

THE CAERULEAN

Dig In!
 With contributions from both Committee members & our readers, Issue 2 of UCLU Conservative Society's newsletter is now even more eclectic!

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How many times did you hit snooze this morning?

Controversial claims this week asserted that Britons in this day and age have a greater right to "freedom to sleep" than "freedom of speech", according to research from Oxford Brookes University. Polls maintain that employers are more likely to frown upon employees asserting non-PC beliefs than turning up late for work.

So, is this what being British boils down to? Has our national identity blistered into an overwhelming emblem of slothiness, disrespect and diminished decorum?



Have you forgotten what makes Britain so Great?

Britain today is a far cry from the spice girl era of undisputed attitude, meaningless backchat and Union Jacks. It's not that I have suddenly become nostalgic over my teenage days or that I'm having some bizarrely premature mid life crisis, only I find it outrageously disconcerting that only ten years on our sense of freedom of speech has been ravaged into some sort of potentially irreversible vortex of political correctness.

Objectively it all comes across as pretty ironic. Our obsession with accommodating for cultures and religions of migrant communities has essentially undermined the features of our state that attracted them here in the first place: our freedom to live our lives as we wish, provided we don't infringe others' rights. With this said alone, it is arguably unchanged, only coerced by the losing battle of freedom of speech to freedom from speech. It seems as though conversation is increasingly uncomfortable to maintain without the concern of coming across as racist, or worse, just plain ignorant. Even our MPs are terrified of committing political suicide by even facilitating the question of the hijab.

When did this happen? With dissent, protest and reform as integral to our national history, what led us in the wrong direction?

I blame Blair's government (surprise surprise!) whose headstrong, meddlesome nature has created a super-government employing more bureaucrats consequently funded through increased taxes, while functioning to erode public incentives and diminish public choice. It seems that regardless of how hard we try to understand or learn about our societies' cultures, that we're lulled into a feeling of futility, completely accepting an

unchangeable ignorance thus relying both hand and foot on the safety net of political correctness. In fact we will be starting the new year with a (fond?) farewell to our much loved black jelly babies...amazingly political correctness wins even over our Western gluttony...oh to be British!

With more people voting for Big Brother than our general elections, isn't it time we reconsidered our position and realise what it is that makes Britain so Great? After all, if we're so adamant on beating terrorism, shouldn't we try harder to maintain the values of our country that are so hateful to the mind set of Al-Queda?

It is difficult in this day and age to encourage a little patriotism without entering right wing, jingoistic territory, but it is time we start embracing our vast, diverse and humble virtues. Fifty years ago George Orwell commented on this reluctance to engage in nationhood, yet since his day we have only furthered ourselves from the patriotism that we so readily admire in the French and Americans.

It surely can't be blamed entirely on the conservative codification of patriotism that

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How do we solve a problem like Korea?

It seems obvious to most that the North Korea weapons threat is real. No matter how small a country's armed forces are, the fact remains that North Korea is now capable of causing mass destruction. However the response from the world though unilateral has been, in my opinion, overly cautious and could lead to more problems. It is a problem which needs to be dealt with in a firm manner. There is no point in delaying, as it would simply be delaying the inevitable. This is even more important as it seems Iran, another face of the axis of evil, which has close ties to Syria, has also stepped forward in it's nuclear program.

Though there are signs of diplomatic breakthroughs the sceptics among us will question the longevity of any outcome. Indeed the supposed breakthrough agreement in 2005 is now in tatters, it is likely that any such agreement will go the same way. Jong-Il will react to any breach or change in the global climate.

The sanctions which the world has imposed on North Korea, though harsh, will not affect Kim Jong-il's egotistical power trip. This is a man who would spend billions of pounds developing nuclear capabilities and yet show complete ignorance to the fact that North Korea is almost totally impoverished and there is widespread malnutrition,

especially amongst children. The poor are not even allowed to leave the country, and are not allowed political views. The climate is such that arable farming is very difficult, and the statistics show a huge deficit. The trade and financial sanctions the UN has imposed may compound this problem. The longer we leave it, the worse it will get, North Korea needs liberation. Militarily, Britain is stretched - both in numbers and equipment. According to the Telegraph, our navy would be too weak to fight.

