

CAFAS Update No. 57

16 January 2008

Council for Academic Freedom & Academic Standards

<http://www.cafas.org.uk>

Next Meeting:

Saturday 26 January 2008

2.00pm

Room 328

Birkbeck College

Malet Street

London WC1

Underground: Goodge Street, Euston Square, Euston, Russell Square, Holborn

BARCLAYS AND HSBC IMPOSE SANCTIONS ON IRANIAN STAFF & STUDENTS

In an alarming echo of events leading to the invasion and occupation of Iraq, the Bush administration continues to press for sanctions on Iran despite the US intelligence service having revealed that Tehran has no WMDs. As a result, at least two British banks with holdings in the States, Barclays and HSBC, have capitulated to pressure from the US Treasury department and decided to impose their own private sanctions on Iranian staff and students in the UK.

Thus, an Iranian student with a Barclays account has reported to CAFAS that, when she

asked the bank to transfer money between Iran and the UK, she was told in writing that the transaction is blocked because she is a 'sanctioned individual'.

I have written to Barclays asking them to explain why Iranians in British universities are subjected to this discriminatory treatment. I don't know whether other banks are prepared to ignore US pressure, but the Cooperative have assured me that they are placing no restrictions on Iranians.

I shall propose at the next CAFAS meeting that we adopt a policy of urging members with Barclays or HSBC accounts to switch to the Cooperative or some other bank prepared to guarantee that it will not impose sanctions. I shall also suggest that we invite the UCU and the NUS to adopt a similar policy.

Colwyn Williamson
Co-ordinator

VIEWPOINTS

Projection of Academic Fraudulent Practices

Taiwo Olabisi-Olaleye

The adage that 'a leopard does not change its spots' is apt to the recent revelation of the Chinese student incident at Swansea University. (1) The questionable practice of the educational institutions is nothing new. Indeed, the psychological concept of Projection is a fitting description of the antics of the Ivory tower. The academics' project their lack of integrity to their victims with the false allegation of cheating including plagiarism. The allegation of fraud against innocent students, invariably foreign and ethnic minority, is a smokescreen for the innumerable wrongdoing of these institutions. The gross misconduct includes undermarking, provision of unqualified supervisors as means of derogation from terms of conferring a qualification. In other words, by presenting the classic 'blame others syndrome', they engage in moving the goal post and compelling the students to repeat the courses. Thereby these institutions increase their Revenue by obtaining money on false pretences of failure. Their misconduct is analogically reminiscent of the Mafia, raking in the cash is the name of the game and the provision of education is secondary.

A few case histories which came to the attention of the Olabisi Olaleye Foundation shows this characteristic Projection, gross misconduct and mendacity of the institutions. The University of Westminster extended a course of two years to several years through exclusion from the registered course and denial of registration notwithstanding incontrovertible documentary evidence to the contrary. The deputy rector, Geoffrey Copland ordered a mature graduate student who protested at the wrongful exclusion from the course for which payment has been received:

'Do as you are told2)

And at a meeting when the Westminster Race Equality Council was invited to assist the student in the discriminatory practices of the university, the deputy rector allegedly indicated that the

University decided how the Regulations were to be interpreted.

This arrogance included denial of two years registration notwithstanding Registration receipts. The student was denied credit for prior learning. Despite eight reminders, the university failed to provide a supervisor and then marked the student zero for non- submission of work. Unqualified supervisor was provided for a project and therefore under marked. The student was compelled to pay for more modules than was necessary for an honours degree. When she asked to be reimbursed, she was told to take more modules. After the hell of nine years, who would want to return to Guantanamo Bay? Another foreign student had all her modules for the Part. 1 LLB course authorised by her course tutor. After completion of the year, she was told that the modules would not count towards her LLB degree.

The former City of London Polytechnic, now part of London Metropolitan University is another case in point (3) A graduate student was granted admission to the final year of the LLB course, but unceremoniously and without consultation after admission, transferred into a combined degree by Frank Webb, head of the department. It took a whole term before she was reinstated and allowed to attend the LLB modules two weeks before the end of the Michaelmas term. The nightmare then continued with the false allegation of plagiarism. The academics ignored acknowledgement of footnotes and bibliography and penalised the student with zero. The chair of the academic board, Marise Cremone, an Oxford graduate, when challenged, about the false allegation responded:

'Let us not take issue with the proper definition of plagiarism' (3)

When the paper was remarked, it was given; A- The coup de gras was the fact that the student was assessed on 50% pass mark when the pass mark in the Regulations was 40%. Moreover, although admitted on the basis of prior learning, the assessment for the final year was solely on the year of admission.

