



WIN TICKETS TO SEE THE WAILERS!
As in 'Bob Marley and ...'
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Concerns raised as cull of QUB lecturers takes effect

LORCAN MULLEN
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Queen's University is finalising the lay-offs of a reported 103 teaching staff as the job losses announced this summer take effect. These job losses are understood to take the form of targeted retirement and voluntary redundancy. With confusion remaining over the intentions of some teaching staff offered voluntary severance packages, there may yet be compulsory redundancies to come.

These measures formed part of the Academic Plan approved by the Senate in June; the closure of the German department dominated reporting at the time. Senate minutes for this meeting are currently unavailable.

The Gown understands that the bulk of the lay-offs will be targeted at teaching staff perceived by the university as incompatible with QUB's aggressive push for internationally-renowned research. One source close to the matter described the process as a way of removing staff originally hired for research purposes, who had not delivered on their initial promise. However, others have not been so phlegmatic about the situation.

Dr Renee Prendergast QUB branch president of the lecturers union, UCU, has publically criticised the 'Academic Plan'



Sources within the Union have raised concerns about confusion and potential chaos in timetabled classes, with many staff now set to leave, despite being scheduled to teach modules this semester. The lecturers' union, the UCU (University & College Union), has suggested that some redundant staff may be forced to return to teach at QUB as short term cover for these classes.

As the details of the job cuts are not fully known as we go to press, some degree of uncertainty over classes/exams is predicted. Several QUB schools have reportedly found it very difficult to plan over the summer with such uncertainty hanging over targeted members of staff.

Evidence of student frustration is emerging from various schools, with popular modules and respected members of staff rumoured to be leaving their departments. In the law school, sources say two very popular final year courses are being scrapped, namely Medical Law and Law & Culture. The Law Society chose not to comment.

Sources within the School of Engineering also report a vast number of cuts. The number of optional modules at stage four has dropped from 19 to 11, with 5 of these remaining modules based on plastics. This source suggests that QUB's focus on plastics is for the purpose of gathering research money, with few students showing much appetite for the courses.

This aggressive emphasis on targeted research is part of Queen's drive to achieve a place in the top 100 best ranked universities in the world.

Renee Prendergast, QUB branch president of the lecturers' union UCU, expressed concern, stating, "There is an emphasis on getting money...there is a potential for distortion." Concerns were also raised over the extent of academic freedom at Queen's, with strictly controlled research objectives determining the fate of many staff. Reports suggest that lecturers are experiencing a much diminished state of independence in following their own research goals, with schools and departments keeping a tight rein on academics.

Dr Prendergast also commented on the closure of the School of German, criticising the contradictions at the heart of QUB's academic planning.

"There are fewer languages, when we are supposed to be internationalising."

In a more positive development, Stranmillis staff have reportedly re-engaged with the merger process, having received assurances from Peter Gregson. The Academic Plan had initially created fears of a cull of staff at the teacher training college, with QUB's original stated intention to remove individuals not research active at an international level. The vast majority of Stranmillis' teaching staff, by nature of the college's work, do not conduct research as part of their post.

A shower of...

Has Rain's raging PR campaign gone too far? Full story page 3



DUP damn QUB and UU 'houses of republicanism'

Students and student leaders have forcefully rebutted claims from two DUP MLAs that Queen's and the University of Ulster are "a home for republicanism".

Assembly members Alex Easton and Jonny Craig mounted this bizarre claim in an effort to influence a planned debate on the options of school leavers.

Both MLAs described enduring cultural problems at both universities, so much so that unionist and Protestant students are effectively forced to study in other parts of the UK.

This intervention can be taken as a re-hash of decades-old allegations that the northern universities are so-called 'cold houses' for Protestant school-leavers and students.

In the statement, Mr. Easton asserted, "The figures speak for themselves; more Protestants leave Northern Ireland for a University education on the UK mainland. The main problem

lies with the institutions...Protestants therefore do not feel welcome."

Both called for immediate action from the minister for employment and learning, Sir Reg Empey, a unionist, requesting a vague and unspecified "initiative" in creating a religious

43.9

The percentage of QUB students who self-identify as Protestant

balance at QUB and UU.

However, when contacted by The Gown, Easton seemed to be backtracking from his initial statement, stating his belief that "there is no cultural problem" at the institutions, and that practical measures to equalise the numbers, i.e. through a system of restraining caps and quotas, are not needed or desired. The North Down MLA also felt the

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need to mention on several occasions that "it wasn't anything sectarian."

Many students, when told of the remarks of the MLAs, expressed a mixture of disgust and scepticism. The DUP has, in recent months, taken a more publically hardline stance on traditional identity grievances, picking petty fights in an attempt to neutralise the insurgent force of Jim Allister's hardline TUV (Traditional Unionist Voice).

While Easton scoffed at The Gown's mentioning of a TUV threat in his constituency, BBC reports show that the anti-agreement party outpolled the DUP there in the recent European parliamentary elections.

