

THE CAERULEAN

*This edition is
dedicated to
Eric Bristow,
five times
Darts World
Champion.*

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'The Comeback Kid'

"Last year McCain was on the brink of disaster, most of his financial support had withdrawn and many considered his campaign in the Republican primary over before it had begun. However I am glad to tell you that McCain is on the brink again, however this time he is on the brink of securing the Republican nomination to run for president. This should cause us all to breathe a huge sigh of relief. Having now won the Wisconsin Primary, taking his delegate count to 974 it is only a matter of time before he can secure the Republican nomination and restore some credibility to American politics and hopefully the White house.

Why am I so keen for a McCain victory? Considering I have no ties to America, and at times I have even wished America would return to the Isolationism of the 1930's, I am amazed at my level of support for the Arizona senator. However, whether we like it or not America has vital role to play on the world stage, and as a result of this it should be very important to all of us who succeeds the rather unfortunate presidency of George "Dubya" Bush!

McCain's greatest attribute (something the current Tory party should listen to) is his belief in small government. He is determined to cut down on the size of administration in place. McCain wants an end to Pork barrel spending, allowing greater efficiency in the two houses. Along with this, he is intent on reforming the Civil service and eliminating government programmes that are not successful. I think we would all agree these are policies that we would like adopted not only over there but over here too!

To further this point he is determined to lower taxation for the middle class, by permanently repealing the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), which will save middle class families \$60 billion a year! What was particularly striking about this policy is that the current frontrunner for the Democrats, Barack Obama, wants to do the same thing. However, he wants to introduce a tax credit system instead, the snappily titled "Making Work Pay" credit. This is all well

and good, but when he then goes on to state the reason for this is to "Simplify tax filings for Middle Class Americans", there appears to be a contradiction. Now is it just me or is having to fill out more forms just complicating the system, especially when the alternative is not having to pay the tax at all.

Before getting to the topic of Iraq, it is necessary to highlight the candidates' respective stances on the 2nd Amendment. In light of the recent tragic shootings at Northern Illinois University, and of course the shootings at Virginia Tech and Columbine, you would have thought gun control would be an important issue. Well you are wrong. Only McCain pays any attention to it; it is conspicuous in its absence from both Obama's and Clinton's websites. However unfortunately, whilst McCain does not support greater gun control; he does at least make an attempt to address the issue of the 2nd Amendment by introducing greater background checks of potential owners for example. In the past McCain has been in favour of greater gun control, so we can but live in hope that once elected he will revert to his former position. Before I finish on this section, just to lighten the mood I want to make reference to Mick Huckabee's stance on the 2nd Amendment, and I quote we need the 2nd Amendment because "Our Founding Fathers, having endured the tyranny of the British Empire, wanted to guarantee our god given liberties." Wow, and I never thought history would have a role in modern politics!

Whilst I could go ad infinitum about the merits of McCain's proposals, such as his stance on immigration and his plans for health care reform. It is his policy on Iraq which makes him stand head and shoulders above the naive Democratic candidates. Yes, we have all heard people saying we should withdraw because Green Day and Coldplay have told us too.

(Continued Overleaf...)

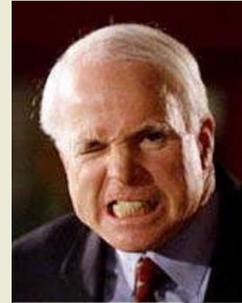
We UCL students also get this from the ever eloquent and ever popular Stop the War society! However whilst everyone has gone back on their support of the war, McCain has stood firm and supported the surge, and has been proved right as a consequence.

The very fact that Obama and Clinton call for a withdrawal whereas McCain states the need for "Victory in Iraq", sums up the candidates. Two are more obsessed with popularity and media image, whereas one is actually concerned with the issues facing America. McCain's support for greater troop involvement in Iraq, despite its unpopularity, shows his commitment in improving the lives of the Iraqi citizens. Whereas the cut and run approach of both Obama and Clinton, are the policies of people more concerned with looking good to the American public.

Ultimately whether you support McCain or not is your decision. However in this age where media sound bites and image seem to dominate politics, we have an opportunity to vote for an American Conservative, who is not a religious mad man (Yes I am referring to Mick Huckabee, we really did dodge a bullet there!) This is a man prepared to go

against his own party such as on abortion and immigration, and is prepared to stick to his beliefs despite their unpopularity. Unfortunately this type of politician seems to be a dying breed, so I think it should be our responsibility to ensure that America's next President is a person of substance. So I urge you, next time someone mentions how charismatic Obama might be or how radical Hilary might be, tell them you are backing John McCain, the comeback kid!