I'm no war lover; I opposed the Iraq war, but don't see there is any other effective solution. Diplomacy will not work when dealing with a man like Kim Jong-Il - highly temperamental, and would go to any length to be noticed. Do we really need to wait until another 9/11 - type terrorist attack to actually take notice of another rogue state?

The war on Iraq was fought on the pretence they had weapons of mass destruction - an allegation later proved to be wrong. North Korea is open about it's nuclear ambitions and yet Bush and Blair, both on their way out, don't seem as interested. Strange, isn't it?

Iain Martin

The Earth is flat!

The earth is flat... I know what your thinking, "no it's round, have you been drinking alone again?" . Well just as Cameron has adopted some rather unconventional policies... so have I. In the spirit of change and new direction I have rethought the period of enlightenment and come up with my own thesis, so before you dismiss this article as a drunken little rant let me enlighten you...

Charles K. Johnson (president of the Flat Earth Research Society) states "the facts are simple, the earth is flat". He goes on to state that the "space shuttle is a joke", "heaven is about 4,000 miles away" and "sensible people all over the world... realize that the earth is really flat". Now to some this may appear ludicrous, surely we have all been told from birth that the earth is indeed round and seen many pictures of the orb like entity affectionately known as 'the globe'. But what compels this distinguished looking, tweed-wearing old man to claim with passion that this is not the case? How many of us have been into space? How many of us have sailed round the world? Indeed Mr Johnson's theory is just as credible to me as anyone else's and to my mind it makes more sense!

Being a Geographer I take great pleasure in perusing the world map that adorns my boudoir and to my mind I think this chap may indeed be right! So it is with naked honesty that I drop my proverbial trousers and admit that I too firmly believe that the earth is flat. And I will go as far as to

say that I'm really quite worried that the next time I board a boat bound for distant lands I'll be happily sipping a cosmopolitan one minute and plunging into oblivion the next (perhaps in the style of the Lib-Dems)!

The next time you have a spare moment away from your party campaigning, TRG events and CF gatherings take a gander at the UN logo... what do they know? As Tory's we should reflect heavily on possible conspiracies that have not come out our own party!

When we read our papers and watch the TV we are told a great amount of things... we hear opinions, debates, spin and propaganda but at the end of the day as young politically minded people we must ensure that we make up our own minds about issues. The worst thing to do is to accept the accepted... and this is my point. Cameron is challenging the accepted foundations of the party and we too should challenge our own perceptions to formulate our own judgments. Just as Mr Johnson proclaims with an inexhaustible passion that the earth is flat, so should we proclaim with an inexhaustible passion when we feel the need for change.

Tread Carefully!

Stephen 'Starbuck' Coleman

What's this "Europe" you speak of?

The moustache, sausages, rubbish cars, phallic buildings, cheap beer, flags and of course the Euro....These are just some of the things that come to mind when I think of our beloved Europe!

Beloved Europe? Did I just write that? Whether we like it or not we are indeed European, it was only last year that we in fact chaired the council... but how many of us actually associate ourselves with a European identity? You could argue that indeed it does not really matter, what difference does being in the European Union actually make to our daily lives... are we not just another star on the flag? Surely it's the French and the Germans who take this whole 'Europe' thing seriously I'm not even sure if I'm meant to spell the blasted word with a capital!

The fact is that as young British Tories (and I use both terms very loosely here) Europe does indeed matter and more so than ever. When Britain chaired the council it made it quite clear that expansion of the EU was its greatest goal... and this is precisely why we need to take notice of this rather immaterial 'back bench' entity. Whilst the pros and cons of EU expansion can be debated endlessly (and would make for a cracking convo after a nice bottle of Chablis) one thing is quite apparent, it is having an enormous effect on our country. Demographically, economically and even culturally things are changing... we as a country are adapting to encompass a broader range of people and new sets of ideals. As each day passes the EU member states appear to be getting chummier and chummier, you only have to look at the new 'together' logo to see the way in which the EU is trying to be portrayed... as a successful 'experiment' we're a community, we stick by each other, we share the same goals, ideals, aspirations... do we?

