the student revolts swept through Europe and London in 1968, as barricades burnt for the sake of the Robbins Report's principles.

In the 1970s, the lands of Woburn Abbey were converted into a safari park by the 13th Duke of Bedford, showing off the rare animals picked up in dilettante travels of his ancestors. While the beasts are caged and tamed, UCL gets hooked up to the first version of the Internet, the US military ARPANET, run through a Norwegian satellite.

As Thatcher comes to power, another figure of hate and vitriol is created: the University of London Vice-Chancellor. Industry is crushed, anti-union legislation increased, and a new layer of precarious agency workers formed. Balfour Beatty - one of the largest construction companies in the world, formed out of, whose money can be traced back to building submarine cables under the Thames in the 1850s, and importing bitumen - is to become the employer of over 300 precarious workers at Senate House.

In 1994 the University eats up the smaller specialist institutes into the Schools of Advanced Studies; at the same time a group of elite university chiefs meet at the Russell Hotel and form the Russell Group, a cartel of fee-fixing and polytechnic quashing. The war between the universities reaches a peak in the new millennium, as Imperial attempts (and fails) to takeover UCL; in 2006 Imperial splits from the University of London, and awards its own degrees. UCL gains that ability a couple of years later, leaving the University of London to stand as an exiled partner in a long forgotten dream. Senate House starts to rot from the basement up.





Malcolm Grant,
The University of
Scrooge.

and his hound Rex Knight

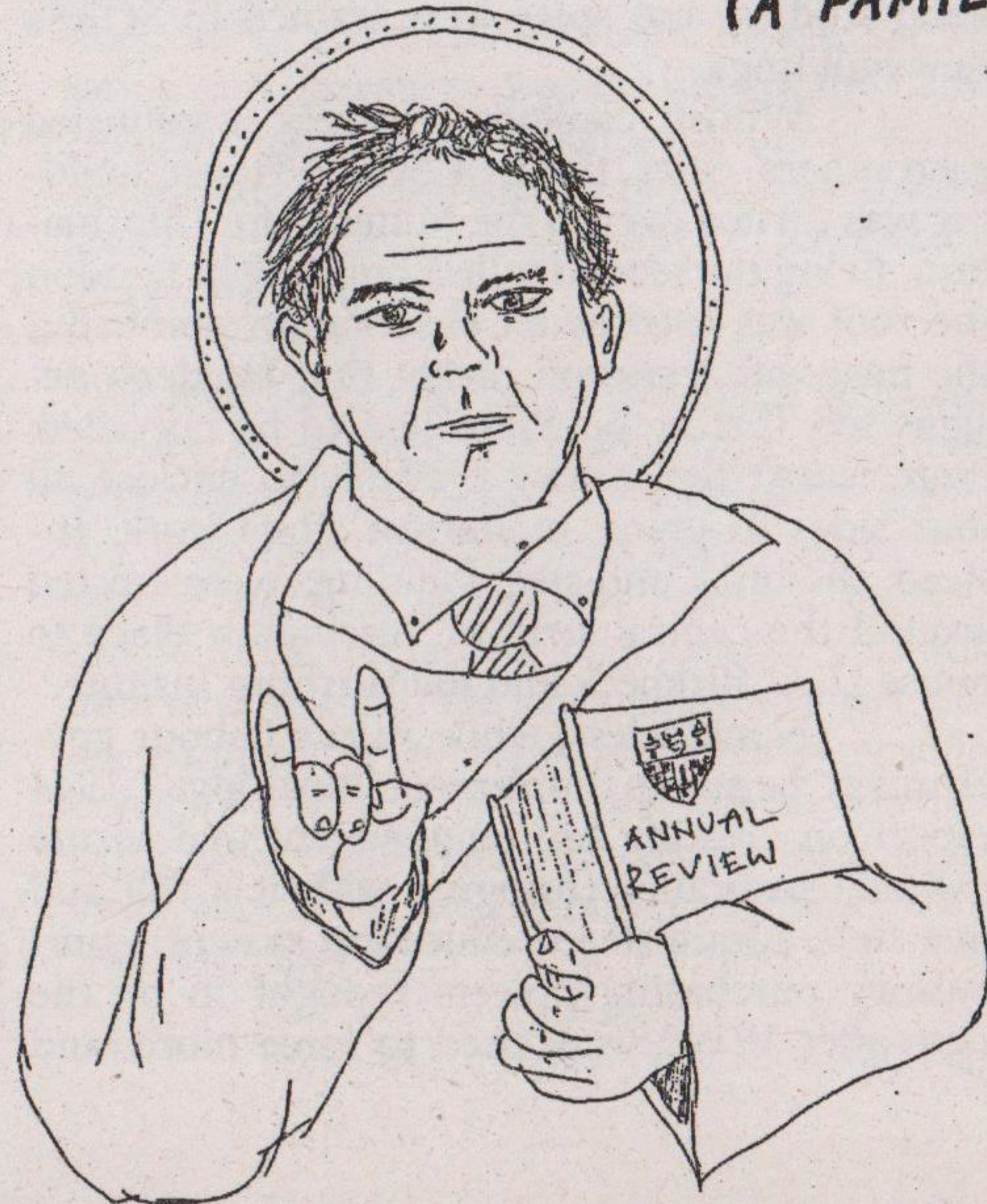


David Latchman, Our Saviour

DAVID LATCHMAN IS THE LORD AND SAVIOUR of the part-time students who make up the main constituency of Birkbeck College, the once-radical institution where he is called 'Master'. When his disciples approached him, worried about the impending rise in fees, he chided them: "Have faith, I have spoken to Two Brains, the God of Higher Education, and he has promised you eligibility for loans just like full-time students. Take heart, this debt to be laid upon your shoulders will open doors to better jobs and bigger incomes." When asked to take a stand against the HE reforms, he answered with humility, "One more man standing up against this injustice will make no difference, but will cut me off from my special connection to the Divine Willets."

In the 2009/10 Euangelion of the College, commonly known as the Annual Review, the honour of penning the last page was given to Lord Browne, who extolled the virtues of his Review of HE. Following an occupation of the Council Room by disgruntled Birkbeckians, Master Latchman has ensured that new security systems were put into place, including a ban on all others from using his Personal Water Closet. In his spare time, Latchman is also a Trustee of University Workhouse London, which essentially means that *in joyless toil we trust*.

The University
Chancellors
(A FAMILY)



MALCOLM SCROOGE WAS MANAGER of the University Workhouse London, and was the highest paid workhouse manager in all the land. He had turkey for breakfast and Bollinger for dinner. But he paid his servants - the cleaners - a poverty wage, and so one day, the cleaners went to Scrooge's Gower Street mansion and asked, very meekly, for a wage they could live, and feed their families, on. Scrooge put his gnarled fingers in his ears and tried to ignore the cleaners. Students harassed him in the street; intellectuals condemned him in the papers. When he was surprised at dinner by a journalist, he bawled, "PAYING THE CLEANERS A WAGE THEY CAN SURVIVE ON IS A LUXURY I CAN'T AFFORD!", spraying champagne out of his moustachioed nose.

Three ghosts visited him that night: the Ghost of Conscience, whom he ignored; the Ghost of Protest, whom he spat on and sent away; finally the Ghost of Public Humiliation, and he could ignore them no longer, and he promised the cleaners a living wage. But when Christmas came, they still lived in poverty, while Scrooge lived in luxury.

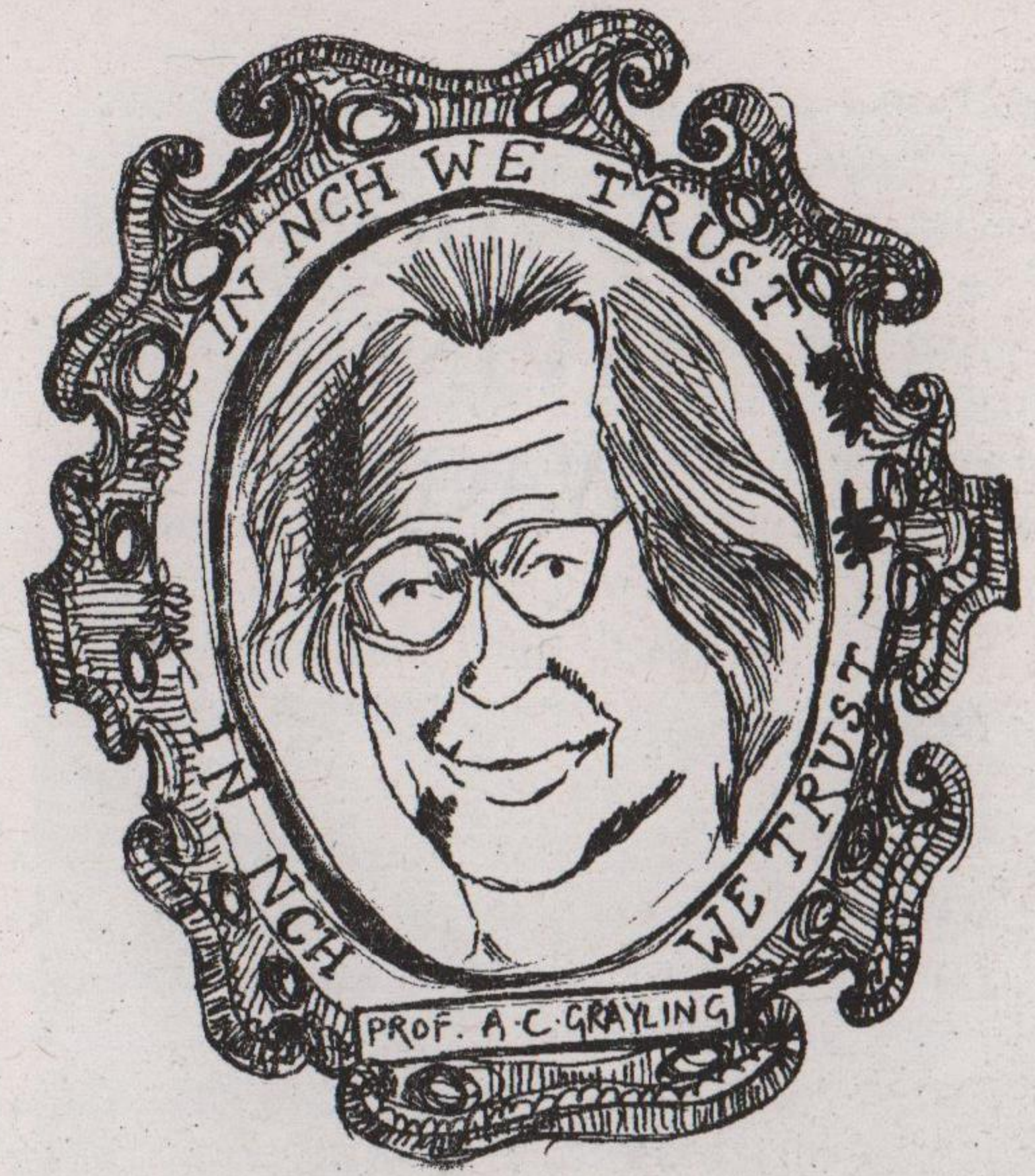
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KEITH O'NIONS, HEAD VEGETABLE.

KEITH O'NIONS IS THE HEAD VEGETABLE (also known as 'Rector') of Imperialist College London. He was once Chief Scientific and Adviser to the Ministry of Offence. An apologist for all forms of scientific output leading to more and more lethal weaponry, he is also known to emit his tear-jerking fumes in his capacity as Non-executive Director of Finmeccanica UK and Advisory Board Member of Serco Defence, Science & Tech, both highly non-violent organisations that promote world peace.

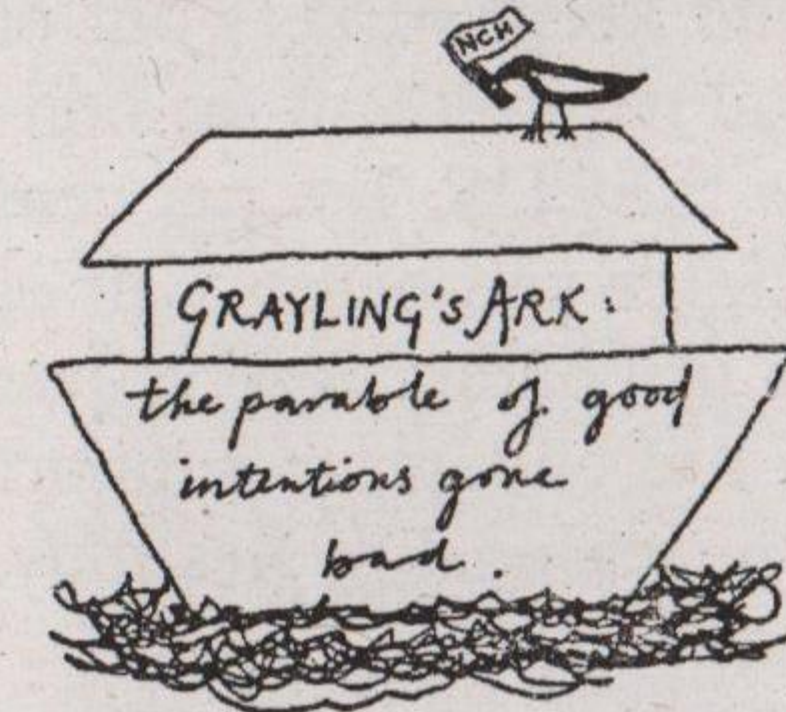
As Head Vegetable, he is a firm believer of the US-style (Corporate Farmers) Market in education, and urged the government to not only raise but remove the £3k cap on tuition fees, as he believes that higher education should operate just like selling fresh food -- the organic shops like Imperialist should be able to charge multiple times higher for their superior products compared to the ordinary run-of-the-mill grocers like the Post-1992 Chain of Stores, such as London Meat and Roehampton. Imperialist College seceded from the Universal Stores of London in 2007, and enjoys a monopoly on gourmet education in the fashionable area of Kensington, known for its exquisite dining options, including by candlelight and with classical music.

of London
of Vice
PORTRAIT)



"A.C. Grayling has withdrawn from this event in order to prevent inconvenience to UCL and to allow the discussion to focus on the subject of the meeting rather than being diverted to other concerns. Professor Grayling is making contact with

those concerned about higher education to talk with them directly about the matters that would have distracted attention here."



THE LORD BROWNE CAME TO ANTONY GRAYLING in a dream. "Public education displeases me, for it is sinful and polluted by the working class," he hissed, "I shall send a flood against the public universities, to purge them of their sinful egalitarianism." And he disappeared, in a puff of foul-smelling smoke. A deep fear took hold of Antony; with the covers pulled over his head, he debated what he should do. He resolved to gather two of every education animal (celebrity professors, young lecturers, posh Eton kids, and even the deserving poor) aboard his New College of Humanities, and there to preserve the Light of Learning in the new dark age. But as Antony began his noble enterprise, The Lord Browne, standing behind him, let out an evil laugh; the New College pleased him greatly: a private, for-profit institution, backed by venture capitalists, costing the princely sum of £18,000 a year; in short, another nail in the coffin of public education. But the people of Bloomsbury were wiser than Antony, and they saw the true implications of his private enterprise. He was hounded from the land by leopards, now lives in permanent exile, afraid to show his shameful face in public.

