

SINGAPORE TECHNOCRAT

VOL. 3 NO. 1

APRIL

MC (P) 791

OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: PAUSING TO EXAMINE IT

IT is indeed regrettable that the educational system in our nation does not develop a fully aware individual — one who will not accept things as they are but who examines them critically for greater progress. On the contrary, we most often find individuals who care about their own interests. Education for them means going through those years of school, accepting what is given and taught, vomiting them out in examinations..... and then boom!.....an "educated" man standing on a lonely pedestal.

Our secondary and pre-university educational system hardly develop anything in the individual. The students spent these six years mugging formulas and memorising facts and dates, just to vomit them out in examinations. So after passing out with a SC or a HSC, what does the student really know? The facts and figures learnt will be forgotten.....he is much relieved. He is happy to leave behind him 10-12 years of slogging student life, but has he achieve anything worthy of note? Does he understand society? Does he understand the issues of the day that will nonetheless affect him? He is not interested, at least they don't affect him immediately. Not fully realising how the economic and political system works and the consequences therein, he will end up most resigned to a situation which he thinks is not his responsibility to interfere. So he allows others to determine his human destiny; his preoccupation is to make more money.

Student apathy for issues around him seems so dominant that the Education Ministry had to organise a seminar to so called raise the political consciousness in pre-U students. Were their political consciousness aroused? Was it merely an intellectual exercise since little was done to bring the students to an

experiential contact with the hard facts of life? Was it an indoctrinating session to imbue students with pro-government ideology? Furthermore, these students do not have much time of their own to seriously discuss social and political issues; they are already pre-occupied with self-study and extra-curricular activities organised for him. There really isn't much stimulus for students to raise their social consciousness.

For one who belongs to the graduate class, perhaps he may have forgotten the number of drop-outs who were once with him in either primary, secondary or pre-U days. Where are his former colleagues now? they must be unfortunate to end up as the source of cheap labour for the industries. But who is to be blamed for situation of drop-outs? Surely not mainly on the drop-outs as most people would like to think! Has anyone ever thought that an educational system that produces more drop-outs than graduates must indeed be defective. Perhaps one does not have enough courage to stand up against a tyrannical system; subtle reprisals are many.

The Polytechnic educational system ought to be given some scrutiny: The curriculum given to each student consists of nothing but technical or science subjects. Gone are the days when liberal subjects were part of our curriculum. The 2 or 3 years in Polytechnic provides the student with only engineering knowledge and skills. This process only serves to inhibit him and make him an alien to society. Isn't the Polytechnic providing a one-way educational system? Aren't we all geared to serve in industries after graduation? As one bright soul said: polytechnicians would end up producing the wealth while our counter-

parts in the universities would be the ruling class of the nation!

Is this the orientation that we want? Each polytechnician will have to answer it. The present educational system produces individuals who do not see that the institution and society cannot be separated. The institution should, besides answering the needs of society, play an important role in making that society socially just and worthy of human dignity. For as Mr. Malcolm Cadwell (a well-known lecturer in SEA economic history, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London) pointed out in his edited publication "American presence in SEA": that it is the duty of students in particular to be sceptical of what they are officially exposed to.

Thus, we have to realise that we cannot depend too much on the educational system here for the development of a fully educated and rounded individual. In the present system, we would have to develop our own potential by ourselves. And what is most important is that we cannot close our eyes to society. Being part and parcel of it, we cannot afford to remain passive in the face of social needs and issues affecting our people.

Mr. Francis Thomas, principal of St. Andrew's School, said in an annual speech day of Kuo Chuan Girls' School of Straits Times 20.8.73:— "There is a silly idea that a loyal citizen will never stand up to disagree with his government. The truth is just the opposite. We should say Yes to what is right and No to what is wrong". This call comes from a school principal; the Education Ministry or Government does not seem to have uttered the same thing.

In conclusion, I would like to appeal to all Polytechnicians to think that the answer to true education does not lie in our educational system. It would be living in an empty dream to think so. Instead, while in our pursuit of engineering knowledge, let us keep our faculty of critical reasoning and judgement alive. Let us be alert to the needs of society especially of the poorer ones and attempt a constructive approach to the issues facing society.

by a Polytechnician.

EXAMINATION LEAKAGE

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCIPAL MR. V.P.W. AGER

Question: How did the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) first come to know about the leakage?

Mr. Ager: We invited the CPIB into the investigation of this leakage because it was quite evident that the nature of the leakage is near to, if not wholly criminal.

Question: How many students were actually involved? And from which department?

Mr. Ager: A total of three students were withdrawn from the Polytechnic by their parents. I had invited their parents to my office where I provided an opportunity for them to withdraw their children from the Polytechnic. 2 of them were from the Production while the third was from the Mechanical department. All were in the third year.

Question: The Union feels that the fault lies partly on the Administration's part and not wholly on the part of the students. What are your feelings on this?

Mr. Ager: In any organisation no system or nobody can be 100 per cent perfect. Even the Pentagon Papers were broken in. If a burglar wants to break into your house and if he has the determination, no amount of locks that you put on your door is going to stop him. The Administration has a responsibility of ensuring tight security and perhaps in this area, you can say the Administration have failed.

Question: What about future security? What steps are the Polytechnic taking to prevent any such future happenings?

Mr. Ager: Prompt actions have already been taken by the Administration to ensure better security. We have already sought expert advice on both the security of the staff-rooms and examinations-Halls. Last week, during the examinations, a 24 hour guard was posted. We have not anticipated anything like that to happen. Perhaps there was too much trust placed on the students by the staff. In all my years with technical institutions this is first time that I have known that such a thing had happened. The major blame is on those

students who broke in. It is not right for anyone to open doors and locks without keys and take things that they know should not be assessible to them.

