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2nd Quarter Report 2010 (26th March – 24th June)
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PART ONE: EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION DUTIES

*“Then place the dire portent within the tow'r.
Cassandra cried, and curs'd th' unhappy hour;”*
- Virgil, *Aeneid* (trs. Dryden)

With a number of long-running projects and assorted bits of general business completed in the first quarter, the second quarter was largely a combination of administrative minutiae and laying groundwork for further initiatives. Or, in the case of VSM, throwing the dice and hoping like crazy that fate (or at least some politicians on the Education and Science Select Committee) would smile in my general direction.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES WORK

i. Operation Old Blue/Guillotine: Affiliations and Disaffiliations

Two additional Clubs were affiliated in the second quarter: Food Not Bombs, and the Student Classics Society. Two further affiliations (the Jewish Students' Association and Renaissance Rapier) are pending, as are new Constitutions for three other groups. While updated Club constitutions almost always use the designated template, it is still necessary to go through the documents with a fine-tooth comb; from experience, the most common pitfalls surround specification of quora and the enumeration of Club Committee positions (or the lack thereof). This is an on-going issue within Club administration due to Clubs increasingly updating old and non-template constitutions.

In addition to dealing with the finalised (or soon-to-be-finalised) paperwork, another key part of the job is ensuring that prospective affiliates have the process adequately explained/relevant templates supplied. Many explanatory emails and attachments are made along these lines, and in one case a face-to-face meeting had to be arranged with a Club seeking Incorporated Society status.

ii. Operation Scrooge McDuck: Grants

This quarter has seen three meetings of the Grants Committee (which I Chair), and the associated closing of two Grants Rounds. It is safe to say that from a promotional level, the third Grants Round was a victim of its own success: no less than fifty-eight applications were handed in for the Round closing 27th May, forcing the Committee to adopt a very frugal approach in formulating recommendations. Through various economies, this third Round was “merely” \$4000 over budget, rather than \$16000. Suffice to say that if this sort of demand continues, by the end of the year Grants will be paid out in ten-cent pieces. A side-effect of the unprecedented Grants Round was the necessity of having to sign nigh-on a hundred contractual letters.

Further on the issue of Grants, it is my hope to rewrite the Grants Policy to address the vast array of loopholes, anomalies, and ambiguities that have become apparent during my time as Chairman of the Committee (the problematic nature of the Policy is best illustrated by the fact that the current Policy is the fourteenth iteration in ten years). I have drafted up an initial document to this effect, and forwarded it to the Policy Committee for further analysis.

iii. Operation Runnymede: Club Charter

One of my goals for this year is the formulation of a Club Charter, to formally set out, in gentlemen's agreement terms, the various rights and obligations that exist between OUSA and its affiliated Clubs (OUSA currently has no overarching direction in the way it approaches Clubs and Club issues). The preliminary draft of this document owes much to the Student Charter between the University and students, but further progress must be delayed until the current internal review of the Recreation Unit is completed.

iv. Operation Doolittle: Club Communication

As mentioned in previous reports, the key to effective Club representation is keeping channels of communication open, both through electronic means and face-to-face contact. Monthly Club newsletters via the OUSA-Clubs mailing list have continued (it has proved necessary at various stages to update the list to keep contact information current), with periodic additional emails as necessary (especially in terms of sending out the results from Grants Rounds). In terms of face-to-face contact, I attended the Aussie Rules Club's AGM (inadvertently helping out with quorum), attended a Classics Society Quiz Night, a SOULS Quiz Night, and met up with representatives from the Tramping Club, UniQ, Food Not Bombs, et cetera.

v. Operation Headbanger: Club Advocacy

At various stages throughout the quarter, I had to roll up my sleeves in my role as defender of Club interests. It is a job I take very seriously, and it is very handy being able to quote SGM motions chapter and verse.

vi. Miscellaneous Clubs Activities

Further investigation of Club brochures has ensued this quarter (now taking the form of "business cards" for cost reasons). The process of getting this done has been an ongoing source of frustration. Other miscellaneous Club stuff this quarter involves making a submission on OUSA's review of its Recreation Unit, and passing onto Clubs the various details of how the University's ban on alcohol advertising will (or will not) affect the ability of Clubs to get sponsorship from bars. Fortunately for Clubs, the University has decided to go after the actual alcoholic product, rather than the venues, since it has realised that, in constructing the rule, it is unable to distinguish between the Cook and Eureka. It is also my intention to organise a Clubs and Societies Quiz Night in the second semester, as well as to complete work on my "Idiot's Guide to being Clubs and Socs Rep" (i.e. handover documents).

PART TWO: GENERAL OUSA WORK

i. Operation Ragnarok: Fighting VSM

The continuing struggle against Roger Douglas' VSM Bill was one of the defining features of this quarter. It started off with the end of the submissions period on 31st March (my own submission clocked in at 3,980 words), so there were frantic last-minute attempts to urge all and sundry to put in submissions (electronic or otherwise). Then there was the compilation of the 3,206-signature anti-VSM petition (16% of OUSA and 18% of the Dunedin Campus). OUSA has kept the original copy of the petition, but paper copies were scanned, printed, and sent to the Education and Science Select Committee, as well as to Messers Key, Joyce, Peachey, and Goff. I also wrote up a press release about the petition, which not only attracted the attention of *The Otago Daily Times*, but also of Roger Douglas himself, whose sycophants grumbled about the "other 82% who didn't sign" on his Facebook page (one wonders about the 97% of New Zealanders who didn't vote for Douglas, but I digress).