The Court of Appeal refused to allow the appeal on the basis that it was out of Time, thereby derogating from its own established principles in earlier Judgement. (3)

These examples are mere tips of the iceberg. A Report by the Olabisi Olaleye Foundation (2) provides an insight into the shenanigan of the academic institutions which makes Enron's fraud a child's play. The Report is free and the battle

against the fraudulent practices of the academic institutions which provides 'Mediocre education' as recognised by George Carey, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, would continue until there is massive boycott of the rogue institutions (2). Japan recently withdrew the licence to operate from an English Educational company, following complaints by Japanese students of the British irregularities. Additionally, the judiciary is culpable in the persistent cover-up of the monstrous wrongdoing of the educational institutions, which undermines the Rule of Law (3). Similarly, the European Court of Human Rights also derogates from its mandate. The Court fails to uphold the European Convention on Human Rights with its inadmissible findings of educational cases submitted to it. (4)

References

1. Colwyn Williamson, Justice in a 'World Class' University, Cafas Update 56, 8 October 2007, pp3-4
2. Olabisi-Olaleye Foundation, 'Human Rights Abuse by the United Kingdom' 2007. Unpublished Report. <http://ethnicminority9.googlepages.com>
3. Oruene v London Guildhall University Court of Appeal c.1997 (See ref.2)
4. Olaleye-Oruene v United Kingdom. ECHR Application no.45377/99 (See ref. 2)

(Taiwo Olabisi-Olaleye is Director of the Olabisi Olaleye Foundation)

FIGHTING FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN IRELAND

Good news from Ireland. A group of academics have told CAFAS they plan to set up a sister organisation there. Our Co-ordinator will address a founding meeting in Dublin in early March.

REPORT COMPLAINT FROM SURESH DEMAN

In November 2006, CAFAS member Suresh Deman submitted an article for publication in Update 52. One of the editors, Pat Brady, asked him to produce an abbreviated version, which he declined to do, taking the view that the editors wanted to suppress his article, and that they had an ulterior motive for this. These events generated voluminous correspondence from Deman, and from the Council for Ethnic Minority (CEM), including a letter from CEM announcing legal action against CAFAS. The following extract from a message to the other editor, Geraldine Thorpe, gives some, but only some, of the flavour of these communications. It should be stressed that it is only an excerpt. Those who wish to read the full message, or the numerous other messages relating to the same issues, should consult our discussion board at Defending-Academic-Freedom@jiscmail.ac.uk.

5 February 2007

...It is...a nonsense that my piece was unfocused, lacked clarity and it was indecipherable and that you could not open. These appear to be pretexts on which most discriminators rely upon. Is it a coincidence that all those involved in responding to my complaint happened to be white members of the CAFAS and activists - "Champions of Freedom".

Mr Brady gave me no reasons and I see no response from him. If you have one please forward me ASAP. Who did he consult about my piece? Provide me names and copies of any communications between the members of the CAFAS Editorial Committee.

CAFAS Update is not a media newspaper. Newspapers are subject to the Press Complaint Commission Codes. Do you have any Codes? CAFAS has different objectives and please be advised to review the objectives before making erroneous justification for my treatment.

It is a nonsense that my response is extraordinarily inappropriate. Perhaps you are used to those who shine the shoes of their white Masters. I will come back to this again. You have not pointed out what was factually

inaccurate in CEM's language, tone of subsequent accusations made about CAFAS Committee [not all members as you claim], in particular about Aubrey Blumsohn, Pat Brady and Sue Blackwell. It seems they were told for the first time what they deserved. Ongoing denial of racial discrimination by your sycophants is an example of conscious and unconscious discrimination. Mr Aubrey's conduct falls in that category. It appears to me self seekers are running the editorial of CAFAS to have an edge within the UCU.

I do not believe Mr Brady, Aubrey, Blackwell and your conduct could be considered as valuable source of support. Mr Aubrey tended to deny racism within the unions in HE sector and by Sally Hunt and has also shown his ignorance about racism elsewhere [re: Shilpa Shetty] on the pretext that he does not watch the Big Brothers show and/or read the news about her racist treatment. He erroneously accused those who do read and watch news about the Big Brother of their low level of intelligence. It seems Mr Brady excluded publication of my piece in the CAFAS Update to express solidarity with those in the unions who subjected me to racial discrimination. When exposed in the debate on Academic Freedom website Blackwell and you colluded with them in blocking the CEM and myself. It is disgusting and stinks with racism of highest form. There is nothing in the CEM and my own e-mail contrary to the policy exercising Freedom to express and expose those who run the website to make mockery of the Freedom.

I don't know what kind of a victim you have been? My own experience of HE Sector or Tribunals is whenever a victim of ethnic minority complaints of racial discrimination the entire system would put a white woman or a white Jew in front of them as if they are the only victims of discrimination and no one else. In fact biggest EO policy is to put 1 white woman, 1 Jewish and 1 moppet or 1 puppets on the panel.

Honest people do not provide website address which are full of filth and one sided stories to discredit the victims as Aubrey did. Your support to justify such action as critical and constructive criticism is an insult to injury to the feelings.

Perhaps your book is full of white supremacists who have been engaged in causing detriment to victims of racism and then justify in the name of Defending Academic Freedom. Stalin had better standard than you and some of your white colleagues. You would not have seen light of day and created a website of Academic Freedom had Stalin lost in the WW II. Despite all the criticism of Stalin people like Khrushchev and other liberal

survived in his regime and Deng Shio Ping in Mao's regime but to do what? In fact, Deng Shio Ping replied to a Swedish Reporter's question when had been asked, "how did you survive having discredited twice?" His telling reply was, "Because I had great confidence in Maotse Tung".

Mao also sent Chowen Lie to intervene when Komingtong Generals had arrested Chang Kai Shekh to save his life although Mao's first wife was excuted by him. Also read Socialist Register for Mao's Portrait of Stalin Edited by Miliband. Perhaps you are aware it was Stalin who banned corporal punishment in the Schools.