Student leaders have been vocal in their rejection of the DUP's reasoning. Gareth McGreevy, the Union's VP Campaigns, told The Belfast Telegraph:

Continued on page 2

The Independent Student Newspaper at Queen's since 1955.

Monday 19th October 2009

The Gown is now available every Monday fortnight across the Queen's campus.

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With thanks to our printers, The Bangor Spectator, our advertisers, and everyone who contributed to the making of this edition.

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Please recycle this newspaper when you are finished reading it.

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Who needs teachers? I do!

Editorial by Catherine Wylie

QUB is evidently very determined to become a leading research university, and we should all be a little bit chuffed that we are part of such an esteemed institution. However, with each passing week, *The Gown* team learns more about the negative consequences of the university's bid to become renowned for their research. An abundance of students from various schools have voiced their concerns, and believe that the shortcomings of QUB's aim of research predominance needs to be highlighted.

It is a given that the laying off of so many teaching staff will result in much bigger classes, and standards are likely to drop due to a less intimate teaching environment. A number of modules which usually would include field trips are now without that aspect, as evidenced in engineering where one class has doubled in size since last year. It seems

that students face a "watering down" of their modules so to speak, and it is all due to the university's decision to pump more money into research. With the prospect of an increase in fees, it is disheartening to think that we are paying for tuition which isn't quite as good as it should be. One could argue that QUB are prioritising their own credentials over students and their needs, which is an ironic thought when one thinks of what University is truly about.

A couple of PhD students told *The Gown* about how they were heavily encouraged to embark on a PhD after they completed their Masters degrees, claiming that the University is "obsessed with research".

What will this mean for QUB in the future? Will they still churn out as many first class honours degrees with this detrimental attitude to teaching? **CW**

Continued from page 1

"To suggest that Queen's is a house for republicanism is an unfounded suggestion. The Students' Union at Queen's welcomes students from all cultures, race and backgrounds. Statistics show that students from a unionist background are well-represented in the running of the Students' Union through the Students' Union Council.

"Steps have been taken over the past 30 years to eradicate any form of any religious or cultural discrimination that was once speculated to have existed. The Students' Union Council is now dominated by students who are 'politically' independent and they are debating and forming policy on student issues."

Queen's subsequently released a statement clarifying the religious make-up of its student population: In 2008-09, of those who declared a religious affiliation, 43.9% of full-time undergraduate students at Queen's identified themselves as Protestant, 56.1% identified themselves as Catholic. The School Census data for 2007-08 showed 40% of Year 13-14 school pupils were Protestant and 60% Catholic. **LM**

Raised And Given

JANE BROWN

It is not only on RAG day that a dedicated team of students give up their time and effort for notable causes, with last academic year seeing a staggering £23, 101 collected by RAG for charitable purposes.

On Wednesday 7th October in the Enterprise SU, a poignant event took place in the diary of any RAG member. Their efforts over the past year were rewarded when they saw four chosen charities; all based in Northern Ireland, each receive a cheque for £2, 983.

Representatives from each of the four charities attended the event and were quick to praise the efforts of those involved in RAG, and highlight how the money raised would be invaluable. The presentation began with Jo Murphy from PIPS,

THE HOOD

Passing the Union on my way deep into the cold, dark night, I noticed the smiley friendliness of two baby faced sabbs planting bus stamps on the hands of drunken revellers. I didn't pity them too much, but then I saw their fellow sabbs stumble out past them in the

fashion of George Best in his heyday. I would have thought that he would have been more "educated" and informed about letting his light hair down so publicly. I know who would fair the best with performance related pay, and with the opposition towards it showed by certain sabbs, I assume that they know too. Some of us are a little too fond of our nights in Mandela, eh boys? However, as much as



Union want passengers!

CHARLENE SMALL

The Union's night bus has resumed service with reports that very few students have even heard of it.

Piloted last semester, the bus now runs on Monday and Thursday from the Union to all the student areas.

The bus costs £150 to run each night, and is financed by donations to the Queen's Annual Fund. This grant is set to run out in November, but union sources say plans are already in place to secure funding from the same source.

During last semester's trial period, criticism was rife that the campaign was mismanaged through a lack of publicity; many students seemed to remain ignorant of the bus service.

Union VP Community, Laura Hawthorne, defended the pilot scheme, explaining that this was partly due to doubt among residents of the effects of a bus, with many fearing a 'party bus' would only heighten rowdiness. As a result, sabbatical officers were only allowed to publicise the bus within the Union building on Monday and Thursday nights.



a charity which supports the families of suicide victims and offers counselling to those who self-harm or consider ending their lives. She explained that the money would be channelled into further counselling services to help deter people from tragedy. The second chosen charity, Aware Defeat Depression, which was represented by Liz Beattie would be using the money raised to go towards a helpline and further support groups for people with depression or bipolar disorder, an illness Liz can relate to as a sufferer of bipolar disorder herself. Likewise, Kate McVeigh who was the representative from The Impact Trust, held the cause close to her own heart. This is a charity designed to help children suffering from autism, a condition afflicting her own child and for which she previously found little

support. Finally, Billy McCrory, the charismatic representative of the charity Shine a Light, noted that the money raised would help fund a trip to Lapland this Christmas for children suffering from cancer, an opportunity to give them intense enjoyment after having to suffer at the hands of such a debilitating illness.