Michael Peet



'Europe in the 21st Century'

Right, so I know most of us have busy lives. What with all the lectures we miss, events we turn up to, not to mention all the extra-curricular stuff we engage in – why hasn't he she called back? What are my plans for the summer? How much will I be overdrawn this month and am I bothered? Why then should we be bothered with the EU? It's great all this European business, what with cheap wine from Calais, cheap flights to Florence and not to mention all the lovely people who come along and do fantastic jobs. When one thinks of it this way it is hard not to love this glorious institution – in which case why bother about the Constitution Lisbon Treaty? Sounds like a treat.

I'm sorry. I for one am not falling for that. Does it not appear all too convenient? We all know that those in power find their jobs quite difficult when their hopes and dreams are crushed. When in 2001 the French and Dutch voted NO in a Referendum to implement the European Constitution, I can assure you Brussels was not impressed, so what better way to replace the term Constitution with "minor treaty". We've signed lots of treaties, it's user friendly and tends to go unnoticed. My dear friends, the bureaucrats have succeeded. Nobody cares, nobody bothers, though we should more than ever before.

I can see it now "Tony Blair elected EU president" and perhaps "Nicolas Sarkozy elected EU foreign minister". What will be left of Britain? A mere Island, with no powers of veto and dreaming of adopting the common currency, how else will it survive? Wake up! We agreed to join the European Economic Community on Economic grounds, and not to end up as a mere suction cup within an ever expanding Octopus – that's right, you heard and a socialist octopus at that.

Our friendship with the EU began shortly after the Suez Crisis, when the government of a declining, post-Imperial Britain looked towards the Continent, saw what it imagined to be the world's new economic powerhouse, and panicked itself to join this brilliant trading group at no matter what cost. The costs are no doubt greater than the gains. Key political decisions governing almost every aspect of our lives are determined by bureaucrats in Brussels and not our democratically elected representatives in Westminster – from how much we're paid to how long we work, how to police our borders, what is and isn't safe to eat, the way we take our measurements, how we dispose of our rubbish and don't even get me started on our fishing rules. We have signed up to ludicrous directives which have destroyed Britain's abattoir industry, hamstrung our chemical industry and blighted our landscape with wind turbines. We are even on the verge of losing our right to drink out of pint – indeed, the terms Feet, Inches, Pounds, Ounces, Gallons and Pints will soon be banned. Membership of the EU has cost us more money and made us less free.

I trust our organic and unwritten constitution; I trust our Law Lords and Judges to pass the right laws. I trust our Parliament to scrutinise these Laws. In short I trust our democracy. Trade is an important economic factor and I welcome it. We can carry on trading with the EU – and it wouldn't harm joining NAFTA whilst we're at it! But for heaven's sake let us make our own laws, let us deal with our own bureaucracy and our own governments and make them accountable before we trust our lives with people who probably don't speak English anyway.

Serene John-Richards

'The Advantages of Inequalities'

By writing this article I hope to challenge the perception that inequality in a capitalist society is not just a necessary evil, but is actually an important driving force behind the economy.

Firstly I would like to differentiate between two types of inequality by highlighting the kind of society which promotes these inequalities. These are 'rigid' and 'dynamic' inequalities, for a rigid system of inequalities to be upheld, a society needs to be directed and hierarchal. The feudal system which governed England along with the rest of mainland Europe in the middle ages would promote a rigid system of inequality where the fortunes of families do not change over time, the two biggest inhibiting factors to peasants wishing to climb the social ladder at this time were their ineligibility to buy property or to train as apprentices. Another and more relevant example of a society which promotes rigid inequalities is a socialist state, however in this case the privileged few are not members of the gentry but party apparatchiks.

Dynamic inequalities are however vastly different, for the very reason that in a Libertarian Capitalistic society there are no arbitrarily set barriers to various professions, alongside the belief that ownership of property is a right of all private individuals. With the rule of law backing up ownership rights which is blind in its application. Therefore the fortunes of families can change over time. This encourages a healthy work ethic, self reliance and the incentive to make the most efficient use of available capital in the hope of higher living standards. This is what Adam Smith described as self love in his thesis 'The Wealth of Nations' and it is this same self love which drives the metaphorical invisible hand that raises living standards in a random impersonal fashion.

'It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own self interest.' - Adam Smith

So as we have established above, unequal distributions of wealth within a capitalistic society provides people with the incentive to make the most of their respective talents, due in no small part to the Libertarian principles which flourish in a free market economy.