Unfortunately I do not agree with you that victims are always helpful and understand plights of other victims. Sometimes victims with racial superiority think they are the only victims and when gain power behave even more ruthless manner and deny the same rights to others about which they once complained. For example, treatment of Palestinians and Lebanese by the Zionist State of Israel. Olmer's statement that he was fighting on behalf of all Jews is the highest form of racism I have ever come across.

Your comment about CEM I find quite offensive and patronising. You need not worry about our friends within CAFAS who have been victims of racism. I do not believe that they disagree with my views or that of CEM. Therefore I advise you not to hide behind them and do not accuse that the CEM is against all CAFAS members. You have no evidence to support your most erroneous allegation. In fact, some members of CAFAS have provided unconditional support to me in coordination with CEM. However these CAFAS members happened to be non-white....

DEMAN AND COMPANY HAVE NO PLACE IN CAFAS

The following is an excerpt from, the concluding section of, a report written by Colwyn Williamson, Co-ordinator of CAFAS, on the views of Suresh Deman and his associates. Several of the matters referred to can be properly understood only in the context of the full report. This is most importantly true of what the report has to say about anti-semitism. Members who wish to make sense of the issues discussed are urged to read the full report, which may be obtained from colwynwilliamson@hotmail.com (Please supply a postal address.)

Our society is deeply divided along lines of both class and race. The division between rich and poor is greater than ever, and our history of slavery and colonialism has left an inheritance of xenophobia and racism. British judges do not stand above these divisions; they are by no means the lofty and impartial figures they make themselves out to be. They are, as one of our most distinguished patrons, John Griffith, pointed out in his *The Politics of the Judiciary*, selected from a very narrow and privileged social stratum. And as members of the ruling class themselves, they do not need to be told that their duty is to act in its interests and embody its prejudices.

It is also true, and for the same reasons, that the Employment Tribunal system is biased in favour of employers and against employees, and that a high proportion of those who suffer from this bias are inevitably from ethnic minorities. The outcomes of cases are of course influenced by a variety of other causes too, but the crucial fact is that those in positions of power frame laws that suit them and choose 'safe hands' to administer these laws. And it is unsurprising that the orthodoxy required of judges is also an unstated prerequisite for the lay members of Tribunals, even those who belong to ethnic minorities. That is the kind of society we live in.

As for the UCU, CAFAS members do not need persuading that union bureaucrats frequently offer, at best, lukewarm support when their members are in trouble. And the right to legal assistance that members think they have too often proves illusory. Union leaders do not share the status of their members, nor are they in any straightforward or effective way answerable to them. They have priorities of their own, with salaries to match, and despite lip-service to the contrary, meeting the needs of members is not high on their list. As a matter of fact, CAFAS came into existence precisely because of the inadequacies of the academic unions.

It is important to recognise these truths, but it is equally important to disentangle them from the anti-semitic fantasies that Deman and his associates have attached to them. We should not make the mistake of thinking that, because they denounce the Tribunals and union leaders, we partly agree with them. Let me illustrate the point with a personal anecdote. After the Israeli army attack on the refugee camp at Jenin in 2002, I was in the centre of Swansea soliciting support for a petition condemning Israel's action when I was approached by someone keen to sign because, as he put it, 'they're everywhere, they completely control the media you know'. I refused to allow

him to sign the petition and we almost came to fighting. The point is that anti-semitism is just as repugnant as Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. I take the same view of Deman and company. It is reactionary and vicious, but also simply stupid, to blame the ills of our society on 'the Jews'.

It is impossible to respond in any straightforward way to the allegations against CAFAS levelled by Deman and the organisation with which he is closely associated, the Council for Ethnic Minority ('CEM'). Their claim that the unions, the judicial system, and CAFAS itself, are under Jewish domination is the stuff of fascism, which makes it unsurprising that at least one leading CEM official openly identifies with the Nazis. If the 'charge' is that CAFAS is dominated by Jews, who would want to deny it? Who would want to 'defend' CAFAS by saying that it does not in fact have many Jewish members? I do not know how many Jewish members there are, but I am certain that it is not enough; and that any Jews prepared to take on some of the work that needs to be done will be welcomed with open arms.

On the other hand, if the 'charge' is that CAFAS is dominated by Zionists in the proper sense, any response must be qualified by pointing out that there is no prohibition, and ought not to be any prohibition, on Zionists joining CAFAS: our membership is defined by commitment to academic freedom and academic standards, not other issues.

That said, claiming that CAFAS is 'Zionist led' is of itself sufficient proof that Deman's view of the world is deranged. If anyone is interested, one of our patrons is a leading British Zionist; another is a leading anti-Zionist, the prime mover in Britain of the academic boycott of Israel, and our most famous patron, Noam Chomsky, is the number one on every Zionist's hate-list. It is also worth mentioning, given Deman and CEM's predilection for treating 'Zionist' and 'Jew' as interchangeable, that all three are Jews.

Refuting the statements issued by Deman and CEM is probably a waste of intellectual energy.

Deman lives in a fantasy world, and it may be that, as the victim of his own delusions, he deserves our sympathy. But CAFAS is implacably opposed to racism, and it would be incongruous to allow anti-semites to be members. Deman and anyone who agrees with him has no place in our ranks.