The RAG society not only does all this great work, but it also allows students to enjoy an active social life at the same time.

For more information on the RAG society, email su.rag@qub.ac.uk, or call in to one of their meetings at 6pm every Monday in The Space. Brave members of RAG will soon be taking part in an abseil down the old Queen's library, all in the name of charity!

I would be prone to lauding our magazine editor in residence, I really am losing my patience with this goddamn publication. When it finally appears, I shall expect nothing short of perfection. Vogue editor, Anna Wintour, allowed a documentary filmmaker to follow her team around as they made the 2007 September issue. Maybe that's what our "footloose" and fancy free editor is in the process of

with the official Union publication. Will this be the biggest and best SU Mag yet? If late nights in the office are anything to go by, then it should be one helluva read.

Finally folks, expect to see me in Mandela for the Halloween party along with *The Gown* him/herself.

See you then Blondie...but I bet you won't see me...

Rain lashes Union with dirty tactics

CATHERINE WYLIE
 editor@thegown.org.uk

The Union have expressed anger at the behaviour of PR staff promoting Rain nightclub around the Students' Union.

Employees from the city centre club have been a permanent fixture at the traffic lights in the opening weeks of term, handing out promotional fliers. However, although various other clubs send PR staff to do the same, Rain has been particularly staunch in their PR tactics.

Speaking of an incident which occurred in June, Union security co-ordinator Nigel Macartney says, "PR staff from Rain broke into the snack bar on the second floor of the Union and left fliers, painted the Rain logo in the snooker room, and even left graffiti on the windows of the sabbaticals' office." Students will note that during Welcome week and Freshers' week, the bollards and railings at the front of the Union were constantly plastered with Rain posters and banners, with one banner posing a dangerous risk to traffic as it wasn't properly fastened.

Mr Macartney revealed to The Gown that £500 was spent on security during the hours of 11am - 4pm in the opening two weeks, in a bid to control the

Rain staff, which he describes were demonstrating "aggressive PR". The Union have had to resort to contacting the DOE on numerous occasions in order to have the Rain posters removed from the railings. However, this was no deterrent for the nightclub which continuously pushed their promotional wares at the Union despite DOE intervention. Rain has even been poaching Union customers from the Monday night Mandela queue, and sending them to the city centre for the nightclub's weekly gay night. However, there are reports that students who left the Union queue in the opening weeks of term were then turned away from Rain, due to them not fitting in with the gay theme.

The Students' Union Bars Manager, Stephen Anderson, has also expressed annoyance at the behaviour at the Box nightclub for their decision to run an illegal bus from the Union and Elms. He observed a "dangerous stampede" of people run to the bus which was charging £1 to go from the Union to the Odyssey. The Union do not participate in this type of PR, and so Mr Macartney remarked that this was "unfair competition".

Read more in the next issue as The Gown speaks exclusively to Union General Manager Andrew Dodge.

A Letter to the editor

I was most surprised to see your front page story about the Holylands (5 October 2009) illustrated by a photograph depicting graffiti containing perhaps the vilest of anti-female swear words (beginning with 'c', four letters). In my opinion, the story itself had enough journalistic merit to avoid the need to be propped up by the sensationalist photograph that accompanied it.

Is this really the level that needs to be stooped to nowadays in order to produce an 'eyecatching' publication? Surely there were dozens of alternative images that could have been used? I fear that many of your potential readership may leave this particular edition on the shelf rather than risk being seen carrying it around.

Your publication was not slow to criticise last year's Vice President Campaigns and Communications for a not dissimilar photographic gaffe in a Students' Union publication - presumably you will now be offering Mr Murphy a belated

apology? And this major misjudgement from a female editor as well? Most strange.

Perhaps you'll explain this editorial decision / misjudgement in the next edition of The Gown? Now that would be an interesting read.

The very best of luck with your esteemed publication for 2009-10.

DOMINIC DOHERTY
 Deputy General Manager
 Students' Union

I don't think the decision to publish the picture was particularly rash or a misjudgement as you deem it to be, and I don't regret it. In my opinion, the photo perfectly contextualises the report, and is effective in illustrating the extent of anti-social behaviour in the Holylands.

Catherine Wylie, Editor

What do you think?

Let us know what you think about this edition of The Gown.
www.thegown.org.uk



David Hamilton is not your average ex-Queen's graduate; this weekend Hamilton will make his professional volleyball debut in the Spanish top-flight with Tenerife Sur.

QUB's volleyball exports



This revealed a bizarre, vindictive Israeli campaign directing suffering on the indisputably innocent."