LONDON LIVING WAGE

BY MEG GROAN

THE LONDON LIVING WAGE (LLW) IS A WAGE-RATE AGREED BY THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY (GLA) AS THE "BARE MINIMUM" NECESSARY TO SURVIVE IN THE CAPITAL. IN THIS MUCH, THE NAME IS PERHAPS A LITTLE MISLEADING. WE WOULD DO BETTER TO THINK OF THE LLW AS THE BREADLINE - A SURVIVAL WAGE, AND NOT SOMETHING THAT LOW-PAID WORKERS CAN TAKE OR LEAVE.

Despite the failure of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) to keep workers out of poverty, it is not a legal requirement for London employers to pay the LLW. Ten per cent of the full-time workforce and nearly half of all part-time workers in London receive less than the living wage; not enough to support dependants, eat even reasonably healthily, and keep on top of rent.

In June 2011, Boris Johnson announced that the appropriate rate from 1st October would be £8.30 per hour, up from £7.80 the previous year. The GLA revises the rate yearly using a formula originally established ten years ago by economists in association with The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO - now part of London Citizens and Citizens UK) using the Retail Price Index and assuming that low-paid workers would receive all welfare, benefits and tax credits that they are entitled to.



The prices of travel, rent and food continue to climb in London, as under-/unfunded students we feel the hit. But less

often do most of us stop to consider the impact this has on those who work in our universities. Those who clean our toilets after us, serve us our lunch, or maintain our security while we study.

Many workers who slave away in these jobs have trouble making ends meet at all. In the UCL Living Wage Campaign we've heard from workers who have spent time while working on campus living in homeless shelters, unable to feed their children, and living an otherwise precarious existence. Meanwhile the Vice-Chancellors and managers of our universities enjoy six-figure salaries and see their salaries increase by double digit percentages, in bad times as well as good.

There is a reason that certain groups of workers suffer such exploitation. Typically they work for agencies on sites owned by different companies or institutions, rather than for those organisations directly. Queen Mary is the only part of the University of London where a majority of cleaners work "in-house", for example, having brought them back in in 2008.

Agencies are brought in to operate services which were once performed efficiently enough in-house - searching for ever higher profit levels, they have to scrimp and save somehow: almost without exception, to the expense not only of service provision, but at the expense of the workers who perform the work necessary for everything to run smoothly.

Of course it doesn't have to be this way. Even in spite of the recent spending cuts, our institutions thrive, putting aside eye-watering sums for senior management salary packets and appealing but unnecessary regeneration projects. One way to try and re-gain some level of dignity in work would be to stop outsourcing services to private companies, and bring the workers already outsourced back in-house.

Most universities in London have agreed to pay the LLW. In some places workers actually receive it - in Queen Mary, SOAS, and Birkbeck, for example. Elsewhere Vice-Chancellors have made empty pledges to begin to

start paying the LLW "soon" - 2012 in UCL, 2013 in Senate House and University of London halls. It shows the managers' disconnect from the real world that they think kids of Bloomsbury workers can wait that long. One year is an awfully long time to go without food on the table.

In some places workers have even been screwed over by the elusive LLW promise. Cleaners at UCL are facing their shifts being halved; meanwhile cleaners, security, and maintenance staff who continued to work directly for UCL were outsourced this summer. Fears that their wages may soon prove unnecessarily high to their new employers would not be unfounded.

Even where workers are fortunate enough to receive the LLW, they don't get the full "package", as London Citizens call it: sick pay, m/paternity leave, pension rights, a decent holiday allowance, compassionate leave, and appropriately rewarding over-time pay. Very few cleaners, catering workers or security staff in Bloomsbury receive such privileges. Unfortunately these conditions, often even more crucial than the LLW rate itself, are often forgotten by groups like London Citizens and less active trade union branches.

One other facet of the LLW which London Citizens presses for is the right to collectively organise and belong to a trade union. Despite begin protected by law, these rights are systematically violated in the industries in question. Around Bloomsbury alone we have seen two cases of victimisation of trade union-activist cleaners, including Juan Carlos Piedra at UCL who was originally disciplined for protesting when ISS¹ collaborated with the UK Border Agency to aggressively detain and deport cleaners from SOAS - after they had organised and were successful in their fight for the living wage there.

In spite of this, the past year has seen an increasing level of anger and militancy among cleaners across London. From the City of London Guildhall to Senate House, cleaners

¹ not the International Space Station, as you might reasonably have thought, but 'Integrated Service Solutions', or 'Integrated Solutions Services'. Whichever. We couldn't find out on their website.

have organised themselves, often with help from the radical union Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and taken unofficial industrial action (most often "wildcat strikes"²) against their employers. Small but significant successes have been won - at Guildhall, workers won recognition for their new union, and in Senate House cleaners won back three months of over-time pay that had been unlawfully withheld from them.



Photo of Cleaners during the victorious wildcat strike at Senate House on 1st September 2011

With any hope we will see this sort of activity continuing to grow across London. Workers' pay and condition has been systemically and systematically attacked for years, and now many are beginning to realise that they must defend themselves. Unfortunately the struggle ahead will remain long and hard, as most bosses are unwilling to sacrifice their own salary increases for the welfare of their staff. But with the help of students and other staff around Bloomsbury, the battle can be won. It's time for us all to realise that as individuals who will go on to work for a living, an injury to one is an injury to all. It is in all our best interests to fight for better wages and conditions for the low-paid on campus, and to learn the values of organisation and solidarity from those workers.

2 (See overleaf)



WILDCAT STRIKES

A 'Wildcat' strike is an action taken by workers without the authorisation of their trade union officials. This is sometimes termed 'unofficial industrial action'. These were the key fighting strategy during the events of May 1968 in France, and in 1977 in Italy (where they were defined as the "Wildcat-strike-disease", by various newspapers).

The Queen's Works, London, 1306:

"A jury of the venue of Cornhill and round the House of the Friars minor was summoned for the morrow to say the oath whether John de Offington, mason, threatened the King's masons and carpenters, who were brought to London by Master Walter de Herford, mason, for the Queen's work, telling them that if they accepted less wages than the other masons of the City, they would be beaten; in consequence of which the Queen's work was unfinished".

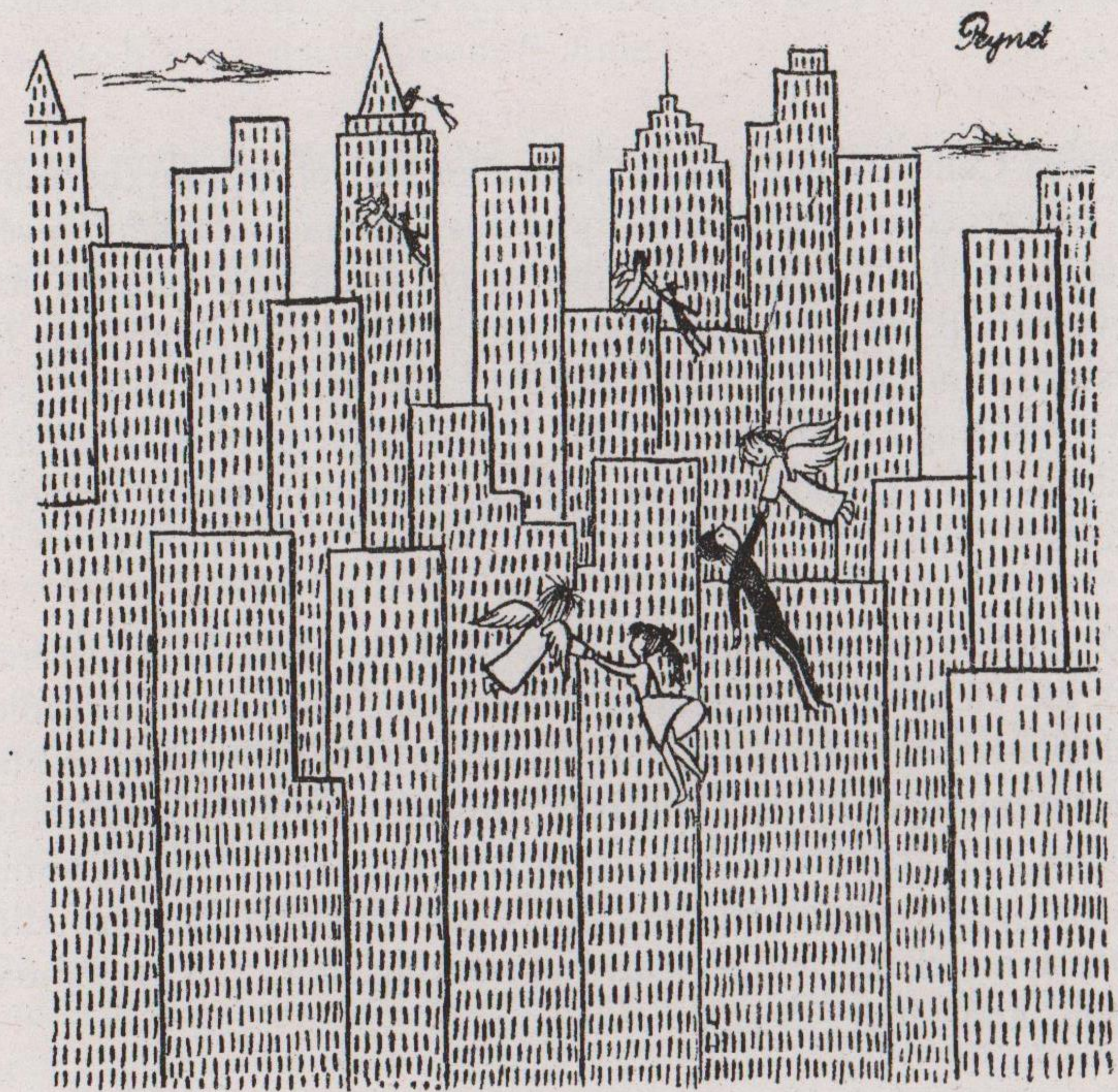
A.H. Thomas (ed.), Calendar of Early Major's Court Rolls. 1298-1307, Cambridge 1924, p. 251.

"To cook them fresh the large ones must be carefully cleaned, the ink-bag removed (unless they are to be cooked in their own ink, which makes a rich sauce, with a very strong flavour), and left in running water for some minutes, then beaten like a steak (in fact I have seen the Greeks bashing them against a rock), for they can be very tough."

E. David: A book of Mediterranean Food, London 1965, p66-7

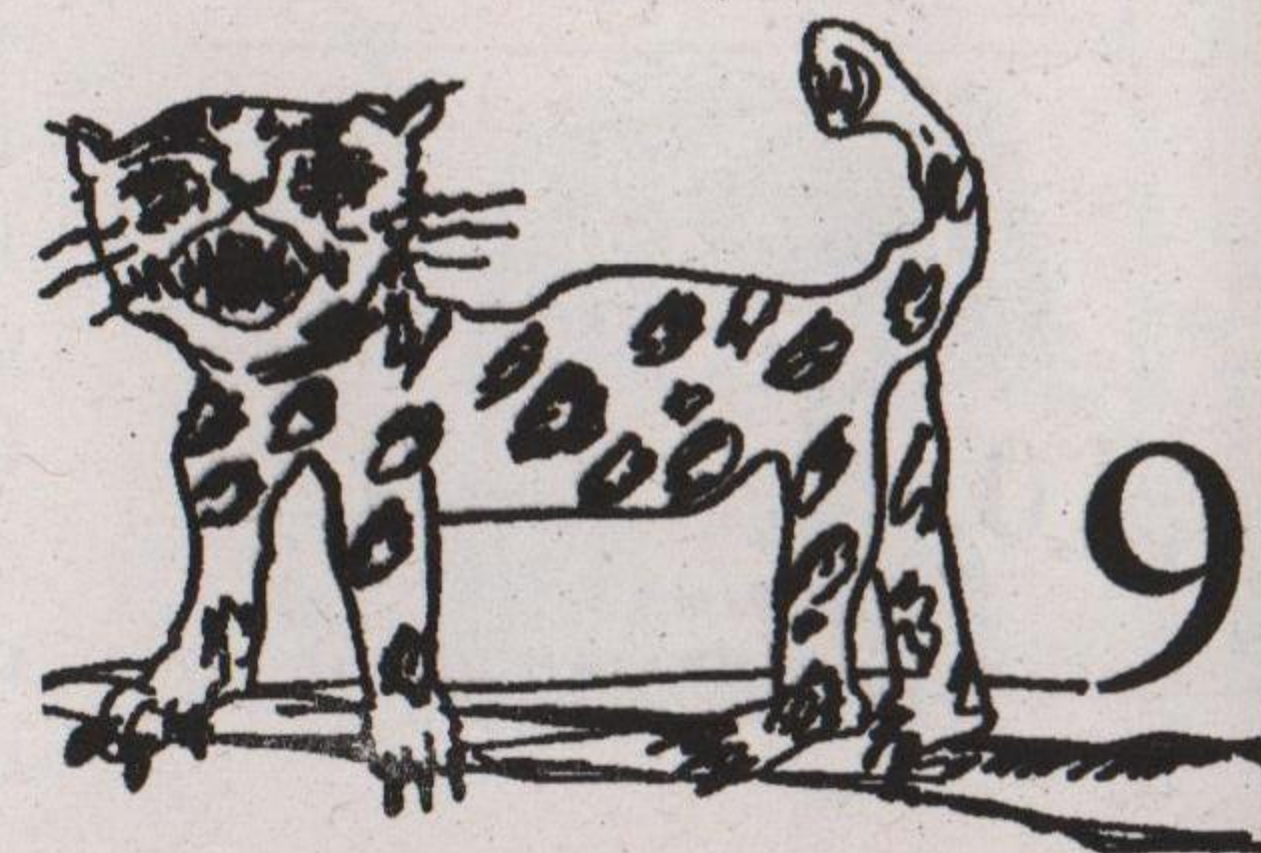


8



U.S.A.
Lift strike

(Some Angels are filthy SCABS)



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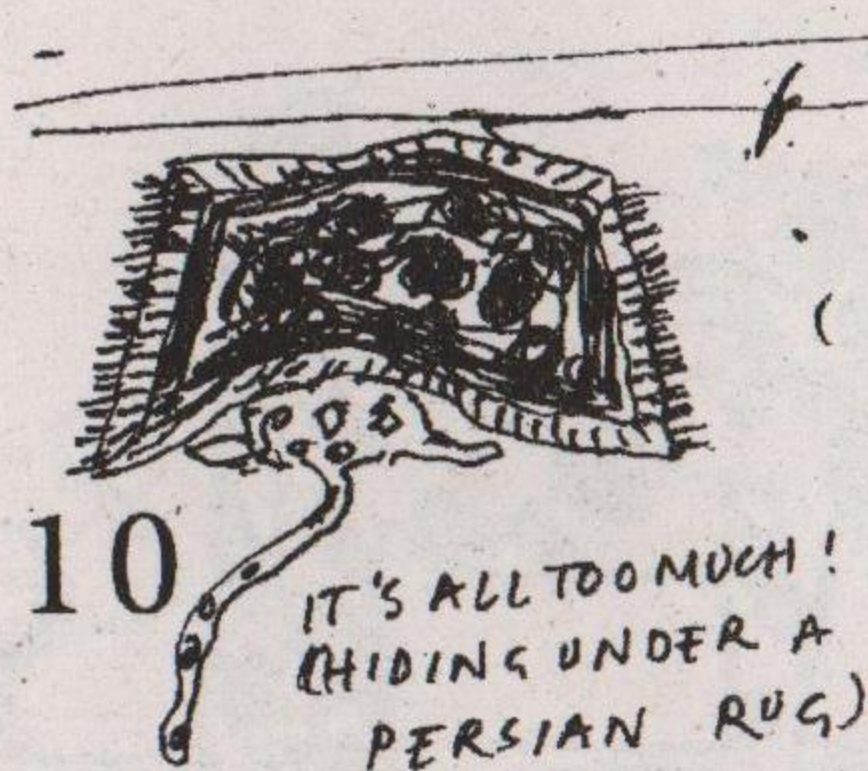
CONTINUED: A FURTHER COMMENT ON MALCOLM 'VICE-DOOFUS' (SCROOGE) GRANT...

