

est. 2034

# Adams & Smith

*auctioneers of late-Capitalist period artefacts*



**13 lot sale of items from the late-capitalist era  
to be auctioned at the Arnolfini, Bristol  
on 28th November 2034, 5-6pm**

Adams & Smith's much anticipated sale of late-Capitalist artefacts promises to be the most exclusive sale of 2034.

On offer are 13 pristine lots of highly sought after objects from the personal estate of the artists Hollington & Kyprianou.

Each item comes with a provenance certificate by the monitoring organisation SpinWatch, assuring these are genuine mass produced items period pieces and not contemporary reproductions.

ISBN 978-1-4452-0829-9

subject to creative commons licence

'Attribution Non-Commercial No Derivatives'

for further information Adams & Smith can be contacted via

[info@electronicsunset.org](mailto:info@electronicsunset.org)





## Lot 1

### Double Buggy Perambulator

Date: Circa 2008

Contents: 2 infants (not included)

This used, but well conserved double buggy perambulator is a wonderful reminder of the folly of unrestricted growth of the human population before the Last Depression. Since the introduction of the urban one child and rural birth spacing policy this 'pram' has become a highly collectable item.

In the year of its production, the then 'United Kingdom' (UK) stood at 61 million people. An increase in 2008 of 408,000 births was the steepest rise for 50 years. At a time when the world population stood at 6.78 billion, the increase in so-called 'developed' countries, such as the UK, caused specific problems: UK citizens (or 'subjects' as they were then) used huge amounts of resources, creating far greater environmental damage per head than the vast majority of the world. For example, in 2009 it was claimed that the average carbon footprint of an individual in the UK was 150 times that of an individual in the Ethiopia, the area now covered by autonomous zones 6-7.

At the time, nearly a sixth of the world's population were believed to be followers of the Catholic Church, a long-lived, but now thoroughly discredited, pseudo-religious cult.

Its doctrine in essence was to breed more members, proclaiming it immoral to use any form of birth control.



## Lot 2

### Cement

Date: c2009

Bag containing processed limestone, clay, gypsum

Concrete was at one time the most used product on the planet after water. At its peak in 2022, the manufacture of concrete accounted for an estimated 6% of the CO<sub>2</sub> placed in the atmosphere by human activity.

By the beginning of the 21st century, however, the industry faced a cap on its emissions under what was then known as the 'emissions trading scheme' – part of a now discredited market-based approach to maintaining a growth economy with little structural change.

Up until this time, a small group of highly influential 'experts' in 'traffic management' (a minor branch of engineering) had used this cut-price material to create more traffic to engineer for.

As the Peak Depression neared and people abandoned personal travel for public transport schemes, the space that traffic management had previously appeared to need was seized in the cause of much needed local urban food production.

Nothing can be seen as more emblematic of these times than the Westway in London, closed to make way for the *Westway Hanging Gardens* allotments project.







ner Healthcare

Paracetamol, Ph Eur, Caffeine Ph Eur  
hydrogenated vegetable oil, E464,  
(gelatinised starch, povidone)

## **Lot 3**

### **Medication**

Date: early 21st Century

Licensed by Wyeth Consumer Healthcare

Quantity: 16 tablet pack

Ingredients: Aspirin BP, Paracetamol, Ph Eur, Caffeine Ph Eur (maize starch, E460, hydrogenated vegetable oil, E464, polyethylene glycol, pregelatinised starch, povidone)

One of the many curiosities of the late capitalist period was the way in which populations were controlled via medication and health policies. This was carried out by governments on behalf of major pharmaceutical companies.

The fact that profit regulated the access to healthcare may seem criminal to us today, but it was an accepted fact in almost all societies. In many cases, mass produced medicines were often only circulated within economically powerful countries as their producers viciously defended their 'patents' stopping the replication of effective medicines at lower costs.

It was also common practice to invent imminent pandemics and imaginary diseases and then sell to the 'patients' and those in charge of health delivery systems, the 'medicines' to combat them.

\*The tablets are past their 'use by' date, and as such are sold as seen. Adams & Smith accept no responsibility for any consequences of ingesting these pharmaceuticals as per their instructions. Doing so can cause effects that may include nausea, loss of hearing, internal haemorrhaging, partial paralysis, coma and death.



## Lot 4

### Smoke detector

Date:c1980

Contains radioactive isotope americium -241 manufactured at Sellafield, UK

Although we now consider the nuclear power/arms industry a dangerous folly, we cannot resign it to the annals of history. The legacy of this industry is still keenly felt, and will be for at least the next 24,000 years - the half-life of plutonium.

As an investment, not many lots can claim an almost guaranteed long-term interest such as this - and that's proven by science.

One fundamental problem that the era of 'atomic enthusiasm' failed to address was how to put in place warning systems<sup>1</sup> of danger sites for future generations.

A 2009 advert placed by LLW Repository Ltd in the Whitehaven News began:

*"We need your help: Did you work at Sellafield in the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s? Were you by chance in the job of disposing of radioactive material? We are very keen to speak to people who were directly involved in consigning nuclear waste...in order to build up a comprehensive picture of the waste inventory in the trenches."*

<sup>1</sup> A yellow trefoil emblem was used as an international standard for some time. This was then updated for ionising radiation with a picture of a man running away from a skull. Some wavy lines were also added.