Lorcan Mullan reports on John Ging's criticism of Israeli conduct

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Jack Peñate



AUNTIE ANNIE'S - FRI 23rd OCT - 9pm - £7



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AUNTIE ANNIE'S - SUN 15th NOV - 8pm - £7



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The Boxer Rebellion

LIAM McILLVENA

Somewhere between Bloc Party and Muse with just enough of the Editors, is a band that will literally take you by the ear-lugs and scream you into submission - and they're known as The Boxer Rebellion. This is a band that you may have heard of in passing, but I insist that you seek them out, for the raw talent possessed by this four-piece from Camden is astonish-



ing.

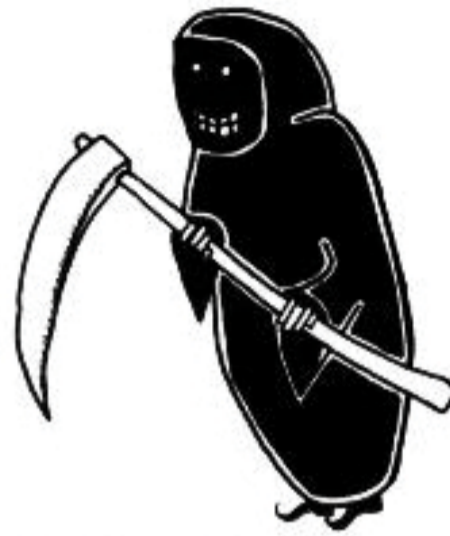
The distinctive and haunting vocals of Nathan Nicholson are reminiscent of Morrissey fronting The Smiths, though he has a grit and intensity all of his own. Todd Howe, a truly brilliant indie lead guitarist, shows his exuberant genius with heavy

To listen to their music is to become infected with a euphoric adoration of the band.

clad tremolo riffs. That, coupled with the added brilliance of Adam Harrison on bass, and Todd Hewitt on the skins, fill to the brim a stage already packed with talent.

Their name truly encapsulates their performance, exuberance and unashamed joy in playing even the smallest of venues. Dynamic in their art they offer an alternative to the carbon copy indie groups currently doing the rounds. Their debut album 'Exit' shows incredible

THE GRIN REAPER



FOR WHEN YOU'RE HAPPY TO DIE

Guest strip by Adam York Gregory

www.theflowfieldunity.com/

promise, with tracks like 'Watermelon' and 'Lay Me Down' that bring a maturity to the music, and pave the way for their offering 'Union'. This album comes as close to anthemic as any modern group can get. To listen to their music is to become infected with a euphoric adoration of the band.

If you like your Indie heavy,

gritty and subtly menacing, then catch these guys next time they are in town. If you can't wait till then I urge you to purchase their album. If it's the only album you buy this year you will be safe in the knowledge it is the best musical offering of 2009. Give in, embrace the moment caught up in the emotion of this hour and join the Rebellion.

Agree or Disagree?

What do you think about today's music and entertainment scene in Belfast and Ireland?

Join the discussion at
www.thegown.org.uk

Green Day return to Belfast

EMMA CREEN

When Green Day play to a sold-out Odyssey Arena later this month, it will be the first time the band has returned to Belfast since 1991. Then they played to a select group of Belfast's Punk scene devotees in Richardson's social club, a tiny venue on the Dunbar Link which has since shut up shop.

After the commercial success of 'Dookie' in 1994, this gig acquired almost mythical status. In the past 18 years, with multi-platinum albums and sold-out arenas on a global scale, as well as duets with Bono under their belt, it's obvious that on the 20th October, the band will be playing to a fairly different

audience than the one they faced on their last visit, and not only will their audience have changed but the city also. Belfast has grown-up, and become a serious contender on the Tour circuit. Some of the biggest acts in the world are fighting for a chance to play to the Belfast crowds, and this is in no doubt due to super-sized venues like the Odyssey Arena, the newly renovated Ulster Hall and St. George's Market. Recently we have seen major acts such as P!nk, Kings of Leon and Coldplay perform in a city that used to be skipped over on UK tours. So with Green Day being such a heavy-weight act, local music lovers can only hope that their stop here adds conviction to Belfast as an

upcoming concert venue.



Upcoming Events

COMEDY

Michael McIntyre

The Odyssey Arena
30-31 October

If you're not in the mood to celebrate Halloween, spend the night holding your sides together as you laugh your way to see Michael McIntyre. Snub the ghouls and join the fools!

FILMS

This is it

28 October

If you find that your life has been drastically altered by the death of Jacko, then the film that depicts his life and what his final tour might have been will be just for you.

Austin Powers

Movies with Glass

The QFT

28th October, 2pm

All you have to do is bring an empty glass bottle or jar to the QFT and you will see a film for free. Groovy baby!

JUST FOR HALLOWEEN

Celebrating the £11 million refurbishment of City Hall, Belfast City Council are hosting a series of events that will run for two weeks, climaxing in a Halloween spooktacular (forgive us, it's an annual writer's necessity)

at Clarendon Dock.