Question: Is the Polytechnic planning to change the mode of setting papers? Have the Administration considered revising the examination system?

Mr. Ager: Yes. The Administration would introduce in the coming session what is called continued assessment. We will be experimenting it on non-final year students, perhaps the 2nd year diploma students. We would take, say, 500 students which would represent a fairly good cross-section of all the students and give these students tests every six weeks or so. At the end of the session they will sit for the examination just like everyone else and if their results proved to be just as good as the rest of the students, then we would have proven our point. There are advantages that I can personally see if this system was introduced. Students wouldn't miss their lectures and they wouldn't have to turn to pep pills or smoke excessively when the examinations is around the corner.

Question: Who was responsible for the first Press release in the New Nation?

Mr. Ager: I haven't got the slightest idea, but I would certainly like to know. I have asked the New Nation and they have refused to reveal anything.

Question: On the whole, what are your feelings concerning the examination leakage?

Mr. Ager: I am very upset that something like this happened. I feel sorry for those few bad apples but I am even more sorry for the 99.9 per cent who are innocent. I don't believe that the public would loose confidence in the Polytechnic. It is reassuring to know that there had not been one letter written to the Press concerning this exam leakage. To the New Nation, that was sensational news, but public opinion will not condemn the whole Polytechnic just because of a few black sheep.



STOP THE PRESS!

The 3rd E.O.C.M., convened on the 10th of April, saw the resignations of the President, Mr. Yap Choon Kok and the Chairman of the Council, Mr. Ng Kheng Soon. Mr. Yap's resignation, as stated in his letter, was due to his 'deteriorating health'. Both of the resignations were accepted by the Council. The Vice-President, Mr. Chia Kum Choon shall be the Acting President until the Council is ready to fill the vacant post. Mr. Simon Lim Yew Whatt, an ordinary member, was voted as the new Chairman of the Council during the same meeting.

Editorial: Examination Leakage

The whole idea of the examination papers leakage is deplorable and is of little difference from any incident which involves cheating and corruption. The Editorial Board unhesitatingly denounces such an act. In the eyes of the public, it would even be more distressing for this highly unethical act was played by students — the vanguard of our future society.

At this point, one may disagree that the whole blame should be on the 3 students involved. The administration too was at fault by not providing sound security measures, thereby enhancing the temptation for students to break in. Nevertheless, as stated by our principal, Mr. Ager, it is never justified for one to break in secretly and take things that do not belong to them. Let us add that the things involved were not of ordinary materialistic value, but would upset a whole examination, undermining the value of our diploma.

Does the exam leakage also reflect a fault in the educational system? From our interview with Mr. Ager, it was known that a change in the system in the future sessions was proposed and will be tested on certain courses. It is hence evident that the administration has sensed some defects in the present educational systems. Perhaps there is too much emphasis on passing an examination. All that is required of each student is to answer a few questions at the end of each session and it is of little importance whether he has full attachment to his syllabus. For those who have not worked hard, the coming of the examination will be much dreaded. The overriding importance of being successful during that brief period can even motivate one to cheat.

Nevertheless, the majority of our students, or the other 99.9% of the student body are prepared to strive hard for their success. This was clearly pointed out by our President, Mr. Yap Choon Kok who also gave assurance that the Union will never hesitate to extirpate the few 'black sheep' among us.

The blatant hostility of the press was also disturbing. If one could recall, New Nation, dated 9th March, 1974, reported that 12 students have bought the original copies of the question papers, and even deduced that hundreds of students have 'benefitted' from it. How could such misinterpretation be tolerated? Is our press so obtuse and irresponsible as to be unable to foresee the consequences of such false reports? It is only obvious that the intension of the press, manifested by its unfriendly response, is to further the damages done to the precious image of our institution, by the three students involved. The editorial board of the New Nation has chosen not to comment on this matter when queried by our principal.

F.O.C.

LEADERS ARE REQUIRED TO GUIDE AND LEAD FRESHMAN. THOSE INTERESTED PLEASE APPLY DIRECTLY TO THE F.O.C. CHAIRMAN.

The Structure Of The Publication Committee

MANAGING EDITORS

NG KHENG SOON
JOSEPH TAN

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

WOON KOK MENG
MAHENDRA KUMAR
SIA BUCK NUN
LIM YAK KIANG

WILLIAM LEE SIEW CHENG

SPORTS EDITORS

TAN AH TECK
YEO BOON KIAT

CIRCULATION MANAGERS

YAM HEIN LEONG
ANDREW PHAY CHOON HGHEE

REPORTERS

WONG SENG CHEONG
CHEN WAI HENG

PHOTOGRAPHERS

VINCENT ONG BOON KENG
MICHAEL LEE JEE KIM

STAFF WRITER

HO LYE SOON

EX-OFFICIO

GOH HONG WAH

Editorial Board Policies

At the first meeting of the editorial board, the following policies were adopted after much discussion, debate and deliberation. These policies are not meant to be hard and fast rules but rather these policies were worked out with the aim of providing guidelines for the committee to work with.

1. Encourage student participation.
2. Foster a closer relation between the full-time students and part-timer.
3. Improve circulation among the students.
4. Encourage students to express their views in letters to the editorial board.
5. Seek and scout for literary talents.
6. Provide a means of communication between the Union and her members.
7. Provide a means by which information and news of the Union and affiliated societies and clubs can be conveyed to the student body.
8. Liberal standing.

Vacant:

STAFF WRITERS ARE NEEDED BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD. PLEASE APPLY THROUGH THE UNION CLERK.

Who Benefits From The Bus Hike?

EXTRACT FROM NEW 'Q' ~ BY THE STUDENTS' CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

THE latest issue which is increasingly receiving public attention in tightly-controlled Singapore is that deterioration of the public transport system and the unjustified price hike of bus fares that will take its toll among the lower income group who form the majority of bus commuters.