In 2010, University College London Vice Chancellor Malcolm Grant (hereafter known as Vice-Doofus), concerned at the bad publicity he was receiving – it might prevent him from gaining his seat in the House of Lords – agreed to pay to all UCL 'support' staff (cleaners, maintenance workers, porters, security) the so-called London Living Wage. This was very good of Professor Grant (annual salary £295,631), because the increased salaries would cost UCL a eye-watering £1 million per year, almost three percent of its annual budget surplus. Of course, as Vice-Doofus Grant well knew, a 'commitment' to pay the London Living Wage costs nothing.

In February 2011, after extensive consultation with his fortune telling goat intestines (annual salary £0), the Vice Doofus developed a marvellous new scheme to avoid increasing the wages of his poorest workers. Until now, the majority of UCL estate and facilities staff have been directly employed by the University. This means that, in addition to their poverty wages, estates and facilities workers are at least entitled to benefits similar to those received by 'higher grade' support workers like IT staff and librarians, including a 'decent' public sector pension, sick pay, and regularity of working hours. (As in all things, academics get a different – and better – deal.)

But the Vice-Doofus had a plan. By 'sub-contracting' the estate and facilities staff to a private sector company, he could push down the costs of workers and, at the same time, divest himself of responsibility for the misery he caused. The for-profit private sector companies who won the contracts to provide cleaning and 'estate maintenance tasks' in UCL can only increase their profits by paying less money to their workers and by extracting from them more work. Their first step is inevitably to withdraw pension benefits.

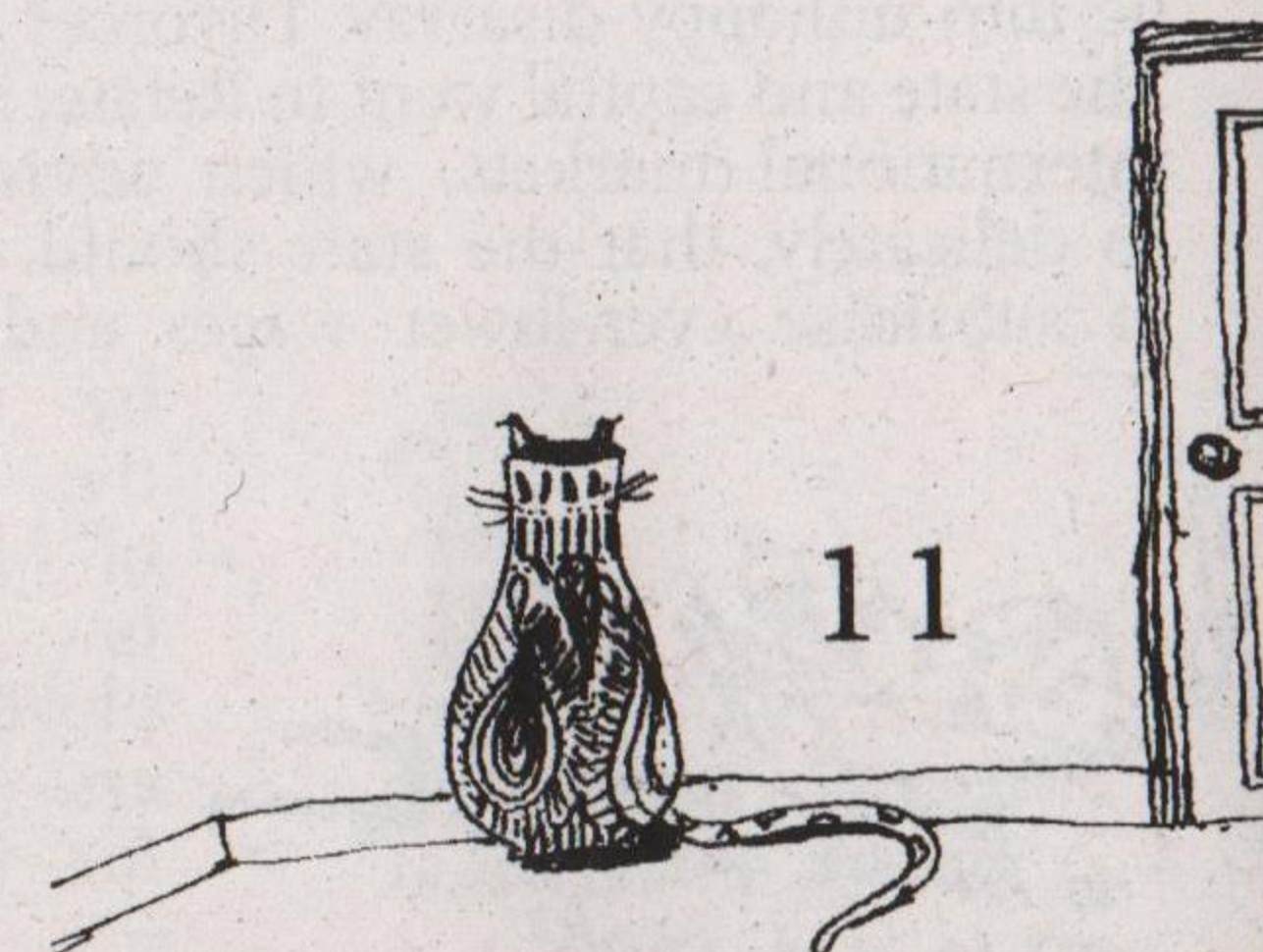
UCL therefore pushes down its wage bill. However, because it is no longer the direct employer of the (already impoverished) workers whose wages are depressed, UCL can argue that this has nothing to do with the university. Never mind that the newly impoverished estates and facilities staff whose wages and benefits are cut still have to Hoover in the Vice Doofus's office every morning: the Vice Doofus is exonerated. The justification put forwards for this kind of everyday brutality is called the 'core-periphery' model. In the model, Senior management (i.e., the Vice Doofus and



his horde of salaried minion orcs), academics and fee-paying student-customers are the 'core'. Everyone else is the periphery. Managers and academics live it up on their pleasure island and everyone else drowns in the ocean. According to Vice-Doofus Grant, this is a 'non-ideological' method of management, which is another way of saying that he doesn't like to think about it too much (by all appearances, the Vice-Doofus hates thinking, which no doubt eats into his moustache grooming time.)

In the current era of the frantic universal privatisation of everything, humans are the principal targets. Coal (R.I.P), electricity, gas, water supplies, the telephone lines and public transport have all been in the hands of private companies for decades, but a small proportion (by now unquestionably a minority) of exploited workers have succeeded in maintaining themselves in conditions which are just barely tolerable. They have done so, in the main, by remaining in the employment of public institutions. Now that those institutions are generally run by aspirational CEOs like Vice-Doofus Grant, with his black heart, his stupid moustache and his neat line on 'core-periphery' models, even those fragile and marginal benefits are being swept away, in a poisonous tide of idiotic 'non-ideological' corporate jargon. The ultimate beneficiaries of privatisation in the universities are not the students or academics who – the Vice-Doofus tells us – represent the 'core' of the institution, because once the cleaners have been dealt with it will be students and academics who are next up against the wall. As ever, the ultimate beneficiaries are instead the private sector companies and their millionaire owners and shareholders, which is to say, the kind of people that the V-D likes to invite to his dinner parties.

Despite months of resistance, and despite some small blows struck against the alienation which separates oppositional students, support workers and academic staff – the outsourcing at UCL was a success. The flipside of this is obvious. The outsourcing was a catastrophic failure for the nearly 100 staff who were outsourced, many of whom have now taken voluntary redundancies and are looking for work elsewhere. In the universities, the outsourcing of impoverished 'support' workers is every bit as significant as the privatisation of education, because its ongoing advance determines the kind of work which everyone except Vice Doofus Grant (i.e., students and non-students both) will eventually have to perform. The work gets worse and worse.



PRIVATISATION: A BRIEF HISTORY OF A FAIRY TALE

BY GRETCHEN GALLERTE

OUTSOURCING, FEE INCREASES AND CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP ARE THE SYMPTOMS; the whole disease has been called privatisation. If you're nostalgic for the era when public institutions were untainted by commerce, take heart: the distinction between public and private was always hazy at best. The university, then, while it looks to be on the cutting edge of the sell-off of UK public services, is actually only on a soft, peach-tinged, fuzzy-logic continuum. And if you think that sounds like cold comfort, congratulations: you're right.

ONCE UPON A TIME

In recent decades, the state has provided crazy luxuries like health and education free at the point of demand, not so much out of loving solicitude but because workers, with all their messy inconvenient needs, are an awkward essential. Nevertheless in the mid-20th century honeymoon period of the marriage of the state and capital, in the rich West, wages approximately kept pace with production, people bought cars and washing machines, youth culture was invented to fill up all the leisure time, the 50s happened and then everyone threw away their mopeds and became hippies instead, etc...

Then the financial crisis of the early 1970s threw the harmony between private and public into unhappy disarray. Divorce? No way! The state and capital went to Relate, i.e. to the international markets, which advised, ever so delicately, that the state should continue to subsidise ever-lower wages and lay-offs

by ensuring the survival of low-paid or unemployed workers. Capital, for its part,

was more than willing to help out by buying odds and ends from the state: entire transport systems, say. The state agreed: as we all know from watching TV, compromise is the key to a successful relationship.

Now, forty years on, after another attack of the crises, the marriage remains exemplary: watch as, eased into power by corporate backers, the government sells the remaining fig leaves of public ownership back to private companies. After many years wedded to each other, public institutions know their private counterparts so well that they can finish each other's sentences. Both are in agreement: with nothing much in the way of industry left to fully privatise, it's time to see what profit can be squeezed out of basic mechanisms of human survival like education and healthcare.

WHOSE UNIVERSITY?

In universities, this means essentially no more direct public funding for arts and humanities subjects: like someone who changes their taste in clothes and music to suit each new lover, the state follows wherever capital leads. So if corporations have decided that arts graduates aren't so useful after all, the Coalition doesn't see any reason to fund arts degrees.

They feel more benign towards science and even some design subjects, which can result in excitingly profitable new products. Increasingly, these courses will be directly sponsored by companies – a perfect solution for cash-starved universities and equally precarious students, many of whom are hopeful of a job after graduation so they can start paying off the debt incurred from university fees. Education is increasingly becoming self-subsidised training for future roles required by businesses.

UNHAPPILY EVER AFTER

What gets lost in this zero-sum game? Education for education's sake is something the graduate has for herself; it is a prize that, in the classic immigrant wager, "they can't take away from you". Training, on the other hand, belongs to the employer. When the jobs go, the skills become redundant too, along with the person who possesses them.

'Public' and 'private' may never have been all

that clearly demarcated, but the distinction is still useful: the publicly funded university was better protected from the brute logic of profitability. Admittedly the present fight against the privatisation of education is piecemeal and reactive: local struggles, small victories. But under austerity, even reasonable demands can become radical, as the last remnants of capitalism's compromise with its subject populations are cleared away to make new for a bright, sparkling new era of privatisation, no longer half-hidden but now rampant. What shall we call it? We suggest: the Balfour-Beatty Age of Austerity.



A WORD ON THE HIGHER EDUCATION WHITE PAPER

BY SPIRO SPERO

THE COALITION GOVERNMENT'S WHITE PAPER ON H.E. was released on June 28th. Its proposals have been greeted with alarm by academics, students, parents and education activists around the country.

It will force universities into competition with one another, opening them up to rampant privatisation, and put business and profit before the needs of those who work and study in these institutions.

The H.E. White Paper undermines universities' autonomy and their contribution to free-thinking and critical oppositionality in mod-

ern society.

With increased interference from government, on the one hand, and exposure to the caprices of the market on the other, this cynical, morally bankrupt move by the government threatens to dismantle the H.E. system and tender it out to the highest bidder. It shows Minister of State for Universities and Science, David Willetts' total disregard for social equality and justice.

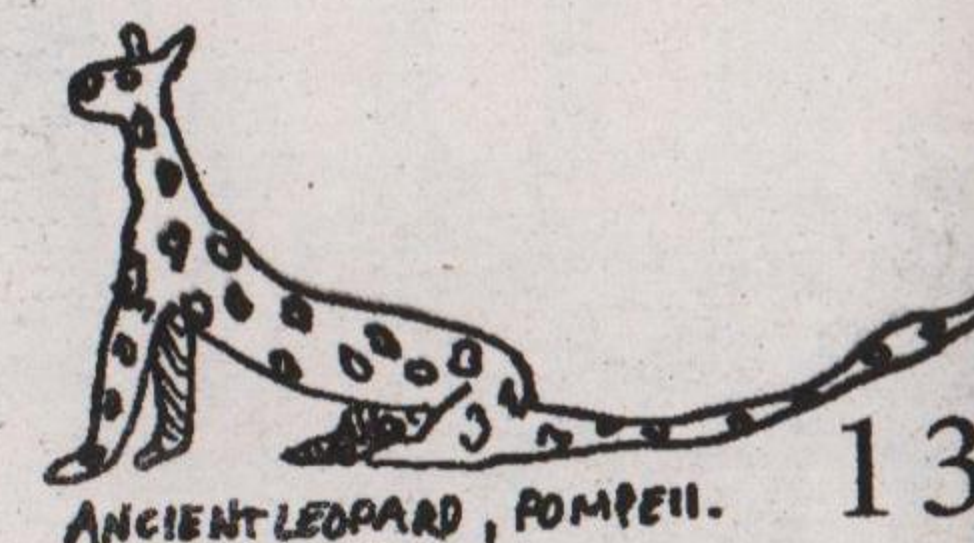
As tuition fees rise to up to £9,000 per year, and after Grayling's private, for-profit New College of the Humanities has announced fees of £18,000, the White Paper proposes the following:

- To cap the number of students receiving government-funded loans
- To redefine HEFCE's role so that it becomes simply the 'promoter of a competitive system'
- To grant degree-awarding powers to new bodies, i.e., private H.E. providers
- To interfere in universities' autonomy and to wrap them in red tape
- To stimulate self-interested competition between academics

All this means that:

- Universities will be prey to market forces and business interventionism
- Students will pay three times more, while academics will have less time for teaching and research
- Institutions up and down the country will be at risk of closure
- Administrators and support staff will be casualised, put on short-term contracts, and denied a living wage.
- Transparency-drives will mean over-regulation and homogenisation
- Students will be seen as consumers rather than participants in a university community

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number of months given to Francis Ferris for throwing 2 12 inch sticks.