As for CEM, there is a real danger that victims of racial discrimination may approach this organisation in the belief that it is anti-racist. They need to be protected against this mistake, and CAFAS should consider what, if anything,

can be done to protect them. It is demonstrable that CEM representatives can have a very damaging effect on the prospects of anyone involved in Tribunal proceedings. Victims with perfectly sound complaints could lose their cases solely because of CEM's malign influence.

It would clearly be pointless to discuss with Deman himself the necessity for CEM to disassociate itself from the racist rants issued in its name. There is good reason to suspect that the apparent authors of CEM declarations, Mr Kumar and Mrs Mahadevan, are not the true authors. Whether they are really aware of the obnoxious views ascribed to them I cannot tell. I leave it to others to decide if it would serve any purpose to try to discuss with them the need to eradicate the anti-semitism with which CEM is presently tarred.

Shadows of a gloomy future for the elite caste

Thursday, 3 January 2008

The Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, Bill Rammell, 27th November 2007 has given a speech on Academic Freedom and extremism in British Higher Education.

Since then he is looking for **allies**; *for people who want to reinterpret freedoms* "in the context of the new challenges and threats that face our society". In reality, with just this sentence he narrows down the scope for debate, framing it as a mere reinterpretation of the word freedom in the context of external threats and imagined dangers from an hypothetical external environment. And he has no fear to talk about it. In fact it sounds more like a declaration of war, instead of a relaxed speech about freedom and civil liberties.

Reflecting the uphill battle that the protection of civil liberties represents for neoliberal, New Labour Britain, Rammell is out to enlarge the corps of troops he hopes to lead into his war. It is here that the rhetoric of his speech comes into act. He calls for a **reinterpretation of freedom** by announcing the warnings and ideas of eminent individuals: most notably, the PM's worries about the state of liberty in UK and the MI5 warning of a real and sustained threat from terrorism and bold statement that "*Britain as a nation tends*

instinctively towards liberty, and historically has led the world in espousing its virtues".

But Rammell forgets that Britain has not yet been able to democratically elect a head of state; that Britain still refers to **ex-colonies** with contempt (economic and political); that Britain has waged war on countries for unjust causes (Iraq); that Britain has traded in **slaves**; that Britain has the highest amount of people spying on each other like sexual perverts who have nothing better to do with their lives; that Britain has a series of secret agents paying neighbours to spy on each other (source: Guardian) whilst **politicians are never intercepted in their corrupt dealings and collusions**; that Britain has hit the bottom of league tables in Europe for privacy and academic freedom and that Britain will possibly overtake china with respect to abuse of human rights. Britain has espoused the neo-conservative Anglo-American ideals of masculinity and imperialism in universities. Not then to mention problems of bullying in schools, universities and the workplace more widely (to emphasise how widespread the plague has become, one needs only to notice that Britain now has to devote national days to 'anti-bullying'). I would like to ask how many people silently suffer **mental illness** and are silently killed for this. Does it really matter that waging war on a country (Iraq) has become a shame worst than Rwanda?

These are the real problems that **kill people**. These are the places where **postmodern urban terrorists** hide behind the press, the headlines and the online forums to spy on and plot against the next victims.

Possibly our Minister Rammell is avoiding tackling the root of such problems, knowing that New Labour has been at the epicentre of their growth, following a narcissistic man thirsty for power and money. Likely our Minister knows that New Labour is still at the centre and must solve the problems. The **impotency for doing so has already been demonstrated amply**.

The words of rhetoric embody the thinking of neo-conservatism in Britain: that everything can be said and denied at the same time on the guarantee that the people will follow the politician to maintain a sense of safety, because otherwise they will be lost.

Rammell lays-out his **true agenda** without appeal to half terms. He intends to root-out extremism from the communities, in order to resist extremist influences and eradicate terrorism. Apparently this should be seen in light of a new freedom in universities, designed to refute violent extremist views on campus. His words are sharp

and leave no space for interpretation or misunderstanding. The link is straightforward and the "proof" is provided by MI5.

But up to now I am not aware of any extremism published or any incitement to violence exercised through the academy, academic journals, classrooms and, importantly, conferences and speeches. I am not aware of students arrested whilst inciting violence or terrorism with extremist academic views.

I am instead aware of a **plague** spreading in British Universities; of research misconduct; of misrepresentation of research results; of setting international conferences and symposiums to access European or EPSRC funding; of **professor suicides for research misconduct** and apparent suicides for work-pressures by esteemed British university professors; and of illegal blacklisting of academics, to mention just a few of the symptoms of a sick system.

This is a fall-out for academic freedom, but surely not a comfortable subject of discussion by Rammell. The British University has learnt that she has to silence the free voices of uncomfortable academics in order for unions like UCU (ex Natfhe and AUT) to survive.

Ah well, Sally Hunt has already trained the dogs to salivate for the next statement on the educational press.

The elite caste has noticed that all this must also be made with the agreement of various politicians of the countries from which such academics come. It is a **dirty battle** for the survival of the Anglo-American corporate dominative-imperialistic thinking in Universities and from there to the rest of the population. Some have already noticed all this and find it impossible to believe that there is no agenda behind it: the Anglo-American deleterious capitalist evil of neo-conservatism is trying to penetrate foreign markets and territories with a thinking that **stifles local cultures** and traditions.