The whole issue focuses on the underlying conflicting interests inherent in a **capitalist** society and reveals the snug bond that ties government to private enterprise.

The conflicting interest between the commuters and bus workers on the one hand, and management, government and the concept of profit on the other, is but one example of the innate antagonism between the powerless and the powerful. Thus we witness firstly the growing discontent of the commuters who have to contend with insufficient and over-crowded buses that invariably arrive behind schedule and which are badly maintained, resulting in frequent breakdowns. Frustrations are compounded during rush hours by having to pack in at bus stops with hundreds of other workers who spill onto the roads and aggravate the already congested traffic. Unfortunately the commuters vent their frustrations wrongly at the bus workers who make a convenient scapegoat.

Yet a little reflection reveals that the bus worker, like the commuter, concerned with reaching his destination somewhere along part of the route, the bus worker has to sweat it out on the round trip. The bus driver seated in his overheated portion of the bus has not only to wrangle his way through crowded traffic routes but he has to make frequent stops to pick up and let down passengers who would usually surge forward on its approach and jampack the bus,

often obstructing the view of the driver. Together with the conductor, he is responsible for the safety of the passengers and face the possibility of an expensive fine for allowing a bus to be over-crowded.

The conductor himself has to often squeeze his way through a mass of humanity to collect the fares and crinch his neck ever so often to observe the passengers who board and alight the bus.

The return to the depot is no solace for the bus worker who would be lucky if he has time for rest and a proper meal in a place often without proper toilets and facilities for relaxation; a place which is hot from the overheated engines of buses and heavy with the smell of oil and monoxide. Then he would have to be off again on another maddening round trip. And this pattern is repeated hour after hour, day after day. And his remuneration is insufficient. On top of that, he faces the constant threat of punishment for his "rude" and "sluggish" behaviour as well as the censure of the public. Is it a wonder then that he should thus be so alienated from his work as to be ill-tempered sometimes?

Secondly, there is a private company with a monopoly over public transport carrying about 1.7 million passengers a day, which is unwilling to alleviate the problem faced unless it could ensure a margin of profit. It is backed by a government that is willing to allow its unfair decision to increase bus

fares by 10 cents on the supposed premise of meeting increasing costs; a government that has announced its intention of seeing to it that the company would not show a "loss" account even to the extent of ensuring a certain profit margin, whatever its effects on the pockets of the lower income group and on spiralling inflation; a government that is unwilling or unprepared to play its role in running an essential public service.

This point has been further elaborated by the students' unions from the institutions of higher learning who spearheaded a public campaign against the price increases, forcing the government to give reasons for its approval of the price hike. In reply, the student unions declared that the government merely view the problem from the perspective of the "profit and loss" of the bus company and not from that of the lower income group, thus expecting the lower income group to shoulder the burden of paying for the "capital infrastructure of a private company". This perspective is substantiated, for example, by the nonchalant attitude over the consequences of the 10-cent price hike, which when added up comes to any extra sum of S\$6 to \$12 per month, assuming that a commuter has to pay — not a small sum for the majority of commuters who earn an already paltry S\$100 to \$300 a month.

This perhaps reveals a perspective that has become so much a part of the thinking of the government, a philosophy formulated into

a policy of making Singapore the ideal investment centre for Western corporations, a philosophy which places profit over other human considerations. This philosophy has been allowed to penetrate even into areas like public utilities, where most existing capitalist governments would not consider it appropriate to do so.

We believe tat the crucial ques-

tion is not whether the Singapore Bus Services Ltd. should be allowed to run the risk, if at all, of going into bankruptcy; not whether because of a management projected increase in running costs that a price hike is justified so as to maintain that margin of profit. Rather the question should be whether it is not incumbent upon the government to ensure the smooth and efficient running of public transportation at low cost for the com-

muter — with the government shouldering whatever extra costs that may arise, even by nationalizing the entire transport system if need be. For why shouldn't the large profits made in other big time commercial activities be ploughed back to run such an essential service, rather than shift the burden onto the already over-taxed wage earner?



THE 14TH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

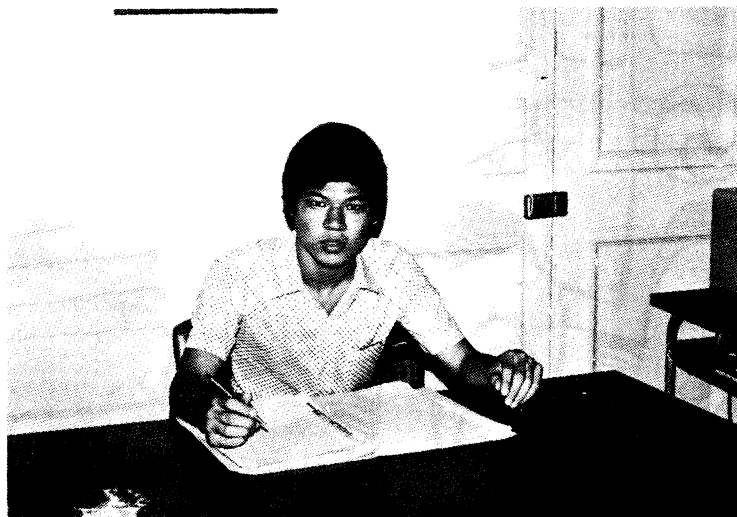
Elected president of the Singapore Polytechnic Students' Union on the 25th January, 1974, Yap Choon Kok resolve to implement the following policies of the 14th Students' Council.