"A protest march is one thing, it is quite another thing to attempt to paralyse the country."

Sebastian Piñera, President of Chile

By FITZ

ORIGINALLY BAPTISED AS THE CHILEAN WINTER, the student movement in Chile has demonstrated that it is far from being the consequence of a seasonal emancipating spirit. After 4 months of continuous and massive protests for the establishment of a fair and integrated educational system, they have achieved what no political party or political leader could in the last 20 years. They have been able to put in the centre of discussion the urgent need of structural and profound transformations to an educational system that owes its existence to M. Friedman's neoliberal experiment and his counselling to the former Chilean dictator, Augusto Pinochet.

The legitimacy of the movement's claims explains the level of support it has gained within the Chilean population. Near 80% support a non-for-profit oriented educational system where the state guarantees adequate access and quality to secondary and higher education. Almost everybody agrees that complete deregulation has created the most expensive system of higher education in the world (OECD), where Chileans spend 30% of their income, 84% of which is entirely borne by the individual (three times higher than the United States). This is why in the last 4 months millions of Chileans have decided to go out to the streets to manifest their discontent to a political class that has been completely unable to provide adequate responses to these problems.

The strength of the movement contrasts with the weakness of the government. With a meagre 26% of support the right wing president, Sebastian Piñera, stuck to his ideological retreats, claims that education is just another commodity and, as such, should be subjected to the rules of the market. However, the government is in desperate need to find a solution to a conflict which has caused the removal of a number of secretaries of state and has placed a huge question mark to their political competence.

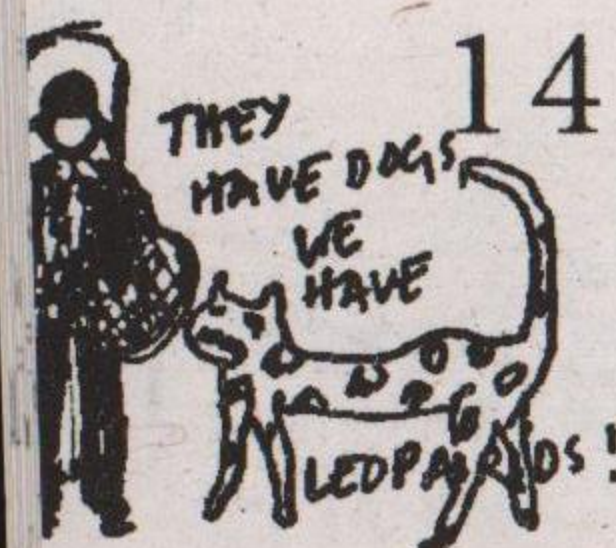
The student movement has consistently dealt with the political niceties articulated by the government to stop the crisis. They have declared that they will only sit at the same table with the government if the starting point is the creation of a not-for-profit public educational system. Only if the government is prepared to start the discussion under those terms the student movement will demobilize. Otherwise, marches and protests will continue, implicated schools and universities will maintain their doors shut and many students will lose their academic years.

Students have been accused of intransigency and of inadequate use of force. To a certain extent these accusations are true. However, these attitudes are a modest response to an educational system that is in itself extremely violent. A system that has institutionalised the reproduction of inequalities by endorsing on the market the responsibility to educate the Chilean people.

One winter will not be enough to produce the transformations that are needed.



Chilean Police hit by Paint Bombs during the General Strike, 24th - 25th August 2011



SOME THOUGHTS OF STUDENT OCCUPIERS FROM LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

What is a university Occupation for you?

A: An occupation is when a group of students take over a building and live in it! Last year there were over 50 student occupations around the country against the fees.

What is the point of an Occupation?

B: In the university occupations last year, students used occupations as leverage against management (with demands), and as a space to organise for demonstrations.

A: To disrupt? To say "NO", you cannot run an institution in such an exploitative, evil way. We are here to stop you fat cats! Occupations can pressure universities to raise the wages of its most underpaid. They can also facilitate events, socials, lectures and concerts.

C: The occupation should not just be seen as a tactic to influence power through the politics of demands, but also as a radical opening in which we profoundly re-imagine what the occupied space means to us.

How long do they last?

B: depends. Sometimes ones with demands will end when those demands have been met. The 'Free Hetherington' Occupation ended in August, after having gone on for 7 months. They got their demands met, and successfully kept the building. In the meantime, it became a place to talk about ideas, to hold seminars and reading groups, and as a safe place to organise. When the riot police came and evicted them they marched into an admin building and took it, and the University gave them back the Hetherington!

The longest student occupation in UK history was of Hornsey Art school in 1968. It started as a demand for control of student union funds, but turned into a wider protest about the structure of Art education. All of the professors were involved, bar one. It lasted a full year!

A: longer occupations are not always as practical though because, for better or worse, people have rent to pay, studies to struggle with and scary lives to come to terms with!

B: Also in some cases occupations have ended because of excessive use of legal force by the University. The UCL occupation of the Reg-

istry ended after threats of legal proceedings from management. About a month before that, Bailiffs were sent for the first time in twenty years to evict 'the anti cuts space' occupation of a Royal Holloway Building in Bedford Square.

What was the best thing for you about the University Occupations last year?

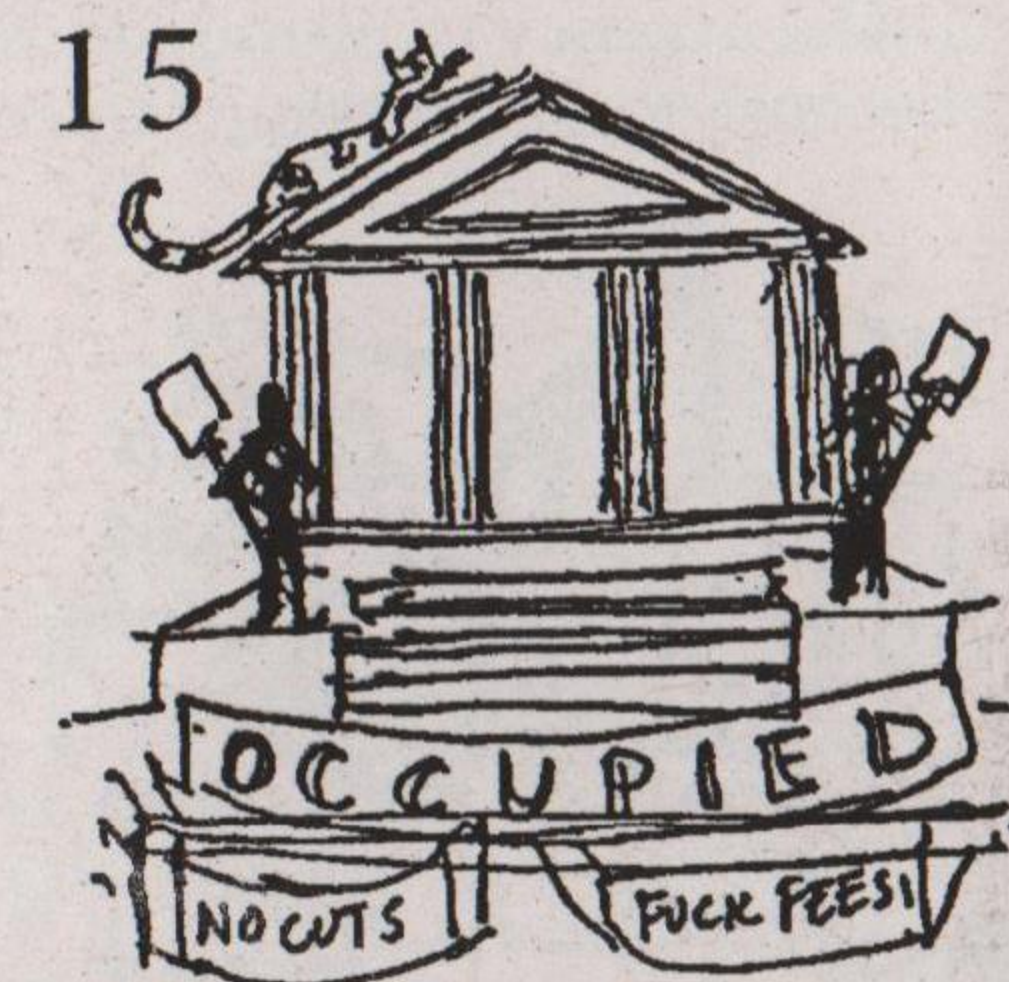
D: The experience of living and organising together for over a fortnight was incredible, if exhausting, it created bonds of trust, respect and comradeship between us, with little sectarianism or back-biting

E: A lot has been written about the politics, aims, problems and objectives of occupation; but I haven't seen much on its beauty. [The UCL Occupation] was productive. At every minute of the day there was someone doing something useful. Even at 6am there would be people on the security desk, keeping a watchful if sleepy eye on things. The workgroups worked. This seems obvious, but people voluntarily doing research, writing, cooking, admin etc. without even being asked is rare in the real world...

I didn't watch TV in weeks. Some people never had time off. It was a constantly productive, friendly and fun time.

How do you see Occupations being used this year?

A: Seeing as they've just raised tuition fees for non-Scottish U.K. students to 36 grand, let us suggest 36 hour occupations. Lots of them. Everywhere. In and out side of Scotland. As has been shown in Edinburgh's George sq lecture theatre, this type of occupation goes down a treat during Fresher's week. As a way to meet locals ... a sort of alternative societies fair. Maybe even a place to stay if you are having trouble finding accommodation! This should help set the tone for the student year.



BOMB THE LECTURE

BY ANTIGONE

QUESTION TIME?

THE FAMOUS PROFESSOR ON THE STAGE HAS SAT DOWN. The lecture has finished and now the questions begin. He dismisses the first, which is dissenting but vague, with contempt: *Infantilism!*

The next, from an eloquent graduate student, is harder to deflect. *You advocate moderation, says the questioner, fierce but polite, when what is called for is extremism!* The professor parries this more formidable intervention with a subtler evasion—the patronising embrace: *That is a very interesting point ...*

It is a ritualistic business, this questioning. Everyone, despite what are often good intentions, tends to play along. Hands are obediently raised. An underlying deference emerges in the failure to move from the skeptical question (perhaps with the permissible disgruntled follow-up) to some act of outright denunciation or disruption.

What makes it worse is that the famous professor—the kind of famous professor who earns \$150,000 per year and often charges \$1000 to deliver a lecture—has been speaking of ... *the future of the Left.*

Todd Gitlin once said of the Left's gains from the "culture wars" that, "We lost—we squandered the politics—but won the textbooks." Really? That "we" enacts a complacently rueful mythology. It is the kind of statement that allows academics to believe that they, principled people and *teachers*, are separate from the ruthless and philistine world outside; that they preserve decency and equality in the institutions which they administer (classroom and library, examination and peer review, conference and journal).

It is folly. Leaving aside the notion that the Right won the textbooks too by leaving the professorial "Left" to write them, can the assertion that academic institutions are emancipatory be sustained for more than the second or two it takes the well-practiced famous professor to decide whether to insult or to deviously embrace a thoughtful question?

Is it necessary to go into anthropological detail about all the patronage and bullying, venality and plagiarism, envy and insecurity, empire-building and gossip, sycophancy and lechery, conflicts of interest and all the innumerable other careerist perfidies that contaminate the profession? Perhaps it is time for someone to nail theses about widespread corrupt practices to the door of the university!

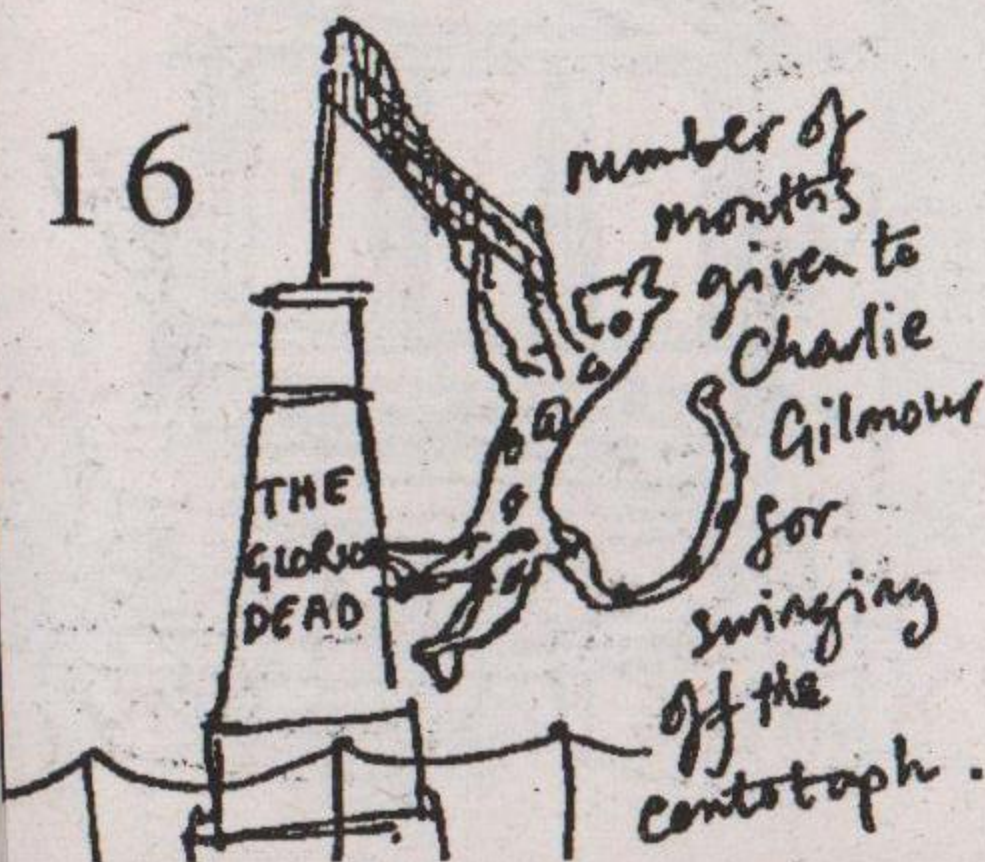
It should happen, but until it does there remains at least the everyday problem of the purportedly radical lecture and its question time.

Should it not be axiomatic that if the social form of intellectual work is a ritualized obedience that dissipates any truly *antagonistic* encounter, it will always be inadequate to the task of radical thinking, which must oppose, defy, repudiate?

Conversely: if we believe that radical thought *can* be emancipatory, is it not a matter of political urgency to introduce dissent and confrontation insistently into the docile lecture theatre because to do so begins to create—for a moment, for longer—a space of contestation, of occupation, in which the tediously common professorial strategies for stultification can be defeated?

And then there would be room for something better, something to do with cooperation and liberation.