Rammell plays with captivating words of rhetoric and sophism. The minister depicts the British university as a place where administrators, students and academics must keep an eye on each other, to mistrust and always put ideas under suspicion. At the same time, the vagueness of a term like extremism is not defined because Rammell cannot. Indeed, it is not possible to define such a term without coming down to observe the current world order, without speaking of masonry, of the secret services and of international politics. In reality, extremism is a term which can only be defined in a vocabulary that is in continuous redefinition. *We must*

however observe that the dictionary is not universal and has not and will not be written by transnational agreements.

The British neo-liberal, even neo-conservative politics of New Labour, cannot be trusted for the simple reason that each action of this government has been part of a design for domination of values which **alienate populations and cultures**. They rely on values which trade freedom to the auto-determination of nations and tribes, promising vacuously, misleadingly, to bring stability and prosperity.

The same rhetoric is present in the speeches of union leaders and in the planning of union meetings, which makes me think that there is more than a simple coincidence to all this. The latest resolution to be adopted by UCU with regard to academic freedom comes, predictably, soon after Rammell's speech. What can we expect from it? Surely, shamefully, we can expect that UCU will continue to recruit and indoctrinate to the effectiveness of the "third way" of **agreements and peace** and then *purge the individuals who really care and work in a manner disinterested from government ambitions and grand master plans for world domination.*

Many foreigners I have met in this country appear to have been transformed into 007s for the British establishment; post-modern subjects indoctrinated to deny their origins and accept the British superiority and the life-style with all the values that come with it. And it is for this reason that many institutions in the UK can not and will not ever be seen as institutions where cultures can be exchanged. Instead they will always be seen as institutions **greedy for economic interests**.

The likelihood that the UK will see a progressive decline of foreign students from Europe is tangible. A further progressive decline of support from the middle-east towards the British neo-conservative elite caste is also probable, as the realisation of how the promised help to both factions could only be detrimental to the progressive developments of local populations, making the prospect of a common future ever more uncertain, as come.

It is interesting to note how UCU and increasing numbers of union activists are keen and ready to put their nose into foreign matters and foreign politics, when time and money should be spent on the interests of workers in Britain. The recent **Israel boycott** scandal is a disturbing example of the intensive interests that UCU has with regard to **foreign politics**. This perhaps gives some indication as to why there has always been a very strong resistance to opening up a dialogue for the

reform of the unions in the UK, considering the ineptitude that such elite caste has created at the base.

We should at this point see the words of Rammell and the instructions by Sally Hunt as a sort of undivided region for the sharing of **international affairs**. And all this would not be nonsense considering that British universities suffer for the instability of some regions in the world, *having taken foreign students as real and proper targets for the accumulation of foreign capital*.

The neo-liberal British university system can only profit from frictionless and stable politics in foreign countries. As such, it should be within the intentions of such foreign governments to bring stability for coalitions which can disturb the normal flow of students towards the UK or can undermine the consolidation of ideas and doctrines exported through transnational agreements between universities in the UK and commercial partners representing them in foreign countries.

In this context, UCU seems to be perversely interested in highlighting the efficiencies of the British system, becoming an **ambassador** of an open mentality abroad: a role in which they are consistently supported by the workings of the Times Higher Educational Supplement, disguised as a newspaper, but in reality more like the official marketing brochure for the effectiveness of government actions in HE.

All this makes me think that, although no grand plan is either written or accessible to the base, everybody knows what they must do in order to achieve it. In other words: *'keep an eye on all the individuals from which the neo-conservative British system cannot profit'*.

The so called extremism as such becomes a priority for the government. In concomitance to UCU and various academics who have professed that Britain was ready to embrace the role of peacekeeper in the middle-east, they have conceived the most opprobrious subject of post-modern history: **war-mongers** can reinvent themselves as **peace-keepers**. It is not that Britain could not take a peacekeeping role in the world, but rather that it could be possible only after seeing Tony Blair on the bench of the Hague Tribunal. Tony has instead been left free to reinterpret his latest career move as a sort of crusade, by asking for absolution to the Pope before Christmas 2007.

The situation is evidently complex, and complexity is a feature of post-modernism. **We should perhaps be wary of people who, for apparent no reason, like to introduce**

complexity; as a sort of discovery where ambiguity or complexity can really erase and redefine history, from which nothing can be learned.

Even UCU, who might be expected to seek a deconstruction, a delayering of such complexity, has instead embraced the idea that it is needed within this new system of contradictions and that new vocabularies, new ambassadors, new students and a new world order must be sought.

The news circular UCU/60, issued soon after Rammell's speech, reports in the opening paragraphs these very objectives of Sally Hunt:

"At UCU Congress, and the Higher Education Sector Conference, two motions were passed on the issue of academic freedom and freedom of expression in the UK. The first one, from Leeds University, outlines the rights and responsibilities of academic and related staff in further and higher education, particularly in the context of the Frank Ellis case:

"UCU Congress resolves that all academic and academic related staff be free to criticise and publish without fear for their jobs; nevertheless with this freedom comes the responsibility to respect the democratic rights and freedoms of others."

The second one from Queen's University Belfast focuses on the freedom to conduct one's own research, particularly as a result of pressures resulting from the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in higher education. This motion calls for "the executive to embark on a campaign to defend academic freedom by all appropriate means."