## Lot 5

### Golf ball & tee

Date: 2012

Golf was a game once considered a sport, where one would hit a ball, walk after it and hit it again and again until the 'athlete' had completed a set of obstacles and targets on the 'course'. This is not to be confused with the popular and skilfull *crazygolf* still played today.

Golf was often seen as an elitist bourgeois pastime, whose extensive courses lay ruin to vast swathes of land. A somewhat male-dominated pursuit, it often attracted businessmen, presidents of the then United States and 'light entertainers' who wore ridiculous clothes and hairpieces.

The late 19th century anti-imperialist Langhorne Clemens – better known as Mark Twain – wrote that 'golf is a good walk spoilt'. The now defunct United Nations once estimated that the upkeep of the world's golf courses consumed 2.5 billion gallons of water a day.

This particular golf ball is rumoured to have been used in the last game of golf ever played, the round being cut short as the player was clubbed to death with a five iron by his valet in the lead up to the 2012 Easter Uprising.



## Lot 6

### Mobile Phone

Date: c 2000

Manufactured by Samsung

Contents include arsenic, antimony, beryllium, brominated flame retardants, cadmium, lead, nickel, palladium, silver, tantalum, zinc, mercury and cadmium (toxic), & tantalum (non-toxic)

Of all the hysterical adoption of new technologies that typified the late capitalist period, none was more ubiquitous than the portable, or as it was known, 'mobile' phone. Despite the wars caused by the supply of the mineral tantalum needed in their production, they became the de rigueur technology of late capitalism. At one point in the former UK it was claimed that for every person there were 1.6 mobile phones.

The cracks in their dominance began to appear in 2017, when the religious cultist company 'Mac' released their fourth generation 'A.I. FingerPhone'. Realising that the main role of mobile phones had become affirmation and not communication, the AI phone was the first 'handset' to self-generate content, allowing the user to converse with the phone itself.

The phone monitored the user, and started rudimentary conversations about everyday matters at any time and in any place – the medium had finally become the message.

The widespread breakdown in public mental health is well documented, and almost all AI handsets were destroyed in the Second Reformation.

Adams & Smith are delighted to offer this compact early Samsung handset, a reminder of more simple and less aggressive times.

\*comes complete with pre-emptive thinking facility







Smoking  
seriously harms  
you and others  
around you



## Lot 7

### Cigarettes

Date: c2012

Packaging and Contents (20)

Manufacturer: Imperial Tobacco Group plc

Contents (when lit and inhaled properly) nicotine, carbon monoxide, tar, butane, ammonia, methanol, formaldehyde, cadmium, radon, hydrogen cyanide, arsenic, acetone

One of the most interesting aspects of late capitalist culture – and one that should be remembered whenever comrades may feel our current struggles and problems overwhelming – was the self destructive nature of so many of the desperate people who had the misfortune of populating it.

There is no better example of this than the habit of smoking tobacco. The collapse of the imperialist tobacco industry was one of the first spectacular events of the post-capitalist era and the burnt out remains of the Imperial Tobacco Group plc<sup>1</sup> here in Bristol have been left as a monument to those early days.

Adams & Smith can proudly offer<sup>2</sup> a full packet of pristine, Lambert & Butler cigarettes, containing 20 unsmoked pieces in their original packaging.

<sup>1</sup> ITG... 'proud to manufacture and sell a range of high quality cigarettes and other tobacco products for the enjoyment of millions of adults worldwide'

<sup>2</sup> Adams & Smith state quite clearly that the purchasing of this lot should be purely as a collectable souvenir, and not to be consumed by its owner, or by anyone who comes into contact with them, which is in violation of the vast majority of autonomous zones voluntary civic conduct agreements.



## Lot 8

### Bottled Water

Date: 2008 (bottle manufacture)

Contents: H<sub>2</sub>O with trace levels of fluoride  
in PET container

Lot Number 8 is a genuine example of late capitalist water in an original, scientifically-verified as sealed plastic container.

This ‘bottled water’ sold for 140 times the price of ‘tap water’ that was piped (at a fraction of the cost) into homes and premises throughout the industrialised nations of the time. Through careful testing we have discovered that tap water and bottled water turn out to be chemically identical. So why the high price?

In the UK, massive growth in the bottled water industry coincided with the privatisation of public water. Once commodified as a ‘liquid asset’ it quickly became a status symbol, particularly in the South East of the island, where requesting tap water in restaurants meant being seated next to the toilets.

New companies sprang up, bottling and advertising water as ‘hydration on the move’. A quarter of the UK’s bottled water was even transported from what was then known as France at great environmental cost by oil-consuming ‘combustion engine’ transportation.

Use of bottled water reached its peak during the 2012 Olympics, when hundreds of users drowned attempting to meet the sponsors challenge to ‘re-hydrate and lose weight’ by drinking 5 litres of bottled water a day.