And it is this question which I pose to you... are you proud to be European? Are you fond of the way your driving licence and your fathers Porsche have that little EU logo emblazoned on them? Do you religiously watch the Ryder Cup wearing your lederhosen and beret?

I jest (and stereotype to high heaven) but surely you can see my point. Are we as 'the British public' being forced into something that we don't want and more importantly don't need... will there come a point in time when we are so

far into the EU warren that we become endlessly committed to the ideas of other people and thus lose touch with our own governments and sovereignty? This may appear a little dramatic but just think how close we came to the Euro... whether we like it or not Europe has a charm which even Cameron may not even be able to resist!

Of course I am only presenting theory... perhaps it's because I've just read *1984* washed down with a bit of 'Equilibrium' (starring Christian Bale). And before the Heseltine's amongst you flare up and proclaim the advantages of our EU identity let me beat you to it! Yes the EU does have its advantages, in this day and age 'safety in numbers' being a key point. Would we really want to be a lone rabbit with the hegemony of America and more to the point China approaching? Can we take refuge in the warm and rather cosy military prowess of Europe's fair weight in the world... leave no man behind and all that... we shall stick together no matter what the rest of the world throws at us, whether it come from the axis of evil or a lone crusade by the inhabitants of Pictin trying to claim the sovereignty of the British crown! Europe sticks together!

One could argue that it is for the eventual 'survival' of the member states that the EU was created (and must be maintained)... otherwise we could all be picked off one by one...

But alas I digress again and seep into the more 'creative' aspects of my wondering mind. Back to reality... at present we have many challenges to face if the EU is to survive... where will it stop? When is Europe finally Europe? Will it be after Romania and Bulgaria join (eventually) in 2008? Or will we be seeing Turkmenistan's membership proposition in 2020! Also what of the 'brain drain' in the less affluent EU countries and of the labour crisis that is brewing within the depths of our society, the red tape, the silly 'light bulb laws' and the constant need for the EU to seemingly bung us into one big bureaucratic, cultural melting pot!

So what's it to be... are you ready to sit down with Hans and Pierre over a strudel or would you rather roast beef with Hugh and Elizabeth?

Stephen "Starbuck" Coleman

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unnerves society so. There isn't, to my better knowledge, any great modesty of patriotism when we centre around sport, so why is it that we find it almost embarrassing to act or speak of any other domain with such ardour?

With politicians such as Brown long ranking our British values above our institutions, it could be that the respect for our monarchy has wilted. Yet it all seems so contradictory; while sovereignty is more associated with the music charts, it's intentional relevance for our government has been almost nullified through devolution and integration into the EU. Our country is magnificent; it is great in every sense but scalar terms, which makes it even

more remarkable. It really is about time we stop taking its rich history, its character and its free nature for granted and start to respect what these features truly stand for. We do it for sport, we do it for literature, why not start doing it for the sheer hell of it...by Jove we are British after all.

Mimi Noor

A taxing question

When looking for election winning machines few can match Bill Clinton. His charisma and languid charm were potent but beyond this lurked a very simple, but very astute analysis of what determines elections - "It's the economy, stupid".

For the Conservatives to capture those important middle class swing voters in 2009, economic stability will need to dominate our manifesto. It will not just need to be mentioned it needs to be drilled home. Luckily the world economy has encountered a benign period over the last decade; growth has been steady and inflation on the whole kept under control. Unfortunately this has led for many in the party to argue that to prove our economic competence we need to match Gordon Brown and his figures on public expenditure, taxation and monetary policy (which realistically he still controls). To follow this path would not be showing economic competence but demonstrating the same ignorance as Labour.

In 1997, controlling inflation was given over to the 'independent' MPC. This body, whose line-up is to a large extent controlled by the Chancellor, was initially chosen to keep inflation measured by the Retail Price Index (RPIX) under control. This measure took account of house prices and council tax, so when inflation started to creep upwards Mr Brown decided to change to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), where costs relating to housing are ignored. Needless to say inflation fell back in line with Treasury forecasts. Brown needed to tweak his figures to keep face.