These two motions highlight the complex, multi-layered nature of academic freedom and freedom of expression.¹ The purpose of the following UCU discussion paper is to encourage a debate amongst members about these important issues."

In my opinion, this kind of further debate can only take UCU further away. In fact it is the direction that the elite caste has determined for its members. Instead of embarking on a work of **deconstruction** in order to unveil the hidden workings of power up to now, the leadership has decided to add layers and **layers of meanings**. Such meanings full of ambiguity can only assist layers and layers of bureaucrats in making sure that such a right (Academic Freedom) justifies their actions, guaranteeing enforceable connotations to the transactions happening under the eyes of union reps in the universities.

It is unlikely that a new meaning for "Academic Freedom" in the vocabulary of freedoms can be understood by any but its writers. Aside from the rhetoric, UCU knows very well that impartiality

must survive contradiction and complexity as features of the places in which such terms will be used.

“Academic Freedom” is a **pleonasm which the UCU leadership knows very well**. We would not need to discuss about freedoms for the work of academics if we would seek truth or knowledge for knowledge’s sake.

The ‘academic’ in Academic Freedom has, however, ceased to be representative of academic environments, while **freedoms** have simultaneously ceased to be guaranteed by the judicial system. The reinterpretation of the power relationships between the elite caste and the newcomers has taken over.

The call, through Rammell’s speech, is evidently for a new order of freedoms and seats in the unions, by the way of a simple but determinant subject: what should the research and teaching of the British neo-liberal system be, in order to gather further consent in foreign regions and territories? This is intentionally coupled to the open request to the various forces to search for allies who are ready to embrace the new anti-terrorist values backed by the government and the unions. This appears to be a real and proper utopia, although very useful and comfortable now for governmental initiatives.

The underlying objective is to launch an attack all over the world for the commodification of British education and exportation of such values through **areas of political opposition**. It is a vulgar double-meaning of “education” in the name of Anglo-American conservatism.

Posted by Sal Fiore at 07:02

<http://ucu-uncensored.blogspot.com/2008/01/shows-of-gloomy-future-for-elite.html>

The following article is copied from **SPEAKERS’ CORNER**) Vol. 157 New Law Journal 1604 (16 November 2007)

“Not so sacred cows?”

The Bush administration has tested the loyalty of the true friends of the US, says Dr Amir Majid

When in Hamburg, Germany, in the closing dinner of a 3-day conference on law and technology on 2 May 2006, a dear American friend, Daniel Garrie, asked me, “So, what is your homeland?” I replied, “In fact, three – Pakistan where I was born, UK where I was made (qualifying as a barrister and reaching the judicial rank despite blindness) and the US where I have one of my most precious friends and LLM class fellow, Steffanie Lewis, Attorney, and her beautiful family (the American astronaut, late Robert Overmyer, was married to Steffanie’s sister, Kit).

I have had the pleasure of befriending so many good Americans that it is impossible that “bad American” (or tales of their malefactions) can ever cloud my image of America, glistening with the precepts of Jefferson, Eisenhower and Carter (to name but a few).

When the US is maligned, I genuinely feel sorry. Recent conduct of the administration has given cause to famous commentators, for example Noah Chomsky, to articulate the argument that the West is a practitioner of state sponsored terrorism and the US is leading it. Samuel Huntington wrote “while the US regularly denounces various countries as ‘rogue states,’ in the eyes of many countries it is becoming the rogue superpower ... the single greatest threat to their societies.”(7 Samuel Hattingdon Foreign Affairs 1999)

It is very difficult to line-up the cows. But if one lines up American sacred cows, respect for the peace-promoting UN, habeas corpus and adherence to the rule of law are bound to front this queue. Unfortunately, to the utter dismay of friends of the US, these three sacred cows have been slaughtered by President Bush and his advisers. The Bush administration has tarnished the American image, violating ideals and leaving many Americans embarrassed to claim that they are the citizens of the land of freedom and liberty.

MARGINALISATION OF THE UN

It is a principle aim of the UN to “ save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. Before military action against Iraq began in 2003, the Bush administration was asking the UN to hurry up and authorise it and its partners to attack Iraq— an anomalous fidelity to the UN key objective.

“ President Bush once again showed reckless disregard for any international criticism”
When France threatened to veto this “ authorisation” because she was genuinely not convinced that war was the only option, the UK prime minister Tony Blair— reflecting US policy— said that if the veto was used “ capriciously or unreasonably”, the resolution would be regarded as conferring the requisite authority on the UK to commence war. To categorise French caution against war as “ capricious” is certainly turning logic on its head. In the end, the Bush administration did not wait for UN authorisation and attacked Iraq regardless. The sacred cow of UN authority was the first casualty of the war.

GUANTANAMO BAY

One of the most senior British judges, Lord Steyn, categorised the Guantanamo Bay detention camp as “ a legal black hole” and said: “ Guantanamo Bay is a stain on American justice. Only the present administration of the United States tries to defend the utterly indefensible.” One does not have to quote scores of political and juridical experts condemning this appalling stain on the American garb. For instance, Danish prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who supported Bush in the Iraq war, said the detention center’s procedures violate “ the very principle of the rule of law” and weaken the fight against terrorism.”