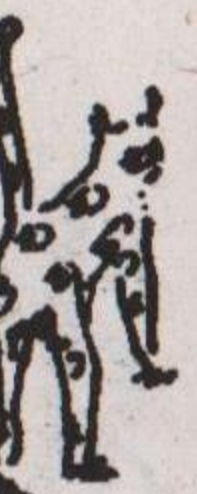
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AC Grayling's Head

A glistening dome, it's said
This phallogocentric head
(covered in a condom of flammable hair)
nothing that's 'seminal' could ever escape
-not even hot air -
is nosing itself like an over-egged snake
into TV and the wallets of rich scum
Let them pay - only the gullible will ever come.

By Desmond Wolfe



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BIBLIOTICLASM AND THE BOOK BLOC

By TW*



Biblioclasm: biblio- comb. form + Greek - *klamos* breaking

Born in Rome during the student protests of December 2010, and again in London's demonstrations of that same month, the Book Bloc would not normally figure in a chronology of libricide. After all, no actual books were destroyed. But, as we shall see, it's not all about the books.

A witty and practical piece of protest theatrics, the Book Bloc is essentially a line of home-made DIY shields made to look like over-sized books with a view both to protect protesters from the viciousness of flailing police truncheons and to send out a message by making a gesture symbolising the need for culture to defend itself in the face of an



aggressive ideology against which it sees itself in perilous opposition.

The eloquence with which the Book Bloc images embodied the underlying message of these protests was, for me, what made them stand out from the routine and generic shots these kind of events invariably produce; photos of angry cops, masked faces, and smashed window panes. This is something that sets the images apart, too, from the more scandalous, headline-grabbing photos of Charles and Camilla besieged in the royal Rolls Royce, and the unfortunate snaps of Charlie Gilmour swinging from the Cenotaph. But what, then, is the nature of this eloquence? Why should these mock-up books have such an impact? This question started a train of thought.

Wu Ming, the *nom de plume/guerre* for a small collective of authors – whose novel, *Q*, was one of the titles featuring in the Roman Book Bloc – put forward an imaginative and lucid reading of the particular choices made in selecting the 'books' holding up the front line. The *Decameron's* plague represents the current blight of the 'atomization of social relationships', echoed by Asimov's *The Naked Sun*, whilst the obsessive futility with which the quixotic people chase after the Great Whale of 'berlusconism' (*Moby Dick*) is represented through Cervantes and Melville. And so on.

Similarly Jay Griffiths, author of *Pip Pip* (a book in London's bloc), indulges in a more nostalgic exegesis of the titles on display, focussing mostly on the aptness of the protest's nod to Huxley's *Brave New World* and the spectre of 1968.

Griffiths begins her article with the observation that "It's a very strange thing to watch a policeman take a truncheon to a book." This attention to the visceral language of destruction – surely an ontological imperative of the Book Bloc –

is largely seen to be missing from both Wu Ming and Griffiths' accounts. And it seems to me that this language points to something else; namely, the destructive poetics of that other mass social and cultural practice called biblioclasm – defined as the practice of destroying, often ceremoniously, books or other written material and media.

In another article, Wu Ming write, "This afternoon, in Rome, students confronted the cops while carrying shields with book titles on them. The meaning was: it is culture itself that's resisting the cuts; books themselves are fighting the police." Furthermore, the people behind the London Bloc have said of books that "we teach with them, we learn with them, we play with them, we create with them, we make love with them and, sometimes, we must fight with them." The idea that it is the books themselves fighting the police, and that they are effectively comrades in arms, reveals something profound about the way we conceptualise books – as somehow animistic entities possessing independent powers. This is something David Abram has touched upon, arguing that books (or texts) are 'speaking subjects' taking up the same place in 'culture' that was once occupied by rivers and trees in societies subscribing to animistic concepts of nature.

It is perhaps this same idea that caused Ray Bradbury to say "I felt it [Hitler's 'burning of the books'] as keenly, please forgive me, as his killing a human, for in the long sum of history they are one and the same **flesh**". Interestingly the allusion to transubstantiation made by Bradbury corresponds to the transformation of the book-object's use-value in moments of crises. In the Book Bloc, the symbolic change can be described as teacher-to-warrior, in biblioclasm this trajectory goes from perpetrator-to-victim; regarded with suspicion of being a propagandist of 'dangerous' ideas by a regime or social



group, the book is set upon and silenced.

The cuts in education and funding are more than measures to alleviate gargantuan deficits. These cuts are also ideological. In these specific cases they are attacking the university institution, sewing the seeds to change it from a forum where knowledge is taught, created and disseminated, to a marketplace where profit rules above all. These cuts are deeply anti-culture.

What I saw in the Book Blocs of Rome and London was indeed a symbolic self-defense of culture. But it was more than that. By marching these cardboard and styrofoam tomes into the violent tumult of the front line, these protesters were, in essence, offering up their carefully selected titles to be destroyed in a ceremonial act of sacrifice. This has the effect of being a kind of reverse biblioclasm, a self-immolation – a literary *Jauhar* of sorts – and suggests a considered *détournement* of the poetics of oppressive violence.

* of the *biblioclasm* blog, charting the 'secret history' of book destruction, or libricide, as a paradoxical practice common to all literate cultures throughout the ages.



FEELING MY WAY THROUGH (GENDERED) POLITICS

By GKL

WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER, MY MUM USED TO SAY TO ME 'A WOMAN NEEDS A MAN LIKE A FISH NEEDS A BICYCLE'. A classic feminist phrase, this struck me as odd coming from her. Having gone through a difficult divorce with my father, she quite quickly found another man. Socially inept, a physical frown and an alcoholic, it took a while to realise what she found attractive in him. It wasn't until we moved into his house in a nicer town, and went to decent schools (instead of the dump with security detectors at the main entrance) that it made sense. The word 'security' became an apologetic sigh.

Since 9/11, security has been the watchword for increased surveillance, racial and religious stereotyping and demonization, war, murder, rape, and many other exercises of social, political and economic dominance.

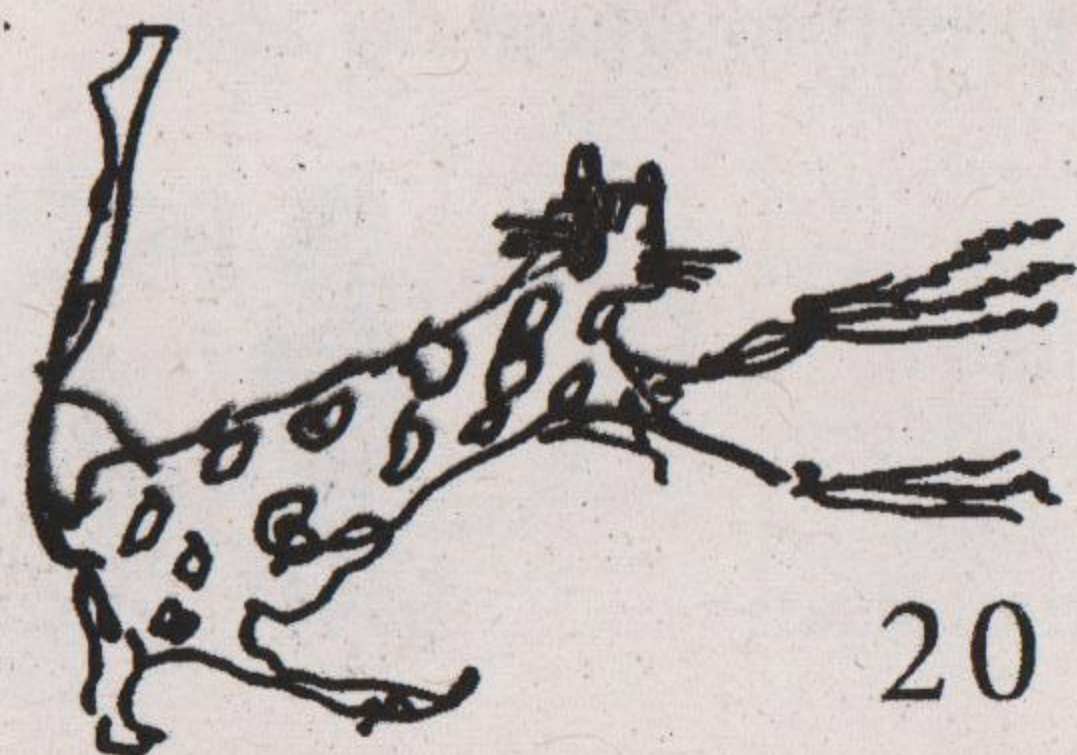
My mother's dependence upon a man, whom she has ambiguous feelings for, to provide what she felt were necessary opportunities for her children to me signifies a patriarchal attitude/situation to safety and need.

Over the past months I became actively involved in student and anarchist politics. I found it to be the only way I could learn about politics – through doing and talking with other people.

Well women, what you going to do about it?

I have just tried to write something personal and polite – referring to my mother's dependence on men and how bull shit patriarchal this is – but you know this stuff already. Your mum probably is too, and you as well, and your mates, and your sisters. Seeking men for approval, for a sense of belonging, for completion. Even with friends – is there a qualitative difference when a male friend compliments you to a woman friend?

I think SECURITY is a pretty fundamental issue for all of us – discounting the imperialist exploitation of fear post-9/11. Our twisted desires for survival - in the face of vulnerable bodies, physical strength, crazy weather, nihilistic hedonism etc. – seem to be increasingly encouraged to be individualistic. You are author, editor and reader in the story of your life. There's an increasing symbiosis between the (neo)liberal glorification of the individual's battle for freedom and the University's marketization of structures and services. Lecturers compete with one another for research grants, students strive for originality and good marks, and maintenance and cleaning staff are replaced by cheaper, un-unionised, out-sourced workers with lower wages and fewer employment provisions.



OF COURSE THE NUS IS GOOD FOR SOME THINGS – IF YOU WANT A 10% DISCOUNT AT PIZZA EXPRESS, A SURE-FIRE ENTRY INTO NEW LABOUR, ANOTHER IDENTITY CARD... BUT IF YOU ACTUALLY WANT TO CHANGE THINGS, THE NUS WILL DO EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO STOP YOU.

This was quite clear in the student demonstrations last year. The NUS president condemned the November Millbank riots as *DESPICABLE*, had almost nothing to do with the various university occupations that followed, and, by December, while students were resisting police in Parliament square, NUS hacks were lighting candles on the banks of the Thames.

Insofar as they resist it is just a show: all the NUS have done against the rise in tuition fees was to ask MPs to sign a weak pledge that none of them kept. And where the NUS and their student unions do join in student action, more often than not they act as a buffer between management and students, negotiating settlements to smother student rebellion, and digesting dissent into long dry motions. The NUS and their unions are impotent. The only thing they 'Demand Extra' for are corporate discounts.

Of course we could try to reform them from the inside. But why would we want to inherit a system structured to keep most of us silent? We don't want to be 'represented' to management – there is no way to represent the anger we feel. Any expression of this anger can only be made by us, and not student politicians sharing wine and winks with university Vice Chancellors. We can fight back without hierarchy in our universities, schools and elsewhere, linking up with other struggles wherever they happen. We don't need them to manage us. In fact, we only have strength when we are in control ourselves.

AGAINST GETTING INVOLVED WITH YOUR STUDENT UNION



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SUBCOMMANDANTE LEOPARDI.



SENTENCING

THERE IS LITTLE POINT IN SHOUTING AT A ROBOTIC PUPPET WHOSE EARS ARE LITTLE MORE THAN VACUUM CLEANERS SUCKING IN THE FINAL BREATHS OF HUMANITY AND DEPOSITING THEM AMONGST GREY DUST. THE TERM "HEARING" POINTS TO ITS OPPOSITE: JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES, PLONKED IN THE CHAIRS OF WESTMINSTER MAGISTRATES' COURT, HEAR NOTHING. RATHER THEY PRESIDE, AND IMPOSE, UNABLE TO SEE THAT THEIR BODIES ARE LITTLE MORE THAN STALAGMITES OF THE DIRT-INGRAINED CONCRETE FROM WHICH THE BUILDING IS BUILT. WHO WOULD EXPECT THEM TO HEAR?

This is the treatment that many of our friends and comrades have faced in the past months, as sentences have started to be served after the protests of last academic year. Frank Fernie got 12 months for throwing some sticks at a police line. We can offer something of a cost-benefit analysis: Cost to the public: £25,000. Cost to Frank: the loss of a year of a life which is already finite. Benefit to the system: the onward slow drip of concrete, enduring greyness, and some triumphal juicy headline for the media dogs.

The protests within which "crimes" were committed are often treated as an aggravating factor in sentencing: the act in good faith, the belief that something needs to change, is treated with far greater severity than an act in bad faith. The inferred truth being that our judiciary, licenced by the government, believes firmly that the incarceration of young people is not only the solution to their apparent delusions of the awfulness of life (the lack of acceptance of the brightness and lightness of debt exceeding £30k), but that to bash such progressive thoughts out of them with such extreme force is "in the public interest."

Meanwhile our own universities have worked with the police and CPS to try to get their own students convicted. UCL gave names, photos, and footage to the police to try their own students for chalking slogans on the university walls. SO15, the police counter-terrorism unit send emails to universities demanding they keep tabs on "extremism on campus", while dogs are brought in and police and security brutalise students and staff outside SOAS.

The trials go on and the process is slow. Many will not be sentenced until mid-winter. Westminster Magistrates' Court is moving to a shiny new home in Marylebone, where inhumanity can be dished out more slickly. There is little point in shouting at a robotic puppet whose ears are little more than vacuum cleaners sucking in the final breaths of humanity and depositing them amongst grey dust. It must instead be destroyed.

NO COPS ON CAMPUS!

BY SALLY WHEATLEY

A UNIVERSITY IS NOT ONLY A PLACE TO BE WOODED BY SERVICE SECTOR CORPORATIONS AT RECRUITMENT FAIRS INTO A MIND CRUSHING BUT SUFFICIENTLY-PAID CAREERS TO PAY OFF THE DEBT YOU ARE ACCRUING WHILE STANDING AND LISTENING TO THEM BLATHER ON ABOUT 'GENEROUS PACKAGES', IT IS ALSO A PLACE OF REFLECTION. WITH THESE REFLECTIONS OFTEN COMES A DESIRE FOR ACTION - ACTION BASED UPON THE UNAVOIDABLE CONCLUSIONS OF THE SHIT SOCIETY IMPOSED UPON US

This education, of political reflection and action, can be untidy and the police are specifically employed to clean up the social disorderly mess that 'we', on reflection, create. As such it is our belief that they have no place on university campuses.

Police are outlawed from parliament unless under invitation from the speaker. Even such a place as this, made up of sweating privileged pygmy men, recognised long ago that the police as an institution are incompatible with free democratic expression - that is not to say democratic expression has ever occurred in the houses of parliament, that is plainly absurd, but their pretence of democratic debate is protected from police intervention nonetheless.

University campuses are however places of free expression and, given the free time and access to resources and to each other, students can consider the world around them, rather than simply considering their future

career as functionaries with accompanying trinkets (car, house, spouse).

In doing so students have become, in the past, 'politicised', 'radicalised' and 'angry', providing previous generations with an opportunity to look back fondly on their university days as they read through reportage of various protests at the universities they used to attend and sigh (over the top of broadsheet newspapers) 'aah the country needs angry young people' - safely on campus playing at being revolutionaries.