This is not the only damning measure of the economy's growing weakness. On productivity we have fallen from the top 10 to 16th in the world competitiveness league, Government borrowing has grown to £37 billion in 2006 and the trade deficit is increasing dramatically. We see an economy that is being stalked by the emerging nations like China and India however we are not oblivious to the threat but preparing to square up to them by weakening our

stance.(100)

In such a climate it is disheartening for George Osborne to announce there would be "no unfunded tax cuts at the next Election" on the release of the Forsyth-led Tax Commission that advocates major tax cuts. This isn't dogma, it is economic fact that low taxes promote growth. The fastest growing OECD countries (average tax share 28%) of the last 10 years have had low taxation at the beginning of the period or sharp falls during that period, conversely the slowest growing OECD countries (average tax share 47%) have had very high taxation at the beginning of that period or a steep increase in tax during that period. Indeed one academic study estimated that a 1% rise in GDP share taken in tax resulted in a 2% fall in productivity per worker.

The state now spends a million pounds a minute. This money swirls around leaky Departmental pipes and finds itself in the pockets, via the Tax Credit system, of those whom Mr Brown approves of. That is the hallmark of a planned economy, an economy where the politicians think they know better than the people. The Conservative Party needs to show competence by proposing tax cuts that will encourage growth and dynamism. This does not mean cutting Inheritance Tax, or reducing pensioners council tax bills. These two examples are ways of cutting taxes and not reaping the benefits of a growing economy. Taxes need to be cut on income, on profits and on entrepreneurial risk.

By following Gordon Brown's lead we would be demonstrating that we are not committed to economic stability but uncomfortable with our convictions. We have a leader with charisma and appeal, it is now necessary for him to take another of Clinton's winning repertoire and start proving he is committed to economic stability by getting serious over tax cuts.

Stuart Davenport

Nicholas Soames @ UCL

What a term this Society has had so far! Two great social events followed by Michael Ancram, who kick started our speaking events for this year. The Committee could only hope that it would get better; and it did on a warm Wednesday evening in late October.

Nicholas Soames is the MP for Mid Sussex, Life President of our Society and most notably the grandson on Winston Churchill. He is one of the most respected Members in the House and we all saw why. He spoke, with great clarity and humour, on a few different issues from Europe to the NHS. Nicholas talked very passionately on the NHS as in his constituency (and like many other areas in the UK) one of the main A&E hospitals is in real fear of being downsized and severely limited with the loss of many jobs. He showed real passion on the issue and it was clear to us all just how much he cared.

His speech was followed by questions before Nicholas had to rush off to do an interview for Sky. Speaking to him on the way out he was very keen both to come again (hopefully for our Alumni dinner in March) and that we should come down to his constituency to help out campaign for the council elections, before having a huge party at the local Conservative club. We shall be going down to help Nicholas next term!

But wait a minute; stop everything. We are the UCL Conservative Society. We are the largest and most prestigious CF branch in London. We are not content with just one speaker; we have three! The first was Richard Merrin, local PR guru and big supporter of our Society, who is standing for the Conservative Party in the Kentish Town ward by-election that had just been called. Richard spoke for a few minutes on his campaign and how we stand a solid chance of doing well there. It was great that Richard

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could come along and we are already up in his ward helping him battle the Liberals!

Our next speaker was the newly elected Conservative Future National Chairman. Mark Clarke has swept lots of fresh air into CF and is initiating huge changes in the system. Mark spoke clearly and confidently on his ideas for CF, including setting up many more CF branches around the country, and where he stands on the political map. It was refreshing to hear a CF chairman speak on a practical vision that will actually follow through (it already is!).

Once the entire champers stockpile had been drunk (so about 5 minutes after the speeches had finished!) we

made our way to Potion cocktail bar to finish the night off. Some, I hear, did not finish till the next morning! I do again want to thank Paul Barton, Chairman of Holborn and St Pancras Conservative Association, for sponsoring the Champagne for the night. Without generous sponsors like Paul, our Society would be nowhere.

Quote of the night: "Oh God!" she gasped. "It would have been easier if you'd said you were gay." Mark's mother when she heard he had joined the Conservative Party.

Richard Jackson



Political Freemasonry?