In a bit of good news, the fact that the Select Committee was utterly swamped with submissions (more than 80% against the Bill) meant that the reporting date on the Bill was pushed back from 28th May to 30th September. In a bit of further good news it meant that the Committee itself held hearings in Dunedin. So, on 9th June, I played an 8 a.m. game of pool with the CDO while Harriet was showing Peachey around Clubs and Socs (it was important to show the facilities utilised, even at 8 a.m.), followed up by making an oral submission to the Committee at 11 a.m. I made a point with the oral submission in trying to frame it in "Keith Holyoake" language (i.e. lots of pleasantries about tradition, pragmatism, being reasonable, common sense, et cetera), because it is important that the politicians perceive us as non-scary. I could accuse certain members of the Committee of asking leading questions though...

ii. Operation Klondike: External Policy

With the task of compiling, printing, and distributing the External Policy booklet completed in the previous quarter, this quarter was a case of making corrections ahead of the 2011 edition, and adding in a couple of referenda results that had come to my attention (OUSA referenda results are notoriously hard to track down because they are not minuted). It also meant updating one obsolete motion from 1993 (which had OUSA supporting \$55 a week rents) at the first SGM of the year.

iii. Student General Meeting

The first semester SGM was held on 13th May. My mundane tasks associated with it included chalking (whereupon it rained, as per tradition), running the Club register of attendance, and putting out chairs. Less mundanely, there was putting forward various motions (including Constitutional ones that would allow abstentions, and provides of the tabling/deferment of motions until the next meeting), and a citation of what we would be losing if all external policy were to be rescinded a la 1987. It was one of the best-mannered, best quality-of-debate SGMs of recent years, and pleasingly did not end with a quorum count.

iv. PolCom

As one of the usual suspects on the Policy Committee, it was nice to see my Policy Policy (renamed by James as the Policy Development Protocol) ratified this quarter. The proposed Student of the Month Policy has been dropped in favour of a rewrite of the Golds Policy to create a "Platinum Award" (draft name) for students who significantly benefit the community. Also drafted up is a Student Hardship Fund policy, the fifteenth incarnation of the



Grants Policy (see above), and various, more beefy, Constitutional changes that will be going before the Policy Committee next quarter for further scrutiny. These include the suggestion of "Associate Membership", which would provide an additional revenue stream by allowing alumni, et cetera, who pay our Levy to access some of our services, and an attempt to grasp the thorn on the long-running saga of the Free Buses (see below).

v. Governance Structure Working Party

Along with Harriet, James, John, and Ros, I sat through several days' worth of oral submissions on the governance review. I was unable to attend the subsequent write-up session, but I commend Harriet and John for their work on the fifty page leviathan.

vi. Other Internal Committees

I sit on both EduCom and WelCom, and while I am periodically unable to attend due to lecture commitments, I normally take the minutes for both when I can attend. In EduCom matters, I have been passing on information about the Common Lunch Hour (see below), and in the case of WelCom, discussion about the need for a Student Hardship Fund result in the drafting of policy.

vii. Operation Round-and-Round: Buses

In collaboration with others (most notably Imogen and James), there is a general intention to do something about the issue of student bus subsidisation that has plagued OUSA Executives for a number of years. To this end, I have drafted up some Constitutional provisions and hypothetical SGM motions that would establish a designated Bus Levy to either fully or partially subsidise student usage of Dunedin public buses (there are various reasons why such subsidisation from the General Levy would be undesirable). Such provisions are, of course, only at the initial draft stage, but it is handy having the results of a Bus Levy survey from 2008.

vii. University Committee: Lecture Theatre and Timetable, and Space Sub-Committee

There have been several meetings of the LTTC this quarter, along with various meetings of a sub-Committee set up after I badgered the LTTC on the lack of a Common Lunch Hour. Apparently the last such review was in 1996, and (in theory) Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 1 p.m. are supposed to be Common Lunch Hours (yeah, right, and I'm the Queen of Sheba). The Committee is looking at formulating a recommendation to ensure Wednesday 1 p.m. is kept as free as humanly possible. In other space-related matters, apparently in recent times the University has been trimming lecture theatre capacity because "students are getting fatter." Priceless.

viii. Other University Committees: Library and Distance

I have attended all the various meetings of the Library Services Committee, the Library Student Liaison Committee, and the Distance Learning Advisory Board this quarter.

ix. Miscellaneous

Carried OUSA banner twice and University banner once during graduation parade (including during my own graduation), attended Ros' Quiz Night, manned the "tollbooth" during a Post-grad Friday, manned the OUSA by-election stall in the Link, briefly helped out with "quality control" on the Fair Trade chocolate stall during Easter, et cetera.