Movie Nights

17-31 October

Visit the City Hall cinema, in partnership with Belfast Film Festival and NI Screen, during the re-opening celebrations. Expect to see a range of classic movies as well as short local films and movies for kids.

Booking information: Tickets are free but you must book by either calling into the Belfast Welcome Centre in Donegall Place (beside Boots) or phoning 028 9024 6609.

Belfast Music Tour

25 October 2pm

The Belfast Music Tour is a bus journey through the heart of a great rock and roll city, from Van Morrison to Snow Patrol. Bus departs from City Hall at 2pm and ends at Oh Yeah! in Cathedral Quarter with a tour of the Belfast Music Exhibition.

CS Lewis Tour

29 October 5pm

Explore parts of Belfast connected to celebrated author CS Lewis, including Campbell College, La Lea and the Hollywood Arches.

Metro Monster Mash

31 October 5pm

The 2009 'Metro Monster Mash', will mark the end of two weeks of events to celebrate the reopening of Belfast City Hall.

Belfast City Council has arranged a variety of activities throughout the day, at St George's Market, City Hall and Clarendon Dock, with all sorts of creepy goings-on guaranteed to chill even the sturdiest of souls.



The witching season is upon us, and to keep you on the edge of your seats, we have compiled a list of our **Top 10 Halloween Horror Flicks**.

- 10 **Nightmare before Christmas**
- 9 **Ninth Gate**
- 8 **Bram Stoker's Dracula**
- 7 **Beetlejuice**
- 6 **The Ring**
- 5 **Nightmare on Elm street**
- 4 **Seven**
- 3 **Night of the Living Dead**
- 2 **What Lies Beneath**
- ...You'll never guess what's number one...
- 1 **The Exorcist (duh!)**

Arts & Entertainment

GownGiveaway

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We have one pair of tickets to see rock band White Lies, and five pairs for Reggae group The Wailers for you lucky students to win! Visit our website for terms and more information: www.thegown.org.uk

Reviews

Kings & Queens

Album
Jamie T
Virgin Records

Jamie T has pulled out all the stops with this and it's blatantly obvious from his current single "Chaka Demus" that he has remained true to form.

As you can expect, the quick witted lyrics are ever present and most of the tracks aren't too far away from what his listeners are use to. There are elements here that make you sit back and look at Jamie T in a whole new light. Unlike his contemporaries, he has clearly made note of what works and what doesn't, and there is plenty of the Jamie T we know and love on this album, as well as enough new material for devoted followers to get excited about.

Unfortunately his highly anticipated UK tour, that would have brought this act to the Limelight, has been indefinitely postponed due to laryngitis. HG



The Soloist

Film
Joe Wright
Universal Pictures

This is the real life story of LA Times journalist Steve Lopez and his search for new subject matter for his acclaimed column, which he finds in the form of the homeless Nathaniel Ayers. It is revealed to Lopez that Ayers was a one-time musical prodigy at the Julliard School in NYC unfortunately afflicted with paranoid schizophrenia. The strength of the film rests on the performances. The Soloist is saved from Oscar fodder clichés and Rain Man comparisons by Wright's direction. It is challenging and thought provoking, providing a view of LA usually reserved for gritty police dramas. JG



The Invention of Lying

Film
Ricky Gervais
Universal Pictures

The plot is based upon a world in which lying, irony and even fiction are yet to exist. This promising premise sparks an inventive opening in which 'loser' Mark Bellison (Gervais) has to deal with his bitchy colleagues and blunt waiters voicing their inner thoughts without a whiff of tact. Unfortunately as the film progresses it deteriorates into a predictable blunder. The well thought out plot becomes convoluted and the intention muddled, a flaw that, if you are a dedicated fan of Gervais' work you will recognize all too well. The astute understanding of personalities and relationships shown in The Office is entirely absent in this. ACM



Fish Tank

Film
Andrea Arnold

Jury prize winner at Cannes Festival, Fish Tank is the story of the hardships faced by an Essex teenager growing up on a council estate. Played by Katie Jarvis, who was spotted by Arnold at a train station arguing with her boyfriend, 15 year old Mia becomes infatuated with her mother's new boyfriend. Arnold's last offering, Red Road, placed the viewer in a similar position in that her work is not exactly enjoyable to watch, but it couldn't be any more compelling if it tried. We see scenarios which we know exist in other peoples' lives, but they are so depressing that, for the majority of us, we are taken to a different world entirely. Kierston Wareing plays Mia's mother enviably well in that she epitomises perfectly the mother you'd never want to have. As always, Michael Fassbender doesn't disappoint and manages



to wrap the viewer around his little finger. I both loved and hated him in equal measure. Fish Tank will take you on an eventful and shocking diversion, and will cause you to have more than one knot in your stomach come the closing credits. CW





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More background information on the Gaza conflict
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Gaza under siege

America's blind eye and Israel's blind fury

LORCAN MULLEN

It seems difficult to place the appalling events of the most recent Gazan war in 2009: while the bloody results of Israel's 'Operation Cast Lead' inspired revulsion and impassioned debate in the midst of the crisis, the event now seems so far away, so very distant from contemporary political discussion.