- (1) Promoting better communications between the 3 campuses. Hence, we resolve to integrate the students of the 3 campuses.
- (2) Providing better communications between the Administration and the Union, hence striving for better understanding and Liasion between the Administration and the students.
- (3) Promoting more student involvement in the Union activities and fight against student apathy. Therefore, we strive for an all-round education for the Union Members while instilling in the students a sense of identity, responsibility and integrity.
- (4) Striving for better transport system for the studnts.
- (5) To seek and fight for international Recognition of S.P.S.U.

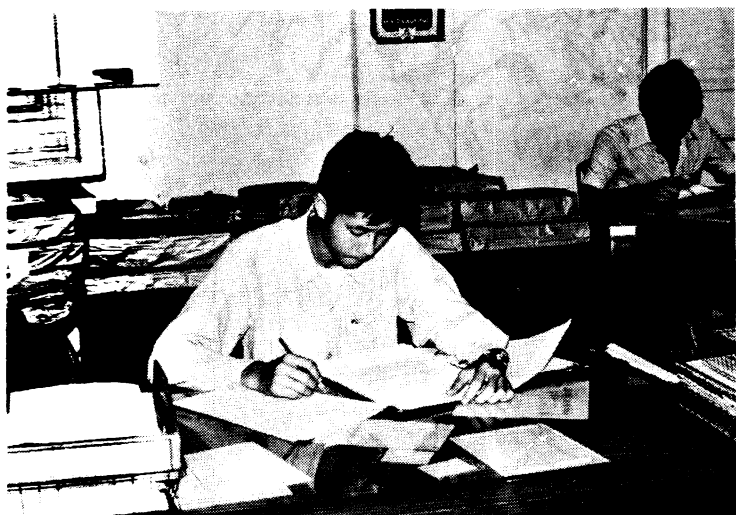
"SPSU FOREVER"
"BERKHAMAT DENGAN KEAHLIAN"



President
YAP CHOON KOK



Vice President
CHIA KUM CHONG



Hon. Gen. Secretary
WONG WING KWONG



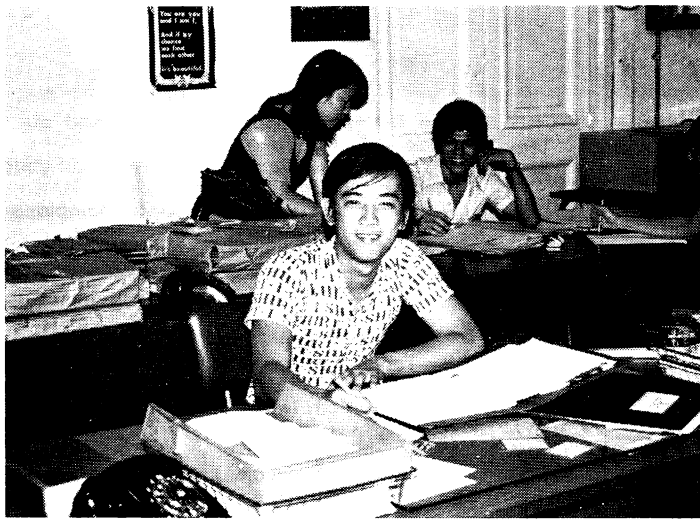
Publication Secretary
GOH HONG WAH



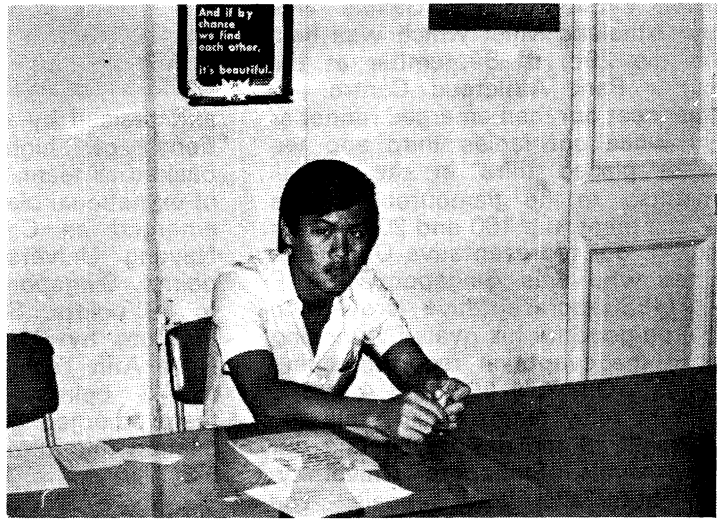
Asst. Financial Secretary
NELSON NEO



Welfare Secretary
TAN ANG MENG



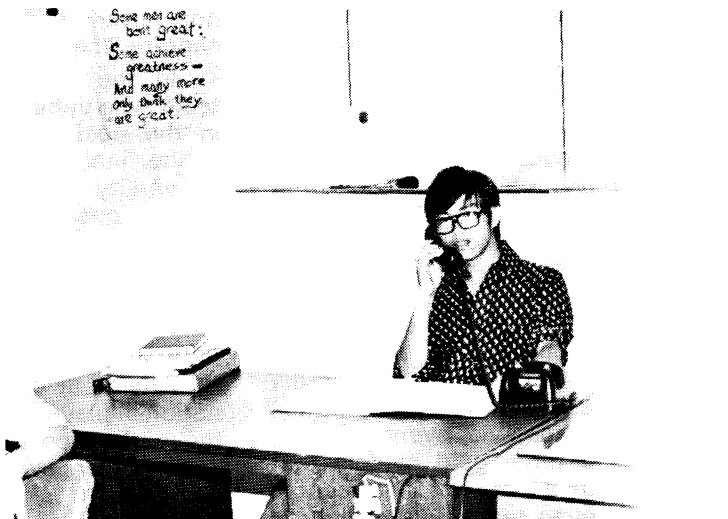
Asst. Hon. Gen. Secretary
CHEW CHIN SENG



Financial Secretary
FRANCIS WU



Social Secretary
KENNY LIM



Union House Secretary
KHO SING NAM

INTER VARSITY/COLLEGE GAMES 1973

Pride Of Our Polytechnic Sportsmen

THE Singapore Polytechnic Sports Councils has once again fielded our best sportsmen and sportswomen, proudly carrying our Polytechnic crest on their chest to compete for top honours in the Annual Inter Varsity/College Games.