However as the western industrialised economies moved from the 19th century to the 20th century laissez-faire and small government gave way to a state controlled paternalism, which resulted from the socialist thinkers of the previous century such as 'Saint-Simon' and 'Karl Marx'. I regard it as the ultimate irony that like many of the states which based themselves upon his ideas Marx died penniless.

I am convinced that while on the whole this shift towards state sponsored redistribution of income was well intentioned it represented a distrust of responsible adults to arrange their own lives as they saw fit, otherwise why would the state give subsidies for particular uses instead of cash, if that state believed that its citizens deserved the chance to exercise free will, while alleviating poverty.

The preferred method of redistribution adopted by western societies has been taxation, while of course a level of taxation is necessary and desirable for the upkeep of national institutions

such as the armed forces, there is no reason why a graduated taxation system is needed. Of course it will be argued that this arrangement is necessary to decrease inequalities in a society, however the levying of a graduated income tax and also capital gains tax does not achieve this end. Infact the result of such taxation is diametrically opposed to the intention. Because the rich who already have substantial reserves of capital are not affected by such legislation, only those individuals who are trying to achieve a higher standard of living will be impeded by taxation, therefore the state is actually providing the rich with fewer competitors for investment opportunities. This entrenches inequalities within a society of the rigid variety, thus impeding social mobility.

I would therefore in the case of income tax argue for a flat rate, this would ensure that everyone would give the same proportion of their income. I believe that this would provide the incentive to earn a greater income and would in the long term ensure the government receives a larger income from taxation. A fixed amount of a large pie is much better than the same proportion of a much smaller pie!

In the case of a socialist society with a planned economy where capital is redistributed from the wealthy to the poor several basic questions are raised I shall list these below:

If a certain level of income is guaranteed where is the impetus for the gifted to obtain a high level of education which certain professions require?

How does such a society ensure desirable levels of productivity in its industries?

It would seem that the answers to such questions can only be provided by state coercion and the limitation of individual freedoms, this is illustrated very effectively by the following quotation:

"It has been said that while the last resort of a competitive economy is the bailiff, the ultimate sanction of a planned economy is the hangman." - Roepke

In conclusion inequalities are a virtue and not a vice, provided that they are the dynamic inequalities produced by a free society where there are no barriers to any profession other than a particular individuals abilities, therefore any extension of the state which is justified by arguments of paternalism and wealth redistribution should be viewed with scepticism as they are likely to restrict individual freedoms and will not produce the expected results.

Stuart Turner



Patriotism: Time for a Rethink

I was sat on the train the other day casually perusing The Times, when I came across an article entitled 'Don't teach our children patriotism'. It laid out the findings of the Institute of Education, which termed aspects of British history as "morally ambiguous". Its main thrust was that, as a result of this moral ambiguity, patriotism should not be taught as part of Citizenship lessons in order to avoid glorifying historical events.

The report went on to say that "To love what is corrupt is itself corrupting, not least because it inclines us to ignore, forget, forgive or excuse the corruption. And there's the rub for patriotism." Whilst few would contend that there are aspects of our history which one would not wish to glorify or laud, there are numerous occasions on which we could and indeed should, feel very proud to be British. The abolition of slavery, the extension of the vote to all classes and sexes, and the defence and promotion of civilized society throughout the globe. These are all proud moments in British history and have had great impact the world over. That we should refrain from teaching our children pride in this, in some naïve and ridiculous attempt to be 'politically correct' is not only futile but also gravely misguided.

Firstly, these topics and subjects are not taught by teachers who are morally neutral nor to recipients who could reflect such a vacuous and dysfunctional person. People will inevitably teach and learn in ways that are influenced by their upbringing and community. Secondly, the Institute entirely misses the point and value of patriotism in a modern British society. To instill a feeling of pride and emotion is vital in ensuring the diverse elements of our society integrate and co-operate successfully, this is to the benefit not

only of the country but each and every individual and citizen within it.

There are divergent views held on this very subject within our society. There are those that would consider patriotism somehow 'un-British' and there are those that feel we should be ashamed and apologetic for our past. I have come across both of these views, often passionately argued and held by intelligent, rational people. They are however, both inaccurate, narrow minded and repugnant in equal measure.