My God. Do any of you have a Sat-Nav in your car? The voice, that monotonous drone of supposed "direction". It drives me insane. Sure, the idea is flawless: sit in your car, listen, and do as the box says. That's the problem though. "Listen". The voices used in those map-abolishing nav-devices are always so mundane that it's hard to stay awake let alone drive. I don't want to hear a socially-average voice chosen by a "marketing department". I want a voice of excitement and intrigue - perhaps Borat's....And this brings me onto a totally non-related issue which I've just come up with: Political Freemasonry.

You see, after a somewhat, shall we say, Sat-Nav-Voice-ish speech by His Excellency The Ambassador of Australia last week, I ended up winding down that evening with a couple of light beverages at The Carlton and The East India, and this is where I began to think about His Tonyness, Cameron, and the tree-huggers. Now, based solely on fact, which out of those three parties would you say is "the best"? Yes we can look back at history and come up with a justified answer, but in reality, more often than not it's just your word against mine. However, whatever the political party the ultimate aims are always to better the economy, the standard of living, and the wellbeing of those under "jurisdiction". So is there actually a difference between these parties or not? They seek the same and hence surely they are the same?!?

Now before you erupt and start slanderously accusing me of being "ignorant" consider this: when walking home that evening I stopped to listen to that Christian fundamentalist chap who seems to live on Picadilly Circus. One of his minions approached and claimed that the "hand of God"

guided him away from an abusive existence and that I should repent my sins ASAP or there won't be a seat for me on the Heavenly-Express. This is where everything suddenly clicked together. I'm not an avidly religious individual but I do consider myself a Christian, but whether Christianity is the "best religion" or not is simply my word against yours. Ultimately all religions exist for the same reason: to benefit their followers.

Freemasonry looks beyond religion. It's *not* a religion itself. It merely states that there is a "Supreme Being" and hence, in my interpretation, that the choice of religion is unimportant since all religions are based around at least one "Supreme Being". Is it too far-fetched that we all "share" this entity and that the world's religions are merely different interpretations of its manifestation? I'd say yes.

This is where my idea of Political Freemasonry kicks-in. Britain's political parties are merely entities with their own interpretations of the avenues to those political goals I mentioned earlier. Ultimately, they are seeking the same end result - the "Supreme Being" of political idealism. It's therefore unimportant what your political preference is. What is of paramount importance though is that the party in power reaches its goals. So I say to you, don't adopt a Sat-Nav voice. Make your opinions heard and maybe one day you could be leading the country to political supremacy.

But I say stay blue - that's just one man's opinion!

Ilya Zheludev

Margot James vs. Ann Widdecombe: different species?

On Friday 20th October I went to a Women in Politics event at the Marquis of Granby pub with Ann Widdecombe as the speaker. The Women in Politics event itself was set up in order to get women to make speeches, as in many cases women A-Listers have had minimal experience of public speaking despite oratory skills being a crucial aspect of a political position. Unfortunately, due to poor advertising and a clash with the dinner in Manchester with David Cameron only eight of us attended! Personally, I thought the lack of attendees was superb as it enabled me to ask questions to one of the most well known politicians in Britain in an intimate setting. Ann spoke to us about her political history, state funding for political parties, and the A-List as well as on an array of other matters. Regarding her position on the A-List, Women2Win and generally the selection process I found her views very interesting. She is known to be against the A-List and although, inevitably, a supporter of having more women in politics was highly critical of the way women have been given a special priority on the A-List. Ann Widdecombe learnt the hard way. When she was selected for different seats she had fierce competition from other male applicants and was one of a tiny minority of women who applied for the different seats. However, she succeeded and has become one of the most personable MPs in British society today. She stated that the problem of the lack of women involved in politics could not be solved by fast-tracking women into standing for the next election but there needed to be a longer term strategy. Ann told us that when she goes to a school or college she always asks the group how many want to be an MP or would consider a career in politics; no matter which age group asked 9/10 of the hands raised are always male. Therefore, she feels that there needs to be a promotion of leadership skills for girls at a very early age as clearly there is a problem that goes back to childhood. She also argued in favour of a nationwide, organised head hunt for women to get involved with politics. Many women are very successful in managerial positions in other sectors yet the travelling and other aspects of being an MP can often hinder the chances of women stepping forward. Regarding the A-List itself Ann told us that the Party, at all levels, is recognising the severe errors of it and the solution to rectify the situation should be to quietly say to Conservative associations across the country that they are more than welcome to take a prospective candidate who is not on the A-List. Overall, she spoke strongly against the way women are involved in the Party and that we need to make sure females always feel they have the capability to lead, headhunt and suggest to women that their skills and expertise could be transferable to politics and discreetly dismantle the A-List.