A thorough training programme was laid out for sportsmen in preparation for this Inter Varsity/College Games. Many sports enthusiasts who were keen to represent Polytechnic had turned up regularly for training and it was from these loyal students that the Sports Council had carefully pick up our 'creams' which also included many 'new born' talents.

One of the highlights of the Inter Varsity/College Games was the Athletic Meet which was held on the 29th of September at the Farrer Park Athletic Centre. In this meet our men emerged runner's-up while our ladies third and we were placed third in the overall results. In the glamorous events of the meet, the 100 and 200 meters sprint, our representative Ong Yoke Phee who was Singapore's SEAP GAMES representative proved to be too good for his rivals by winning both the events in record-breaking times. Our 4 x 100 and 4 x 100 meters relay teams again stole the limelight of the day by beating our arch rivals, Singapore University, for both the gold medals. The relays were closely contested from the moment the gun went off but our Polytechnic's anchor man proved to be far more superior than our rivals. We won the relays with true sportsmanship and high fighting spirits. This gave the Singapore Polytechnic some of her proudest moments as we were the host of the inter varsity/college athletic meet this year.

Another highlight of the Inter Varsity/College Games is the Swimming Carnival which was held in the Shaw Pool. During this carnival special mention should be given to Michael Kong, Tan Thiam Hock and Ng Boon Yew for breaking the Singapore University's dominance in their respective events. Michael Kong could be commended for his record-breaking performance in the 50 meters freestyle event winning one of the three gold medals that we won, in a time of 27 seconds. Our swimming team was placed as the overall runners-up.

Our men's basketball and table tennis teams must be congratulated



and praised by the Chinese institutions of higher learning. The basketball team, under the guidance of ex-national player, Ng Hoon Chee, emerged as Champions defeating Nanyang University by 78 to 66 points, Singapore University by 52 to 49 points, Singapore Technical Institute by 67 to 31 points and Ngee Ann Technical College by 66 to 43 points. Our table tennis team emerged Champions too after beating Institute of Education by 5-3, Singapore University by 5-0, Singapore Technical Institute by 5-0, Nanyang University by 5-2 and Ngee Ann Technical College 5-1.

However, in other games like soccer, softball, badminton and volley-ball, our teams though represented by various state players and trainees, were simply unlucky in not clearing the last hurdle to capture the championships.

In the soccer competition, our team was unbeaten and was leading in the goal average but, however, in the final game against Singapore University we were unfortunately beaten one-nil though our players performed splendidly. The softball finals was just as disappointing. Our team which was represented by several club players lost to Singapore University by one run.

Again our volleyball team, led by national player Goh Eng Seng, and the badminton team led by former state player, Whatt Yum Seng and represented by F and N trainees, failed in the crucial matches, losing both finals to Singapore University by scores of 1-3 and 2-3 respectively.

The fastest man at the games and our pride — Ong Yoke Phee

Below is the overall results of our teams in the Inter Varsity/College Games:-

Basketball (Men)	Champions
Volleyball (Men)	Runners-up
Volleyball (ladies)	Third
Soccer (Men)	Runners-up
Softball (Men)	Runners-up
Softball (ladies)	Runners-up
Table-Tennis (Men)	Champions
Table-Tennis (ladies)	Fifth
Atheletics (Men)	Runners-up
Atheletics (ladies)	Third
Rugby (Men)	Runners-up
Swimming (Men)	Runners-up
Swimming (ladies)	Runners-up
Badminton (Men)	Runners-up
Badminton (ladies)	Fourth
Hockey (ladies)	Runners-up

From the above results, it can be clearly seen that luck was not with our sportsmen this year. The Sports Council sincerely hopes that all sportsmen and women will put in extra efforts for next year's Inter Varsity/College so that our flag will fly higher than before.

SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC SPORTS' COUNCIL ANNUAL AWARDS.

The Sports' Council Annual Awards are honours awarded to sportsmen and women with outstanding performances in their respective sporting events. This year a total of about 30 sportsmen and sportswomen with outstanding performances were nominated by their respective sports convenor for the awards. The selection committee led by Mr. Wilbert Wong, the Sports' Council's President, selected the winners based on performance, qualifications (academic) and sports involvement.

The winners of the Awards were as follows:—

Sportsman of the Year 1973/1974 — Tan See Kay (Basketball and Athletics)
Runners-up — Pathi bin Bakry (Rugby, Softball and Hockey)
Sportswomen of the Year 1973/1974 — Tan Ai Buay (Softball, Hockey, Athletics and Volleyball)
Runners-up — Tay Sock Huang (Badminton, Athletics and Softball)
Best Team of the Year 1973/1974 — Basketball Team.

A MANIFESTATION OF STUDENT SOLIDARITY

Woon Kok Meng

TRUE democracy can only be achieved if there is a realisation of effective mass participation in the process of decision-making on important national affairs. This was as defined by Professor Sung Ming Shuen of the Nanyang University.

The current fight against the bus-fare hike by the four students' unions can thus be viewed as an exercise in democracy. Whether they are successful in their campaign or not is not the question. Students have proved that they were not socially apathetic and alienated as they had so often been accused. The spontaneity of students in signing up the petitions and the high initiative they took in collecting signatures from the public is a clear indication of their social awareness and commitment to the betterment of the welfare of the people. One can only praise them for their sincere efforts and give them all the encouragement they needed.