\* not to be confused with mineral water



Lot 27  
Cigarettes





woolworths

great news from  
WOOLWORTHS





## **Lot 9**

### **Disposable Plastic Bag**

Manufactured 2008

Contents: polyethylene, manufactured using natural gas

The 'disposable' plastic bag was introduced in 1957 and by the beginning of the third millennium, over 5 trillion per year were being produced. Their non-biodegradability, coupled with their tendency to quickly become very visible litter made banning them a focus for woolly-minded 'green consumers' who continued to shop in 'supermarkets'.

Barely a hundred years since the first true plastic was manufactured, the material began coalescing in an area once known as the Pacific Ocean – at one point covering an area three times the size of Autonomous Zone 10-66.

Charles Moore, an 'American', discovered the Great Pacific Garbage Patch at the turn of century, after taking a wrong turn whilst sailing. Swirling just beneath the surface of the water he found a vast soup of plastic artefacts. After sailing for 10 days and not seeing an end in sight he returned to land, sold his substantial family oil interests and became an environmental activist.

In 2013, he was one of the victims of the Hurricane Ethelene, which dumped up to a third of this floating plastic onto the Pacific seaboard of the United States (autonomous zones 33, 45 and 78).



## Lot 10

### Penalty Charge Notice

Date: 2009

Contents: Pre-pay envelope and payment slip

*'What will I do for public transport? I will improve the economy so you can find good enough work to be able to afford a car'. - George W Bush, US President, campaign speech*

Another great myth offered by late capitalism that grew steadily through the 20th and early 21st century was that of the personal ownership of a motor car.

Popularised by early car maker, Henry Ford, the cult of 'freedom to travel', or in his own words "the blessings of hours of pleasure in God's great open spaces", flourished until 2008.

The last statistics produced by the 'Department of Transport' in the then 'United Kingdom' stated that 75% of households owned at least one motor car. This reflected an absurd doctrine promoted by the industrial/political elite that saw ownership not only as (a) right, but even worse a necessity.

One leading light, the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, was even reported as saying - *'Any man who rides a bus to work after the age of 30 can count himself a failure in life'*.

The irrational pre-occupation with the 'right to private transport' in cities continued into the second decade of the 21st century. Its eventual wholesale collapse occurred just six months after the last major road building project was abandoned.

This highly collectable 'Penalty Charge Notice' was issued by Lambeth council on the 12th October 2009. In keeping with the spirit of traffic engineers (see lot 2), it records the issuing of a £60 fine, even though I was only fleetingly parked adjacent to a dropped footway whilst loading a 'double buggy' (see lot 1).

# PENALTY CHARGE NOTICE

## DO NOT IGNORE

IT IS AN OFFENCE FOR AN  
UNAUTHORISED PERSON TO  
REMOVE OR INTERFERE WITH  
THIS NOTICE

  
**Lambeth**  
Parking

2008MVA  
PENALTY CHARGE NOTICE - DORMANT



easyJet



# ANGER SAFETY CARD

veiligheidsinstructies

consignes de sécurité

sicherheitskarte

Obey the instructions  
for your aircraft





## Lot 11

### Aeroplane ticket stub and passenger safety instructions

Date: 1903 - 2025 (the aeroplane) (ticket 2009)  
Paper ticket stub *easyjet* EZY 5006 London - Lyon

Lot 11 is a rare remnant from a form of overly-fast travel that relied on kerosene as fuel. As late as 2012, 10% of western industrialized society used the 'aeroplane' for making both long and short 'hauls'. Conditions for the vast majority of flyers, however, were highly cramped.

The first moves towards the airships that now populate our skies came after an event in the preceding decade, which saw aeroplanes being used as weapons against 'skyscrapers' (a discredited form of high-rise building).

The grounding of commercial flights in the three days that followed in the 'United States', gave scientists a unique opportunity to study the impact that water condensation, or contrails, from aeroplanes had on the troposphere. Their conclusions were ignored until the Year without Summer',<sup>1</sup> which occurred only in regions of the world on major flight paths.

Kerosene was eventually taxed, which saw flight numbers drop significantly. Despite the eventual outright ban on high-altitude, high-speed flying, the completion of Heathrow's fourth runway went ahead due to public-private partnership <sup>2</sup> contractual obligations.

Innovative new airships, the development of which had been stifled by the aviation industry, began to replace freight and passenger flights. Even early airships were able to operate for a week on the fuel that a '747' aeroplane once used to taxi from the departure gate to the runway.

<sup>1</sup> It is thought that 'the sky's the limit' was first coined during this period

<sup>2</sup> ppp was a form of business arrangement which extended the private sectors influence and power into areas traditionally publicly run.





easyJet

Passenger

NICHOLAS/FABIENNE CE

From

Madrid Terminal

To  
London Gatwick

Flight

EZY5474

Date

15JUN

Seq No.

42

Boarding Group

B





## Lot 12

### Banking counter pen and holder

Date: 2006

2008, 2013, 2019, 2021. Dates that every school child knows. The first three, huge tremors within the capitalist financial industry, the latter its final glorious collapse.

The system was definitely terminally ill before its eventual enforced demise, but it was by direct action that it was put out of its own, and our, misery. And what a misery.

Adams & Smith are delighted to offer this well-preserved 21st century bank pen and holder, a slightly comical device that was nonetheless widely used for many years.

It would be found on the 'public' counter within high street banks, enabling the 'customers' to fill out forms and provide a signature as a form of security.