Less than a week later I attended the King's College London reception with Margot James who is the vice chairman of the Conservative Party with overall responsibility for women's issues. Margot James is glamorous and successful having sold her PR company for around £4m. Unfortunately there was a low turnout for the event but this did not prevent the evening running seamlessly to Arleen Ouzounian's credit. Margot chose to predominantly speak to us on the topic of entry routes into politics. She named the legal profession as a very helpful

foundation for politics and also spoke about media work being helpful. It was an interesting insight into the real and wider world of politics past student level and Margot came across as a very personable woman who would always advise and encourage people to enter the political world. Although she did not speak at length on the candidate selection process it was evident to me that she had the polar opinion to Ann Widdecombe. She spoke of the need to quickly change the make up of the MPs in parliament and that the A-List was the main solution to do this. It would have been helpful to hear more of her view on this topic. To summarise she spoke passionately about the need for more women to participate in politics but did not mention a deep seated issue in society that prevented this from already happening, or a head hunt and spoke in favour of the current selection process. Rather she stated that women should have a priority and that the selected PPCs for the next election should consist of many more women.

Rachel Watts

Do you support Margot or Ann?

Ann:

- A nationwide head hunt.
- Educational changes to promote leadership amongst females.
- Make it clear to those selecting candidates that they can choose whoever they feel is most suitable rather than feel inclined to choose an A-Lister or someone just because they are from an ethnic minority or a women etc.

Margot:

- The current women involved should be prioritised.
- The process of gaining more women at leadership level should happen quickly.

Editor's notes

As you may have noticed, *The Caerulean* is beginning to evolve. I'm proud to say that interest in the UCLU Conservative Society is on the rise, and that as a result non-committee members are volunteering to contribute to our newsletter. This is clearly a step in the right direction, and so I'd like to thank *Iain Martin* and *Stuart Davenport* for the fine articles they wrote for this issue. I encourage you to contribute, so if your political imagination is bursting please contact me on i.zheludev@ucl.ac.uk and do let me know!

Finally, if you have any photographs from our past events that you wish to be featured on our website www.uclconservatives.co.uk then please email them to us on conservative.society@ucl.ac.uk. Many thanks!

Ilya Zheludev

Michael Ancram @ UCL

As our first political event of the new academic year, Michael Ancram, proved to be a tremendous success. Also known as Michael Andrew Foster Jude Kerr, 13th Marquess of Lothian, PC, QC, MP, he has had a fascinating career in politics which spans over a course over 25 years.

He is currently Member of Parliament for Devizes in Wiltshire but has had an exciting political career in Scotland before he settled into this constituency. It is interesting to know that he won Berwick and East Lothian for the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party in the February 1974 election, only to lose it again in October of the same year.

Michael has not been a Member of Parliament for his entire political career; after losing his seat in the October 1974 election he was not re-elected as an MP until 1979 when he was elected as MP for Edinburgh South where he stayed until 1987. He then had a five year gap until he was re-elected in 1992.

Ancram served in the Shadow Cabinet as Constitutional Affairs Spokesman from June 1997 to June 1998, after the defeat of Conservatives by Labour in 1997.

Ancram was also chairman of the Conservative Party from October 1998 to September 2001.

Although this is seemingly irrelevant in the political arena at the moment, in 2001, Michael stood against Michael Portillo, Iain Duncan Smith, Ken Clarke and David Davis for leadership. When eliminated, he strongly supported Iain Duncan Smith. Duncan Smith made Ancram Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in September 2001. He remained in this position after Michael Howard took over in 2003.