Alas, the government's response to this issue was far from encouraging and certainly beneath the dignity of an impartial and democratic government. From the very beginning of the campaign when Mr. Yong tried to evade student leaders at the City Hall to the time when the petitions signed by the students and the general public were flatly ignored, the government had clearly shown that all opposition (be they justified or unjustified) were uninvited. The mistrust in the sincerity of the students' actions was also exhibited by the number of plainclothesmen swarming around the Poly Union House.

The great irony of the whole situation is the fact that only a few years ago, the government had suggested that effective opposition parties should be built up in the University, and now, when a little opposition, which is not in any way political, was offered by students, they were completely rejected. Hence it is not surprising if one should find the government's actions not merely uncomprehensive but contradictory to each other.

The government views the whole picture, from an elevation of profit and loss. This viewpoint is indeed myopic. The economic implications of the 10 cent increase, to the lower income sector whose only means of commuting is by bus, will be alarming. An intelligent government cannot be so obtuse so as to be unable to foresee the repercussive effects of such an increase. Their permission and approval of that increase is not only nonchalant but also contradictory to their intentions to curb inflation in our country.

The Ministry of Communications had stated that increment of oil prices, road tax, etc., has burdened the capital infrastructure of the SBS, and buses were hence running at a loss. True enough, but on the contrary, must the lower income group shoulder the entire burden? Is it impossible for the taxes imposed on the SBS be deducted? These were some of the unanswered questions brought up by the students. Organisations like SIA and HDB which are partly managed by the government, have already gained worldwide reputation for their success and it can only be a ridiculous gag to say that the government is unable to manage efficiently a bus-system in co-operation with the

private companies.

Nevertheless, the bus-fare was increased and the petitions signed were all unheeded. But all that had been done was not in vain. This was the very first time that the four student unions got together to work on a common problem. Student solidarity has never manifested itself more greatly before. The response from the public was bewilderingly good, judging from the number of phone-calls we received from the public who continuously expressed their indignation to the uncalled-for fare increase. It is only regrettable that the government has alienated herself from this common problem among her people.

A LESSON TO LEARN

NOW that the shoutings, yellings, and fist wavings are all over, it is time to review the whole situation with more clarity and perhaps with tempers cooled, we could substitute rationality for foolish emotions.

First to be commented was the turn-out of the students for the meeting. About 300 students turned up. For a 6,000 strong union and for such a decisive meeting, could one call it good? This poor attendance show how much concern students have for their union. It also reflected the extent to which student apathy has plagued our union.

Worse still, the two parties (Councillors and petitioners) acted with little regard over the heated state of the debate. It is unmistakable, that the speakers were more interested in creating convictions than promoting clear thinking among the students. They have, through their irresponsibility, deliberately employed all kinds of emotional language and sensitive words to stir up the already heated up atmosphere, hence, creating a difficulty for the uncritical student to come to a rational decision. And what about the audience themselves? How many have actually taken the whole affair seriously and not just a laughing matter? The majority of the students submitted themselves to the influence of the emotional language. Many have been carried away, or colloquially speaking 'psychoed'. What is more deplorable is the unruly behaviour of the students during that memorable evening.

The charges made against the 13th Council also seem trivial. It

certainly was ridiculous that so much controversy could be built on such small matters like, the conversion of the TV room or the SIA free flight issues. Perhaps what we students need most, is a more thorough knowledge of the personal relationship between petitioners and councillors. It would certainly be distressing to know that the involved were not sincere all this time, but like the much confused students, we in the Editorial Board are still too much in the dark to make any further comments on the whole affair.

The ousting could have all been a mistake on our part, the student's part, but the 13th Council is dead, beyond resurrection and as in every mistake made, there must be a lesson to be learnt. Those who were involved were supposed to be responsive student leaders, the cream of a union, but their vagueness in the implications of the issue they were dealing with, proved them to be immature and irresponsible. One need not stress further that responsibility is that all important quality in a leader and if there is to be a lesson emerging from all this, then, it is the necessity for a greater sense of responsibility and dedication for the union, not only in each future councillor but in every ordinary member. The reputation of our union has been badly marred, and it is now our duty to pick up the pieces left and rebuild the good name of the union.

Welfare Services Committee

Welfare Talentime 1974

THE Welfare Services Committee has again undertaken to organise the first ever Welfare Talentime. This project was initiated because the Committee feels that it is the underprivileged and handicapped are given the chance to reveal their hidden talents to the general public. From time to time, help in finance or in other forms were given to them. Therefore in this project, the first of its kind in Singapore, is to allow the underprivileged and handicapped to self-help themselves.

The main of this project are:—

- To encourage and allow underprivileged and handicapped persons to reveal their talents to the general public, thereby contributing towards the betterment of their own future.
- To cultivate a sense of community awareness amongst the general public.

With Mrs. Jek Yuen Thong, wife of the Honorary Minister of Culture, agreeing to be the Patron and the full blessings of the Singapore Council Of Social Services, this Talentime will definitely be a successful venture. Further to the blessings and support given by the S.C.S.S., they (S.C.S.S.) have agreed to act as the adviser to the project, to help the Organising Committee in arranging publicity pertaining to Television coverage and to help the Organising Committee in whatever ways they can.

The participants of this Talentime are all from Welfare Homes or Organisations in Singapore catering for the underprivileged and handicapped persons. However, entries are welcome from the general public who falls under the category 'handicapped'. There are at present more than 50 entries involving over 100 participants from various Homes and Organisations were received. Below is a list of the Homes and Organisations participating:—

SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT:

- Bukit Batok Boys' Home
- Toa Payoh Girls' Home
- Telok Blangah Girls Home
- Katong Girls' Hostel

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (UNDERPRIVILEGED)

- Girls' Town
- Chen Su Lan Methodist Childrens' Home
- Boys' Town Home Section
- Boys' Tw etaoni shrdl cmfwyp
- Singapore Childrens Society:
 - Toa Payoh Branch
 - Whampoa Branch

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (HANDICAPPED)

- Singapore Association for the Blind
- Red Cross Crippled Childrens' Home

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (HANDICAPPED)

- Oral School for the Deaf
- Singapore Association for Retarded Children
- School for the Deaf.