What is most telling is that the base was fixed to the counter and the pen (joined by a chain) was fixed to the base, meaning that no customer could 'steal' the pen.

In its own way this lets us in on the very thought processes of this 'banking' industry. The customers actually trusted the banks to *look after* their money, - sometimes all the money they had.

And the bank? The bank didn't even trust the customer with a cheap plastic pen.



## Lot 13

### Gavel and block

Contains Brazilian mahogany recycled from the negotiating table of the 'Cop15' climate summit, 2009

Since the Federal Council of Autonomous Zones has, in its largesse decreed that from 28th November 2034 that all cash transactions are to be abolished, this will be the last auction\* of its type in the world.

This 'lovingly hand-crafted mahogany' gavel and block comes from an area once known as the 'Brazilian rainforest'. Stories still circulate of ancient forest-dwelling tribes living sustainably in this once vast and pristine ecosystem.

Illegal exploitation of these areas resources, (including a trade in hardwoods dominated by the United states and Britain) was responsible for human rights abuses, community breakdown and genocide.

Incursions by capitalist cultures systematically exterminated the indigenous communities, and with them the proof that life without hierarchy, money or notions of inevitable scarcity was possible.

It is difficult to untangle legend from historical fact, but it is nevertheless interesting that such cultures, if they existed at all, should have shared the very same values we see as the cornerstones of our own society.

We feel confident that Lot 13 will be a much sought after item not only a symbol of the late-capitalist era - but, with the last bang of the gavel - a final end to the history of its enduring legacy.

\*This is the last sale of the century. The FCAZ in all its wisdom has ushered in a new era, a year zero for which we are all accountable.





## Lot 13

### Gavel and block

Date: 2020

Contains Brazilian mahogany rescued from the negotiating table of the Kyoto Climate Summit.

Since the Federal Council of Autonomous Zones has, in its latest decree that from 28th November 2037 that all cash transactions are to be abolished, this will be the last auction of its type in the world.

This 'lovingly hand-crafted mahogany' gavel and block comes from an area once known as the 'Brazilian rainforest'. Stones still circulate of ancient forest-dwelling tribes living sustainably in this once vast and pristine ecosystem.

Illegal exploitation of this area's resources, (including a trade in hardwoods dominated by the United States and Britain) was responsible for human rights abuses, community breakdown and genocide.

Incursions by capitalist cultures systematically exterminated the indigenous communities, and with them the proof that life without hierarchy, money or notions of inevitable scarcity was possible.

It is difficult to untangle legend from historical fact, but it is nevertheless interesting that such cultures, if they existed at all, should have shared the very same values we see as the cornerstones of our own society.

We feel confident that Lot 13 will be a much sought after item not only a symbol of the late-capitalist era - but, with the last bang of the gavel - a final end to the history of its enduring legacy.

THIS IS THE LAST SALE OF THE CENTURY. THE KATO IS AT ITS END. THE AUCTION HAS OFFERED A NEW END, A NEW SALE, A NEW END. A NEW END.

## Lot 13 Provenance

"The mahogany specimens included in the present volume, which have been purchased and in action of Adams & Smith, are in action of the Association for 'The Last Auction from the Brazilian States of Pará, September 2000."

This agreement was signed the following year by both Brazilian forest inspectors and British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany.

The phrase is commonly used in the region to mean 'the mahogany's end'. It is implied in the late-capitalist era's end. British mahogany's end. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany.

The company against the large forest trade, especially mahogany from Pará, Brazil, included a group of 'mosses' (mosses) from Pará, Brazil, who in 1935 identified several types of mahogany (mahogany) from Pará, Brazil. They were then taken to the last great event, where the mahogany, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany. It was a very important agreement, which was the beginning of a new era in the world of British mahogany.

Images: Mahogany and British States. Mahogany is a new end, a new sale, a new end. A new end.



Lot 13  
Gavel and block



Adams & Smith sale No.2034. Provenance provided by Spinwatch.

SpinWatch is a non-profit making organisation which monitors the role of public relations (PR), lobbying and spin in society. Through the online encyclopedia SpinProfiles.org and other projects, SpinWatch highlights the people, groups and issues that shape the public agenda. For example, the PR and lobbying firms that few have heard of, but which have a direct impact on the way our world is shaped, from what we read in the press and the manipulation of public opinion, to the decisions taken by our politicians. A guide to the £6.5 billion PR industry in the UK is available to download at: [www.SpinWatch.org](http://www.SpinWatch.org)

## PROVENANCE

### Lot 1 Double Buggy

"Never, never, never tell a lie." This should be the first rule of the Catholic Church's public relations team, according to American Archbishop John Foley, one time head of broadcast media at the Vatican.

Foley was speaking at an Opus Dei conference in 2001 on handling the media and conducting communications for the Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> The 100 plus delegates attending also heard from Joaquin Navarro-Valls, the pope's spokesman. He warned of the unreliable picture of the world that emerges from the mass media: "I have great fear of people who get all their information from newspapers," he said.

