



The October Conference, Luneberg, Germany 2010

Rowan King and Saier Zhang

Every October since 2006, schools internationally have been sending delegates to represent them in the International Students' Leadership Conference, also known simply as the October Conference. Annually, since the first conference was held at Beauchamp College, students meet to discuss areas for improvement in their school structure whilst comparing cultural differences. The venue for this year's conference was the Wilhelm Raabe Schule in Luneberg, Germany.

Five countries took part in the conference this year from a total of 9 schools. Delegations were present from France, England, South Africa, Sweden and the host nation, Germany. The theme of this year's conference was 'Everyone is born a leader' which was subdivided into three smaller groups: 'Decision making in schools', 'Teacher student relationships' and 'Career Choices'.

Our group of seven students separated and each worked on the subgroups to present our findings to the other students on the last day. This was followed by a discussion session where teachers and students alike were able to express their opinions on the



findings.

Throughout the week we had the opportunity to visit places which would give us further impressions about the German culture and the German ideas of leadership. Whilst the most enriching trip was the visit to the Reichstag, the German parliament, a building designed Sir Norman Foster. the trip to the VW factory in Wolfsburg was the most impressive. We were able to see the sheer size of the assembly lines and the robotics used in manufacturing the cars. We were also taken on quite thought provoking visits to the site of the Berlin Wall and a former concentration camp, Neunengamme, one of the few camps in Germany where most of the buildings have been conserved, and the site serves as a memorial to the Holocaust.

There were many challenges along the way during our trip, including a frankly awe-inspiring dance routine that had to be learnt in record time and the occasional lack of vegetarian food. Surprisingly it was easy to overcome the language barriers. We picked up many German phrases and the delegates from all the other countries had impressive English skills. The rewards we gained from this trip far outweighed any challenges that had to be taken also. We

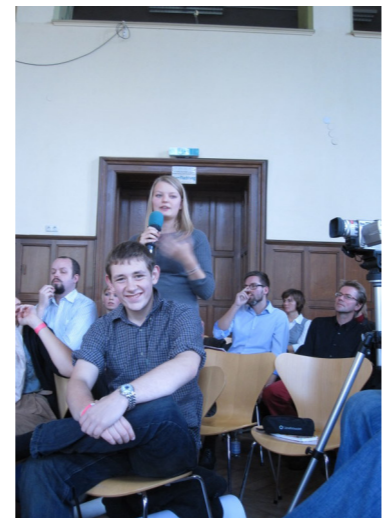
have made lifelong friends with students from other countries. Additionally, everyone has come to appreciate the Beauchamp campus and life. In the Wilhelm Raabe Schule, blackboards were used in most classrooms, something we would never consider in Beauchamp.

Overall conclusions were reached which will be discussed and it will be considered whether they can be implemented in college. We have been set up well for next year when the next step will involve planning the next October Conference at Beauchamp College in 2011. A leadership theme will have to be decided upon but we have been left with lots of ideas to expand on.

It was a great opportunity and an eye-opening experience and we would like to thank Ms Hussain, Mr Ardley for putting up with us and the late nights and Mr Parker and Mrs Berridge for accompanying us. The experience would not have happened without the support of these people. Of course, a final thanks goes to our German hosts who organised a fun and fulfilling trip for us.



WHEN YOU FALL AND
RISE YOU GROW TALL
AND WISE!



Luneberg, Germany 2010



International Students' Leadership Conference