Dates for Orientation, Heats, Semi-finals Rehearsals and Grand Final.



Hi, Hitch-hikers

It is observed that many of our students at Ayer Rajah Campus have turned to thumbing their way home — especially after the implementation of the 10 cts. bus fare hike. So who says nothing is for free? Our students have been enjoying free rides — thanks to the admirable generosity of some friendly strangers.

Well, hitch-hikers, any special experience to share with those who still stick to commuting by bus?
DO WRITE AND TELL US.

There will be an orientation instead of and audition on the 25th of May 1974.

- Heat 1 — 1st. June 1974
- Heat 2 — 15th. June 1974
- Heat 3 — 29th. June 1974
- Heat 4 — 6th. July 1974
- Semi-final 1 — 27th July 1974
- Semi-final 2 — 10th August 1974
- Grand-Rehearsal — 28th September 1974

Grand Final — 12 October 1974
The venue for the Heats and Semi-finals will be People's Park Complex. The Grand Rehearsal and the Grand Finals will be held at the National Theatre. Some of the prizes expected to be donated by well-wishers and sponsors are:—

- Mini vans
 - Refrigerator
 - Televisions
 - Televisions
 - Double return air tickets with all expenses paid.
 - Musical instruments
 - Sets of furniture
 - Washing machines
 - Savings Bank Account
 - Watches
 - Sets of Encyclopedia
 - Hampers
 - Transistors radios and tape recorders
 - Scholarships
 - Cameras
 - Cash donations
 - Souvenirs, pewters etc.
- List of Sponsors and well wishers.

- Mobil Recreational Club
- Robin Shipyard
- Ee Peng Liang & Co.
- Metro Departmental Store
- People's Park Departmental Store
- Marco Polo Hotel
- Singapore Airlines
- Summit Hotel
- China Airlines
- Hyatt Hotel
- Pan Electric
- Shaw Brothers
- Boustead Trading

SPMLS Activities For The Long Term Vacation

The Malay Language Society is organising various activities for this long term vacation — in its efforts to promote interest in the Malay language and Malay culture amongst its members. Also to afford a recognised means of communication with related organisations and the general public, as in accordance with Article III of its constitution.

In this connection, here are some of the layout of the forthcoming activities.

1. Work Camp

The Malay Language Society will be holding a work camp for five days at Lorong Kikir beginning from the 31st. March 1974. This work camp will be a joint project with the Malay Language Society of the University of Singapore. Works to be carried out will include the construction of a ditch.

2. Language and Cultural Week

The SPMLS and the USMLS/USMS will be jointly organising a Language and Cultural Week. An inter-school debate at re-university level will form part of the occasion and is to be held on 27/4/74, 4/5/74 and 11/5/74 at LT4, Prince Edward Campus. The finals of this debate will be held during the orientation week as part of their orientation programme. The climax of the week will be the Cultural Night to be held preferably at Victoria Theatre or Cultural Centre, at a suitable date which has yet to be fixed. Items for the Night will include a folk dance, choir, Malay wedding presentation and a fashion show.

3. Food Fair

The SPMLS will also be holding a food fair during the Orientation Week. Details of this project have yet to be finalised.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR • • LETTERS TO THE

Dear Ed,

It's been a long time since the 'Technocrat' has been published. What has happened to the Publication Committee? Are the editors sick or have gone for hibernation? I do hope that is not true. Could the Editorial Board Provide us students a satisfactory reason for this long absence?

Thank you and I hope to see our Newspaper out as soon as possible.

— T.S.C.W.

Ed — I'm glad to know that there are members who are concerned over the newspaper. The 'Technocrat' was not published during the past few months because of conflict in the union and the difficulty in securing a permit for publication. Anyway I hope that we shall not face such problems during our term. I also hope that there will be more contributions from the students themselves.

Unhygienic Practices At PEC Canteen

Dear Ed,

Please refer to the Sunday Times 6th Jan. '74, pg. 4 under the headline 'Many food hawkers openly flout new hygiene laws'. The hygienic laws are as that under the Environment Health (Food Handlers) Regulation. I myself was ignorant of those laws until then.

The Sunday Times reported that many food hawkers were flouting those health laws.

The food-sellers at our canteen at PEC are also among those reported in the Sunday Times. From the do's and don't's of the health laws, Food hawkers are not suppose to smoke while preparing food nor are they allowed to handle food with their bare hands. Through my observations, I have found that our canteen food sellers have broken all these regulations.

If one is at the canteen early, one could see the chicken rice seller preparing his food. On several occasions, I have seen him handling the char siew with his bare hands. The unhygienic practices of the other stall-keepers were also of little difference from those reported in the Sunday Times.

Once the canteen boys wore gloves while swooping ice, but now they no longer wear them — another violation of the new health laws.

I hope that the Union's canteen committee will inform the stall holders of the above mentioned health laws so that we students could eat clean food in a hygienic environment.

— A Student

Ed — The Welfare Secretary who is in charge of this issue has given us the assurance that he will look into this matter. Copies of the new health laws will be distributed to all canteen stall-holders, and in future, the Union will take action against those who chose to flout the laws.