A decade earlier in 1990, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops was facing a successful pro-choice (abortion) campaign in the United States. In response, it went in search of external public relations help to push their anti-abortion message to an increasingly sceptical public.<sup>2</sup> The PR account, estimated to be worth \$5million, went to the PR and lobbying giant, Hill & Knowlton, which was once described by a former employee as "a company without a moral rudder" (see also Lot 07). The campaign employed all of the modern PR tricks to win the public over to their anti-abortion position.

When dealing with the press, church PR people should have a "mission statement" in mind, according to Navarro-Valls, the pope's spokesman. Asked what this mission statement should be, Navarro replied: - "In one word... salvation".

<sup>1</sup> John L. Jr. Allen; Rome conference studies the media – Catholic Church and public relations, National Catholic Reporter, August 2005

<sup>2</sup> Dan Balz, Bishops Enlist PR Firm in Abortion Battle DAN BALZ, Washington Post, April 1990

### Lot 2 Cement

Despite their low public profile, the cement firms responsible for making concrete have come under increasing political and public pressure to reduce their climate changing emissions. To understand the scale of the problem, in 2006 China's demand for building materials meant that cement production released almost the same amount of carbon dioxide as Britain's total output from all sources.<sup>1</sup>

Like many polluting industries facing the threat of tougher government regulation and growing public concern, the cement industry has attempted to get on the front foot with a series of voluntary eco-measures under a programme known as the Cement Sustainability Initiative.

The Initiative is part of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, a lobby group made up of more than 200 transnational businesses. It was set up to represent corporate interests at the UN's crucial Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, an event it was accused of hijacking. Its aim today is to promote business as an environmentally friendly force in the world.

The Council's former chairman, Livio DeSimone, reveals the group's greatest achievement to date: "Business... used to be depicted as a primary source of the world's environmental problems. Today it is increasingly viewed

as a vital contributor to solving those problems and securing a sustainable future for the planet.”<sup>2</sup>

So what does a sustainable future look like? Recent ‘sustainable construction’ demonstration projects in the UK include: a drive-through McDonalds, five giant superstores, a new motorway, part of a nuclear power plant and a cement works.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> David Adam, The unheralded polluter: cement industry comes clean on its impact, The Guardian, 12 October 2007

<sup>2</sup> World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Annual Review 1997

<sup>3</sup> Part of New Labour’s ‘Rethinking Construction’ initiative, 1998

### **Lot 3      Medicine**

Sir Roy Anderson is one of the UK government’s leading advisors on swine flu, and is part of the government’s Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies. He was one of the first scientists to label the 2009 swine flu outbreak a pandemic.

As well advising the government on swine flu, Anderson is also a paid board member of the pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), which is selling swine flu vaccines to the UK government. GSK also makes Relenza, an alternative to the anti swine flu drug, Tamiflu.

In a radio interview in May, Anderson strongly supported the mass use of anti swine flu drugs and called for their distribution.<sup>1</sup> Listeners were not told of his financial relationship with GSK.

Anderson receives £116,000 a year for his position at the company, with at least a quarter of his salary being paid in shares.<sup>2</sup> GSK’s share price rose 10% in the two months from May and in July 2009 it posted profits of £2.1 billion pounds for the past three months.

Pharmaceutical profits are among the highest of any commercial sector and the combined value of the world’s top five drug companies is twice the Gross National Product of all sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>3</sup> As the UK’s biggest export earner after North Sea oil, the industry has tremendous economic and political power.

In August, the UK government rejected advice from other swine flu experts on the widespread use of anti swine flu drugs. By making the drug widely available now, they said, the government could be doing more harm than good.<sup>4</sup> Resistance to the drug could develop, making it useless to fight any future and potentially more serious pandemic flu strain.

Despite these warnings and calls for the national swine flu helpline to be shut down, the government has continued with its programme of mass prescription.

<sup>1</sup> Roy Anderson on Radio 4’s Today programme, 1 May 2009

<sup>2</sup> David Derbyshire, Government virus expert paid £116k by swine flu vaccine manufacturers GSK, Daily Mail, 27 July 2009

<sup>3</sup> Emma Miller, Reaping Profits from Disease Mongering, [www.spinwatch.org](http://www.spinwatch.org), 28 June, 2005

<sup>4</sup> James Sturcke, Experts warned dispersal of Tamiflu would do more harm than good, The Guardian, 16 August 2009

### **Lot 4      Smoke Alarm**

An “unattractive option” is how nuclear power was described by the British government in its 2003 energy policy paper. However, it also said that before any decision was taken to build more nuclear power stations, there would have to be “the fullest possible public consultation.”

In the run up to the consultation, the nuclear industry ran a sophisticated PR and lobbying campaign, pushing its pro-nuclear message through third parties including its own workers, MPs, academics and charities. It also cleverly aligned new nuclear power with the pressing concerns of climate change and energy security.

For example, nuclear firm BNFL commissioned a public relations company to come up with a series of ‘race cards’ with key messages to help their senior staff push new nuclear in the media. These prompted them to make the debate “personal”, using “simple, straightforward language”, while “emphasising how nuclear protects values”. One card linked nuclear power with climate change: “CO2 emissions = climate change = irreversible damage to our environment,” it said helpfully.<sup>1</sup> This message was echoed by another PR firm, the global Weber Shandwick, which was also working for BNFL on a “Nuclear New Build” strategy. It pushed the point that “nuclear power is essential in combating CO2 emissions” – a link that now appears to be accepted as fact in the minds of many.<sup>2</sup>

Greenpeace took the government to court over the poor quality of the public consultation. A high court judge

agreed, deeming it “misleading”, “seriously flawed” and “procedurally unfair”. According to Mr Justice Sullivan: “Something has gone clearly and radically wrong”.