In the reshuffle following the 2005 election, Ancram was moved to Shadow Secretary of State for Defence but remained the Deputy Leader. He stood down from the shadow cabinet in October 2005, following the election of David Cameron. Our evening started with the 'traditional' wine and snacks. Much to my dismay, there were practically buckets of red wine and no white, but it was compensated by hundreds of vegetarian rolls and chocolate muffins. The Tories love to have classy events with crisps, cocktail sausages and scotch eggs! On a serious level though, despite the lack of white wine and cordon-bleu appetisers, over forty people attended the event and people seemed to enjoy interacting with him briefly in the drinks reception. Ancram once said that he has 'always believed that politics is about interactive dialogue.' Michael reinforced this statement by opening the floor after his speech and giving people an opportunity to ask a wide variety questions on different issues including the NHS, the War in Iraq and Thatcher's Government.

Ancram backs up the Henry Jackson Society principles which promote an active approach to the spread of liberal democracy across the world, including, when necessary, by military intervention. When Ancram came to UCL on the 17th of October, he spoke of how the Conservative party only supported Labour with the war on Iraq because they believed that Labour had a proper programme of reconstruction planned for after the war. Now, Iraqis have less electricity per person than they did before the war, hundreds of innocent Iraqi's have died and there seems to be no improvement. This is why, on April 21st 2006, Michael became one of the first senior Conservative MPs to call for British troops to withdraw from Iraq. He believes that Iraq is effectively in a state of civil war and 'It is time now for us to get out of Iraq with dignity and honour while we still can.'

We were all very grateful that he came along on the 18th October. It provided us all with a very useful opportunity to ask a variety of questions on current issues today.

One of our new society members, a fresher, commented that 'I'm really surprised. I thought that listening to a talk by an MP would be a bit dull but I was determined to give it a try... I really enjoyed myself.'

I would like to finish with what I thought was the most poignant point that Ancram made that evening. To be honest, it was one that I would not have even crossed my mind in all probability until he said it. He said that although Tony Blair might be one of the longest running Prime Ministers in the UK, he will be quickly forgotten. Despite his charisma and his claim that he would change the political arena in the UK, he will not be remembered for anything significant and good. Yes, he will be remembered for his alliance with America, yes, he will be remembered for his decision to invade Iraq and yes, he will be remembered for snappy slogans such 'education, education, education.' Problem is, will Blair be remembered for anything good? Ancram believes he will not be and that this is the reason Blair is trying to 'save' Northern Ireland. He believes that Blair wants to finish on a high note. Surely though it is too late for Blair?

Ancram ensures us of his belief in Cameron. Let's hope that next general election, the Tories will win, and Cameron will learn from Blair's mistakes.

Helen Roberts

Coming events



Port and Policy Debate

Tuesday 14th November @ 7:30pm
UCL Wilkins JBR

Policy debate to be held at UCL. We will debate a selected issue. More info to follow...



HSPCA Winter Drinks Party

Wednesday 22nd November @ 7:30pm
Rebecca Hossack Gallery, Windmill Street, London

Annual winter drinks with the local association and special guest Damian Green MP, Shadow Minister for Immigration and former Chairman of Kings Cross Ward!

Special rate for UCL Conservatives! Tickets £10



Winter Drinks with The Freemasons!

Wednesday 22nd November @ 7:30pm
Metropolitan Grand Lodge, Holborn

A drinks reception is happening on the 22nd November at Freemasons Hall (**as seen on Spooks as MI5 HQ!!**), should be quite fun and is a pretty rare opportunity to see inside a very impressive building. As you may be aware Freemasons Hall is an imposing listed Art Deco building covering over 2 acres of Covent Garden, London. To apply for tickets at just £15 each please email (conservative.society@ucl.ac.uk).



Boris Johnson @ UCL

Thursday 23rd November @ 7:30pm
UCL Wilkins JBR Room

Its the event you have all been waiting for: Boris Johnson MP, Member of Parliament for Henley and Shadow Minister for Higher Education will be coming to speak at UCL.

Tickets: UCL Society members: FREE. Non-members: £5. Includes wine and Canapés.

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