Presently however things are slightly different. The British state currently needs to enforce economic austerity onto the populace in order to preserve the resources of the economic elites. The increased seriousness of approach towards the resistance to this programme is apparent in moving political dissenters at universities from being seen as endearing student 'radicals' (through dewy eyes gazing over the top of Newspapers), to hard stares and databases of 'domestic extremists' - domestic extremists for free education. We don't need to pay 9 grand to realise this shift in tone is setting the ideological ground for increased repression of dissent.

When resistance starts to work suppression gets serious. The Kent State University massacre in the US where the National Guard fired 67 bullets in 13 seconds at an anti-Vietnam war student demo killing four protesters, having previously bayoneted a number of students in the days prior, was preceded by Governor Rhodes of Ohio referring to these (now dead and maimed) student protestors as the 'worst kind of militants' 'vicious dissident groups' and 'well trained' 'unamerican revolutionaries', pledging (emotionally) to 'eradicate the problem' on university campuses.

The massacre at Athens Polytechnic in 1973 saw (at least) 23 students killed by the state. This led, once the junta had fallen, to the ban-

ning of police entering university campuses under 'freedom of expression' laws - a sacrosanct rule that has just been overturned by a Greek government enforcing unparalleled austerity (bankruptcy) on a reluctant nation. It is no coincidence that enforced economic ideology must be accompanied by physical enforcement for the dissenters. You are free to express whatever you like unless that may actually alter what we wish to impose.

And most recently two student protestors were murdered by the police this summer in Chile fighting the exact same fight UK students are engaged in.

This last year of student protest in the UK has seen no students killed (although it has been close and dozens have been hospitalised) but we know of course that the British police do kill a lot of people (333 deaths in police custody since 1998 have seen no police convictions), and out on the streets student protests were suppressed - with broken bones and cracked heads - a tad enthusiastically.

The police, as the enforcers of government policy, have unsurprisingly taken an interest in campus activity this last year. The Glasgow university 'Hetherington' occupation was violently evicted involving riot cops and a police helicopter with several students injured, the MET's counter-terrorism police wrote to all university vice chancellors in early 2011 asking them to provide details of student protests and protestors on their campuses (the extent of co-operation by vice chancellors is still unclear), and this came on top of the arrest and incarceration without charge of Rizwaan Sabir. Rizwaan is a Masters student at Nottingham University studying counter terrorism strategy and downloaded an Al Qaeda manual from the internet (freely available in bookshops). Police deemed a week in jail as an appropriate response to this act of free enquiry. He has got a funny sounding name though I suppose.

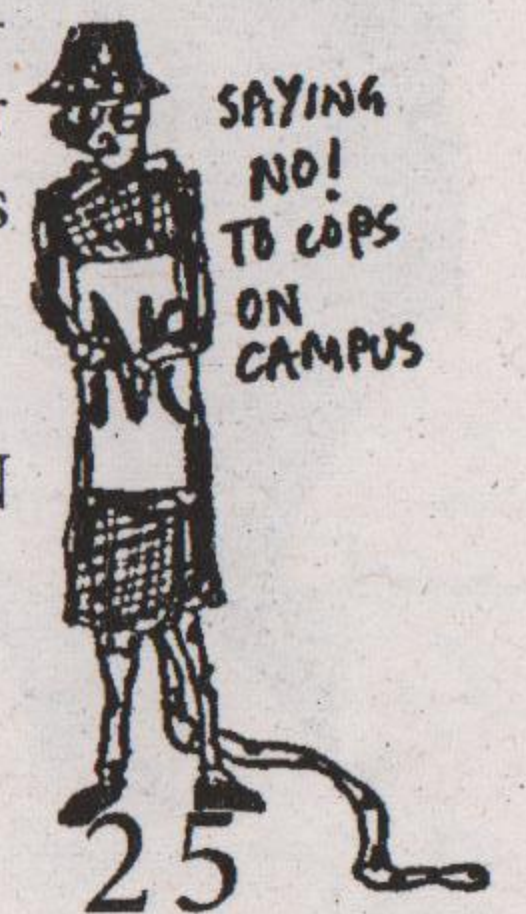
Police have also strong-armed various unpopular government ministers onto campuses to 'safely' deliver some speech or other to somehow bolster their legitimacy for destroying institutions by speaking earnestly of education within them. When David Willets visited SOAS at the end of the last academic year for such a canape'd fuelled back patting exercise several protesting students were rounded up and arrested by police and one handsome young man was kicked in the face by the same officers for his valiant attempts at correcting those injustices. The police, like these ministers, are not welcome.

It is our belief that education and political expression should be autonomous from state interference. Our universities and campuses are autonomous zones of education, reflection and political expression that need to be fought for and protected. The police, as servants of government policy and in light of the obvious threat they pose to student safety and free expression, are our enemies in this endeavour.

Some suggestive beginnings of a strategy for people who support free education, enquiry and expression; if an officer of the status quo engages you in a conversation about political activity or any other matter ignore them or lie, if you spot police at your university get friends together and usher them off campus. Make a scene, make a racket, make them uncomfortable and make them unwelcome.

Call meetings, lobby the vice chancellor, include it in occupation demands, sticker the halls, poster the walls, blockade the roads and climb on the roofs.

NO FUCKING COPS ON CAMPUS!



BANNING PUBLIC PROTEST: A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION TO LAW

By SD

ON 26 AUGUST 2011, THE HOME SECRETARY, THERESA MAY, APPROVED A REQUEST FROM THE LONDON METROPOLITAN POLICE TO BAN ALL MARCHES IN FIVE LONDON BOROUGHS (TOWER HAMLETS, HACKNEY, ISLINGTON, WALTHAM FOREST, AND NEWHAM) FOR 30 DAYS. THE BAN WAS EXTENDED TO A SIXTH BOROUGH (CITY OF LONDON) ON 31 AUGUST AND CAME INTO FORCE AT MIDNIGHT ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2011. The request from the police was popularly believed to come as a result of the planned march by the English Defense League, an anti-Muslim organisation who planned to march through East London's Tower Hamlets on Saturday 3 September. However, recent statements made by the police now indicate that the ban was at least partly for fear of violence breaking out at the funeral of 29 year-old Marc Duggan who was murdered by police on 4 August 2011 and whose funeral was held on 9 September.

Such a ban is permissible under Section 13



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of the Public Order Act of 1986. In fact, the Chief of Police can apply for such a ban for up to three months given that the reasons are compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. If the reasons are not compatible with the ECHR, such infringements must be proportionate to the desired end result provided the goal is in itself reasonable and lawful.

The ban was challenged by Taherali Gulamhussein, a London activist who had planned to attend a march against the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEi) arms fair, that took place from 13-16 September. Under threat of taking the London Met's ban to a high court for being disproportionate and discriminatory, the police themselves applied to have the ban lifted. Their application was accepted by the Home Secretary and the ban was lifted on 12 September 2011 thereby allowing the planned march against DSEi to go forward.

Of course, such a systematic account of the events, while necessary, neglects to tell some very important aspects of this story and for conceptions of 'law' and 'justice' more broadly. While this particular challenge to the ban happened to succeed, this is not a parable about the success of legal action or the overcoming of wrongs by the truth of justice.

The Law Is Not 'On Your Side'

POLICE POWERS – Ban or no ban, the police have the upper hand on the street. Not only are they uniformed officers of the state but they also carry weapons and the heavy weight of cultural authority. Not many people are going to stand up to a police officer. Of course, if a police officer infringes your rights, you can challenge them in a court of law. But you are going to need some evidence. And witnesses. And your case is going to have to outweigh that of the uniformed officer of the state. As we have seen repeatedly in cases challenging the tactic of kettling (Lord Hope expressed his belief that in *Austin v Commissioner* [2009] the police acted in 'good faith'), as well as deaths in custody (333 people dead and not one police conviction), the police almost always get off. As Walter Benjamin put it in 1921, "the violence of the police is as amorphous as its phantom manifestation (nowhere graspable, everywhere in evidence)".

THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS – You may want to claim that your rights have been violated but you must understand the difference between Absolute, Qualified, and Limited Rights. Essentially, this means that some rights are more important than others and that some rights can lawfully be infringed upon by the state. If in the interests of 'national security' – another amorphous concept – the state deems it reasonable to trample on a qualified right you have under the ECHR, such as freedom of assembly, they can lawfully do so. And just when you thought that the 'absolute' in Absolute Rights might actually carry some weight, case law such as *A v SSHD No. 2* [2005] as well as recent discoveries about MI5/MI6 practices, confirm that that is not so. While Absolute Rights are purportedly not to be infringed upon under any circumstances, Article 3, which prohibits the use of torture in any circumstances, was trampled on in both of these examples. Though the ECHR seems to offer protection for your rights it can be manipulated in the first place by ministers of the state and the police, and after the fact, by courts that preside over your case. If the case above had gone to court, it may have been found that the ban was not disproportionate or discriminatory. The final ruling would have been up to the judges.

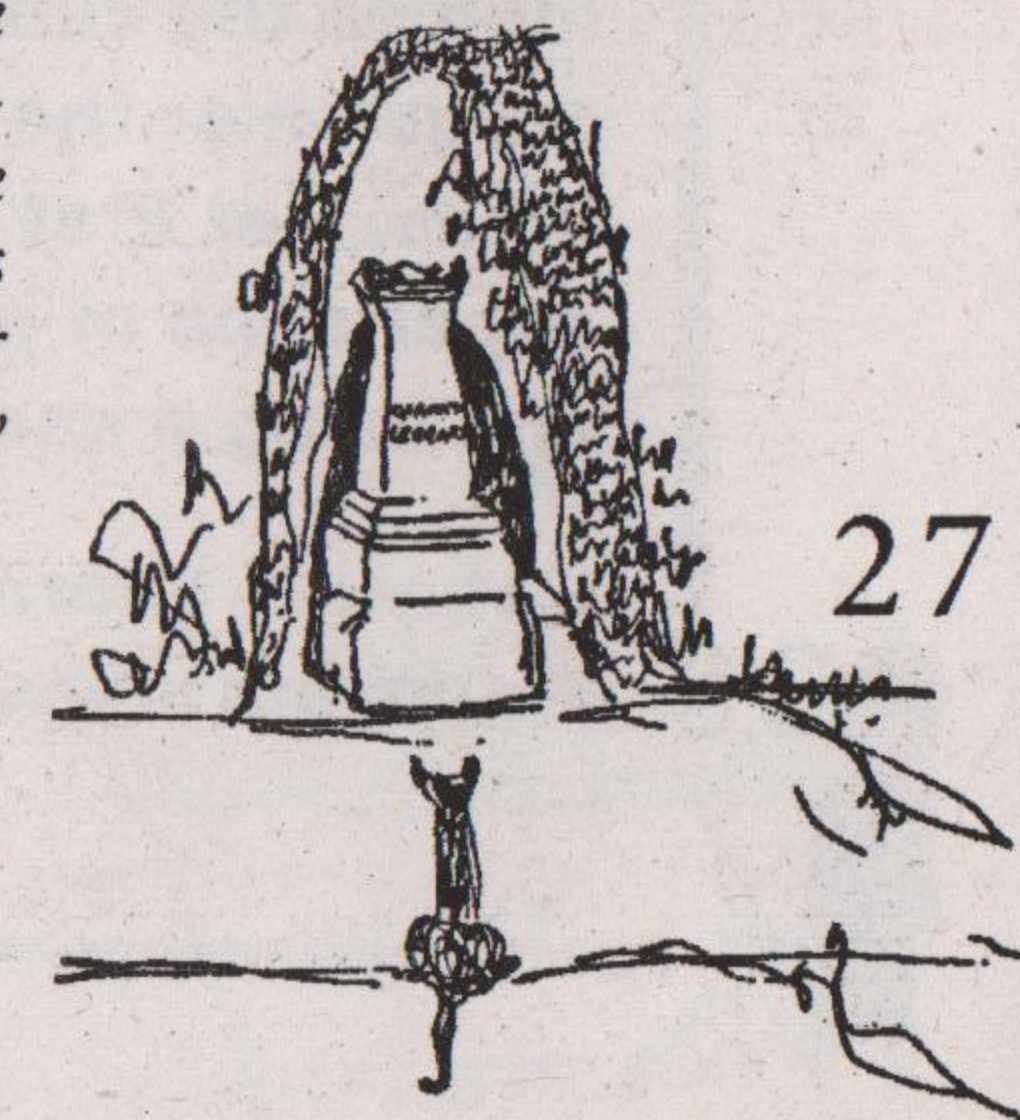
STANDING – If you wish to bring a case forward against the state – in the form of a Judicial Review – you must have 'standing'. This means that you must be sufficiently 'close' to the case that a judge will allow your claim to even be heard before a court. This makes it difficult say in the case above for just anyone from London to have come forward to challenge the ban. The person who challenges the ban must have some 'connection' to the case. What kind of a connection, you ask? That is up for the judge to decide. But you had better make sure that it is a good enough one, or they will throw your case out and it won't be heard. Gulamhussein, who brought the challenge to the ban forward, had to identify himself as an activist who was planning on attending the march against DSEi and who, as a result of the ban, would be prevented from doing so. What does this mean for our conceptions of law and justice? Who is 'eligible' to try to challenge the state? Who and what challenges are prevented

from being made under such rules?

LEGAL AID – Lastly, if you DO think you have standing and want to go ahead with a Judicial Review keep in mind that, in the event that you lose your case, you will owe the state £25000.00. Yes. £25000.00. This is for costs incurred (i.e., judges' salaries) during the proceedings. The way to get around being stuck with the bill is to take your Judicial Review via solicitors obtained through legal aid. Easier said than done. While various factors need to be considered, you will most likely only qualify for legal aid if you are already on a state-supported benefit or employment scheme making less than £700 a month. Having said that, legal aid is currently on the Tory chopping block, ensuring that more and more cases will become financially unviable for claimants without legal experience and major financial backing. Judicial Review, the process of challenging public decisions, is a rouse; an inaccessible and only occasional functional process standing in as a symbol of the supposed heights of our democratic political system.

In law, there is no objective measurement of justice laying off in the unseen distance. Rather, romanticised notions of trust in the police and in the supposed fairness of the court systems should be revealed for the naïveté that animates them. The priest's parable in Kafka's *The Trial* characterizes it best:

"Everyone strives to reach the Law," says the man, "so how does it happen that for all these many years no one but myself has ever begged for admittance?" The doorkeeper recognizes that the man has reached his end, and, to let his failing senses catch the words, roars in his ear: "No one else could ever be admitted here, since this gate was made only for you. I am now going to shut it."