To argue that the concept of patriotism is in some bizarre sense not 'British' is, on just one level, historically inaccurate. As a nation we have always had huge turn outs for events such as coronations, jubilees, fleet reviews and countless other national events and celebrations. To argue that we, as a people should be ashamed of our imperial past is incoherent and repulsive in itself. Whilst there are always events in history that have imposed upon others and affected their lives in a myriad of ways, they are events which are creatures and consequences of their time. That I, as a young man in 21st Century Britain should feel ashamed and be apologetic for, events that happened two hundred years ago is absurd and prevents any positive and progressive use for such history. Namely that of restoring a sense of British pride for all those who live in this great country and striving for a beneficial, compassionate and successful integrated society.

Christian Waterfield



Next Year's Society

As President of next year's Conservative Society at UCL I have a number of ideas for improving the society. Most of these were announced at the AGM on February 26th, however for those who weren't there I shall list these policies below:

- Focussed campaigning on two local marginal seats. As it stands, these would be Westminster North and Hampstead and Kilburn. These constituencies are newly created and have notional labour majorities of 4.5% and 6.5% respectively meaning that they are definitely winnable at the next election but could do with our help.
- Inter-society events with other political societies at UCL. Ideally we will have a termly debate with Forward Left, the Liberal Democrats and the Labour Society. (Other parties willing, that is!)
- An increased number of social events, from pub lunches to theatre trips. If you have any ideas for social events, please contact next year's Social Secretary, Adam Sawyer. (Contact details on page 6.)
- Better publicity raised by a number of people at the AGM. Events listings on Conservative Home and more flyers should help towards this.

In terms of the speakers I should like to invite:

- Ken Clarke MP
- David Davis MP
- Michael Spicer MP (Chair of the 1922 Committee)
- Richard Ottaway MP
- Graham Brady MP
- Tim Barnes, Chris Skidmore and Christopher Chope MP (Chairmen of the TRG, Bow Group and CWF respectively.)
- Other conservative personalities such as Iain Dale, Douglas Murray and Michael Portillo.

If you have any other ideas for speakers, events, constituency campaigning etc. please let me know. (Contacts details on page 6.)

All the best

Eamonn Hurley-Flynn

Nozza on Bozza

In the first of our 2008 series of events, the 22nd saw Steve Norris address the Society, speaking on a range of topics relating to the government of London and the office of Mayor. Following his experiences as an MP under Thatcher and as Transport Secretary, he retired from Parliament to run for the then newly created position of London Mayor twice, so this was an opportunity to hear from a man deeply in touch with these topics.

Introducing himself as, "the man who used to be the next Mayor of London", he began by exposing a deeply divided city, juxtaposing extremes of wealth and poverty, illustrated with shocking statistics and local examples such as the stark contrasts between just one side and the other of Euston Road.

Having identified this enormous disparity, it was conspicuous by its absence from his list of the three main challenges any Mayor here must face, those of crime, transport and the skills gap. Regarding skills, he also highlighted the vast budget of the London Development Agency, and the oft suspicious manner of its disposal.

Addressing next the election itself, he suggested that as with many other "local" elections, the candidate themselves is less important than general support for their party. This surprised some members of the audience who afterwards noted that two highly colourful characters are at the front of the current mayoral race.

Having begun his talk saying he would discuss London's regional issues and examine broader national ones at the end in questions, it was a mark of the impact he had made on the audience that all of the questions asked were on London-centric topics. His great experience and, as he put it, "nerdy" familiarity with each and every one of them and the city itself, made this inspirational and profoundly topical evening a real treat, showing us how London really is, and could be, governed, and we look forward to hosting him in the future when we may be at a time of substantial change and development in the government of this city.

Adam Sawyer

Coming events

UCL Question Time 2



Tuesday March 4th @7.30pm
Venue: Haldane Room

Join us for our second Question Time event of the year. Based on the BBC show, a panel will take questions and give you their views on the current political climate.



Speakers: Shaun Bailey (PPC for Hammersmith) , James Cleverly (Conservative GLA candidate for Bexley & Bromley), and other guests to be announced...

Reconvened UCLAGM



Wednesday, March 5th @7.30pm
Venue: Christopher Ingold Auditorium

Please make an effort to come along to the reconvened AGM of UCLU. There are a number of motions being debated which have been proposed by the UCL Stop the War Society. These include the attempt to ban the military in all its forms from UCL. Please come along and help us to add a little sanity to the affair.

UCL Conservatives Campaign Day



Saturday, March 8th@10.30a.m.
Meet: Orange Tree Inn, opposite Richmond station

This is the society's second campaign day this year. We will be going to Richmond to help Zac Goldsmith beat the Liberal Democrats. Lunch and drinks will be provided by the local association.

Tickets (Excluding UCLU AGM): Members: FREE. Non-members: £5.

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