The ruling forced the government to undertake a second consultation exercise. Following this, in January 2008 the British Labour Government gave the go-ahead for the building of a new generation of nuclear power stations.

<sup>1</sup> Nuclear Energy Racecards, Strategic Awareness: [www.SpinProfiles.org](http://www.SpinProfiles.org)

<sup>2</sup> The Case for Nuclear, Email Sent from Weber Shandwick to BNFL, 15 December, 2004: [www.SpinProfiles.org](http://www.SpinProfiles.org)

## **Lot 5      Golf Ball & Tee**

Donald Trump's proposed golf course in a Scottish nature reserve has divided local opinion, with those who see the development's promised economic benefits pitted against people concerned about the lasting environmental damage it will cause.

Trump claims the two proposed 18 hole golf courses, 450 bedroom hotel, 950 holiday apartments and 500 new houses will “improve the natural environment”.<sup>1</sup> Others see it destroying the area's rare and protected dune system. To help win over the locals, Trump has hired a small fleet of public relations and legal advisors.

For example, Scotland's largest PR company, The Big Partnership was drafted in in early 2008 to drum up local support in the run-up to a key public inquiry on the development. Trump's US lawyer, George Sorial explained that the Trump empire, which owns several million square feet of prime Manhattan real estate, “needed support in ensuring we communicate our key messages”.

Another firm drafted in to help is Dundas & Wilson, Scotland's largest law firm. Trump has sought its advice in relation to the golf resort since at least 2005, specifically from Dundas & Wilson's planning team chief, Ann Faulds. Faulds' experience includes work for the Scottish government, as a member of the Executive's research team on, among other things, development planning, and compulsory purchase and compensation.<sup>2</sup>

It's reported that Aberdeenshire Council's next move in the golf course saga is the use of compulsory purchase powers to force residents on the land out of their homes.

<sup>1</sup> Auslan Cramb, Donald Trump to show site of £1billion golf resort to supermodel wife, The Telegraph, Nov 2008

<sup>2</sup> Dundas & Wilson, Ann Faulds biography

## **Lot 6      Mobile Phone**

Mobile phone manufacturer, Samsung is the second largest maker of handsets in the world. It is part of the Samsung Group, a huge conglomerate that accounts for 20% of South Korea's total exports.

One of its companies, Samsung Techwin, has an interest in military hardware. Its K9 Thunder tanks, for example, are described as “meeting the requirements of 21st century warfare” with its “deep fire support”, “higher mobility and protection”.

Samsung has also developed an armed robot, the SGR-A1, which uses state-of-the-art surveillance technology – it is capable of tracking a number of moving targets – and an optional lethal weapon, which can “identify and shoot a target automatically from over two miles away”. The robot sentry can be fitted with a range of weapons, including a machine gun.

Developed for use in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea, it was reported that Samsung is also looking to deploy the robot “minus the gun, but perhaps with some sort of non-lethal weapon” at airports, prisons, and nuclear power plants, among other places.<sup>1</sup>

As in previous years, Samsung will be a full sponsor of the 2012 Olympic games in London. On its commitment to the Olympics, the company says: “Over the years, sports have been utilised to promote world peace and to uplift the human spirit. Samsung's corporate agenda to contribute to humanity corresponds with the very spirit of sports.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jean Kumagai, A Robotic Sentry For Korea's Demilitarized Zone, IEEE Spectrum magazine, March 2007

<sup>2</sup> Samsung, Environmental and Social Activities: [www.samsung.com](http://www.samsung.com)

## **Lot 7      Cigarettes**

In 1953 the heads of the major US cigarette manufacturers met in New York with representatives of PR and lobbying firm, Hill & Knowlton (see also Lot 01). Together they agreed to conduct a long-term public relations campaign to counter the growing evidence of smoking as a cause of serious diseases. It was to be the start of a vast, fifty year campaign to hide the health effects of smoking, with Hill & Knowlton at its heart.

A year later Hill & Knowlton set up the first of many 'front groups' (the term for a lobby group that hides its true purpose and financial support) called the Tobacco Industry Research Committee. It quickly launched an ad campaign with "A Frank Statement to Cigarette Smokers". Echoing many PR campaigns since, the ad assured the public that the industry took its responsibilities very seriously, and promised more research, openness and cooperation with the authorities on the health implications of tobacco. To improve its credibility, the Committee also hired Dr Clarence Little, former head of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, as its director.