On 10 June 2006, three Guantanamo Bay detainees committed suicide. According to the Associated Press, one of these detainees who committed suicide (Mr Al- Utaybi) had been cleared for transfer to another country. The implication of this was that even those who thought Guantanamo was a legitimate facility had come to the conclusion that his detention at Guantanamo was not justified any longer. But without any distinction amongst the victims, General John Craddock, commander of the US Southern Command, opined: “ The suicides of three detainees were part of the holy war against the USA and its allies.” The camp commander Rear Admiral Harry Harris also showed no finesse in distinguishing the case of Al- Utaybi, saying the suicides were “ an act of asymmetrical warfare”. Guantanamo, he stated, was being maintained to protect Americans.

The majority of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States on 28 June 2004 impressed the world by their pro- humanity judgment in *Rasul v Bush* 542 US 466 (2004), criticising the Bush administration for maintaining a military prison at Guantanamo Bay, calculated to deprive

prisoners of any legal protection. In his concurring judgment, Justice Kennedy, said: “ Guantanamo Bay is in every practical respect a United States territory, and it is one far removed from any hostilities.”

Many devotees of the rule of law— including Tony Blair’s wife, Cherie Booth QC— admired the US judiciary for this act, which made the critics of the US administration aware that the US judges had vibrant blood of legitimacy in their veins, and that the principle of habeas corpus may be banished from the White House, but was not forgotten in the Supreme Court.

THE LIBBY EPISODE

After Valerie Plame’s husband— former US ambassador Joseph C Wilson— openly criticised the Bush administration’s case for attacking Iraq on the basis that Saddam was buying uranium to produce nuclear bombs and publicly exposed this fallacy, the Bush administration (led by Lewis “ Scooter” Libby), decided to punish Plame by revealing her identity as a CIA agent, to her manifest detriment. On 6 March 2007 Libby, ex- chief of staff to vice- president Dick Cheney, was found guilty of two counts of perjury, one count of making false statements and one count of obstruction of justice. According to the US District Judge Reggie B Walton, Libby’s guilt was proved by “ overwhelming” evidence. Even though it was widely believed that for these offences he would go to prison for up to 25 years, the public prosecutor asked for a very low duration. Libby was sentenced to prison for 30 months.

On 2 July 2007, President Bush commuted this imprisonment. His Clemency Order said: “ I, George W Bush, President of the United States of America, pursuant to my powers under Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution, do hereby commute the prison terms imposed by the sentence upon the said Lewis Libby to expire immediately.”

Indeed, in using his “ constitutional clemency power” to protect a senior member of his administration, President Bush once again showed reckless disregard for any international criticism by protecting a judicially convicted perjurer and obstructor of justice. So much for the rule of law.

It remains to be seen whether any more sacred cows will be sacrificed in the remaining 15 months of the Bush administration. As a true friend of America, I hope not.

Dr Amir A Majid is a barrister and a reader in human rights at London Metropolitan University

Happy New Year to all our readers.

Contributions in this *Update* continue to reflect concern over the direction of education. Britain more than any other country, even the United States, has gone furthest in the privatisation of education. It is the only country in the world to have no state institutions in the tertiary sector. But these institutions are certainly not autonomous from government and state. Many appear to be actively implementing government policy. What is this?

British governments are struggling to keep their policy based on neo-liberal economic theory imported from the United States. The best definition of neo-liberalism in our view is to be found in the pages of the socialist journal *Critique*. Briefly, it is seen to be the policy of the dominant form of capital, finance capital, in its decline. Ideally, the 'laws' of the free market would regulate all activity including education. But at a time when such policies no longer have the material base that existed for a few decades in the nineteenth century, it is no surprise that countries following this model are finding themselves in financial and social turmoil. As European countries did earlier, they have to resort to strengthening the state in order to regulate the economy. Nothing illustrates this better than on the one hand the bailing out of Northern Rock by the taxpayer. On the other hand, as our contributors point out, human liberties are eroded. Interestingly, the leading finance capitalist countries, the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have formed a working group, the International Information Consortium, to set up an international database to pursue "the war against terror". Biometric measurements, irises or palm prints as well as fingerprints, and other personal information e.g. bank account details are likely to be exchanged across the network. (*Guardian*, 15.1.08, p1)

The universities are demonstrating their loss of autonomy by their slavish implementation of government policy. They are the least likely to challenge the ideology. It still falls, unfortunately, to courageous individuals in and out of the universities to do this. A recent example is the civil servant, Derek Pasquill, who passed secret papers to journalists about what Britain knew of US rendition fights. Charges against him were

dropped when senior figures in his own department had privately admitted no harm was done by his leaking a series of Whitehall documents to, among others, Martin Bright of the *Observer* and *New Statesman*. (*Guardian*, 10.1.08, p3).

Two things seem to be clear. One, the economy requires planning and organisation, especially in education and health. Two, the more democratic these are, the more everyone can do something about government policy.