Union House Study Room

Dear Ed,

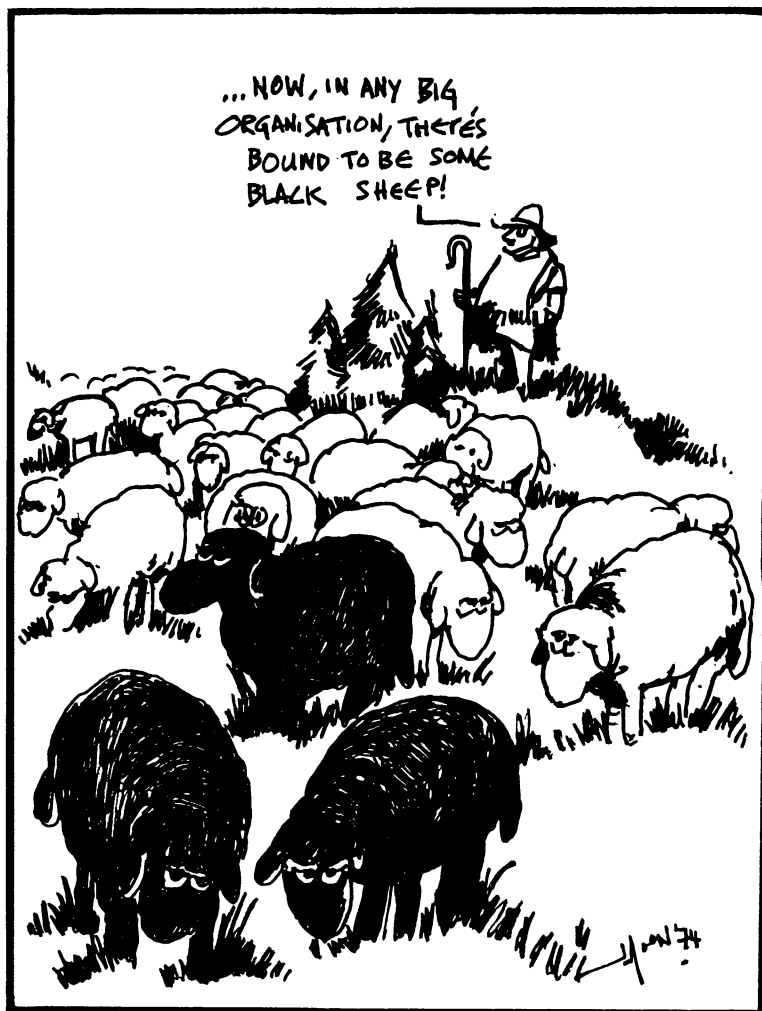
The conversion of the Conference Room into a temporary study room during the examination period was a splendid idea and I was one of the many students who have benefited from it. The Union must have noticed that the space in the present study room was inadequate during that time.

On several occasions, I have noticed that chairs and tables in the study room were rearranged by some inconsiderate students. Could the Union House Management Committee please see to it that students refrain from shifting any furniture in the future?

The air circulation in the study room also need improvement as the place is always stuffy when full.

— L.C.H.

Ed — Students using the study room have already been informed that the tables and chairs are not supposed to be shifted or removed from the room. It is understandable why many students have ignored this regulation. Several students have complained that the tables are too small and many have felt that it is more comfortable to study along the verandah. The Union House Management Committee are at present thinking of a solution to this problem. The committee is also trying to get the broken-down air conditions installed as quick as possible.



LIFE AT AYER RAJAH CAMPUS

HOW are the conditions over at the Ayer Rajah Campus? Recently, the Students' Welfare Service made a brief survey of common complaints and grievances among the students about campus life there.

The results of the survey showed that canteen conditions at that campus are much deplored by students. Food there is not only unhygienic, it is particularly expensive and of little quality. Together with the uncomfortable atmosphere in the canteen during lunch time, many students have taken to lunching at Queenstown. It is hence certain, that cheaper food and an improved environment is much desired by the students there. Many believed that the Union's Canteen Advisory Committee has been doing a bad job.

The lectures are also arranged very poorly. Students complained that 8 a.m. was a rather early time to start off a lecture thus leaving them tired and sleepy during the afternoon lectures. Ventilation in blocks D and E is insufficient, thus the two blocks are stuffy throughout the day.

First year students there, dislike being taught by part-time lecturers who are mostly undergraduates from the Singapore University. Not only are many of them incapable

of teaching well, the time-table has on several occasions to be altered so that the lecturers themselves could attend their own lectures at the University. There is little communication between lecturers and students too, leading to a poor mutual understanding between both parties. Many lecturers make it a habit to start lectures at least 15 minutes late, keeping a whole class waiting. Others are particularly stern about punctuality. Students arriving 15 minutes after the actual commencing time are then considered absent. The students have expressed dissatisfaction too over the implementation of a 75% minimum all round attendance.

Students complained that the library facilities are inadequate. Relevant books (those recommended by lecturers) are insufficient. The poor co-operation from librarians also hinder the efficient use of the library.

The male students' rest room is in a sorry state. Tables and Chairs are insufficient and the room is too small, considering the large male population of ARC. Some students suggested that the Union should negotiate with the Administration to extend the rest room. Space in the games room can be used partially for the extension. The

ventilation of the rest room is appalling.

At present, there are only a few recreational facilities in campus — namely table-tennis (only two tables), two or three carromboards and a few sets of Chinese and International chess. Considering the population of students there, these few games are definitely insufficient. ARC also happens to be the only campus without billiard tables — as complained by some billiard enthusiasts.

The field in the campus ground has to be booked before anyone can use it. This is a good procedure, however, the booking has to be done at PMC. Students have suggested that the booking of the field be transferred over to ARC and that some sporting equipments such as footballs or rugger balls, etc should be kept there, in the charge of a clerk from the Administration.

Recreation facilities in the campus are indeed poor and improvement is a must.



SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS UNION

9, PRINCE EDWARD ROAD,
SINGAPORE - 2.

TEL: 981974.

Cable Address: POLYSTUD, SINGAPORE.