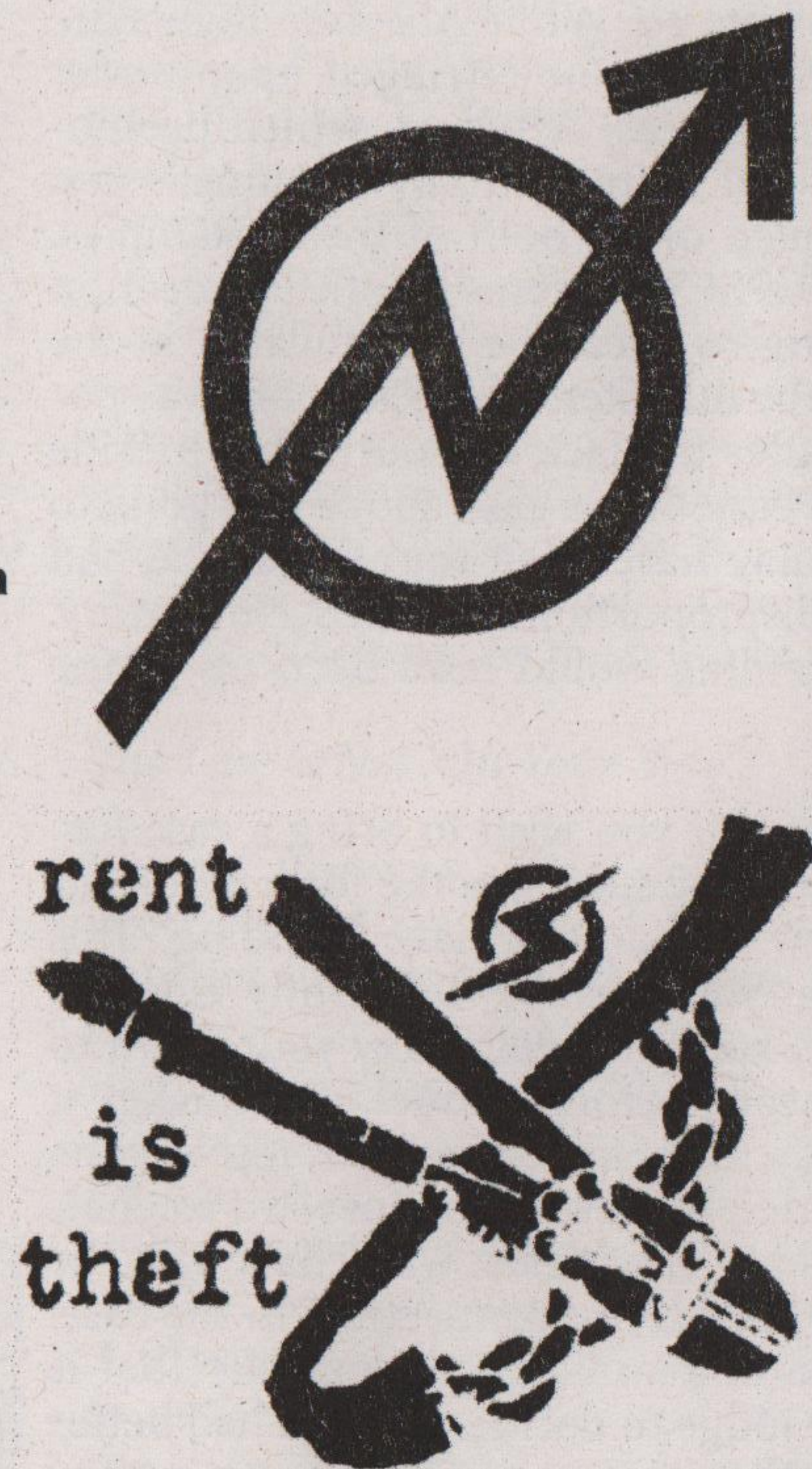


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SKIPPING: MIRACLE IN A BIN LINER

BY ROBERT PESTON

PICTURE THE SCENE. YOU WALK INTO AN 'EAT' THAT IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS AMID A BUSY LUNCH TIME AND INITIATE THE THEFT OF SEVERAL CARAMELIZED ONION AND CAVE-AGED CHEDDAR BAGUETTES. Whether you are caught or not (and with a modicum of talent and resolution you will NOT be caught) you are invariably committing an act of 'theft'. While a negative social stigma is attached to this theft, this beautiful, dextrous act of appropriation, what inhibits most of us from undertaking such an act is the concern that we may be caught. That the costs of capture outweigh the potential benefits and joys of eating our stolen booty.

Picture a second scene. You are outside the same EAT as before, only now it has closed and it is the early evening. Most commonly between the hours of 6:00 and 7:30 there will still be bags outside the store. You may think that these are refuse - commonly however one or two will be filled with those same baguettes as before and much more besides. Soups, pies, wraps, noodle pots... undefiled, touched only by the lovingly indifferent hands of their makers.

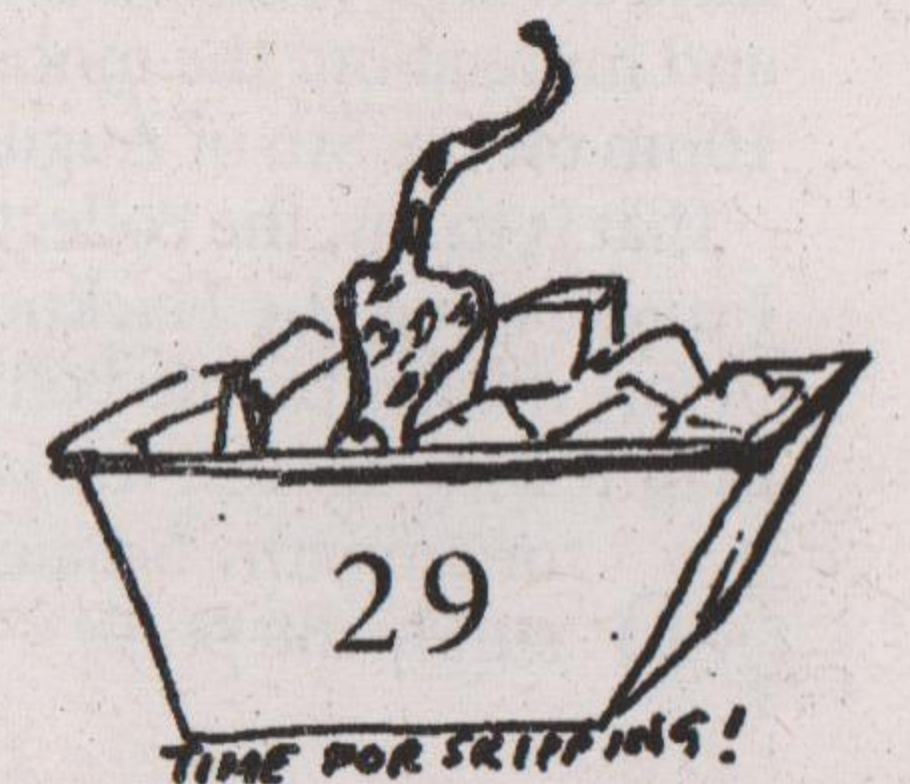
So what stops you now? You are no longer a thief, you should not be troubled by naive allusions to moral rectitude. It is a technically easier operation than theft, requiring little elan and even less courage - easier, less morally questionable and with far greater treasures to be had. What is stopping you?

It is an 'economy of shame' that is instead mo-

bilized against you. Many of your fellow students and workers will stare aghast as you take cakes, flowers, soup and sushi from the bins of Sainsbury's, Marks and Spencers, Samurai, Paul and EAT. They will utter "I would never do that". But in their voice one makes out a strange curiosity. A desire to cast aside social affect and unhelpful and useless notions of decorum. It IS 2011. We are increasingly realising that we will not all be management consultants, artists, entrepreneurs and music stars. The deceit of the last 30 years was based on debt and this same faux decorum of artificial affluence. That 'we' are better than the immigrant labour cleaning our streets and serving our coffee. That it simply is not for us. We are not and it is. The game is up.

Our society creates more surplus than we can fathom. What can not be sold, no matter how perfect, delicious or useful is discarded. Take it. Feel not shame. Feel pride that you have the bravery to transgress such a pathetic social norm as to ignore perfectly good food that will be otherwise wasted. The idiotic excess of production in our civilization is matched only by such near-holy conceit of the indebted classes that such ventures are beneath them. For consumer capitalism thrift is as heretical as theft and this economy of shame is as integral to its maintenance as the police, the courts and the prisons. Forget shame, dispense with it, it is useless. It is merely a means to accessing true knowledge.

Every Paul will provide bread, every Samurai will provide fish - and the fruits of London's surplus will feed infinitely more than the apostle's 5,000.



SUMMER RIOTS

By Lily

TO REFLECT AND CHOOSE BETWEEN SHOP WINDOWS AND HUMAN LIFE.

"the principal sign that it was a deep seated movement, impossible to quell, was that they were not scattered about or controlled by a few individuals, but flared up as one. Fell silent as one man with such unanimity and constancy that one would have thought they were acting upon the word of command." TACITUS once described the nature of a flare-up.

Hackney: on the 8th of August, riot began, as riot police besieged the park next to Hackney Central station. Twice, a stop and search of young men, no older than 20. Cuffed. They refused the details of solicitors -- they were let off. The police swarmed again, this time encircling a 16 year old boy, who was sitting on the grass with his bike in front of him. He saw no reason to move, so 17 riot police took pleasure in escorting his arrested body to the closest police van.

Some specificity of looting and looters: mothers, taking nappies and baby milk, saved from having to spend all benefits on these items for one mad week, a young man took one drink from a Texaco garage, being cheered by his friends, went back to get everyone some. We accept the fruit shoot, a disgusting sweet taste.

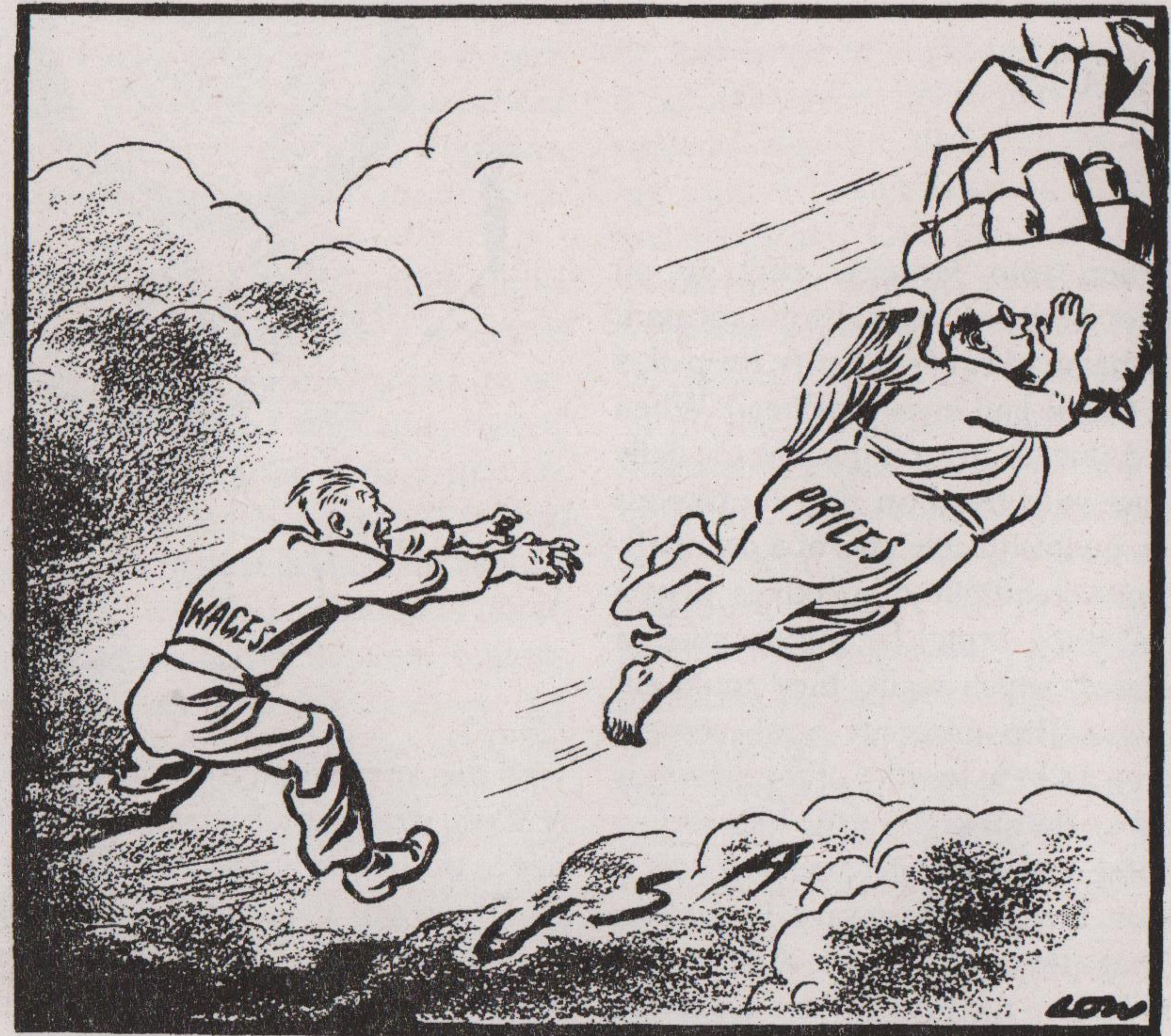
The time when someone shouted, "the shop is open" the joyous rabble ran, girls and boys, filling handbags with hair products, sandwiches and chocolate, four bottles of Courvoisier, to set a car alight. And the next time a liquor store was specifically excluded.

Between Hackney Downs and the Pembury Estate, rioters face up to the police, throwing stones, bottles, bricks. One cop crumpled as a rioter pushed him down. The Pub landlady said: "now they're getting their tactics right. They should be against the police not burning buildings." Then Croydon burned. We looked between the same scenes taking place through the pane of glass to one side and as a birdseye view on LCD in the open pub; we were not shocked. As she said those words, the screen flickered to Croydon, she looked out the window, poured another pint, looked back to the screen once again, the birds eye view of what was right next to all of us. She stayed open because she knew she would not be attacked.

The logic of revolutionary movements is not one of a project, but one of a ruling of power. The power that is taken is defined by the particular moment in capitalist development. The sliding of power moves from one side of the labour relation to another. This power, unless under primitive communist societies, has always in itself been defined by its relationship to exploitation. The "revolutionary moment" belongs to a cycle of struggle that has almost reached a point where this transfer of power is already in new hands.

The Hackney riots were primarily against the police; echoed by the chants "fuck da fed", "kill the fed" and after at least 333 police murders in custody this is unsurprising. It is however contrary, as we know, to what the mainstream media enjoys vomiting into the material world. But this is not to say that that makes them right, or better: simply qualitatively different. With a different space behind them to create that kind of antagonism which is angrier and less about the joys of possessions, and more about the mob articulated perfectly by the proclamation of "THIS IS MOB RULE!" at about 10pm on the 8th of August.

That is to say, the collective will of the mob which doesn't see the project but only sees the present. I understood the Hackney riots as a mass yoking together of some sets of this crisis, as someone before me has pointed out, these communities suffer not *from* capital but for the *lack* of it. The anger manifesting against the police was not rational, but explosive. It had nothing to do with democracy or empathy because it is born of exactly the fact that this problem goes unheard, and that is surely the point.



LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

The mob dissolved into individuals and normal daily tasks were once again undertaken: benefits claimed, jobs done and the status quo; free once again to commence, as an impotence of thought and action, the proletariat crystallized as wanton criminal. But the emotion of that moment is not forgotten.