A second tobacco front group, the Tobacco Institute, was set up by Hill & Knowlton in 1958. It was described by The Public Relations Journal as one of the most "formidable PR and lobbying machines in history". More than thirty years later, the Institute was still spending \$20 million annually on pro-tobacco campaigns.<sup>1</sup>

Even as late as the nineties cigarette makers continued to invest in front groups. Philip Morris, for example, employed another lobbying firm, Covent Garden-based APCO, to launch and run a group known as The Advancement of Sound Science Coalition. The purpose of the coalition, as described in one APCO memo, was "to link the tobacco issue with other more 'politically correct' products".<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most shocking role played by public relations was in maintaining controversy over the health effects of smoking where there was none, as demonstrated by a Hill & Knowlton strategy memo from 1968: "The most important type of story is that which casts doubt on the cause and effect theory of disease and smoking," it said. Eye-grabbing headlines were needed, which "should strongly call out the point – Controversy! Contradiction! Other Factors! Unknowns!"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stauber J and Rampton S, Toxic Sludge is Good For You: Lies, Damn Lies and the Public Relations Industry, 1995

<sup>2</sup> The Advancement of Sound Science Coalition on [www.SpinProfiles.org](http://www.SpinProfiles.org)

<sup>3</sup> Hill & Knowlton memo from Carl Thompson of the Tobacco Institute, 18 October 1968

## **Lot 8      Bottled Water**

'The biggest scam in marketing history, is how many see the bottled water industry. Certainly since its 'invention', producers have heavily invested in managing public perceptions of their product.

For example, the industry has sought to promote itself by undermining public confidence in tap water. In November 2008, Nick Krzyzaniak, head of bottled water company, Danone declared that drinking tap water is "a slightly scary proposition". Krzyzaniak also raised the specter of "chemicals and other things being introduced", making municipal water "much more susceptible to hormones, carcinogenics, and things."<sup>1</sup>

One bottled water company, Pepsi-owned Aquafina, was even forced to admit in 2008 that the water it had been marketing as "the taste of purity" was in fact simply tap water. This is now stated clearly on the label.<sup>2</sup>

Bottled water companies have also been keen to push the 'two litres a day' message to increase our daily intake of their product. However, in a review of scientific data published in 2008, US researchers found no evidence for such measures

<sup>1</sup> Martin Hickman, Troubled waters: Why we fell out of love with bottled water (and how the industry plans to win us back), The Independent, November 2008

<sup>2</sup> Aquafina: [www.spinprofiles.org/index.php/Aquafina](http://www.spinprofiles.org/index.php/Aquafina)

## **Lot 9      Plastic bag**

Cabot Circus, Bristol's newest shopping centre has both its supporters and critics. From the very beginning of the development process though, a small army of PR and lobbying professionals have been tasked with making sure that opinions are managed in favour of the mall.

For example, public relations firm Trimedia has been working on the Cabot Circus project for nine years. Based in Queen Square, Trimedia is one of the largest PR consultancies in the South West. Its role over the



years has ranged from facilitating the 'public consultation' on the shopping centre to creating the hype for its opening.

Cabot Circus' online presence has been managed by another firm, Re:Media. It acknowledged local opposition to, what has been described as "large developers forcing the homogenisation of Bristol's City Centre". Re:Media is proud though to have developed a web-presence that "engaged the community and garnered their support".<sup>1</sup>

It was also reported that Cabot Circus' developers turned to a third company, Opinion Leader Research, to help secure favourable local opinion.<sup>2</sup> The company describes itself as "experts in influence, deliberative engagement, dialogue and insight". However, Opinion Leader Research was criticised in 2008 by the Market Research Standards Board for using information in another public consultation (for the UK government on nuclear power) that "was inaccurately or misleadingly presented, or was imbalanced [and] which gave rise to a... risk of respondents being led towards a particular answer." (see also Lot 04).<sup>3</sup>

Public relations companies are often put in charge of 'community consultation' by developers. But rather than offering a genuine two-way dialogue, consultation is frequently seen as a way of winning over local opposition. As another Bristol-based PR company, PPS, puts it: "Get it right and you can bring the community with you. Get it wrong and you will face heightened concerns." PPS is another PR company that has been criticised for its practices, including the alleged forging of letters and bugging of private council meetings.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Re:Media, Property Developers and the Web (pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Bristol Indymedia, 27 September 2008

<sup>3</sup> Another nuclear consultation was fixed, Greenpeace, 17 October 2008

<sup>4</sup> PPS Group on [www.SpinProfiles.org](http://www.SpinProfiles.org)

## **Lot 10      Parking Ticket**

Bristol is the largest importer of cars to the UK. In 2007 the port, which has its own police constabulary, handled over 650,000 vehicles for a range of customers. For example, all Honda imports into the UK are directed through Bristol and Mitsubishi Motors has 57 acres of storage on the site for its entire UK import of vehicles from the Far East and Northern Europe.

Since 1991 the port has been operated by a private firm, the Bristol Port Company.

The company has become a vocal opponent of the Severn Barrage renewable energy scheme, which it says would be a "major impediment" to its plans to turn the port into one of the biggest deep sea container terminals in the country.<sup>1</sup>

In 2007 the Bristol Port Company's retained lobbying firm, Waterfront, was tasked with constructing what it describes as "a broad-based coalition campaign in order to raise awareness and opposition to a proposed Severn Barrage". It duly set up the 'Stop the Barrage NOW' campaign, created the group's website and produced a media and 'stakeholder' strategy "using [parent company] Freshwater's expertise in order to help with the public relations branding of the campaign." According to its website, Waterfront also "worked alongside parliamentarians... to develop a coherent strategy for attacking the Severn Barrage."<sup>2</sup>

The Stop the Barrage NOW campaign group is widely quoted in the press without the input of the Bristol Port Company's lobbying firm ever being revealed.