None of those responsible for the profound suffering involved have been brought to justice, and no significant progress has been made to break the long-standing political impasse in the region. Indeed, Israel's government, under a new leader, Binyamin Netanyahu, is even more aggressive and intransigent than its bloodstained predecessor.

Many hoped that the arrival of a new, more progressive US president in the shape of Barack Obama would ameliorate the region's political and social uncertainties which cloud the lives of thousands of Gazans. It seems, however, that Obama has

been politically paralysed by the current toxic state of the current domestic debate on US health reform and the war in Afghanistan, leaving his greater foreign policy ambitions as yet unrealised.

The former chancellor of Queen's, former US senator George Mitchell, famed for his peace process work here in Northern Ireland, was appointed as US special envoy in the region. His task, according to US political expert Matt Yglesias, is to "clear out the cobwebs of pessimism that are clinging to both sides" in an effort to simply bring the two sides to the point of negotiation. Hopes, however, are not high. The negative attitude of the Israeli government, one now embracing ultra-orthodox Jewish parties in an unwieldy right-wing coalition, coupled with the split leadership of the Palestinians (Hamas in Gaza, Fatah in the West Bank) has made the mere prospect of progress towards renewed negotiation extraordinarily unlikely in the short term.



The Gaza War led to the deaths of an estimated 1,417 Palestinians and only 13 Israelis, according to the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem. A recent UN report into alleged war crimes, led by the South African judge Richard Goldstone, acknowledged war crimes on both sides, but singled out Israeli officials for "individual criminal responsibility", not least in the deliberate destruction of humanitarian, health,

education and economic targets. The report also appears to confirm allegations that Israel used Palestinian civilians as human shields.

The most recent war, in the words of John Ging, the Irish head of the UN relief effort in Gaza, was "a result of political failure." Mr Ging spoke to The Gown after a well-received talk at Queen's just before the summer break, held as part of a series of Trocaire lectures.

Mr. Ging, a former Irish Army officer and barrister, was strongly critical of Israel's conduct in the war, saying that "the infrastructure destroyed was not the infrastructure of terror." He also appeared to pour cold water on Israel's reasons for the assault; the destruction of rocket firing bases in the north of Gaza. Mr. Ging asserted that "for five months before, there were no rockets fired."

He gave clear examples of deliberate economic destruction, with a particularly vivid example describing the bulldozing of Gaza City's limited remaining factories and warehouses as the war itself was over. This appeared to reveal a bizarre, vindictive aspect of an Israeli campaign directing suffering on what Mr. Ging described as "the indisputably innocent."

Examples were also given of chronic food shortages, and an inability to provide basic attempts at reconstruction post-conflict. While money had poured in from donors worldwide, the economic embargo kept in effect by Israel forbade, and still forbids the import of any form of basic building materials. In Ging's words, "the siege continues."

No price too high?

Haroula Pasparki investigates the decision to raise student fees in universities.

With many universities now facing bankruptcy, serious demands have been made of the government to confirm whether it will raise tuition fees for university courses. Students across the UK are now facing blows to their financial situations, begging the question; just what price are you prepared to pay for your future?

The National Union of Students has fought back against plans to cut "generous" levels of student support, brandishing it "offensive."

The expansion of higher education coupled with the current economic climate has resulted in fears for the quality of education, with proposed cutbacks suggested in research funding, funding for teachers and caps on student numbers.

The CBI Higher Education Task Force has proposed removing the interest rate subsidy on all student loans and closely monitoring which students deserve maintenance grants. On top of this, an increase in tuition fees has been deemed "inevitable" with a figure of around five thousand pounds per year mooted for introduction.

With almost all students leaving university with mountains of debt and graduate



employment prospects at a record low, such proposals "merely list the obvious ways to increase student debt" claims Sally Hunt of the University and College Union (UCU).

We asked several students in Belfast what they think the best approach would be to combat this problem. Sara Rogers, 19, stated that "university should be free, but limited to only the very best students regardless of background. Courses should also be limited to "real" subjects so that people could get proper jobs." Others suggested bringing back more manual courses and night schools, whilst Diane Brooker, 23, claims that "you have to spend money to make money, an education is an investment in your future."

One conclusion that nearly all students came to is that students have an unfair reputation for spending their loans on binge drinking. In reality, fees are already extremely expensive and maintenance loans barely cover basic living expenses such

Is do the new dough?

Rionnagh Sheridan investigates the value of 'worth experience' on a CV

'Worth experience' is the new buzz phrase of choice for many charities and volunteers. But is the purpose of altruistic endeavour losing ground to a breed of student looking to improve their CV with a few hours clocked up at a local charity?