A VAGUE HISTORY OF SUBVERSIVE PICNICS

BY ILONA

When your lecturers next go on strike, do not be disheartened by the constant flouting of that marker of solidarity, the picket line. It is a fragile and invisible thread. When undefended, it is readily trampled by the daily swarm. Those who tread on this are faceless consumers, unable to conceive of a day without Wi-Fi or 'serendipitous' meetings, driven (as a friend once wrote) by the promise of a Caesar salad, which really, they could eat anywhere else. The university has become a supermarket, and the feeding of the swarm is elevated above the struggle of the lecturers.

Some stamp over it; some float over it like plankton, flirting with a wave. In another world, perhaps we could call this mindless violence and forgive the students for mistaking the purple-arm-banded strikers for yet more Ministry of Sound leaflet-ers, or corporate internship signer-uppers. But in this world the trampling herd has no excuse.

It may comfort you to know that Dante reserved the 9th circle of hell for those who cross a picket line (traitors - see figure 1). So, if we step out of our parallel world and into a future one, perhaps we can see these faceless heads buried in the ice, or crammed into Lucifer's dribbling mouth. Frozen and denied of sociability, the punishment fits the crime. For now however, we must punish these renegades with the immediate and disarming spectacle of the subversive picnic.

In my explanation of the radical history of picnics I have deliberately provided no references, because it is my

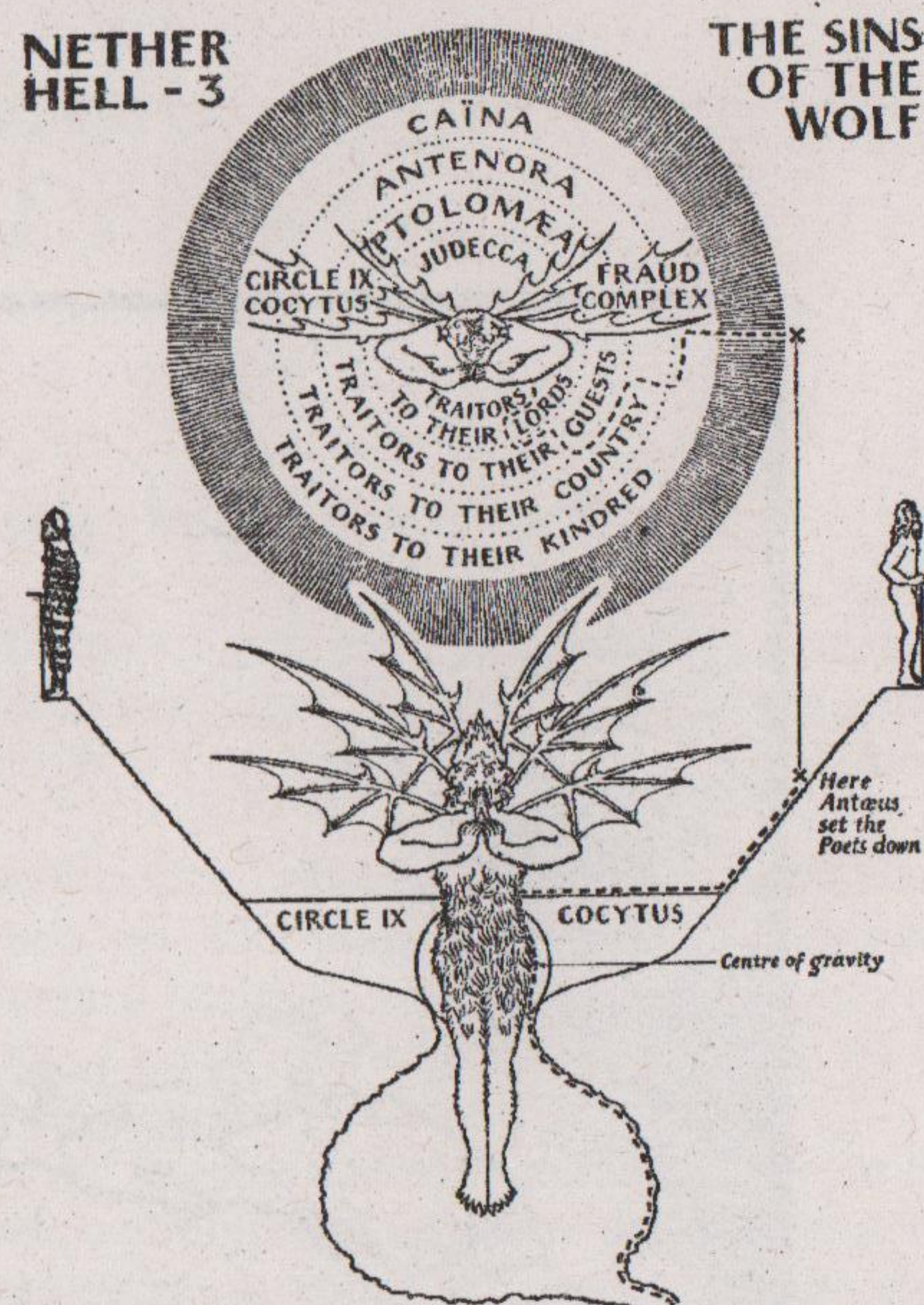


Figure 1 wish that you should trust me unconditionally. If you want to find some, you ought to journey to the library at nighttime, and search the Scandinavian, Italian and Classics sections. Or you could read a green-covered book called 'The Picnic At Sakkara', before finding that it in fact has nothing to do with picnics. You may also, if you like, read the 'Picnics and Public Spaces Commission' of 1971- but it is very boring so I wouldn't bother. Let us now wander from the straight path, and begin:

The etymology of the word 'picnic' is unknown and much contested. There have been some speculations that it is a shortening of the phrase 'pick-a-ni[ck]gger', and therefore that the picnic is from a time where hideous colonialist assholes lynched slaves for entertainment whilst taking an outdoor meal. However, it is thought more likely that the word derives from the French 'pique-nique', a late 17th century anarchic practice of taking one's own wine to a restaurant.

Food accompanied excursions became a statement of liberation from authority

in a later, post-revolution France, when newly enfranchised citizens took to the leisure parks and public spaces to enjoy their new freedoms. Let's not even get into a discussion about Germanic 'freedom' or the aforementioned Francified 'liberty', for it is such a complicated discussion, but let me instead say, that the parks were not given freedoms, they were taken by force and the picnics were a symbol of that victory.

The picnic then had a rather murky time during the 19th century, when it became a nasty bourgeois activity, undertaken to cement the division between work and play and jeer at those who had none of the latter. For this reason it is actually impossible to find anything but unremarkable late 19th century verse on picnics in even the dustiest of libraries. From the earlier half of the same century, it may be that these grotesque lynching episodes happened. By the end of the 19th, and in the early 20th century, the picnic was confiscated from the hands of these tyrants, and excellent picnics were held by suffragettes such as Lucy Parsons and Emma Goldman for the purposes of discussing direct action.

In more recent years, during the Maldives democracy movement, a law was passed which prevented people from assembling publicly. That is, citizens were not allowed to meet in groups of more than two, except for the purpose of birthday parties or picnics. Here the picnic resumes once again its threatening role. Eager hordes of activists met with one another at huge faux-picnics. Vats of rice pudding were made in order to bolster this charade, and whenever hesitant policemen approached, they were shaken off by the immediate and raucous singing of "HAPPY BIRTHDAY!". Soon the policemen became bold, and seized the vats of rice pudding, running off with them like cowardly squirrels. Obviously these law-keepers looked ridiculous. The activists helped the transition of the Maldives from an autocracy to a liberal

democracy (clearly, there needed to be more picnics), and rice pudding is now a celebrated and commemorative dish.

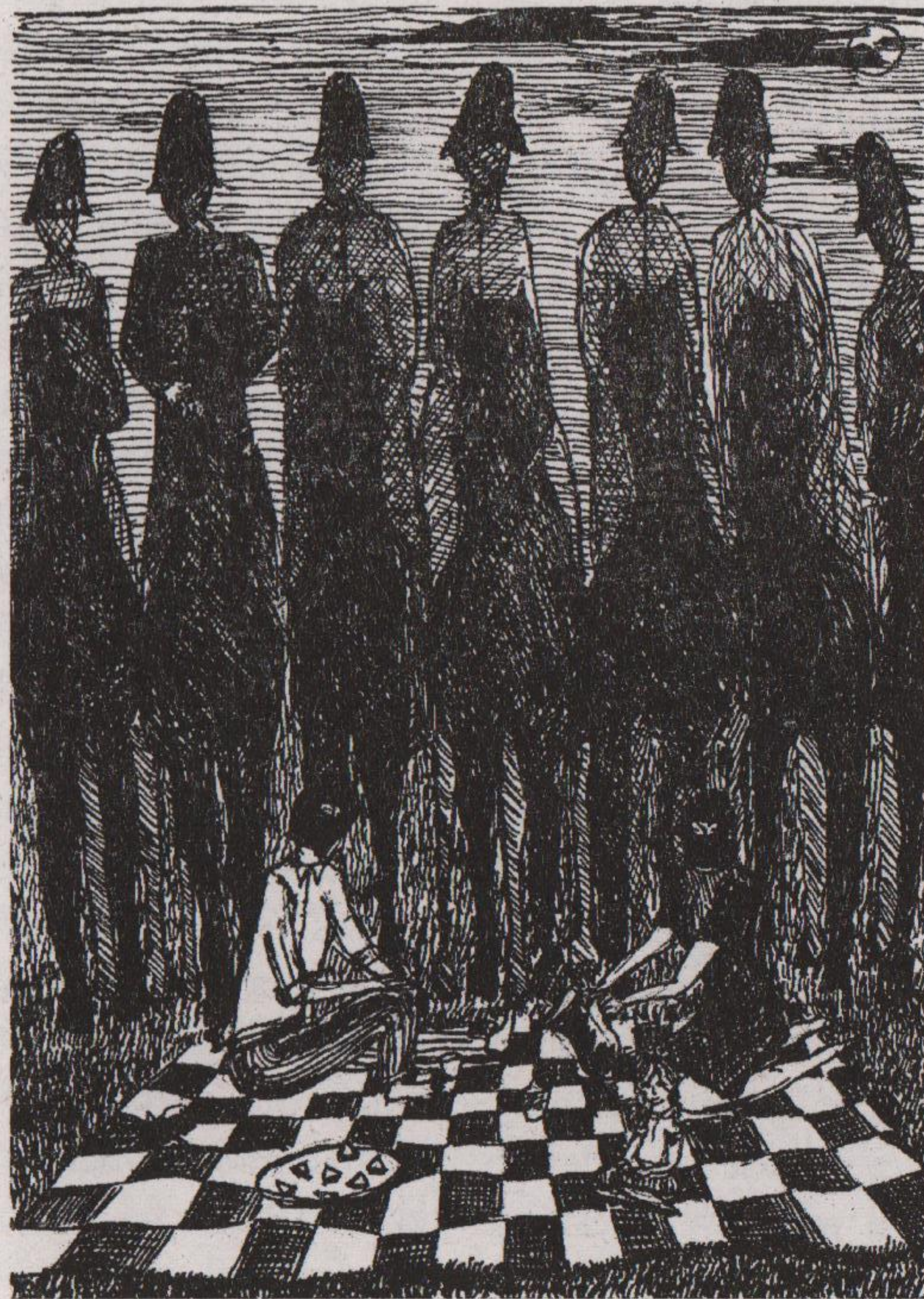
And now, to the present day! The picnic is an excellent way of subverting authority. It does not attempt to seize power. Rather, it ignores power. Police and picket-crossing students alike are disarmed by the charming sight of people sharing food, breaking bread together; 'Com pane', with bread! Here we derive the ultimate sociability: compagne, company, compañero... solidarity! In UCL earlier this year a group of students staged a 'picnic line' behind the abused picket line, and this spectacle was just too darling for people to ignore. Van drivers reversed and drove away; Caesar-salad seekers paused to think and joined the feast. Less like Brutus, the 9th circle was saved from a hellish fate. The gathering swelled from three to forty. It was a crushing blow for the university canteen, devoid of customers. Chaos! Sublime anarchy! The picnic in this context is an exaggeration of bringing tea to striking workers (which is obviously the minimum you should do if you also wish to avoid lava and ice). Give them breakfast and be sociable!

We've seen other examples of picnics this year, the UK Uncut breakfasts for example. It is my feeling that those picnics were too moderate. They were good for then, of course, just as Teletubbies were good for the 90's, and Elvis was good for the 50's. We are in danger of allowing the picnic to descend in to a kitsch and futile gesture - or worse, a twee one. It is of absolute importance that the picnic is not clawed back by the bourgeois reactionaries. The radical picnic should absolutely not be co-opted into clean-up missions; the gingham table-cloth should not be replaced by the riot shield!

May I suggest, instead,



that we make our picnics a genuine obstacle. Picnics should be used to block roads, to defend picket lines, to inhabit awkward public space. A few months ago I would have exemplified this as Westminster, but now I feel all too comfortable there. Rather I would like to advocate the destruction of the alienating authority of the university via the picnic. We should feast in its hallways, make useful its cold marble archways and unforgiving floors. We feel that we are not allowed to linger, to loiter - we must rid ourselves of this by picnicking! Alternatively, have a picnic in someone important's garden. When they speak to you, ask them to join in. If they chide you, respond with surrealism. If they ask you to leave, offer them a tomato (this tactic has relieved my mother of many a parking fine). SWAP YOUR GINGHAM FOR BLACK BLOC AND YOUR LEMONADE FOR MOLOTOVS! PICNIC OUTSIDE THE POLICE STATIONS! REMIND THE AUTHORITIES THAT YOU ARE THERE! TAKE PLEASURE IN RECLAIMING SOCIABILITY! RECLAIM THE SPACE! RECLAIM PICNICS! VIVE LE FRANCE!



Dear Guardian,

Reading your paper is like walking up to your ex-lover while they masturbate. Your news used to be MARRIED to some kind of limp ideal, now it is DIVORCED from any semblance of worthwhile ideology. Your reports from March 25th of December 9th could have been written on March 25th or December 2324234th; indeed they COULD HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ON ANY OTHER DAY!!!!

The slag drab heap that you spit onto our forests and shove into our cornershops burdens us with the weight of tired and dead ideas. Ideas which are symptomatic of a loveless void lustily submitting itself to homogeneity. Every word of the Guardian SMACKS of the proud deference of one felling their master. That Venomous monster who goes by many names - Authority, Capital, Clegg, Peace, War, Police, Churchill, Sewage, the majority, necessity, Earl Grey or FAUSTUS.

You grieve for the violence you condemn - and profit by condemning. Your real is an imaginary parliament, ours is the streets. Your reality is something we can never affect, only gesture towards. And hope to direct. You worship the inhumane - windows, banks and national states - and ram and smash and smash and ram your uncarried footnotes onto our dreams. Dreams of relationships which are not commodified, of living lives of unimpeded ~~freedom~~ autonomy and clear, ~~unimpeded~~ unimpeded freedom.

When the Guardian has divorced itself from the Real Politik, who will reap what? And what will the child do? Preyed on by paedophile journo-hacks, she must:

OCCUPY! RESIST! STRIKE! TRANSFORM!
GROWTH IS SHIT. JOBS ARE SHIT.
ALL I WANT IS REVENGE.