<sup>1</sup> Barrage Threat to 'Superport', Western Daily Press, 7 June 2008

<sup>2</sup> Stop the Barrage Now campaign: [www.freshwater-uk.com](http://www.freshwater-uk.com)

## **Lot 11      Aeroplane**

Plans to expand Britain's airports have sparked a furious row across parts of the country, pitting the aviation industry and business lobby groups against environmentalists and local communities.

The current Labour government is pro-expansion. Many attribute some of the industry's success with politicians to the intricate network of contacts it has built up within the government and the Labour party. These include: Tony Blair's former spin doctor, Tom Kelly, who is now airport operator BAA's chief lobbyist; Julia Simpson, a former advisor at No.10, who became head of communications at British Airways; the aviation lobby group Flying Matters is chaired by former Labour energy minister Brian Wilson; British Airways has hired an external

lobbying firm, run by a good friend of Gordon Brown; while BAA's lobbying firm is run by a friend of Lord Mandelson.

British Airways has also reached out to its customers and asked them to lobby for the expansion of London's Heathrow airport. In a letter to members of its executive club, the company's CEO, Willie Walsh, said: I believe these plans... represent our best hope for making your experience as our customer easier, calmer and more reliable."<sup>1</sup> Which is something people living beneath a flight path can only dream of.

<sup>1</sup> An email from British Airways, November 2007: [www.greepeace.org.uk](http://www.greepeace.org.uk)

## **Lot 12 Banking Pen**

The financial services industry is one of the most powerful lobbies in the world and its influence over politics is substantial. Like other industries it has sought to achieve this position in many, very deliberate ways.

For example, the closeness of the financial services sector to the UK government and its regulators is a cause for concern. The UK ranks second after Switzerland for the revolving door – that is the number of people moving from financial companies based in Britain to the British government, regulators and civil service and vice versa.<sup>1</sup>

The financial services sector is also a major party donor in the UK. For example, the hedge fund and private equity industries have been eager to fund the Conservative party – dubbed the government-in-waiting. Few Tories appear to have declined their help: only 5 of the 28 MPs on the shadow cabinet have not financially benefited from the finance industry: either through second jobs, such as Francis Maude who is a paid advisor to Barclays; through direct sponsorship of their offices, as in the case of Liam Fox, who is sponsored by 3 hedge funders; or through direct gifts, like tickets to sporting events.

The close relationship between policy-makers and the finance industry is no different in Brussels, where a lot of the UK's policies now come from. For example, there are now more finance sector executives helping draft Europe's financial sector policies than European Commission civil servants: at least 220 corporate advisors to 150 policymaking staff.<sup>2</sup> This presents an obvious and pressing problem: the public interest is not synonymous with the private interests of finance companies.

<sup>1</sup> David Miller and William Dinan, Revolving doors, accountability and transparency: emerging regulatory concerns and policy solutions in the financial crisis

<sup>2</sup> Captive Commission, Alter EU, 2009

## **Lot 13 Gavel & Block**

'The undersigned companies dedicated to the timber industry... declare...that they are committed not to utilize or acquire illegal logs or timber originating from Indian Reserves.'

- Declaration by the Association for Timber Exporters from the Brazilian State of Pará, December 1992

This agreement was signed the following year by both Brazilian timber exporters and British importers. It came amid rising international concern over the plundering of timber from the land of Brazil's Indian tribes, which is protected under the country's constitution. However, it was by their own admission a 'gentlemen's agreement', voluntary in every respect, or as they say in the Brazilian State of Pará, "For the English to see".

This phrase is commonly used in the region to mean 'for appearance's sake'. It originated in the mid-nineteenth century when Brazilian landowners feigned compliance with the anti-slavery laws of the British Empire by hiding their slaves from the view of British traders. Concerned British parties would be shown instead a plantation without slaves, or one "for the English to see". It is especially appropriate when used in connection with the theft of indigenous wood.

The campaign against the illegal timber trade, especially mahogany from Brazil's reserves, included a group of "ethical shoplifters" from Norwich, who in 1993 'liberated' several items of mahogany furniture from their local department store. These were then taken to the local police station, where the protesters demanded that the items be investigated as stolen property belonging to the indigenous peoples of Brazil. Others tried to recover an entire dining set from Harrods.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hering and Stuart Tanner, Plunder for profit: The UK and Brazilian mahogany trade, Friends of the Earth, 1998

**'Adams & Smith, auctioneers of late-Capitalist period artefacts'**  
is brought to you by Hollington & Kyprianou in collaboration with  
Tamasin Cave and Spinwatch.

Thanks to Platform, London, the Arnolfini, Bristol, and the Andrew  
Wainwright Reform Trust.

Hollington and Kyprianou have worked together since 2000, producing  
a body of installation and video based work that engages with the  
cultural role of science and technology in society.

For past and future projects see: [www.electronicsunset.org](http://www.electronicsunset.org)



ARNOLFINI