Many would deny that they volunteer purely for the rewards they reap, and it remains that students raise thousands each year in order to spend their summers teaching English in Indian slums, or building houses in Zambia or Chile. They donate hours of their time to helping out in local Oxfam shops and Meals on Wheels initiatives. Given the commitment and responsibility, volunteering is not for the faint

as rent and textbooks.

Students are the future of this country. By forcing them further into debt, we enter into a vicious circle of prejudice and exclusion for those who simply cannot afford to continue their education.

As neither Labour nor the Conservative Party are willing to commit to any policy regarding tuition fees prior to the election campaign, I propose we prepare ourselves for the proverbial shoestring budget of beans on toast.

of heart or light of purse.

But if students and the unemployed, those with the most time on their hands, lay claim to charity for the sake of charity, they are denying the rising trend in using charity work to fill space on a CV, a pattern that has become almost an essential part of job application. In straitened times, the competitive edge might catapult a jobseeker from the dole queue into full time employment. Being seen to be a well-rounded individual is crucial to graduate success. Many people feel the need to include charity work on their CV in order to keep abreast of their peers and competitors in the job market, and while this situation appears not to detract from the goodwill of volunteers; it does place non-volunteering students in a slightly compromised moral position. Are charity volunteers 'better people', they wonder, and why are charity workers seen as being better candidates for employment than those who are not charity workers?

The argument goes that jobseekers must set themselves apart from the crowd in order to increase their competitiveness, and if the charities themselves endorse the practice, surely it is a win-win situation. A recent press release from Macmil-

lan Cancer Support states that volunteering is "the new work experience trend sweeping the nation...spending time volunteering for a charity, in the holidays, when made redundant, or to beef up a CV ahead of job hunting'.

Then there is the other class of volunteer, trained professionals who take a leave of absence to lend their expertise to charitable organisations. Macmillan claims that "the credit crunch has caused people to take stock, re-evaluate their priorities and consider the use that their professional expertise could be put to." All fair enough. Charities need great brains to deliver help and support to those who need it most. Employers want to employ people who can show they are willing to go the extra mile in any situation.

Volunteering is the great trend of the noughties graduate, and it looks as though it is here to stay. No one would doubt the value of time well spent caring for the elderly and infirm, or helping out in the Simon Community, but there remains great doubt over whether people would rush to volunteer if there were no hidden benefits involved.

Convinced?

To get started volunteering, or to get more information on what's out there, check out
www.volunteering-ni.org

Have you volunteered before? Tell us your story at
www.thegown.org.uk

David Hamilton: La Liga starlet, QUB star

NEIL BRANNIGAN

David Hamilton is not your average Queen's graduate; this weekend Hamilton will make his professional volleyball debut in the Spanish top-flight with Tenerife Sur.

David Hamilton's first Volleyball experience came at the age of 13, playing in his local school in Senegal; returning to Northern Ireland shortly after, Hamilton became involved with the Craigavon Aztecs, his local volleyball team. David was like any other kid; he was interested in the game, and enjoyed playing it. He was soon spotted by the Northern Ireland National team, and gained his first cap against Scotland. This was just the beginning.

Playing abroad certainly poses no problems for Hamilton, he said, "Playing in Tenerife wasn't an opportunity I was going to pass up". Away games outside Tenerife will mean flying back and forth to mainland Spain, and this will undoubtedly add to the prospect of La Liga

volleyball, allowing Hamilton the chance to see and experience the country.

David's record in his sport is impressive; from top scorer to Irish All Star, as well as receiving the prestigious Sports Achievements Award from Queen's at their annual Blues Dinner in June. He has also captained Northern Ireland senior squad and is currently a member of the GB National team. Hamilton has also spent some of his time at Queen's as assistant coach of QUB Ladies.

When asked about his proudest moment in the sport, he revealed that it was receiving his first ever volleyball trophy, an MVP in an annual sports tournament held in Senegal between competing schools.

Player Profile

David Hamilton	
DOB:	8/11/1983
Height:	6'5"
Position:	Middle Blocker
Current Club:	Tenerife Sur
Previous Clubs:	UUJ NI-International



David has not only achieved a lot on the court, but also off it. In 2005, he graduated from QUB with a 2:1 grade in Biochemistry. Balancing a degree and a demanding sporting schedule, he admits, "I had to make sacrifices. If you want to excel in something then you have to put that as a priority; any athlete will tell you that. For me it was worth doing."

The future looks bright for David, as he is currently hoping to advance his career as a professional volleyball player, and looking towards the 2012 Olym-

pics. He stated "It would be a fantastic opportunity; something to give me the drive and determination I need." When questioned about what lies ahead after his sports career, he answered, "You never know who you'll meet and the opportunities that come your way. Ill just take it as it comes."

David is a true role model, and a brilliant example of an athlete, conducting himself professionally on and off the court. We all wish him the best, and hope to see him on the court in London.

Roundup

QUBFC -v- Dergview; Saturday 24th October

QUB take on Adrian Forbes' Dergview side, aka 'The Constittutes', at Darragh Park, Castle-derg, Tyrone, in their next IFA Championship 2 clash.