Pat Brady & Geraldine Thorpe

Defending-Academic-Freedom JISC Mail List

You can join by going to the Cafas website <http://www.cafas.org.uk> and opening the link

NOTICES

Meeting

**26 January 2008 2.00pm Room 328
Birkbeck College**

Agenda

- 1. Minutes;**
- 2. Matters arising;**
- 3. Academic Freedom;**
- 4. Case work**

**Officers' meeting in Room B23 at 1.30 pm
Informal lunch and chat from 1.00 in the
Junior Common Room, 4th floor. All welcome.**

Committee

Chair:

John Fernandes

76 Bois Hall Rd, Addlestone Surrey KT15 2JN
john.fernandes66@yahoo.co.uk

Secretary:

Dr John Hewitt

33 Hillyfields, Dunstable, Beds LU6 3NS
john.hewitt22@ntlworld.com

Membership Secretary & Treasurer:

Dr Eva Link

17 Highcliffe, Clivesdon Court, London W13 8DP
02089982569; rekgemL1982@yahoo.co.uk

Co-ordinator & Founding Member:

Colwyn Williamson

3 Canterbury Road, Swansea SA2 0DD
01792 517 473; m:07970 838 276
colwynwilliamson@hotmail.com

Founding Member

Michael Cohen

50 Queens Road, Mumbles, Swansea SA3 4AN
m:07917 670 555
mike.cohen4@btinternet.com

Cafas Update Compilers:

Pat Brady

3 Ingleby Way, Chislehurst BR7 6DD
0208 467 2549; patrickbrady@onetel.net

Geraldine Thorpe

7 Benn Street, London E9 5SU
0208 986 3004; geraldine.thorpe@onetel.net;

Auditor:

Majzoub Ali

36 Viking Court, Gunfleet, Shoeburyness,
Southend-on-Sea SS3 9PT; 01702587995;
majzoubali@hotmail.com

David Regan Appeal

Coordinator: Dr Janet Collett

University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN
01273 473 717; j.i.collett@sussex.ac.uk

Students' Complaints:

Dr Harold Hillman

3 Merrow Dene, 76 Epsom Road,
Guildford GU1 2BX
01483568332; harold.hillman@btinternet.com

Committee Member

Dr Aubrey Blumsohn

11 Carsick View Road, Sheffield S10 3LZ
0114 229 5595
ablumsohn-1@yahoo.co.uk

Website

Dr John Hewitt

33 Hillyfields, Dunstable, Beds LU6 3NS
john.hewitt22@ntlworld.com
<http://www.ahabitoflies.co.uk>

Health & Safety Spokesperson:

Dr David Heathcote

Dept of Applied Psychology,
Bournemouth University BH12 5BB 01202595283;
dheathco@bournemouth.ac.uk

**April AGM 1.30pm &
Meeting 2.00pm
Saturday 26 April 2008
Room 252.**

**Please send nominations for the
Committee to The Secretary, Dr
John Hewitt,**

**Further 2008 Date
Saturday 26 July 2008 Room tba**

**Birkbeck College, Malet Street,
London WC1**

CAFAS - ISBN Publisher

Cafas is now a certificated holder of the ISBN
Publisher Prefix 0-9550782

We have been allocated 10 numbers two
of which are now assigned to:

**Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson, 2004,
The Mission Betrayed, Cafas.**

ISBN: 0-9550782-0-2

**Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson, 2004,
The Tangled Web, Cafas**

ISBN: 0-9550782-1-0

CONSTITUTION

CAFAS' aims are outlined on the membership
form. The full constitution can be obtained from
the Secretary or www.cafas.org.uk.

CAFAS was founded in February 1994. It
depends on subscriptions and an active
membership. It meets in January, April, July and
October.

NEAR

Cafas has linked to the Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR).

Information is on the website

<http://www.nearinternational.org/>

'NEAR's purpose is to facilitate the rapid global transfer of accurate information in response to breaches of academic freedom and human rights in education.'

Next Cafas Update

Please send letters, news items and articles to:

Pat Brady

patrickbrady@onetel.net

Geraldine Thorpe

geraldine.thorpe@onetel.net

Deadline: 6 April 2008

SUBSCRIPTION

Dear Members

Some of you have forgotten to pay your membership fee.

Could you please be kind enough to check the date of your last payment on the address label? If you should find there "**" or "****!!!" could you please send a cheque without further delay as your contribution is absolutely crucial to the well being of CAFAS.**

Many thanks for your contribution.

Your Treasurer and Membership Secretary

**Eva Link
17 Highcliffe,
Clivesdon Court,
London W13 8DP**

***CAFAS Update* seeks to provide an open forum for opinion and discussion.**

Items do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council.

Cafas Reports

- 2. The Other Plagiarism Case: Mrs Jones & the University of Wales**
Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson
£1.50
- The Davies Report: The 'Great Battle' in Swansea**
Sir Michael Davies
£4.00 or £3.00 to members
- 3. Prospects of Promotion: Towards a common code of Practice**
G R Evans £1.50
- 4. Research assessment: as strange a maze as e'er men trod**
John Griffith £1.50
- 5. Raising Concerns and handling the consequences in Further and Higher Education**
G R Evans £3.00 or £2.50 to members
- 6. Upward Appraisal in UK Universities**
G R Evans & Kevin Moloney £1.50
- 7. Nolan: what you need to know**
£1.00
- 8. Universities: the Way Forward**
£3.00
- 9. The Mission Betrayed, 2004**
Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson
ISBN: 0-9550782-0-2 £3.00
- 10. The Tangled Web, 2004**
Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson
ISBN: 0-9550782-1-0 £2.00

Please contact the membership secretary for copies of the reports. Details of Cafas Reports are also on www.cafas.org.uk