Malone Cup; Wednesday 4th November

The Malone Cup is an 11-a-side soccer tournament that will be held at Malone Playing Fields, or at an alternative venue depending on availability. It is £10 per team to enter and each team will consist of 16 players. Please ask at the PEC reception for more details.

Ulster -v- Leinster; Saturday 24th October

The current top two teams of the Magners League go head to head in this clash of Rugby titans at Ravenhill

Fancy a game of five-a-side soccer at the PEC?

Meet new friends and show off your skills, Email your name and phone number to sport@thegown.org.uk

Queen's winning streak continues against Banbridge: 24 - 6

CONNOR DALY

sport@thegown.org.uk

An impressive Queen's performance at The Dub ensured the students made a perfect start to their All-Ireland League campaign.

QUB applied severe pressure right from the opening whistle, containing Banbridge within their own half for lengthy periods as they demonstrated the attacking flair of previous performances this season.

As the first half progressed however, Banbridge enjoyed a stint of superiority; attempts by the students to play it wide came to nothing as they were simply over-crowded by the opposition; ball-in-hand ventures became limited and QUB were offered no more than five kickable penalty opportunities. Unfortunately three such chances were sent wide of the mark.

With 40 minutes gone, Queen's and Banbridge were on level terms with 3 points each. The referee brought an end to a stop-start first half which witnessed few opportunities; maximum points certainly could certainly have gone either way.

Just two minutes into the second half, Banbridge were presented with a glorious oppor-



tunity to take the lead, however this effort from 44 metres was sent just wide. Almost immediately, Queen's were to present the match's first try-scoring opportunity. However, agonisingly close to the try-line, QUB were foiled by a superb chase back and tackle from Banbridge's scrum half Adam Evine.

Missing their second penalty chance of the game, Queen's sought to set up a lineout and this decision was to prove vital to their victory; as a result QUB, through Paul Karayianis, were able to power a fully-stretched Banbridge defence to advance their score to 10 points. With thirteen minutes left, Banbridge reduced the deficit to just 4 points with their second pen-

alty of the match; now seemed the perfect opportunity for the visitors to gain a bonus point.

QUB were clearly the better team throughout. First half blunders had been eradicated, and with great support work the home side were able to set up a second try through Michael Ferguson. QUB then grabbed their third try just before time thanks to James McKinney, and the university's third successful conversion put the game to bed.

Queen's University will no doubt be hoping they can continue their winning streak when they face Midleton away in their next AIB League fixture on 10th October.

Making sense of fencing

CONNOR DALY

sport@thegown.org.uk

The QUB fencing club meet twice a week in the PEC; on Tuesdays at 7pm in the Main Hall, and Wednesdays at 6pm in the Minor Hall.

Like any other sport, The Gown's first Fencing session began with a series of stretches. As the majority of those attending were new members, there was undoubtedly a sense of expectation; would we actually get the chance to wear the gear and fight with the blade? We certainly hoped so.

Having stretched the body's muscles, now was the time to learn the technique of stepping. Never before had stepping forward and back been so difficult - bending knees, maintaining a straight back and perfect feet; it sounds so simple in theory. Learning to lunge after this was so much easier than stepping back and forth...

The availability of Fencing instructors, and the enthusiasm to teach was assuring. At this stage of the session it was time for fitting into the Fencing gear.

Fitting and trying fencing



equipment took a long time, and for some, finding a left-handed glove certainly did not help. Nevertheless, it was definitely worth the wait. All those attending were split into two groups; one group enjoyed fighting, the other took part in fun exercises in which they could incorporate the various Fencing techniques they had learned. Fighting in pairs was great and most certainly the majority's favourite part of the session.

Fencing was both educational and entertaining; definitely a worthwhile experience. We recommend fencing to anyone; the sport is awesome and the instructors are more than happy to help; the proposition of pints at the Students' Union afterwards clearly typified the welcoming atmosphere.

Did we miss anything?

If you have any news, entertainment, or sports stories that you think deserve attention, let us know.

www.thegown.org.uk

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WWW.QUBSU-ENTS.COM

IMELDA
May

21ST OCT, MANDELA HALL



THE
WAILERS

27TH OCT, MANDELA HALL



THE CAVE SINGERS
ESPERS AND WOODS

12TH NOV, SPEAKEASY

GREATLAKE SWIMMERS

14TH NOV, SPEAKEASY



LITTLE
BOOTS.

28TH NOV, MANDELA HALL

*Richard
Hawley*

2ND DEC, ULSTER HALL



WHITE
LIES

8TH DEC, MANDELA HALL

MODEST MOUSE

9TH DEC, MANDELA HALL



*Enter
Shikari*

11TH DEC, MANDELA HALL



*Horse
Feathers*

12TH DEC, SPEAKEASY



The XX

15TH DEC, SPEAKEASY



LISA HANNIGAN

18TH DEC, MANDELA HALL



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